



Cambodia

Cambodia is in a transition period, marked by both progress and pressure. While economic growth has improved living standards for many, 2.8 million people still lived in [poverty](#) in 2019/20. In 2023, approximately 36% of the population was employed in [agriculture](#), often informally, making them vulnerable to climate-related shocks. As the country moves towards a projected [population](#) of 22 million by 2050, the need for more inclusive, sustainable systems is urgent.

Since 2005, SNV has supported the Royal Government of Cambodia to co-develop market-based solutions that strengthen local ownership and climate resilience across the water, energy, and agri-food sectors. SNV's work has evolved in response to Cambodia's changing landscape: from forest degradation and decentralisation of basic services to the rise of inclusive enterprises and clean energy alternatives. The programmes facilitate market access for farmers, women, and entrepreneurs through impact-driven finance, promote the adoption of clean cooking through behavioural change, and contribute to more accountable water and sanitation systems.

In this way, SNV's collaboration with the country's government, civil society, and the private sector aims to lower barriers to development and promote local ownership—reshaping how essential services and opportunities reach communities sustainably.



660K people
gained access to sustainable, affordable, and reliable energy



280K people
equipped with access to improved water and sanitation



113K people
witnessed a rise in income

** 2018-2024 achievements

Responding to the climate crisis

Cambodia faces climate pressures as economic growth intersects with environmental vulnerability. Much of Cambodia relies on the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake for agriculture, fishing, and livelihood. Yet, rapid deforestation, shifting weather patterns, and urbanisation strain these systems. Government initiatives—including the [Cambodia Climate Strategic Plan 2024-2033](#), the updated [NDC 3.0](#), and the [Circular Strategy on Environment 2023-2028](#)—were established to advance conservation and restoration efforts. These [measures](#) aim for a 42% reduction in emissions and a 70% reliance on renewable energy, along with improved forest management covering 60% of forest land by 2035. In 2023, climate [financing](#) reached KHR 2,769 billion (approximately €581,000), nearly half of which came from domestic sources. Through public and private sector partnerships, SNV supports government priorities by scaling up climate-resilient farming and nature-based solutions, providing technical assistance, alongside brokering blended climate finance to build resilient and inclusive rural economies.

BLF | Mekong Region | 2023-26 | € 2M

The Biodiverse Landscapes Fund (BLF) promotes climate resilience and inclusive growth by integrating biodiversity into development around protected areas in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam. SNV works with Indigenous Peoples and local communities to strengthen natural resource management and develop sustainable value chains for agroforestry products, including coffee, cashew, cassava, livestock, and non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The programme supports climate-resilient farming methods alongside forest protection and biodiversity conservation. Around Virachey National Park, eight Indigenous communities have adopted sustainable practices, resulting in reduced hunting and deforestation. NTFPs create alternative income opportunities, while integrated agroforestry, such as cattle raising alongside cashew plantations, and smart water solutions like solar pumps increase food security and secure dry-season production.

Partners: DEFRA, Fauna & Flora, IUCN, and SNV

CHAIN | Four northern provinces | 2015-22 | €9M

The Cambodia Horticulture Advancing Income & Nutrition (CHAIN) initiative strengthened horticulture in Kratie, Stung Treng, Preah Vihear, and Oddar Meanchey provinces by boosting vegetable production, reducing reliance on imports, and increasing farmers' incomes. CHAIN enhanced market linkages, introduced farming technologies, and promoted climate resilience through drip and sprinkler irrigation, water storage, shade-net houses, mulching, and integrated pest management. By



integrating gender-sensitive extension services and partnering with government and private sector actors, CHAIN improved the livelihoods of 10,000 farmers—60% of whom were women—and supported 65 SMEs engaged in input supply and vegetable trading. Today, 6,000 commercial smallholders continue investing in year-round high-value crops using smart-water solutions and shade-net houses, while also expanding into long-term farming by acquiring land for cashew and fruit cultivation.

Partners: SDC and SNV

Climate Resilient Maize and Poultry Farming | Four provinces | 2023-25 | € 450K

The ADB-funded Climate Resilient Maize and Poultry Farming initiative supports 4,000 farmers across the Tbong Khmum, Kampong Cham, Kandal, and Prey Veng provinces to adopt climate-smart practices and strengthen links with the commercial feed industry. With a strong focus on women, the project delivers hands-on training and practical solutions. Maize farmers learn to use drought-tolerant seeds, improve soil health, manage irrigation, apply fertilisers efficiently, and control pests to boost yields with less risk. Poultry farmers benefit from improved cooler chicken coops, quality feed, and disease prevention methods to keep flocks healthy under hotter, drier conditions. Alongside technical practices, women gain skills in farm management, marketing, and financial literacy. Together, these efforts enhance productivity, reduce losses, secure incomes, and build resilient, sustainable food systems.

Partners: ADB, Deheus, FNN, and SNV

Accelerating inclusive development

Cambodia continues to face significant energy inequalities in access to clean cooking. In 2021-2022, only [50%](#) of the population used clean fuels, with a sharp urban-rural divide: 78% in cities compared to 33% in rural areas. Wealth disparities exacerbate the issue, with traditional firewood use remaining deeply entrenched among the most vulnerable populations due to cost and cultural factors.

The Government of Cambodia has set an ambitious target under its [NDC 3.0 Strategy](#): to achieve a 60% national adoption of clean cooking solutions by 2035. SNV supports this goal through a multi-pronged approach that engages in market development, fosters locally led governance, drives behavioural change communication, activates demand, supports SMEs, and creates financing pathways to cut pollution, reduce emissions, and ease the daily burden on rural women and children.

SFV | Tonle Sap Region | 2021-26 | €3.8M

The Smoke Free Village (SFV) programme, implemented across 487 villages in Cambodia, promotes clean cooking practices and helps bridge the energy access divide. Over the course of the programme, households abandoned their traditional wood stoves and adopted LPG and electric stoves. The change was led through local authorities, schools, health centres, and pagodas. Over 120,000 villagers—including Indigenous Peoples, households living in poverty, people with disabilities, and women-led families—participated in this change. Through targeted subsidies, 1,579 low-income families gained access to these smoke-free stoves. Today, 95,000 households cook with cleaner methods, and in most communities, over 85% of families now rely on clean fuels instead of smoky wood fires, creating healthier homes and better air quality for everyone.

Partner: Endev, Franke, Lien Aid, and SNV

HTCC | Tonle Sap Region | 2022-25 | €1.8M

The Higher Tier Cooking Component (HTCC), which was under the Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Clean Cooking programme, boosted the supply chain of cookstoves, particularly electric appliances and biodigesters, across five provinces of Cambodia. So far, the initiative has supported 65 small and medium-sized enterprises, including 43 women-led businesses, with market-based solutions such as the Innovation Fund and Result-Based Financing to improve access and promote the use of clean cooking methods in rural Cambodia. These efforts help diversify products, introduce new technologies, expand distribution channels, and enhance sales strategies. By empowering local entrepreneurs, HTCC has increased access to clean cooking solutions, making them more affordable and widely adopted. This shift reduces reliance on traditional fuels, lowers emissions, improves health, and saves time for women.

Partners: RVO, Ministry of Mines and Energy, and SNV

ICCC | Cambodia and Laos PDR | 2022-25 | €1.1M

Improved Cooking by Carbon Credits (ICCC) promoted cleaner energy access and climate resilience by replacing traditional stoves with fuel-efficient Naga cookstoves in rural Cambodia and Lao PDR. Verified under the Verra Standard, an international benchmark for certifying emissions reduction, the initiative helps lower greenhouse gases, reduce deforestation, and improve household health by cutting indoor air pollution. In Kampong Chhnang province, SNV partners with the Clean Energy Systems Partner Alliance (CESPA), an association that has already led community workshops, resulting in the production of more than 100,000 ceramic stoves. Local production creates jobs, enhances technical skills, and increases household income, while providing rural families with affordable, climate-smart cooking solutions that reduce reliance on firewood.

Partners: CQuestCapital and SNV



Building more resilient systems

The Government of Cambodia has placed climate resilience and sustainable growth at the centre of its national policy. Initiatives such as the [Cambodia Climate Strategic Plan 2024-2033](#) and the [Circular Strategy on Environment 2023-2028](#) are aimed at reducing emissions, expanding forest cover, and accelerating the adoption of renewable energy. SNV supports this vision by facilitating market-driven innovations that can translate policy into practice.

Through impact-driven finance, SNV works with early-stage businesses to pilot practical solutions, measure outcomes, and grow proven models—ensuring that the projects evolve into bankable investments with local ownership. This approach strengthens Cambodia's adaptive capacity and builds systems that endure long after project completion.

DFCD | Multi-country | 2019-27 | €440M

The Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD) programme promotes private sector investments in climate adaptation and mitigation across Asia and Africa. The fund provides financial and technical assistance through two stages: origination and investment. The Origination Facility supports private partner companies with feasibility studies, piloting, de-risking, and technical assistance to prepare projects for investment. In Cambodia, DFCD has the potential to transform 100,000 hectares of land and support 50,000 rural households to become more climate resilient. So far, it has supported companies to improve soil health through biochar, introduce agroforestry coffee systems, expand solar-powered irrigation, and promote regenerative agriculture.

Partners: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, EU, FMO, SNV, Forest Carbon, WWF-NL, and private companies

IAP in Cambodia, 2017-23



Nine inclusive businesses supported

€14 million additional private finance mobilised

€5 million sales revenue generated

80,000 people gained access to basic services

IAP | Multi-country | 2017-27 | €21.4M

The Innovations Against Poverty (IAP) programme drives sustainable development by investing in inclusive businesses that serve low-income populations in five countries across Asia and Africa. The programme provides co-financing grants of €50,000 to €200,000 to established enterprises that engage people living in poverty as suppliers, employees, distributors, or customers. In Cambodia, IAP has supported nine businesses that help smallholder farmers, improve agricultural value chains, enhance soil health through biochar, provide clean water, and expand solar-powered irrigation. Notably, several IAP-funded companies in Cambodia are now thriving. Solar Green Energy supplies affordable solar-powered irrigation to small-scale farmers to supplement water supply during drought. SOGE's successful water service model pilot in Kampong Chan secured them an AMK non-collateral loan to scale their operations. Beyond funding, the programme connects businesses with potential investors and trains local business development providers in building networks.

Partners: SIDA and SNV

SNV is a global development partner deeply rooted in the African and Asian countries where we operate. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, we strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform agri-food, energy and water systems. Working on the core themes of gender equality and social inclusion, climate adaptation and mitigation, and strong institutions and effective governance, we tailor our approaches to different contexts to achieve large-scale impact and create sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

Contact SNV in Cambodia

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Visit the SNV website for an overview of our projects in Cambodia.
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