

## GENDER ACTION PLAN: LABOR AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING ACTION PLAN

1. The Rural Roads Improvement Project will significantly benefit rural Cambodians. Of Cambodia's 2.3 million rural households, nearly one-third (29%) are headed by women. The poverty incidence in rural areas was 35% in 2007, based on a poverty line of about \$17.75 per person per month. Remote areas—especially those that become difficult to access by road during the rainy season—are particularly poor. Transport takes up a lot of time and physical effort in rural areas. Paved roads and enhanced connectivity are vital for local economic development and poverty reduction. By paving more than 500 km the project will improve year-round all-weather access to markets, jobs, schools, and health centers. A labor and gender mainstreaming action plan has been prepared to maximize benefits to local populations and to ensure that men and women equally share the benefits. Enhanced connectivity can also have unintended consequences (e.g. increased risk of HIV/AIDS and human trafficking), and this plan includes provisions to mitigate against these.

2. **Gender and road infrastructure.** Improved connectivity can bring great benefits for women. Transport services increase, travel is faster and more convenient, and women and girls can travel safely further from home. The quality of rural health, education and other services improve with better accessibility. Girls have a better chance of attending secondary school. Markets are easier to reach and trading opportunities for women increase. Better roads bring more customers to the area, improving opportunities to expand women's small enterprises. Road construction and maintenance can generate jobs for women and provide cash income for the poor. But there are also potential negative impacts: opening remote areas can increase the spread of HIV/AIDS, both during construction and with greater influx of outsiders once the road is complete. Trafficking of girls and women could increase, especially in areas that are near national roads and border areas.<sup>1</sup> The risk is greater where there is widespread poverty.

3. **Social protection and public works.** To combat widespread poverty, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) began developing a national strategy for social protection of the poor and vulnerable in 2009. The strategy, due for completion in the second quarter of 2010, is based on a long-term vision of a basic guarantee of social protection for the entire population through a package of benefits and services that addresses vulnerabilities along the life-cycle, e.g. children, the working-age population, the elderly. One of the strategy's five priority areas is reducing underemployment, particularly in rural areas. The corresponding objective is to provide employment opportunities for the poor and vulnerable to secure income and to create sustainable infrastructure assets that promote social and economic development particularly in rural areas. Public works programs are proposed as the core activity to achieve the objective. A public works program adopts labor-intensive or labor-based methods where possible. Cambodia has significant experience in the implementation of food- and cash-for-work programs, and in labor-based road maintenance.<sup>2</sup>

4. **Gender mainstreaming.** Greater gender equality in labor-based road construction and maintenance will provide significant social benefits to participating households and communities. Women's jobs can include repairing potholes, cleaning pavement, clearing ditches and culverts, collecting road maintenance materials, overpass and small bridge repairs and maintenance, road brushing, and maintaining signage. Women can maintain embankments and plant and care for trees and other plants that protect against erosion. Measures to effectively mainstream gender in rural road activities include: (i) capacity development activities to promote better understanding of the differential gender impact of poor infrastructure and of the social benefits of improving it (related to

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report (June 2009) describes Cambodia as a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation and forced labor.

<sup>2</sup> ADB-financed projects in Cambodia that have prioritized labor include the *Rural Infrastructure Improvement Project* (Loan 1385-CAM, 1995), *Mainstreaming Labor-Based Maintenance to the National Road Network* (JFPR 9048-CAM, 2004), and the *Emergency Food Assistance Project* (Loan 2245-CAM/Grant 0116-CAM, 2008).

gender differences in the purpose of travel and travel patterns, and in mobility outside the home and outside the village); (ii) mandatory recruitment procedures or quotas in minor works contracts, preceded by sensitization activities targeting both men (to encourage them to allow female family members to participate) and women (to inform them of opportunities); (iii) a requirement that contractors recruit a new workforce at regular intervals (e.g. every 5km) to maximize job creation and to ensure that women are not discouraged by excessive travel; and (iv) equal pay for equal work for both men and women, with a requirement that contractors submit time sheets that are disaggregated by gender.

5. **Implementation arrangements.** MRD as the executing agency will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the action plan (Table 1), particularly through the ministry's Gender Working Group. A national social development/gender consultant will (i) conduct gender awareness training for the project management unit (PMU) and Provincial Departments of Rural Development (PDRDs), (ii) establish sex-disaggregated indicators for project performance monitoring and evaluation, and (iii) coordinate with other specialists during subproject preparation and implementation. The PDRDs will incorporate labor and gender monitoring in quarterly progress reports to the PMU, and the PMU will do the same in reports to ADB and the RGC.

**Table 1: Labor and Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan**

<b>Project Output</b>	<b>Actions Proposed</b>
<b>Output 1: Road rehabilitation component</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil works will be based on labor-based appropriate technology: contractors will prioritize the use of local unskilled labor (through subcontracting)</li> <li>• At least 40% of unskilled laborers will be female</li> <li>• Male and female unskilled workers will receive equal pay for equal work</li> <li>• Contractors will not employ child labor on civil works contracts</li> <li>• Road shoulders will have a sealed bituminous surface enabling carts with wheels to reduce the burden on women and girls who haul water in rural areas</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2: Road asset management component</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity of the local contracting industry will be built on gender and labor-based appropriate technology</li> <li>• A labor force database will be available for contractors, and PDRDs will be able to track the use of local labor</li> <li>• A road maintenance action plan for MRD and PDRDs will support a sustainable road maintenance regime, with works delegated to rural communities through small community contracts</li> <li>• At least 50% of road maintenance workers will be women</li> <li>• Child labor will not be employed for road maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3: Road safety and safeguards program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the safety of children and pedestrians, all project roads will have speed bumps to slow traffic in villages</li> <li>• All project roads will include road safety signage</li> <li>• A community-based road safety campaign will involve community members as facilitators, and at least 50% of community facilitators will be women</li> <li>• The project includes an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention program to mitigate potential HIV-related impacts during and after construction</li> <li>• The project includes a human trafficking awareness and prevention program</li> <li>• Baseline socio-economic survey data will be sex-disaggregated</li> </ul>
<b>Output 4: Climate change adaptation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vulnerability mapping for rural roads to improve planning for climate change adaptation will include local women at planning stages</li> <li>• Emergency management and early warning systems will engage vulnerable groups (women, disabled persons, etc.), during the planning stages and special provisions will be included for such groups in actual operation of the systems</li> <li>• Climate change adaptation will include community-based work programs that involve women in planting and caring for road-side trees and other plants</li> </ul>

MRD = Ministry of Rural Development, PDRD = provincial departments of rural development