



Unofficial translation

M E S S A G E

of Samdech Kittipritthbindit Bun Rany HUNSEN

President of the Cambodian Red Cross

and The National Champion of the United Nations Secretary General's

Joint Plan of Action for Women's and Children's Health

On the occasion of the NATIONAL MOTHER, NEWBORN AND CHILD'S DAY

Under theme: *“Strengthening Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Care Services to Achieve Universal Health Coverage”*

21st February 2024



***Respected Samdechs, Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Neak Okhnas, Okhnas!
Ladies and Gentlemen, Beloved Compatriots!***

On the auspicious occasion of the National Mother, Newborn and Child's Day on 21st February, in the name of the Cambodian Red Cross and in my personal name as the National Champion of the United Nations Secretary General's Joint Plan of Action for Women's and Children's Health, I have great pleasure in joining The Royal Government of Cambodia and all Cambodian compatriots in celebrating the National Mother, Newborn and Child's Day, which takes place on Wednesday, February 21st, 2024, under theme: *“Strengthening Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Care Services to Achieve Universal Health Coverage”*. This topic aims to highlight the commitment of the Ministry of Health in implementing key health measures set forth by the Royal Government at its 7th Legislature of the National Assembly.

The launch of key measures to strengthen health care services towards universal health coverage also highlighted the great achievements of the Royal Government at the 6th Legislature, led by Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, and at the 7th Legislature led by Samdech Moha Borvor Thipadei HUN MANET, has been implementing the National Social Protection Policy 2016-2025 to respond with good

results to the complicated evolution of the national and international situations, the spread of COVID-19 and other issues through cash support programs for pregnant women and children under 2 years old, school feeding programs, etc. and other social protection programs such as: Health Equity Fund, Equity Fund for Informal Workers and Target Groups, Supplementary Allowance Program for Female Workers in and Out of Maternity, as well as the introduction of a series of social security systems for civil servants, former-civil servants, veterans, employees in the field of health care and victims of accidents at work place have been further strengthening and expanding the scope of universal health coverage in Cambodia.

Continuing to develop the health system and developing human resources in the health sector in line with the Pentagonal Strategy of the Royal Government of Cambodia at its 7th Legislature will lead to full access to the quality health care and treatment, especially in the field of mother, newborn and child health care services in Cambodia. In this context, the Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) and the National Champion Working Group are committed to support and to continue educating and promoting women's awareness on primary health care before marriage, health check-up during pregnancy and at childbirth; health care for mother, newborn and child after delivery; to achieve less than 5% by 2025, the prevention of infectious diseases transmission from mother-to-child such as HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B. In the meantime, CRC and the National Champion Working Group are working on promoting healthy lifestyle to prevent oneself from non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, atherosclerosis, diabetes, breast and cervical cancers.

Therefore, on the occasion of the National Maternal, Newborn and Child's Day, 2024, I would like to appeal to all compatriots, particularly parents and young people as follows:

1. Pregnant women should have at least four regular check-ups, to get vaccination preventing mother-to-child infectious disease transmission, especially voluntary blood tests for HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B; the birth delivery should be at the health center or referral hospital with professional and well-trained specialists;
2. After delivery, mother should follow health check-ups for both mother and newborn; the baby should receive 11 vaccinations against 11 diseases at regular intervals determined by medical staff/midwives; regularly monitor the growth of the baby, breastfeed the newborn immediately from birth for at least 6 months, provide all kinds of nutritious supplements (Bobo Khab Krob Kroeung), along with continued breastfeeding until the child reach 2 years old;
3. Take the baby to the hospital immediately when there is sign of dangerous respiratory disease, diarrhea or other diseases; and take the underweight baby to consult and receive treatment from the healthcare center or hospital;

4. Young women / women at reproductive age between 15 and 49 years old who have health problems should consult, receive care or treatment at any health center or hospital or clinic, where there is professional doctor recognized by the Ministry of Health. Continue to get the COVID-19 boost up vaccine and encourage all 9-year-old girls to be vaccinated (HPV) against cervical cancer to avoid communicable and non-communicable diseases that cause death and disability.
5. Let leaders, civil servants, health workers, doctors, midwives and all service providers with high professional ethics and responsibilities provide support to the implementation of the key priority policies of the Royal Government to achieve high efficiency and effectiveness to meet set goals of the Royal Government.
6. Sub-national and local authorities should take into account to encourage and reproductive age women (15 to 49 years old), pregnant women and women with children under 2 years old to receive health care services at health centers or hospitals.
7. Officers and staffs of the branches, sub-branches and CRC volunteers should cooperate closely with officials and health workers in participating in health education to all target women and to help and refer women to health centers or hospitals promptly.
8. May all relevant national and international institutions continue to invest in maternal, newborn, and child health work, especially to support skills training and retraining health officials/staff, local authorities, and educators in the community to gain real knowledge and skills.

I sincerely hope that the Royal Government of Cambodia will achieve more achievements in improving the health status of mothers, newborns and children in Cambodia.

I would like to thank the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Ministry of Health, officials, relevant institutions, donors, national and international organizations, the Cambodian Red Cross, civil society organizations, philanthropists, local authorities and all competent authorities who have been actively supporting the work of maternal, newborn and child health.

I would like to dedicate the content and meaning of the National Mother, Newborn and Child Day to promote actions which help achieving ultimate goal for Universal Health Coverage by 2030.

Made in Phnom Penh, on 19th February 2024

Signed and sealed

Samdech Kittipritthbindit Bun Rany
HUNSEN