

17 Oct 2008 - Vietnam Country Progress Presentation

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Chairman of Rural Roads Surfacing Trials (RRST) Steering Committee

Good Morning Excellencies and Ladies and Gentlemen,

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

I am very happy to meet again with the many friends and colleagues who are involved with the SEACAP program. I wish to update you on the progress that we have been making in Vietnam with SEACAP support since we last met in Hanoi in September 2007, principally in two key areas:

- **Rural Road Surfacing Research**
- **Inter Ministerial and Program cooperation for Rural Transport Development.**

Rural Road Surfacing Research (RRSR)

Under the overall supervision and coordination of the RRST Steering Committee, our research efforts have focused on:

- i. Monitoring the performance of the trials from RT1 and RT2;
- ii. Investigation of distressed trial roads in Dak Lak Province; and,
- iii. Extending the RRST to new provinces in RT3.

SEACP 27 - Monitoring the performance of the trials from RT1 and RT2

The gathering of data on the performance of 41 trial roads built in RT1 and RT2, in 12 provinces throughout Vietnam continued since the last SPM. The guidelines developed in SEACAP 1 are being effectively used as the basis for the data gathering. The data will be analyzed after the last round of gathering at the end of this year. The analysis will update the cost and performance models for the various pavement and surfacing technologies. This will enable us to select the most appropriate technology for developing the rural roads based upon more certain information about deterioration and maintenance needs. It will be necessary to continue the monitoring of the trials for more several years in order to fully understand the rates and factors contributing to LVRR performance.

SEACAP 24 - Investigation of distressed trial roads in Dak Lak Province

Two of the RRST roads constructed during RT2 in Dak Lak Province were found to have deteriorated at an unexpectedly rapid rate. This project examined these roads to understand the causes of the deterioration in order to reduce the risk of recurrence in the future.

SEACAP 30 - Extending the RRST to new provinces in RT3.

Following the completion of the RT2, the Ministry of Transport has launched RT3. The MoT requested SEACAP to continue the RRSR program in RT3. At this time the trials designs are being developed in six selected RT3 provinces.

Developing Inter Ministerial and program cooperation.

DF 55: Dissemination of Low Volume Rural Road (LVRR) Knowledge & Experience

This project will improve the sustainability of the LVRR improved and maintained through the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) / Integrated Rural Development Sector Project for Central Provinces (IRDSPCP). This is in line with the Rural Transport Strategy (RTS) and agreement between the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and the MARD. Through a training program the project will transfer the RRSR technical knowledge and experience to the IRDSPCP provincial engineers in the 13 project provinces.

FUTURE PRIORITIES

The Government of Vietnam has made the improvement of rural transport a national priority for the reduction of poverty and for the social-economic development of our rural areas. We have programmed approximately 1% of our annual GDP for this purpose. This is a major undertaking and we must make sure that these investments are sustainable. In moving forward with this program we are facing several short to mid-term constraints. SEACAP has provided effective support to our program. We hope that this support can continue while we develop our national capacities. We have identified the following priority areas where support is needed:

i. Research

- RRSR: There are several provinces in Vietnam which were not included in the RRST. The MoT needs to carry out research in these provinces to complete the national coverage. We also need assistance to continue the monitoring and analysis program so that the cost and performance models for the various options are as accurate as possible;
- Slope Stability: The MoT and the MARD have visited the SEACAP Laos Slope Stability program. We believe that this kind of program is very much needed in Vietnam where we are having similar and severe difficulties; and,
- Inland Rural Water Transport: Several regions of Vietnam have extensive inland water ways. Many of which have great transport potential. We are interested in developing this transport mode.

ii. Dissemination

- RRSR: We would like to have support to build upon the Inter-Ministerial cooperation and extend it much further; and,
- 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.

iii. Mainstreaming

- We have identified the need to mainstream the RRSR in the following ways:
 - 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.

Once again, the MoT appreciates the very useful assistance that is being provided in an effective and sincere manner. In closing I wish to thank DFID for supporting SEACAP and hope this successful program will continue into the future.

Thank you.