

17 Oct. 2008 - Cambodia Country Progress Presentation

Vientiane – November 2008

by H.E. Suos Kong

Secretary of State, Ministry of Rural Development

Royal Government of Cambodia

Chairman of Cambodian - SEACAP Steering Committee

Good Morning Excellencies and Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to begin by thanking the Laos Ministry of Public Works and Transport for inviting our Cambodian delegation to the Third SEACAP Practitioners Meeting here in Vientiane – Thank You!

Also thanks SEACAP for supporting this event. It is wonderful to meet so many friends again.

I wish to update you on the progress that we have been making in Cambodia with SEACAP support since September 2007. I will touch upon the following subjects:

- Projects; and,
- Future priorities.

PROJECTS

Since the last SPM, I am pleased to report that we have completed the following projects:

SEACAP 6: *Infrastructure constraints to growth and poverty reduction in Cambodia.*

The Rural Road Policy and the Rural Road Development Strategy are now complete. A consultative approach was used throughout the project. We are following up with the steps required to officially endorse these documents.

SEACAP 20: *Development of locally made, low cost equipment for the road sector.*

This project found that the market in the three countries studied is able to respond to demand for road sector equipment and that extra-ordinary support or subsidies is not necessary.

Currently we have one on-going project:

SEACAP 19 *Development of Local Resource Based Standards.*

The project is progressing according to plan and will be completed by the end of the year. The project office is located in the Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC) and has integrated as much as possible both faculty and students into the research work. We are glad that the Low Cost Structures Manual will be taken to final draft format.

In addition one of the outputs of the SEACAP 2 project continues to be important to us. This is the Cambodian National Community of Transport Professionals – CNCTP. It provides us with a national consultative and dissemination capacity as well as close links to international organizations such as the IFRTD.

FUTURE PRIORITIES

I am pleased to inform you that the Royal Government of Cambodia intends to make rural development a national priority. For the MRD this will involve ramping up our rural roads program. In this regard it is important that SEACAP supports:

Research:

- Rural Road Research: Cambodia needs to catch up with the rural road research work that is on-going in the neighboring countries. There are now a number of new projects under formulation that could provide us with a research platform.
- Inland Water Transport: For many areas of Cambodia, inland water transport is the traditional mode used for centuries and still used today by many rural people, particularly in the rainy season. We need to research the potential of rural water transport to increase rural access.

Dissemination:

- Nationwide dissemination of the Rural Road Policy and Strategy. Once the policy and strategy are officially approved by the government we will need support to disseminate it to the stakeholders. We envision a similar effort to what was done in Vietnam last year.
- Project formulation. Several new rural transport projects will be formulated in the near future. We will need good advice and support to develop these projects and integrate the outputs from SEACAP.
- Regional Cooperation: A feature of the SEACAP program that we appreciate and hope will continue is the exchanges of information, knowledge and ideas among the participating countries.

Mainstreaming

We have identified the need to mainstream the SEACAP outputs in the following ways:

- We envision the CNCTP evolving into a professional body that will have official standing and links to international transport organizations;
- LVRR standards, specifications and associated guidelines for both national and provincial levels.
- University courses; and,
- In-service training, particularly at the provincial, district and commune levels.

Excellencies and Ladies and Gentlemen in closing

On behalf of the Cambodian delegation we appreciate the assistance that is being provided by SEACAP. We also wish to thank DFID for supporting the SEACAP initiative.

Thank you.