



Phnom Penh, 14 March 2022

DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

School Meals Coalition: Nutrition, Health and Education for Every Child

The Royal Government of Cambodia expresses its strong support to the objectives of the School Meals Coalition, recognizing the important role of school meal program as a driver of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and as a catalyst toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Cambodia has a long tradition on school meal program. Since 1999, the Royal Government of Cambodia has supported the provision of nutritious meals to bolster human capital development.

Today, the national school meal program, which is increasingly funded and managed by the Royal Government of Cambodia, benefits 280,000 school children in areas with high poverty, malnutrition and low educational performance. This program relies mostly on a home-grown model, which serves to diversify children's diet, create a demand for locally grown nutritious foods and support local economic development.

Recognizing the potential of school meal to enhance human capital development while bolstering local food systems, the Royal Government of Cambodia joined the School Meals Coalition in August 2021 through its Declaration of Commitment and subsequently identified home-grown school feeding as a game changing solution in its Food Systems Summit Roadmap.

As a member of the School Meals Coalition, we commit ourselves to working towards the following objectives:

1. To continue increasing the share of school meals funded and managed by the Royal Government of Cambodia in areas with high poverty, malnutrition and low educational performance.
2. To formalize and operationalize a national school meals policy whilst strengthening its integration across relevant sectoral policies and strategies.
3. To continue optimizing the design of the existing program based on good practices and lesson-learned, promoting cost-effective healthy diets while contributing to the local economy.
4. To implement a holistic package of complementary activities as part of the national school meals program that supports the human capital development of Cambodian children and their communities.
5. To develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to measure the performance of the national school meals program, including cross-sectoral performance indicators.

6. To take forward the agenda of the School Meals Coalition “Peer to Peer Community of Best practices” as a provider and a recipient of experience and best practices on school meals.

These objectives will accelerate action on the Sustainable Development Goals as we head toward 2030 and improve the lives of our children. ៖



Dr. HANG CHUON NARON

Minister

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport