277,484 (F: 122,176)
Number of migrants who returned to Cambodia since March 2020.

6,891 (F: 3,328)
Number of migrants who returned to Cambodia in January 2022.

54 (F: 26)
Number of migrants diagnosed with COVID-19 upon arrival at POEs in January 2022.

595 (F: 310)
Number of migrants currently in quarantine (in Oddor Meanchey and Battambang)

HIGHLIGHTS

IOM continues to collaborate with Department of Hospital Service (DHS) of the Cambodian Ministry of Health to facilitate the discussion for the development of the National Strategic Plan for Migrants’ Health (NIP-MH). In November, a consultative meeting with the Technical Working Group members and provincial health departments of the border provinces was attended by over twenty participants in Kampong Chhnang. Two draft chapters of the Migrant Health Policy were discussed and revised following inputs from the Ministry of Health representatives. Then, another consultative workshop was held in December where the relevant ministries provided comments on the draft NIP-MH.

Ms. Kristin Parco, IOM Chief of Mission in Cambodia, commented:

‘We are grateful for the Ministry of Health’s ongoing commitment to the resolution 70.15 on Promoting the health of refugees and migrants endorsed in May 2017 by the World Health Assembly (WHA). We hope that the development of the National Strategic Plan for Migrants’ Health 2021-2030 will enhance equitable health care access and improve the health of migrant communities.

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POINTS OF ENTRY (POE)

In November, IOM, joined by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), visited some of the most active POEs and quarantine centres (QCs) in Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey and Battambang.

IOM and UNFPA supported returning migrants with food provision and hygiene supplies upon their arrival, and collaborated with the provincial authorities and the provincial health departments to ensure all migrants have access to COVID-19 prevention measures to minimize the risk of wider community outbreak. IOM was able to distribute 2,500 food packages and hygiene kits in November to returning migrants in Oddar Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey and Battambang at POEs and in quarantine centres. In December, further 11,365 food packages and 4,310 hygiene kits were supplied to three provinces (Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey and Battambang) for distribution to newly returned migrants at POEs, QCs and Treatment Centers (TCs).

Building on IOM’s SOP for health compliant border management developed and implemented last year, the project team provided mentoring to border officials at Cambodian—Thai border points, who had been already trained under the previous phase of the project. Training was also provided to border officials at Cambodian-Vietnamese POEs. In total, 330 immigration officials from seven international (border) checkpoints between Cambodia and Thailand and four from International Border Crossing Points between Cambodia and Vietnam were trained and mentored. As a result, the on-site training and mentoring in conjunction with the support of PPE materials and hygiene kits from IOM, contributed to the mitigation of the risk of COVID-19 transmission at POEs. In their feedback, frontline officials expressed their confidence in managing and facilitating movements at PoEs effectively and reconfirmed their commitment to implement health compliant border management procedures.

To support POE preparedness for border re-opening, IOM jointly conducted with the general Department of Immigration (GDI) risk assessment which covered eleven international border checkpoints between Cambodia-Thailand and Cambodia-Vietnam. The assessment identified gaps and challenges faced by frontline officials at PoEs currently and when the border operations resume in the very near future. The assessment findings will be shared with relevant government agencies for comment and implementation.
With the new national guidelines for quarantine requirements, the number of migrants in quarantine centres has decreased substantially, with the border provinces using purpose-built facilities, rather than schools, to host them.

IOM, with the support from Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), collaborated with Banteay Meanchey and Battambang Provincial Health Departments in accelerating the COVID-19 vaccination efforts for returning migrants from Thailand. The overall objective is to ensure that returning migrant workers can access to the COVID-19 vaccine and receive at least the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine before returning to their home communities. IOM organized refresher trainings on mandatory COVID-19 vaccine and vaccination management for 118 (40 women) health workers in Banteay Meanchey province, with an aim to improve health workers’ capacity on COVID-19 vaccine, vaccine data recording and reporting and health education on COVID-19 vaccine.

Since August 2021, the number of migrants vaccinated in three provinces monitored by IOM (Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Oddor Meanchey) is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of vaccine</th>
<th>1st dose</th>
<th>2nd dose</th>
<th>3rd dose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J&amp;J</td>
<td>1,045 (F: 442)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinovac &amp; Sinopharm</td>
<td>4,437 (F: 1,929)</td>
<td>425 (F: 213)</td>
<td>100 (F: 43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astra Zeneca</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>204 (100)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,482 (F: 2,371)</td>
<td>629 (313)</td>
<td>100 (43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Awareness raising session on gender-based violence and sexual & reproductive health at Sampov Loun QC.

Distribution of hygiene kits to migrants in Samnong QC, Oddor Meanchey © IOM 2021.

Quarantined migrants in Sampov Loun QC receive hygiene kits © IOM 2021.

Quarantined migrants in Sampov Loun QC receive hygiene kits © IOM 2021.

IOM visiting vaccination site for quarantined migrants © IOM 2021.
AREAS OF RETURN

The impact of COVID-19 on tuberculosis (TB) program especially among returning migrants pose a major concern for the achievement of Cambodia’s commitment to end TB by 2030. Throughout the pandemic, IOM continued to work with National TB program and Banteay Meanchey Provincial Health Department to address this challenge by ensuring that the active case finding for TB continues to be implemented, TB services are available at health facilities and TB follow up and adherence support are in place.

In November, IOM field team in collaboration with Health Centre staff and Village Health Support Groups (VHSGs) conducted TB active case finding activities including health education sessions on TB and COVID-19 at Health Centres in Operational District Mongkol Borei in Banteay Meanchey reaching 221 (F:122) migrant workers. Out of these, 70 (F:49) took part in the screening session for TB symptoms. IOM also provided refresher training to health centre staff and VHSGs in the Malai district on procedures and protocol in TB screening attended by 50 participants (F:32). The purpose of this training is to strengthen the capacity of participants to treat TB, detect suspected TB cases in the community and gather quality sputum. After training, VHSGs and HC staff will be able to identify migrants through screening their profile, identify symptoms of TB and refer cases for treatment.

IOM in collaboration with Banteay Meanchey PHD, ODs and HCs conducted awareness raising campaign & community dialogues to raise and promote the access to COVID-19 vaccination for migrants in four implementing ODs. The campaign aimed at increasing access to information on COVID-19 vaccination for migrant communities in Serei Sophorn (total people reached: 14,288 incl. 8,041 women), Mongkul Borei (total 10,400 incl. 4,578 women), Poipet (total 26,564, incl. 13,648) and Malai (total: 6,593 incl. 3,448).

IOM conducted awareness raising on safe migration in Sampo Loun (Battambang) and Ou Chrov (Beatney Meanchey) reaching in total 392 migrants and community members, including 246 women. In addition to the community-based outreach activity, the awareness raising session on safe migration was also conducted with another 2,932 returning migrant workers (1,230 women and 301 children) at the Migrant Resource Center (MRC) located in Poipet.

To improve migrants’ access to skill development programmes, information on scholarships and technical and vocational training courses in the construction and tourism sectors with the National Polytechnic Institute of Angkor (NPIA) and EHT Paul Dubrule was also disseminated among migrant workers and community members in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, as part of the safe migration sessions.