

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT¹

Division: SEAE

TA No. and Name TA 4574-CAM: Community Self-Reliance and Flood Risk Reduction			Amount Approved: \$500,000	
			Revised Amount: N/A	
Executing Agency: Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM)		Source of Funding: Poverty Reduction Cooperation Fund	TA Amount Undisbursed \$36,186.85	TA Amount Utilized \$463,813.15
Date			Completion Date	
Approval	Signing	Fielding of Consultants	Original	Actual
8 April 2005	02 June 2005	10 October 2005	31 August 2006	31 May 2008
			Closing Date	
			Original	Actual
			31 August 2006	30 June 2008
<p>Description</p> <p>Rural life in the lowland areas of Cambodia is linked inseparably with the annual cycle of flooding. While rainfall is partly responsible for this cycle, floods in the Mekong River are the primary cause. Communities have developed ways of coping with floods that last up to 6 months a year. Hence, annual floods become disasters only when they are deeper than average, unexpectedly fast in onset, or unusually prolonged.</p> <p>Disastrous floods do occur in Cambodia, and with increasing frequency in recent years. The floods of 2000, 2001, and 2002 in Cambodia were more severe than the average of recorded floods, and their sequential occurrence meant that much of the damage had not been fully repaired before the next flood arrived. Their recurrence at short intervals was particularly devastating for poor farmers and fisherfolk.</p> <p>MOWRAM has primary responsibility for managing floods and droughts, but Government-funded flood management projects tend to concentrate on structural measures for reducing floods. Several nongovernment organizations (NGOs) have programs in Cambodia to mitigate flood damage and improve community disaster preparedness focusing on mitigation action planning involving local communities, disaster preparedness action planning; and disaster management through savings. An evaluation of these approaches showed that these programs significantly decreased the impact of flooding, saved lives and livestock, increased rice yields, improved access to services and goods, and built affordable credit and savings to cushion future shocks. Although several programs were developed to capitalize on these findings, NGO interventions tend to be disparate, weakly coordinated with other similar initiatives, poorly funded, and without guarantee of long-term support. They do not reach a majority of the affected community in flood-affected areas and their capacity to develop and implement gender-sensitive approaches needs to be strengthened.</p> <p>Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs</p> <p>Agencies active in flood management and mitigation urgently need to adopt common standards and approaches, including a gender strategy. A programmatic approach—coordinating current and future interventions—would increase the efficiency of externally funded projects, and distribute aid assistance more equitably. Under such circumstances, MOWRAM and its development partners could incorporate community-based interventions into disaster risk-reduction projects more readily to magnify the impacts of NGO efforts and spread the benefits over a larger target area. Community resilience to external shocks also could be increased greatly by improving networks and organizational capacity, disseminating site-specific flood forecasts to isolated communities, and raising communities' awareness of available emergency assistance.</p> <p>The TA was designed to be implemented in two phases: (i) strategy development (6 months) to formulate a methodology for mobilizing communities to plan, design, and implement preparedness, prevention, and mitigation measures; and (ii) capacity development (8 months) to train government officials, NGOs, and leaders to implement the strategy. The strategy and improved capacity would be directly applicable to flood management initiatives in Cambodia, including ADB's future flood management project to be identified under TA 6149-REG in support of flood management and mitigation program of the Mekong River Commission (MRC).</p> <p>The TA aimed to (i) assess the effectiveness of ongoing and previous NGO interventions; (ii) select target areas based on vulnerability to floods and droughts, incidence of poverty, and locations of previous and ongoing</p>				

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Interventions; (iii) design a community participation model based on a strategy of proactive disaster risk reduction; (iv) undertake a baseline survey in the target area; (v) formulate the risk-reduction strategy, including a gender strategy to make disaster efforts more responsive to women's and children's needs; (vi) select NGOs to implement the strategy through local communities; (vii) train government, NGO staff, and community leaders in strategy implementation; and (viii) supervise priority works as practical training in strategy implementation.

Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities

The initial activity of the TA was to review NGO interventions in flood and drought risk reduction to gain an understanding of NGO and other agency programs, their interventions, strengths of their approach and constraints. A needs assessment was undertaken by the TA team to understand community concerns and needs in the context of flood and drought impacts. This was an important basis to determine the activities under the TA.

A draft Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) Strategy was prepared as the key output from Phase 1. It was presented at a consultative workshop in August 2006, attended by a range of stakeholders including MOWRAM, the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), provincial and district level government staff, the Cambodia Red Cross (CRC) and various NGOs. Based on feedback from the workshop, the draft strategy was revised and presented more widely at the 6th meeting of the Cambodian Disaster Risk Reduction (CDRR) Forum in Phnom Penh on 27 March 2007. Training material was developed based on the draft CBDRR Strategy, supplemented by regional experience of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) and material used by CRC and other NGOs.

A simple Flood Vulnerability Geographic Information System (GIS) Atlas was developed under the TA to facilitate decision-making, integrating data on several indicators of flood risk. This atlas was used to identify the vulnerable communes in the TA districts and facilitated selection of pilot projects and was used as a training tool during project workshops. Due to the wide interest in the GIS Atlas, the TA consultants conducted a training seminar for MOWRAM, NCDM and CRC at the TA project office within MOWRAM's Department of Hydrology. The GIS Atlas was provided to the participants in Arc Reader format along with the full datasets. It was also demonstrated to MRC, and has since been used under TA 6149-REG.

Terms of Reference were prepared and seven NGOs were approached to undertake the two pilot projects (for which the target areas were identified and prioritized using the GIS atlas). Two NGOs [Chamroen Chiet Khmer (CCK), Church World Service (CWS)] were selected. This process took considerably longer than anticipated, and provided many insights into the challenges of engaging NGOs for such activities, as reflected in the TA reports. An extension of the TA implementation period was required to implement the pilot studies due to the seasonal nature of floods in Cambodia.

The pilot projects were undertaken over the period July 2006 to August 2007 in Svay Rieng and Takeo provinces. As a result of lessons learned in conducting the pilot projects, manuals were prepared and training on CBDRR was conducted for the two NGOs undertaking the pilot studies in Khmer in August 2006. The training also included the provincial departments of water resources and meteorology (PDWRAMs) of the four target provinces (Prey Veng, Kandal, Takeo and Svay Rieng) and the provincial and district disaster management committees (Koh Andeth and Borey Chulsa districts of Takeo Province, and Svay Chhrum and Kampong Ro of Svay Rieng Province). During implementation, the NGOs conducted several workshops in the pilot project areas to seek inputs and ensure sustainability of the project activities following completion of the TA.

The NGOs for the pilot projects supported the local government in developing a provincial/district disaster risk reduction plan for implementation over 2008-2010. In addition, provincial and district disaster risk reduction action plans were developed for Svay Rieng province and in Borey chulsa district of Takeo province based on the revised CBDRR Strategy. This process established standard operating procedures for CBDRR in all target districts. This was a highly consultative process led by the respective provincial and district committees for disaster management with active support from other stakeholders working in the area in the field of disaster risk reduction.

The CBDRR Strategy, the key output of the TA, was revised based on experiences of pilot project implementation and presented at a national workshop in April 2007. All project outputs and documents are available on CD.

Overall, the TA was well designed, the TOR comprehensive and the engagement of the consultants (ADPC) highly appropriate to undertake the TA. In all, 16 consultants were engaged by ADPC, of which only the 7 principal experts were evaluated by the project officer due to his personal association with these consultants. However, the anticipated timeframe of the TA of 14 months was too short to undertake the work envisaged. ADPC was highly flexible in implementation of the TA activities, were willing to extend the implementation period at no cost, and prepared thorough documentation of all TA activities. Collaboration between MOWRAM's Department of Hydrology, the consultants and ADB was excellent, and four review missions/tripartite meetings were conducted over the course of the TA, in November 2005, and January, April and October 2006, and ADB staff participated in all major workshops throughout the TA period.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

Main outputs of the TA are: (i) Assessment of disaster management interventions of NGOs; (ii) Finalization of a community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) strategy, and (iii) Pilot implementation of the CBRR strategy in two provinces.

The TA is considered highly relevant in assisting the Government of Cambodia, NGOs, and communities to become better prepared for flood disasters and to build the capacity at the community-level for flood disaster prevention and mitigation. As indicated, the TA prepared a CBDRR Strategy that was implemented at the provincial level in Svay Rieng province and the district level in Borey Chulsa district of Takeo province, providing a model for implementation of activities elsewhere. The TA, through training and workshops, has reinforced the importance of non-structural approaches to flood risk management among staff of MOWRAM at the central and provincial levels. The GIS Atlas was also well received, and has been widely used and built upon.

In terms of effectiveness, partnerships were developed in the two pilot areas which provided a practical opportunity the formulation and adoption of provincial and district disaster risk reduction action plans. The process was highly consultative and led by the respective provincial and district committees for disaster management with active support from other stakeholders working in the area in the field of disaster risk reduction.

The TA implementation was considered highly efficient in having completed all target outputs within the budget, and, in fact, going somewhat beyond the original scope of the TA in the rolling-out of the CBDRR Strategy.

Initiatives taken to sustain the impact of the pilot projects include partnerships with local government and stakeholders to develop Provincial/District Risk Reduction Action Plan. The ADPC project team also linked the initiatives with other ongoing ADPC activities in flood preparedness in Cambodia thus enhancing the sustainability of the project.

Overall Assessment and Rating

With reference to the expected outcomes of the TA and the assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, the overall assessment of TA implementation is considered highly successful.

Major Lessons

The work conducted under the TA was highly relevant to the needs of Cambodia in preparing a CBDRR Strategy. Although the timeframe for implementation of the TA was overly optimistic, one of the key lessons that can be drawn from the implementation of the TA was the importance of flexibility during TA implementation on the part of all parties (government, TA consultants and ADB) to make adjustments in the implementation arrangements. Also, there was considerable support and enthusiasm for the program shown at the district and provincial levels, where the need for such a program was highly appreciated. The selection of an appropriate organization/NGO (ADPC) as "consultant" also contributed to the success of the program in that the outcomes of the TA will be widely used in developing similar initiatives in neighboring provinces and countries, as has already been demonstrated through the expansion of CBDRR programs in other provinces of Cambodia.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The CBDRR strategy document developed under the TA forms a basis for expanding and developing Provincial and District Disaster Risk Reduction Action Plans in both Cambodia and further afield. The outputs of the project are expected to be used as a basis for developing CBDRR action plans for implementation under RETA 6456: GMS Flood and Drought Risk Management Projects in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam and will be considered for use under TA (2009)-INO: Flood Management in Selected River Basins.

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