I. Background

1. The Mekong River started to rise in early August 2011, with the water level rising significantly when Typhoons Nesat and Nalgae in late September and early October brought heavy rain. Eighteen out of 24 provinces and municipalities have subsequently been inundated and over 1.7 million people affected. The damage from the 2011 flooding is expected to exceed that of floods in 1996 and 2000, both in terms of loss of life and impacts on infrastructure and agricultural crops, largely because the water rose and receded three times.

2. A preliminary damage and loss assessment (PDLA) carried out by ADB indicates that direct damage to assets and economic losses amounts to $624 million dollars. Damage and losses were concentrated in the Transport sector ($344.4 million or 57 percent of the total, of which 89% is the extent of the damage and 11% is the loss), Agriculture sector ($179.6 million or 29 percent of the total, of which 22% is the damage and 88% is the loss), and in the Irrigation and Water Resource sector ($27.1 million or 4.5 percent, of which 100% is the damage as it was not possible to estimate the loss). The high damage and loss figure estimated in the transport sector is due to the extensive damage of approximately 900 Km of National and Provincial roads and more than 4,000 Km of rural roads. Rural water and sanitation also was affected by the flood, and although the monetary impact is marginal, the present conditions of rural water and sanitation will lead to health hazards.

II. ADB Responses

3. On 2 November 2011, ADB approved a humanitarian assistance for Cambodia of $3 million grant from the Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund (APDRF) to be utilized within 6 months. In order to respond quickly to the immediate humanitarian needs arising from the floods and lay the foundation for a full recovery, as well as ensuring complementarity with the activities of the UN agencies and other development partners, the Government is using the APDRF funds to address critical needs for: (i) rice seeds to enable affected households rapidly to replant destroyed rice fields; (ii) temporary repairs of irrigation canal embankments through provision of fuel and sand bags; and (iii) supporting affected families through food- and cash-for-work schemes for undertaking emergency repairs to flood-damaged rural roads in order to restore connectivity of affected communities. This is quickly restoring access to flood-affected areas for distribution of emergency assistance while providing jobs to the affected people.

4. In terms of post flood rehabilitation and reconstruction, and in response to a high-level request from the Government, on 27 March ADB Board of Directors approved, through summary procedure, the Flood Damage Emergency Reconstruction Project. The total project cost is $67.18 million (ADB $55m loan, AusAID $5.3m grant, Govt $6.9m in kind contribution) and with four components: (i) restoration of national and provincial roads (including bridges and culverts); (ii) restoration of rural roads (including bridges and culverts); (iii) restoration of irrigation facilities; and (iv) project and flood management. In terms of longer-term solutions to the current floods, which may recur more frequently due to the effects of climate change, ADB is exploring possible support to Cambodia's capacity for flood forecasting and risk reduction and management of up to $5 million from Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction.

III. Government and other Donors’ Responses

5. The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has allocated about $39 million in 2011 to three priorities ministries (Ministry of Public Works and Transport-MPWT; Ministry of Rural Development-MRD; and Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology-MoWRAM) for immediate repair of flood damaged infrastructure. In 2012, RGC is allocating another $90 million ($40m from ADB budget support programs and $50m from RGC own budget) to carry
out the remaining repair and rehabilitation activities which were not covered in 2011 and outside the scope of development partners’ funded projects (i.e. ADB, JICA, KFW). KFW announced a commitment of 8 million Euro to focus on repair of rural infrastructure (roads, bridges, culverts, drainage and irrigation). AusAID has confirmed its interest to provide grant cofinancing of about US$5 million to ADB Flood Damage Emergency Reconstruction Project. JICA is carrying out a survey for rehabilitation/improvement of some national roads for a follow up project grant of about $15 million.

IV. Some photos of the floods