



PRESS RELEASE

Cambodia's vaccine programme is further strengthened by the arrival of cold chain equipment supported by Japan and UNICEF

Phnom Penh, 20 September 2021 – Today, essential equipment to strengthen the cold chain management of COVID-19 vaccines was received by Cambodia's Ministry of Health at a ceremony at Phnom Penh's Central Medical Store. The equipment, which includes 21 ice-lined refrigerators, 21 voltage regulators, and 271 fridge tags for temperature monitoring, was funded by the Government of Japan with procurement support through UNICEF. Having strong cold chain systems and facilities in place throughout Cambodia will ensure strong COVID-19 vaccine storage capacity and will enhance the country's routine immunization in the longer term.

To date, the Royal Government of Cambodia has vaccinated approximately 11.5 million people over 12 years old, which represents about 95% of the targeted population. This makes Cambodia one of the most vaccinated countries in the ASEAN region and globally. This is an exceptional achievement. The timely donation of additional cold chain equipment by the Government of Japan will further boost this effort, as it will ensure that the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines will not overstretch existing capacities and disrupt routine immunization services, especially those for children.

This support is a part of an Emergency Grant Aid by the Government of Japan, totaling \$36.9 million, contributed to UNICEF to support 12 countries in East Asia and Pacific Region in improving their cold chain capacity. \$907,588 of this has been specifically allocated to Cambodia. In addition to cold chain equipment, Japan is supporting the Cambodian Government to strengthen the health system's capacity to manage and maintain this equipment and improve the supply chain management process at all levels.

Japan has also pledged \$1 billion to the global COVAX Facility, an international mechanism led by Gavi, CEPI, the World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF, to ensure and accelerate equitable access to vaccines across the developing world. Most recently, Japan donated approximately 1 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines manufactured in Japan to Cambodia.

“For a vaccine to be effective it must be kept at the right temperature, which is exactly what this equipment does,” said Mikami Masahiro, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia. “We feel very confident that our contribution will powerfully and positively support further remarkable progress towards recovery that has already been made by the Royal Government. Our friendship with the Cambodian people is deep, and we hope this support will take one more step forward.”

As the largest single vaccine buyer in the world, UNICEF is the leading procurement and supply agency for COVAX. Within Cambodia, UNICEF and WHO have spent three decades as the leading technical agencies supporting the Ministry of Health (MoH) in strengthening its national immunization programme, benefiting millions of children every year.

“The people of Japan have been great friends to the Cambodian people throughout this crisis, and this is yet another way in which they have provided essential support to the Royal Government of Cambodia in its extraordinary efforts to respond to this pandemic,” said Foroogh Foyouzat, UNICEF Representative in Cambodia. “The support from the Government of Japan plays an important role in the success of Cambodia’s COVID-19 vaccination programme, contributes to the country’s recovery plans, and further strengthens its immunization capabilities. We are grateful to the Government of Japan for their generous support and remain entirely committed to continuing our support to the Royal Government of Cambodia as it builds back a stronger and more resilient health system.”

For more information, please contact:

Embassy of Japan in the Kingdom of Cambodia

Tel: 023-217-161, fax: 023-214-330

Email: eco.jpn@.pp.mofa.go.jp

Website: <http://www.kh.emb-japan.go.jp>

UNICEF CAMBODIA:

Rudina Vojvoda, Chief of Communication

Tel: +85523260204; ext=434 or Email: rvojvoda@unicef.org

Bunly Meas, Communication Specialist

Tel: +85523260204; ext=435 or Email: bmeas@unicef.org