



**Document of the
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Community Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot Provinces

Project Completion Review Validation

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**Office of Evaluation
International Fund for Agricultural Development**

**IFAD – KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
COMMUNITY BASED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN KAMPONG THOM AND
KAMPOT PROVINCES (CBRDP)**

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT VALIDATION

Abbreviations and Acronyms

APIP	Agricultural Productivity Improvement Project
APR	Asia and the Pacific Division of IFAD
AusAID	Australian Aid
AWPB	Annual Work Plans and Budget
CAAEP	Cambodia Australia Agricultural Extension Project
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CBRDP	Community-Based Rural Development Project
CC	Commune Council
CD	Community Development
C/S Fund	Commune/ <i>Sangkat</i> Fund
D&D	Decentralisation and Deconcentration
DED	German Development Service
DOT	District Outreach Team
DSF	Debt Sustainability Framework
ERR	Economic Rate of Return
ExCom	Executive Committee (of the Provincial Rural Development Committee)
FP	Farmer Promoter
GIZ	German Technical Cooperation (former GTZ) <i>(The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit)</i>
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation <i>(Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit)</i>
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
IFSP	Integration Food Security Programme
IOE	IFAD's Office of Evaluation
LGS	Loans and Grants System (IFAD)
LTC	Local Technical Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MOWRAM	Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MTR	Mid-Term Review
MVF	Most Vulnerable Family
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PCR	Project Completion Report
PDA	Provincial Department of Agriculture
PDP	Provincial Development Programme
PDWA	Provincial Department of Women's Affairs
PDWRAM	Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology
PIA	Project Impact Assessment
PLG	Partnership for Local Governance
PPA	Project Performance Assessment
PPMS	Project and Portfolio Management System (IFAD)
PRDC	Provincial Rural Development Committee
PSU	Project Support Unit
PSDD	Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralisation and Deconcentration

RIIF	Rural Infrastructure Investment Fund
RIMS	Results Impact and Management System
SRI	System of Rice Intensification
TA	Technical Assistance
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
VAHW	Village Animal Health Worker
VN	Village Network
WUC	Water Users Committee
WFP	World Food Programme

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A. Basic Data¹

Basic Project Data			Approval (US\$ m)		Actual (US\$ m)	
Region/Province	APR	Total project costs	22.85		22.96	
Country	Kingdom of Cambodia	IFAD Loan and % of total	9.99	43.7%	9.99	43.5%
Loan Number	551-KH	Borrower	1.82	8.0%	1.82	7.9%
Type of project (sub-sector)	Agriculture development	Co-financier 1 GTZ	7.88	34.5%	7.88 (PPMS) 9.5 (PCR figures)	34.3% (PPMS) 120% (PCR figures)
Financing Type	F	Co-financier 2 WFP	1.30	5.7%	1.30 (PPMS) Unknown according to PCR	5.7% (PPMS) Unknown according to PCR
Lending Terms ²	HC	Co-financier 3 AusAID	0.55	2.4%	unknown	
Date of Approval	7 December 2000					
Date of Loan Signature	11 January 2001	From Beneficiaries	1.30	5.7%	1.30 (PPMS) unknown according to PCR	5.7% (PPMS) Unknown according to PCR
Date of Effectiveness	29 March 2001	From Other Sources: DSF Small Grant as of 27 December 2007			0.115	0.5%

¹ There are inconsistencies between data retrieved from the Project and Portfolio Management System (PPMS) and the Project Completion Report (PCR), especially regarding contributions from the beneficiaries. These inconsistencies are reflected in the table below and will be further investigated as part of the Project Performance Assessment (PPA).

² According to IFAD's Lending Policies and Criteria, there are three types of lending terms: highly concessional (HI), intermediate (I) and ordinary (O). The conditions for these are as follows: (i) special loans on highly concessional terms shall be free of interest but bear a service charge of three fourths of one per cent (0.75 per cent) per annum and have a maturity period of forty (40) years, including a grace period of ten (10) years; (ii) loans on intermediate terms shall have a rate of interest per annum equivalent to fifty per cent (50 per cent) of the variable reference interest rate, and a maturity period of twenty (20) years, including a grace period of five (5) years; (iii) loans on ordinary terms shall have a rate of interest per annum equivalent to one hundred per cent (100 per cent) of the variable reference interest rate, and a maturity period of fifteen (15) to eighteen (18) years, including a grace period of three (3) years.

Basic Project Data			Approval (US\$ m)	Actual (US\$ m)
Loan Amendments	3 ³	Number of beneficiaries (if appropriate, specify if direct or indirect)	49,600 ⁴ households (39 150 direct) (10 500 indirect)	219,272 ⁵ (165,575 direct) (53,697 indirect)
Loan Closure Extensions	1	Cooperating Institution	UNOPS	
Country Programme Managers	Youqiong Wang 26 January 2001 to date	Loan Closing Date	30 September 2008	30 June 2010
Regional Director(s)	T. Elhaut	Mid-Term Review (MTR)	27 August 2004	September 2004
PCR Reviewer	C. Perch	IFAD Loan Disbursement at project completion (%)	100%	6.91 m (88% in SDR)
PCR Quality Control Panel	A-M. Lambert M. Torralba			

Sources of this table: President's report, PCR, PPMS, Loans and Grants System (LGS), MTR, Appraisal Report, Supervision reports.

B. Project Outline

1. The Community Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot Provinces (CBRDP) comprised 1,134 villages in the two provinces, situated respectively north and south of the capital Phnom Penh. Based on WFP data these two provinces were classified as among the four most vulnerable to food insecurity in the country. The project sought to build on interventions by GTZ (now GIZ) in supporting and empowering functioning grass-root organisations in their social and economic development.

2. The strategic goal of the project was "to reduce the poverty of targeted households in the project area".

³ Loan amendment letters dated: 24 March 2006, 23 January 2008 and 13 July 2009.

⁴ According to the PCR the Mid-Term Review (MTR) revised logical framework at the purpose level refers to 39 150 as the number of households in the project area assisted to sustain increased food production and farm incomes from intensified and diversified crop and livestock production. It mentions no other groups of beneficiaries. In the appraisal report 39 150 was the number of households who would benefit directly from the agricultural development programme.

⁵ According to the PCR indirect beneficiaries are defined as all households in the project area who did not receive any services directly from the Community Based Rural Development Project (CBRDP) (or agencies supported by CBRDP). The PCR argues that this assumption assumes that due to the wide ranging interventions implemented by CBRDP e.g. training of provincial administrators and commune councillors, the RIFF provided to all Communes in the target districts and the diffusion of technology etc., any household in the project area that is not a direct beneficiary is considered to have received some indirect benefits and therefore to be an indirect beneficiary. However, these benefits might be not very tangible, but relate more to an overall better cooperation and communication between people and the administrative structures. Therefore, when attempting to quantify the number of project beneficiaries it would seem more sensible to focus on the numbers of direct beneficiaries and not to make assumptions about the numbers of indirect beneficiaries. IOE concurs with this assessment.

3. The immediate project objectives were:
 - (i) increased food production and farm income for 39,150 poor households from intensified and diversified crop and livestock production; and
 - (ii) increased capacity of the poor to use the services available from the Government and other sources for their social and economic development

After the MTR in 2004 a third objective was added, namely that:

- (iii) poorer households, their village organisation and commune councils jointly with government and non-government service providers efficiently implement development activities for their economic and social well-being.
4. The project was built on the following four components:
 - (i) Community development;
 - (ii) Agricultural and livestock development;
 - (iii) Rural infrastructure; and
 - (iv) Support to institutional development.

5. The project had the following elements:
 - (i) Social mobilisation and participatory development as the entry point for improving the capability of the poor to use their natural resources effectively and to access the services available for their social and economic development;
 - (ii) initial targeting of areas where a start had been made by GTZ in developing the necessary institutional framework and later expansion of these approaches to other areas as staff capacity is further developed with project assistance;
 - (iii) through extension and demonstration programmes transfer simple and proven crop and livestock production technologies to address the constraints of the target group and increase their farm incomes;
 - (iv) rehabilitation of small and medium scale irrigation and water control schemes to improve water availability for both wet and dry season crops;
 - (v) provision of access to safe drinking water and road communications to improve target – group health , labour productivity and marketing opportunities;
 - (vi) beneficiary contribution to the construction costs and full responsibility for the operation and maintenance (O&M) of rural infrastructure investments to ensure sustainability and beneficiary ownership;
 - (vii) project implementation using contracts with the line agencies to enhance transparency and accountability; and
 - (viii) provision of institutional support to local service providers to strengthen their capacity to deliver services to the target group effectively and in a demand–driven and participatory manner.

6. The project's target group comprised the estimated 77,400 rural households (40 per cent of the local rural population) who live below the poverty line of US\$112 per capita per year. Women were considered a significant part of the target group because of their important role in crop and livestock production and community activities.

7. Several changes to the project and its context occurred during project implementation. At project start up in 2001, the government's decentralised provincial structure was not yet operational. In addition there was no elected local government, which was introduced in February 2002 following the election of the commune councils. In the first half of the project implementation period great changes occurred in moving from nationally controlled service delivery to a decentralised system incorporating the elected commune councils, the commune planning process and the Commune/Sangkat Fund (C/S Fund).

8. The logframe was revised following the MTR in 2004 and reflected the development role of the commune councils, financing and implementation and also sought to simplify the project design. More particularly, this meant that from 2005, the Rural Infrastructure sub-component was implemented through Commune Councils by introducing the Rural Infrastructure Investment Fund (RIIF) and a Operation and Maintenance Fund used by the Local Technical Committees (LTC). In the Agriculture Component additional activities were developed in order to target more explicitly the most vulnerable households in the villages and the support of local governance structures became more important.

9. The project was extended by 21 months from 30 September 2008 - 30 June 2010. The purpose of the extension was two-fold. First the extension was to use SDR 868,956 in the Loan Account and Special Account in June 2008, to reactivate the projects activities to focus on the Most Vulnerable Families (MVF) who were adversely affected by the rise in food and other prices in 2008. Secondly, the extension was to allow the completion of the irrigation canal construction work at Steung Phe phase II that had to be rebid in 2007, and to continue the development other project financed irrigation schemes.

10. The Project Completion Report (PCR) is from 2008. However as mentioned above some activities were extended until 2010 and one supervision mission took place in 2009.

C. Main Assessment – Review of Findings by Criterion⁶

Project Performance

C.1 Relevance

11. The Government's highest priority was and still is poverty reduction and progress towards achieving the targets of the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Poverty being largely a rural phenomenon in Cambodia, high rates of growth from the agricultural and rural sector is key to poverty reduction. The project's strategy and investments sought to address the incidence of rural poverty and are assessed as relevant to achieving this goal.

12. The project also aimed at establishing a system for the provision of services through a decentralised government system, which was consistent with the government's poverty reduction strategy as articulated by the National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010. More particularly, the project was the first loan financed multi-sector project where implementation was decentralised to the provincial authorities in support of the government's still evolving approach to decentralised development planning, financing and implementation. In addition, CBRDP design was based on continuing and scaling up activities started by two on-going German assisted projects, one in each province, with different activities and approaches (PDP the Provincial Development Programme in Kampong Thom and IFSP the Integrated Food Security Programme in Kampot).

⁶ For definition of and guidance on the criteria, please refer to the Evaluation Manual: http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/process_methodology/doc/manual.pdf.

13. The project design was complex and perhaps overly ambitious. It had many components and built on two quite different projects. In addition, although the commune council elections were foreseen at appraisal it dramatically changed the delivery and support structure and mechanism at provincial and district level. For example, the provincial departments had initially played a major role in the identification, planning and implementation of project activities in particular the infrastructure activities. The situation changed as the commune councils became more active and took over responsibility for the development of their communes. Given the expected changes mentioned above it can be considered a risky approach for the project to introduce decentralisation at project coordination level in a political context that had not yet clearly defined the appropriate governance system.

14. The PCR argues that the project's support for the development of decentralisation was relevant and timely to the government's policy for administrative reform as well as for poverty reduction. The project contributed to broadening the perception of the concept from a narrowly focused "administrative" process to a genuine development tool that supported the whole project framework. However, there are indications, and this is recognised in the PCR, that the price for achieving this meant that the poverty reduction focus got momentarily lost during project implementation. This was regained with new approaches introduced from MTR onwards such as the identification of poor households, targeting directly most vulnerable families with agricultural and other activities.

15. CBRDP had six outputs which contributed to the project's objective and together had 44 indicators. The PCR notes that the excessive number of indicators contributed to the resultant insufficient data collection and IFAD's Office of Evaluation (IOE) concurs with this assessment.

16. According to the Appraisal report (2001) the target group was 77,400 households living below the poverty line of US\$112 per capita. However, the quantitative Performance Impact Assessment points out that targeting the "poorest of the poor" was done when feasible but not systematically. The reason for this was that some of the project components were not available to, or applicable for, the poorest households. For example the agricultural extension measures could only reach rural poor farmers that owned at least a small amount of land, thereby excluding the poorest of the poor who may be landless. Equally, the irrigation component primarily rehabilitated existing irrigation schemes and thereby provided irrigation water to households that owned land in the irrigation area and that had already been receiving this water from the original scheme. On average households that received this irrigation water generally had more land for their house compound for growing rice and for growing other crops than did the households in the other beneficiary subgroups. In other words, the households receiving this were not rich, but can be described as "less poor".

17. This situation also applied to the training and promotion of improved methods for raising valuable livestock (cows, buffalos) were of much greater interest to the households that had these animals, again the less poor. Therefore, in terms of economic assets owned by the households, many of the direct beneficiaries were not in the poorest households. However, the project also targeted female headed households who tend to have on average less land and lower levels and total value assets. During the second half of the CBRDP the MVF approach was used in project implementation to identify the poor and then enrol them as the project beneficiaries. The PCR reports that the identification and targeting of MVF has had the largest impact on the poor and delivered benefits directly to targeted poor households. This activity was the result of good cooperation between the different components of the project.

18. The picture is therefore mixed and the CBRDP direct beneficiaries have to be seen an amalgam of households whose depth of poverty ranges from the poorest of the poor through the less poor. Overall the targeting is considered to have met its objective in terms of attracting poorer households in the project areas but also those households best able to participate in the various components. With respect to the female-headed households the Project Impact Assessment (PIA) concluded that while households headed by both men and women benefited materially from participation in CBRDP, male-headed households achieved disproportionately larger relative gains in asset holding over the life of the project than did female-headed households.

19. Despite using a risky approach the decision to implement the project through provincial, district

and later commune government structures was appropriate and contributed to strong government ownership of the project. Although not an easy approach, the fact that government staff were implementers meant that capacity was built as much through "learning by doing" as through the training.

20. CBRDPs policy alignment, poverty orientation and attention to gender issues are considered a positive contribution to its relevance despite some weaknesses in the logframe and initial targeting. The relevance rating is therefore 4 (moderately satisfactory)

C.2 Effectiveness

21. The objectives of the CBRDP were (i) increased food production and farm income for 39 150 poor households from intensified and diversified crop and livestock production; (ii) increased capacity of the poor to use the services available from Government and other sources for their social and economic development; and (iii) poorer households, their village organisation and commune councils, jointly with government and non-government service providers, efficiently implement development activities for their economic and social well-being⁷. The logframe attached as an annex to the PCR includes an additional two objectives which are differently formulated (1) or not included (1) in the revised logframe from the MTR. It would seem these objectives derive from the GTZ Rural Development Programme project and that in the effort to report jointly between GTZ and IFAD they were added to the CBRDP logframe⁸.

22. The PCR states that CBRDP achieved seven and partially achieved three out of ten indicators at the objective level. The indicators used to measure the objectives related to: improved food security; increased production/yields; households and commune councils reporting satisfaction with frequency and quality of services from government and non-government organisations; satisfaction at household and village level with commune councils services; maintenance of infrastructure, number of farmers adopting technologies and number of households making use of at least one privately offered services.

23. The PCR reports on the indicators but not on the objectives as such. Although the indicators overall make sense it is not always obvious which indicator relates to which objective. The PCR reports that the project improved household food security, stating that around 100,000 households adopted technologies promoted by the project, many more than the 14,800 target households by 2007. The PCR does not further discuss or substantiate these findings. However, according to the final summary assessment of the CBRDP (2008) the food security situation for all categories of households improved considerably and relatively equally between 2002 and 2007. About 12 per cent more households in all categories shifted from the below-12-months category to the 12-months-and-above category between 2002 and 2007.

24. In terms of the adopted technologies production increase for wet season rice by 42,000 farmers was reportedly 30 per cent, while 50,000 households increased their livestock holdings by at least 50 per cent. According to the PIA over 10 per cent of all surveyed households adopted at least one of the following practices that they learned primarily from CBRDP: i), System of Rice Intensification (SRI); ii), use of improved rice seed; iii), split use of fertilizer for growing rice; iv), making and using compost; v), cattle vaccination; and vi), pig vaccination. This percentage represents approximately 21,900 project area households having adopted at least one of each of these methods. Agricultural techniques and seed of improved rice varieties introduced by the project were according to the PCR much appreciated by the farmers trained by the project and some others who had seen or been

⁷ MTR 2007.

⁸ It is noteworthy that the two objectives in question do not figure in the revised logframe undertaken as part of the MTR. Objectives: a) The rural population in the provinces of Kampot and Kampong Thom are able to effectively better satisfy their basic needs and have more food and income at their disposal; b) measures for social and economic development are implemented effectively and efficiently, according to demand, jointly by the rural population, the Commune Councils (CC) and public and private service providers.

informed about the new technologies. Nevertheless, farmers' access to the agricultural extension service was limited. Improved technologies were adopted by the poor as well as non-poor. Some of the very poor were also reported as benefiting but, because initially there was no specific targeting, the very poor and vulnerable households did not benefit sufficiently from the agricultural component.

25. Regarding the second objective the targets set in the log frame and reported in the PCR have overall been reached. This result is confirmed in the final summary assessment of the CBRDP which highlights that the level of overall satisfaction of Commune Councils (CC) with respect to their cooperation with all relevant institutions lies with an average of 89 per cent in Kampong Thom and 91 per cent in Kampong Speu far above the indicator target. Yet, there is no information available concerning effectiveness, transparency and efficiency.

26. The proportion of households making use of privately-offered services (paid for at least one private supplier (seeds, fruit trees or VAHW) for service and/or goods) were according to the log frame 65 per cent and exceeded the MTR target of 50 per cent.

27. The PCR highlights that the indicator related to infrastructure O&M was only partially achieved. The performance target for wells was met, but not that for the roads or the irrigation schemes. However, the well LTCs were reported as not being fully functional with villagers tending to wait until a need arose to organise any maintenance. The road LTCs were established, with project support, before or some after road construction. Where roads were inter-commune roads there was according to the PCR very limited participation from local people. In addition, the PCR questioned the composition of the committee which consisted of District Governor, the PDRD Chief of District Office, PDRD technical staff and commune councillors. It was highlighted that this was not the community-based approach envisaged by the Appraisal document and that it indicated limited community participation in maintenance.

28. Community participation in day-to-day maintenance of infrastructure was the clear intention, which includes, but is by no means confined to technical matters. Fund management matters were generally dysfunctional, indicating limited capacity to address day-to-day road maintenance issues.

29. In addition to the objectives reported on above the 2009 Supervision Mission Report highlights the project achievements in engaging the vulnerable families in development activities. This was the focus of the extension period but started previous to this. More particularly, the project's other components (especially agriculture) provided special support to the MVF families. The agriculture component provided grants to the MVF groups for productive activities. Each member received a loan, which had to be repaid within 6-12 months with an interest of 1 to 3 per cent per month (depending on the group). The revolving fund was used to provide loans to new members of the MVF Group. Most of the groups are still in the "honeymoon phase". The in-kind grants supported by training (e.g. group management and leadership, book keeping and account keeping as well as monitoring) were perceived as beneficial and having a positive influence on the lives of the very poor. Furthermore, other services providers (health, education, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), relief organisations and private donors) also provided support to the MVFs.

30. According to the PCR of the CBRDP the number of direct beneficiaries (165,000 households) has far exceeded the appraisal target of 39,150. Although there are limitations to solely relying on satisfaction scores and the lack of a baseline poses serious problems in terms of attribution the overall assessment of effectiveness based on the PCR and the PIA is considered moderately satisfactory (4).

C.3 Efficiency

31. The loan to the Government of Cambodia for the execution of the CBRDP became effective three months after board approval. This is faster than IFAD's global average (12.4 months), the average for the Asia and Pacific Division (APD) (9.2 months) and close to the average of IFAD-funded projects in Cambodia (2.5 months) the originally established closing date was extended once to 30 June 2010.

32. The PCR contains a rough analysis (with a lot of assumptions and not all costs calculated) and some approximate estimates of Economic Rate of Return (ERR).

33. These show that the estimated return from investment in wells for drinking water was high (87 per cent). There is potential for irrigation provided it enables the cultivation of dry season crops and the estimated return from the irrigation sub-component is 24 per cent. But to ensure this further investment was needed and such an investment was subsequently made, in the shape of a tender for Phase II of the Steung Phe irrigation scheme. The analysis though does not include all costs which if included would reduce returns and the achievement of predicted returns depending on key follow up activities (improved commitment by the Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology [PDWRAM] to community participation and efficient Water Users Committees [WUCs]).

34. The adoption of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) appeared to be a more worthwhile investment than irrigation in the wet season. The roads sub-component shows an overall economic return of 11 per cent.

35. To ensure good ERR for the project follow up activities were needed in a number of areas.

36. It is not possible to compare all the actual costs and financing with the appraisal estimates. No cost figures are available for the actual AusAID or WFP contributions (post 2004 no food aid was provided thereafter due to the suspension of WFP food-for-work activities due to serious irregularities in their field operations). In the PCR there is no information on the actual Partnership for Local Government (PLG), Project to Support Democratic Development through Decentralisation and Deconcentration (PSDD) or beneficiary contributions, while a total figure is available for the German contribution in kind equivalent to US\$9.5 million (different to figure in PPMS), 120 per cent of the appraisal estimate. The financial statements provided to the PCR mission did not compare the German contribution with the appraisal or annual work plan and budget (AWPB) estimates, as the PSU did not keep up to date records of the German contribution.

37. Nevertheless by 31st March 2008, actual expenditure in US\$ from the IFAD loan and the government's contribution combined were 97 per cent of the appraisal estimate. While investment in infrastructure exceeded the appraisal estimate by over 20 per cent, expenditure on community development and agriculture were 80 per cent and 87 per cent of the appraisal estimates. As of 4 June 2008, 11 per cent remained undisbursed, equivalent to US\$1.4 million and this was subsequently used for further project activities to project completion. This availability of funds in US\$ terms largely reflected the depreciation of the US\$ *vis à vis* the SDR.

38. In terms of the loan extension the 2009 supervision reports states that the Steung Phe Phase II irrigation scheme was completed on time. However with respect to the MVF there were delays in reactivating the loan and availability of grant funds which resulted in Community Based Organisations (CBOs) only being able to receive loan funds by August 2009. Despite the cited good project management the report was not able to provide up to date figures for total expenditure indicating that no improvements in terms of accounting had taken place since 2008.

39. The quality of the analysis provided in the PCR does not provide enough evidence to get a global vision of the project efficiency. However, based on the fragmented information presented above the project is rated 3 moderately unsatisfactory.

Rural Poverty Impact

C.4 Impact

40. The impact on rural poverty was variable. The lack of baseline data and sufficient disaggregated poverty data hampered any analysis of the projects contribution to reducing the incidence of poverty in the two provinces.

Household Income and Net Assets.

41. According to the PIA direct beneficiary households only, almost exactly two-thirds (66 per cent) had an increase in their reported asset holdings over the life of the project. This corresponds to approximately 116,618 households in the project areas. Further, almost half of the direct (49 per cent) and the indirect (45 per cent) beneficiary households increased the total value of their asset holdings by at least 25 per cent. This last result corresponds to approximately 85,261 and 28,957 project area households, respectively.

42. Female-headed households (both direct and indirect beneficiaries) increased their assets considerably less than male headed households (only around half of the increase of the male headed households). Unfortunately no discussion of these results is included in the PCR.

43. There have been substantial increases in the assets of both direct and indirect project beneficiaries and male and female-headed households over the life of CBRDP; however, because of seeming contradictions in the data regarding the magnitude of the relative changes for these subgroups, it is not possible to categorically attribute all of these changes to CBRDP.

44. The PIA has analysed the impact of the project on rice production and has estimated that for Kampong Thom, an estimated 47,449 households have increased their rice production over the CBRDP life and for Kampot, an estimated 60,100 households have increased their rice production over the CBRDP life. However there were a number of caveats in the calculations and some households' production decreased over the period.

45. An estimated 15,532 Kampong Thom households and an estimated 35,749 Kampot households increased their holdings in cattle (cows/buffalo) and/or pigs and/or poultry by at least 50 per cent. These numbers exceed the logframe targets for the Kampong Thom by at least a factor of (almost) 2, and for Kampot by a factor of about 7. A large part of these increases are likely due to CBRDP interventions and services (but the available data is not sufficient to prove this). Note that these results may not be as significant as they sound; households that had one animal and/or bird in 2001 and by 2007 had 2 or more of these same animals and/or birds have met the criteria for a 50 per cent increase.

46. Other project results, which according to the PCR are likely to have had significant impacts and benefits for project area households are the CBRDP support to roads. Approximately 200 km of roads (100 in Kampong Thom and 100 in Kampot) were constructed. The principal benefits of these roads included reduced travel time to common destinations, increased value of land near the roads, and increased commercial activity in the villages with these roads.

47. CBRDP also supported wells which brought significant benefits to those households that got water. The benefits included reducing the time spent collecting water, especially for women and children. The PCR reports that there have been health benefits including for animals too, although these have not been measured.

48. There are significant benefits that accrue to those households that receive water from CBRDP-supported irrigation schemes. The principal and most significant benefits reported by these households include increased crop yield and food for the household and increased household income. But most of these households do not believe that they receive enough water from these schemes to fully meet their water requirements all year.

49. Based on the above mainly qualitative information the probable impact on household income and assets is rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Human and Social Capital and Empowerment

50. The PCR does not contain much information on this aspect of the project. CBRDP has provided capacity building for NGO facilitators and staff from provincial departments with regard to their day-

today community development related tasks, fund raising and management, organisation and moderation of meetings reporting to their members and CC, etc. Special focus has been placed on the understanding and further promoting of the principles of democratic decentralisation and civil society participation through establishing and supporting functioning Village Networks (VNs).

51. Examples of such networks are the Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs) and the Farmer Promoters (FP).

52. The PIA concluded that participation in CBRDP training activities has led to widespread increased household knowledge and adoption of improved agriculture methods by the households. A small percentage (7.5 per cent) of all project area households (16,445) believe that they have increased their crop production and/or their household income.

53. The project also met the target regarding satisfaction with the District Outreach Team (DOT)/Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDA) and VAHWs and the target requiring at least 50 per cent of households reporting satisfaction with the Commune Council's addressing the community's priorities being met. However only 20 per cent of the households thought that the community participation in commune council meetings was satisfactory. Almost all CCs were satisfied with their cooperation with the decentralised administrative institutions far exceeding the target of 60 per cent satisfaction.

54. This impact domain is rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Food Security and Agricultural Productivity

55. Unfortunately, no assessment of malnutrition rates in the specific project areas was made by CBRDP or any other organisations during the CBRDP life cycle.

56. Malnutrition rates among children under the age of five were moderately reduced in Kampong Thom province (stunting: - 10 per cent, underweight - 10 per cent) and considerably in Kampot province (stunting: 30 per cent, underweight - 20 per cent) during 2000 to 2007. However, because of the lack of directly comparable data for CBRDP households; it is impossible to reach any definitive conclusion about the impact of the project on this. However the PIA suggests, but cannot confirm that there have been significant improvements as a result of CBRDP interventions".

57. In addition the PCR states that CBRDP contributed directly to improving food security throughout the project areas for both direct and indirect beneficiary households. It is estimated that, partly as a result of CBRDP interventions, 57 per cent (over 94,000) of the direct beneficiary households and 46 per cent (over 24,000) of the indirect beneficiary households feel that their own household food security has improved since 2001.

58. Farmers are also increasing their yields due to the demonstration and extension activities. In 2003, seed of improved varieties grown under farmers' management outperformed local varieties by 1,265 kg/ha – an increase of 53 per cent.

59. The Supervision Mission Report (October 2009) advised that during field visits they were informed by some MVFs that there had already been some reduction in the duration of food shortage from the adoption of chicken production and introduction/expansion of off-farm income generating activities.

60. The rating for this criteria is moderately satisfactory (4).

Natural Resources and Environment (including climate change issues)

61. CBRDP was not expected to have any irreversible impact on the environment. The project followed national policies whenever required. For example the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), required a ground water survey prior to any construction of water points and

these were undertaken. The PCR notes that there was a noticeable growing awareness on environmental issues during the course of the project's implementation among the project concerned parties and that mainstreaming of environment has taken place. It is not explained how the project contributed to this.

62. A few positive developments are worth mentioning: (i) the establishment of the Organic Rice Producer Association in the target province is cited as a model for other provinces in Cambodia; (ii) the VN and the FPs adopting 'Farmers to Farmers' approach constituted a network which was essential in sharing and propagating issues related to the environment with the communities and the local authorities; (iii) the introduction of technology such as the SRI and the production of organic rice had a considerable impact. Those technologies were widely disseminated and extensively widespread beyond the target areas within each target province. According to the PCR capacity building of sub-national level project staff, beneficiaries and local authorities also enabled and ensured readiness of local capacity to deal with environmental issues. Finally, the use of the decentralised planning process during the project's implementation was an effective lever in further increasing the awareness on environment and demonstrating that environment could be translated into action/activities for other sectors.

63. This impact domain is rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Institutions and Policies

64. The PCR states that progress in developing functional institutions has not been as successful as envisaged. Several reasons for this are mentioned but it is certain that the institutional changes that occurred since appraisal especially the CC election in 2002 lead to delayed decision making and weak management and thus delays in project implementation. Related to this, government staff at provincial and district level had difficulties accepting the role of the commune councils and as a result the reduced role for the village development committees.

65. Technical Assistance (TA) staff also remained at arm's length from the project, regarding outcomes as purely a "Kmer" concern. The achievement of project objectives was not regarded as a joint undertaking. There were also coordination problems among staff from the different government agencies at national and provincial level, and representatives of other development agencies and Ministries did not work as a team to deliver the required project outcomes. The PCR notes that synergies between various policy changes, lessons learnt from other projects and alike were not used to their full potential.

66. Some progress does seem to have been made in addressing the above issues following the MTR and the PCR states elsewhere that a major achievement of the projects improved capacity of MRD/Project Support Unit (PSU) and Executive Committee (of the Provincial Rural Development Committee [PRDC]) and ExComs to manage effectively and coordinate a multi sector and multi-donor project. CBRDP also provided the necessary capacity within the ExComs and the provincial departments to support effectively the local level actors and provide good services to poor farmers.

67. The overall rating for impact is moderately satisfactory (4).

Other Performance Criteria

C.5 Sustainability

68. The PCR praises CBRDP for successfully developing CBOs and highlights the importance of the participation of the civil society in local governance as a core element for decentralisation. It continues by stating that the existence of efficient and effective capacities of local communities and their CBOs is a precondition for sustainable development. Some networks are more likely to be sustainable than others.

69. The VAHW is considered more likely to be sustainable than FPs as they can charge a fee for

vaccinating and treating animals especially cattle and buffaloes, where as farmers are reluctant to pay for advice provided by FPs. The PCR notes that according to the government policy, each village should have at least one VAHW to provide animal health service and to also act as extension agent (farmer promoter).

70. Several interventions require continued support in order to be sustainable. This is the case for the project's agricultural development activities and associated allocation of resources, which will require continued support from the PDA. There is also a continued need for PDA to provide capacity building to farmers, public service providers and commune councils. Funds will also be needed for major repairs of rural access roads financed by the project. Likewise the MVF lists will need to be updated annually if they are to remain a useful tool for targeting benefits of various programmes to the poor.

71. The general satisfaction with the commune councils is an indicator that the planning process corresponded to local needs and this should in principle result in strong ownership amongst the villagers, however, some important indicators do not score as well. For example, only 20 per cent of the households thought that peoples' involvement in commune council meetings were satisfactory. In addition, the technical and institutional capacity of project implementers at provincial, district and commune level is generally lower than public service staff in Phnom Penh and 50 per cent of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) staff are estimated as being located in the capital. Clearly, this has implications for the quality of the services being delivered.

72. CBRDP has been implemented entirely by government authorities, which should contribute to creating ownership within the government because of the project's alignment with the government's decentralisation and poverty reduction objectives. This, however, has not been straightforward for the reasons mentioned under *institutions and policies*. Although commune councils were reported as actively preparing commune development plans and managing the Commune/Sangkat Fund (C/S Fund) in a generally prudent fashion and provincial management was delivering services with increasing confidence several challenges were identified that will be relevant in the future as well. Some exit strategies have been prepared but are not reported on in the PCR. However even with the goodwill of the government the budget is likely to be much reduced without the project and capacity will need to be consolidated further before it will be fully sustainable.

73. Based on the above insights sustainability is rated as moderately unsatisfactory (3).

C.6 Pro-Poor Innovation, Replication and Scaling-up

74. According to IFAD's innovation Policy, there are three forms of innovation: (i) adoption in a new context or on a new scale of practices or technologies developed by others or in other contexts; (ii) adaptation/redesign of existing practices or technologies; and (iii) the creation of new practices or ideas. A recent evaluation of IFAD's innovation capacity found that 97 per cent of completed projects fell into the first category, about half had some adaptation or redesign to meet the requirements of the target group in a new context, but the creation of entirely new innovations is rare (IFAD 2010).

75. The basic project structure, in terms of objectives and components, is fairly typical of rural development projects in remote areas. However, there were several innovative features in the design, which are listed below. Most of these features refer to institutional processes rather than the development of new technologies. The key innovations are listed below:

- An increased targeting of the poor through the project's focus on MVFs; others are now using the lists of MVFs prepared with the project assistance to target their activities to the poor and the Ministry of Planning is further adapting and promoting the up-scaling and replication of this approach to targeting. IFAD provided a grant of US\$115,000 to support the implementation of this innovative approach;
- The use of Beneficiary Impact Assessments as a management tool to assess service provision; The PCR states that the project devised a successful cost effective approach to

using this management tool that was more effective than more traditional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches;

- Establishment of VNs to develop participatory local governance in rural areas;
- Establishment of associations of VAHWs to support and provide services to the membership; these associations are a useful approach to help sustain the VAHWs as private sector service providers working on a fee for service basis;
- Production of organic rice and marketing through Organic Rice Associations;
- Provision of specific funds to the commune councils on the importance of road maintenance and the need in future after the conclusion of RIIF to allocate funds in the Commune Investment Plan for road maintenance; and
- The start of a village level extension system through support for FPs.

76. At the time of its design, CBRDP was considered to be an innovative project because of the novel processes used for project implementation. The project was ambitious as it introduced decentralised provincial and district level delivery of services intended to reduce rural poverty, with investments in several sectors in two provinces. However, based on the PCR and other project documentation it is difficult to assess to what degree the project innovations have been replicated or scaled up. The PCR does not provide any further details on this. One must therefore conclude that apart from the innovation on targeting none of the above have been scaled up or replicated at the time of the PCR. The rating for innovation and scaling up is therefore moderately satisfactory (4).

C.7 Gender equality and women's empowerment

77. The project supported the government gender strategy and mainstreaming. In addition to the general awareness raising and training on the role of women in local governance, an emphasis was given to developing decision making, public speaking and facilitation skills among women. With the establishment of the commune councils, the need for training for an active involvement in commune affairs was recognised and supported, including the nomination of gender focal points in the commune councils. However, the PCR states that the proposed participation of staff from the Provincial Department of Women's Affairs (PDWA) in multi-agency Community Development (CD) teams never happened.

78. Female participation in CBOs was according to the PCR remarkably high (generally more women than men) but the PCR did not provide any explanation or analysis of this.

79. The PCR does not include any comprehensive analysis of gender issues. Instead the main information is to be found in the log frame where the project has reported on each indicator. From this it would seem that in quantitative terms the project has only partially achieved its main gender goals. More than 50 per cent of women participated in local planning but less than 50 per cent participated in the follow up process (decision making and project management). 250 gender focal points in CCs and line departments successfully increased their capacities to perform their task but no evaluation of capacity building exercises was done. Gender training for other focal points, NGOs, and individuals was conducted according to training plans and AWBP. Other indicators state that food security between 2001 and 2007 went up for all households from 57 per cent to 69 per cent and for female-headed households from 52 per cent to 64 per cent. On the agricultural side female headed households constituted on average 22 per cent amongst adopters of technologies.

80. According to the Supervision report (2009) Gender sensitivity improved in the provinces at all levels. This was reflected in women's increased active participation in grass root level groups, training, agricultural activities and village and CC administrations. Domestic violence decreased.

81. In light of the above the rating given is moderately satisfactory (4).

C.7 Performance of Partners

IFAD's Performance

82. IFAD was closely involved in the design of CBRDP. Substantial resources were invested in the formulation and appraisal processes. IFAD's internal review processes were thorough and the comments drew on lessons learned from other similar projects. IFAD also encouraged collaboration with other donors in the appraisal process. The MTR was conducted at the appropriate time and helped resolve many implementation issues. According to the PCR, follow up missions were referred to as supportive and conducive for the smooth implementation of the project. In addition to the loan, IFAD provided the following services:

- Recruitment of consultants to work on subjects such as gender mainstreaming, Decentralisation and Deconcentration (D&D) in Agriculture and rural Development;
- Project impact analysis training;
- Invitation of project staff to various workshops: Portfolio reviews and thematic subjects: PIA, M&E, planning, local knowledge, credit, Results Impact and Management System (RIMS); and
- Technical Assistance: The International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) missions to Cambodia.

83. In line with the completion report, IFAD's performance is rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Government's Performance

84. According to the PCR initial implementation was problematic and prior to the MTR performance of the implementing agencies and the PSU was inadequate. However, there were substantial improvements following the MTR both at provincial and national levels, although M&E remained problematic throughout, not helped by the lack of a baseline survey. The PCR states that acceptance and greater familiarity with D&D and the role of the ExComs contributed to this situation. However, Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology (MOWRAM) and the two PDWRM.

85. PDWRAMs continued to operate in a top down way with a lack of commitment and support for WUCs. With the exception of MOWRAM and the two PDWRAMs. Issues were also raised regarding the low government salaries and project allowances which were a disincentive for good performance.

86. The Government had to "learn by doing" in implementing this project. Coordination and participation etc. were all concepts that a relatively inexperienced project staff at both provincial and national level had to get familiarised with. There are indications that Cambodia has ownership of the project. This has been helped by the project's alignment with government goals and policies and the government's active involvement as an implementer, co-financier and supervisor. The project was one of the first in Cambodia to be implemented through government structures.

87. Based on the above the rating is moderately satisfactory (4).

Cooperating Institution

UNOPS

88. UNOPS performance up until the MTR had serious shortcomings. The first supervision mission took place twenty months after project effectiveness in November 2002. Given that this was the first provincial based, multi-agency, multi sector project in the country such a delay in mounting the first supervision mission had a negative impact which extended teething problems to a period of three years and these could have been dealt with in the first 6-12 months. The MTR also noted the lack of continuity in the supervision with frequently changing portfolio managers being an issue. After the MTR the performance was much improved. The composition of the missions was balanced and the

review of the project objectives was thorough. The missions provided concrete and practical recommendations. Given that important improvements in the performance took place after the MTR the rating for UNOPS performance is considered satisfactory (4)

Other Partners⁹

GTZ/DED

89. According to the PCR GTZ/German Development Service (DED) broadly met, or in some instances exceeded, its commitment to the project. From 2001 to 2007 a total of 515 person months of international TA and a total of 2 118 person months of national TA were provided at provincial level. In addition, 92 person months of international TA and 63 person months of national TA were provided at national level. In the early years there were some differences in the understanding between the various agencies involved in financing and implementing the project. However, following the MTR a common understanding of the objectives to be achieved and the implementation process to be followed was established. According to the PCR the project is an example of a successful integration between investment (IFAD) and technical cooperation (GTZ/DED). This is due to the following: use of a joint logical framework; use of one process for yearly planning and one planning document for implementation; use of one M&E system and using the same formats; conducting joint MTR and supervision missions; piloting new approaches through technical assistance and subsequent implementation of successful activities using IFAD loan funds, while maintaining the technical backstopping in this process; and national technical assistance staff working closely with staff in the provincial departments at provincial level.

WFP

90. Prior to the MTR, WFP was reported to have generally kept to its commitment and had in fact provided greater quantities of food aid than agreed, although there were some delays. In Kampong Thom, some villagers waited over a year after carrying out the work for 'food wages'. Clearly, where food insecurity is an important factor food wages must be delivered on time. No food aid was provided after 2004 due to the suspension of WFP food for work activities due to serious irregularities in their field operations.

AusAID

91. According to the PCR differing perceptions of the nature and intensity of the inputs to be provided by the Cambodia-Australia Agricultural Extension Project (CAAEP) reflect the difference between how CAAEP II operates now compared with CAAEP I, which was operating at the time the project was designed. CAAEP II has had a part time adviser in each of the project provinces, who has assisted the project's extension activities by supporting the provincial and district extension offices in the use of the extension guidelines e.g. training, staff appraisals, and in Kampong Thom office renovations and some equipment. CAAEP I advisers had a field level role in support of demonstrations of extension packages. CAAEP II subsequently centralised their extension advisers in Phnom Penh.

Performance of the Agricultural Productivity Improvement Project (APIP)

92. In the Project Loan Agreement (Schedule 3.A. para. 15) the government agreed that APIP would post two long term volunteers, one rural engineer and one community development specialist, to Kampong Thom in the second half of 2001 for three years to provide technical assistance to the PDWRAM in implementing the project's irrigation development and finance equipment and operational costs for staff. APIP supplied these volunteers late and their terms of reference stated that they were to assist with the small scale IFAD funded irrigation schemes. However, PDWRAM never used the volunteers for the IFAD funded irrigation schemes, claiming that the IFAD schemes were medium scale schemes. The refusal to use the services of the United Nations volunteers as intended was in contravention of the Loan Agreement.

⁹ Co-financers are not rated as part of the PCR V.

C.8 Overall Assessment of Project Performance

93. The PCR does not include an overall assessment of project performance. Based on the findings of the PCR and other project-related documents examined, an overall positive global appreciation emerges. However, the extent to which the project contributed to reducing poverty remains unclear. In addition, from the PCR and other relevant project documentation it would seem that the decentralisation aspect took over the project at the cost of the poverty focus but at the end of the project picked up on it again through the increased focus on Most Vulnerable Families (MVF). Although the MVF concept is praised in the PCR as a targeting mechanism the sustainability of the grants provided to the MVF groups is uncertain. The same applies to the WUCs looking after the irrigation schemes and several of the other community based organisations established as part of the project. It is also worth noting that the extension of the project improved the overall performance of the project considerably. The overall rating for the project is therefore moderately satisfactory (4).

D. Assessment of the PCR Quality

Scope

94. The PCR is in large part based on PIA and findings are therefore generally substantiated in the report. However the PCR was completed before all the project activities that carried on for a further two years and this has had an impact on the report's usefulness. There are also examples of issues that could have benefitted from more analysis and discussion (e.g. food security, increase in assets between male and female beneficiaries). Also, a consolidated analysis of whether the objectives and goal had been achieved would have been beneficial, especially considering that the project has in the last years generated a number of important documents that could have fed as input into such a discussion. The lack of a baseline survey has seriously impeded the work of the PCR. The general picture is however, that despite these shortcomings the report does overall present what would seem to be a fair picture of the project. Scope is thus rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Quality (methods, data, participatory process)

95. Data contained in the PCR is for most parts based on the surveys undertaken in PIA which was done thoroughly but again impeded by the lack of baseline data. In addition, for the capacity building activities only few training assessments were carried out. The process of undertaking the PCR was done in a participatory manner. For example, the project organised stakeholder workshops in each province to review the project's achievements and performance, lessons learned and exit strategy. The quality is rated as moderately satisfactory (4).

Lessons

96. The PCR went to great length to identify lessons and have identified lessons learned within 8 domains, namely management and coordination, agriculture (SRI), Farmer Promoters, Village Animal Health Workers, community development and M&E. The lessons are relevant and are thus rated as (5) satisfactory.

Candour

97. Candour is rated as moderately satisfactory (4) as the report highlight problem areas.

E. Final Remarks

E.1 Lessons Learned

98. The PCR have identified a number of important lessons learned and IOE concurs with them.

E.2 Issues for IOE follow-up (if any)

99. A project performance assessment (PPA) of CBRDP is envisaged.

G. Rating Comparisons

Project Ratings			
Criterion	PMD Rating¹⁰	IOE Rating	Net Rating Disconnect (IOE PCR V - PMD)
Relevance	4	4	0
Effectiveness	3	4	+1
Efficiency	4	3	-1
Project Performance¹¹		3.6	N.A.
Rural Poverty Impact			
(a) House Hold Income and Net Assets	3	4	+1
(b) Human and Social Capital Empowerment	4	4	0
(c) Food Security and Agricultural Productivity	4	4	0
(d) Natural Resources and Environment	4	4	0
(e) Institutions and Policies	4	4	0
Overall Rural Poverty Impact¹²		4	N.A.
Sustainability	3	3	0
Pro-poor Innovation, Replication and Scaling Up	5	4	-1
Gender equality and women's empowerment	4	4	0
Overall Assessment¹³		4	N.A.
Performance of Partners			
(a) IFAD	4	4	0
(b) Government	4	4	0
(c) Cooperating Institution	3	4	+1
AVERAGE Net disconnect			0.07

¹⁰ Rating scale: 1 = highly unsatisfactory; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = moderately unsatisfactory; 4 = moderately satisfactory; 5 = satisfactory; 6 = highly satisfactory; n.p. = not provided; n.a. = not applicable.

¹¹ Arithmetic average of ratings for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

¹² This is not an average of ratings of individual impact domains.

¹³ This is an average of ratings of individual evaluation criteria. Also, performance of partners is not a component of overall project performance ratings.

Ratings of the PCR document quality	PMD Rating	IOE PCR V Rating	
(a) Scope	4	4	0
(b) Quality (methods, data, participatory process)	3	4	+1
(c) Lessons	3	5	+2
(d) Candour	3	4	+1
Overall rating PCR document	N.A.	4	N.A.

H. List of Sources Used for PCR Validation

IFAD, Report and Recommendation of the President – Community Based Rural Development Project in Kampong Thom and Kampot.

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Bauer Eberhard, Results of RDP/CB-RDP, Summary Assessment 2002 to 2007, Final Report, 2008.