

## Cambodia: Community Based Rural Development project in Kampong Thom and Kampot

Item	Assessment Remarks	Rating
Country & Project Name	Cambodia: Community Based Rural Development project in Kampong Thom and Kampot	
Loan No.	511-KH	
Project Id	1175	
Board Date	7 Dec 2000	
Effectiveness Date	29 March 2001	
Original Closing Date	30 September 2008	
Final Closing Date	30 June 2010	
Total Project Cost USD(M)	USD 22.35 million	
IFAD loan USD (M)	USD 9.94 million	
Cofinanciers (if any)	USD 1.8 million from GoC; USD 1.3 million from beneficiaries; USD 0,55 from AusAID (Australian aid agency); USD 1.30 from WFP (World Food Programme); USD 7.88 from Germany	
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) as the Lead Project Agency; Executive Committee; PDRD; PDAFF; PDWRAM; Woman Affair; PDLMUPC	
Principal Components	The project goal is to reduce rural poverty in the targeted rural householders (hhs) in the project area. Its objectives are: i) sustain increased food production and farm incomes from intensified and diversified crop and livestock production; ii) enabling the poor to increasingly make use of the services available from government and other sources from their own social and economic development. Project's main components are: Community development; Agricultural Development; Rural Infrastructure Development; Women's and Veterans Affairs; Support to Institutional Development.	
<b>Project Performance</b>		
Relevance	CBRDP is a multisectoral project with a relative complex and ambitious project design. The project was the first loan-multisector project intended to reduce rural poverty with investments in several sectors in two provinces. CBRDP was based on continuing and scaling up activities already started by two ongoing German assisted projects in the two provinces, with different activities and approaches. The project's design was relevant to the target group, as well as it was appropriate in supporting gender mainstreaming, assisting poor hhs to adopt improved agricultural technology, and providing rural infrastructure which figured prominently in the priorities expressed during Participatory rural appraisals (PRAs). The project was based on effective government ownership, and it was highly supportive of the Government's broader development objectives. Its implementation was decentralised to the provincial authorities in support of the still evolving approach to the Government's Decentralization and Deconcentration (D&D) policy. However, at project start up in 2001, the Government decentralised provincial structure was not yet operational. In addition, there was no elected local government, which was introduced in 2002, following the election of the commune councils. At the mid-term review (MTR) in 2004, some changes to the design were requested in order to reflect the new development role of the commune councils (CC), to take account of further changes to the arrangements for decentralised development planning, financing and implementation and to simplify the project design. Another issue that could be questioned is the wisdom of implementing project activities in two provinces that are far apart, as it complicated project management. Finally, there appears to have been a lack of clarity over the roles, processes and procedures among those responsible for project implementation, in part reflecting the institutional changes that have occurred since the appraisal.	4
Effectiveness	The PCR does not provide a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of its intervention. The project's objective of <i>assisting 39150 poor hhs in the project area to sustain increased food production and farm incomes from intensified and diversified crop and livestock production</i> has not been successfully achieved. As highlighted in the MTR, the focus of its activities until MTR 2004 was on infrastructure investment and commune development plans, with few initiatives in support of agriculture, which had the potential to reduce poverty and improve households' food security and incomes. This issue is mentioned also in the PCR, thus confirming the MTR findings. No further information is provided to the project's effectiveness concerning period 2004-2008. In the loan extension period, the project made some efforts in starting some income generating activities for the Most Vulnerable Families (MVF). However, this happened too late in project's life. Finally, little progress has been made in achieving the second project's objectives, namely of <i>enabling the poor to increasingly make use of the services available from government and other sources from their own social and economic development</i> .	3

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Efficiency	The PCR did not deal with efficiency as well as it provides little useful information to assess it. The PCR also mentions that as of August 2009, the IFAD loan disbursement was 97% of the total loan. There is an attempt to overcome this missing issue in the annex dedicated to Financial and Economic Analysis. Within this regard, a simple economic analysis of project's irrigation, water supply and road components has been made. However, this does not provide a comprehensive picture of the project overall efficiency. Finally, project efficiency was hindered by the delays in reactivating the IFAD's loan and in the availability of the grant funds which took eight months. Overall, it seems that project's efficiency has been moderately satisfactory, but not very high. (Additional comment: Efficiency of roads, infrastructure component have been cited, only 40% of roads are found to be functioning regularly, but overall achievement of outputs has been high)	4
Project performance		4
<b>Partner Performance</b>		
IFAD	The PCR does not say much about this domain. IFAD is deemed accountable for some major design weaknesses that have affected project's implementation. However, at the 2004 MTR IFAD correctly pointed out the crucial issues to be dealt with and has taken the responsibility to make the requested changes to the project's development strategy and approach. The follow-up missions undertaken by the CPM proved to be supportive for a smooth implementation of the project.	4
Cooperating Institution	As the project's Cooperating Institution, UNOPS (UN Office for Project Services) did not perform its role satisfactorily, as highlighted in the 2004 MTR. Overall, it conducted 5 supervision missions, of which the first one took place twenty months after project effectiveness! The second supervision mission took place ten months after the first. As CBRDP was the first provincial-based, multi-agency, multi sector project in the country such delay has been deemed a very serious issue. Partly as a result of this delay, resolution of some of the start-up problems has taken up to three years (up to MTR in 2004). In addition, important decisions were made by the project in consultation with UNOPS, some of which UNOPS should have questioned. In addition, there has been a lack of continuity in supervision, as since project start-up, three different portfolio managers have been responsible for the project. This severely affected the effectiveness of project's supervision.	3
Government	At Government level, there has been a big effort to manage a project that was entailing a dramatic change from the traditional top down approach to a more new bottom up approach. This implied a coordination culture among the various project parties that was laborious to start, also as most of the recruited staff had limited experience of project management. The national project parties have been supportive and have shown great cooperation. Gov't contribution to the project is significant. Availability of the Gov't contribution funds has not been an issue. However, the Gov't is deemed accountable for the long time taken for MEF to request IFAD to reactivate part of CBRDP. With regard to loan covenants, there are some areas of non-compliance or partial compliance, such as: failures to commit resources officially after the Project Implementation Period; the failure to involve the Agricultural Productivity Improvement Project volunteers with the project financed irrigation schemes; collection of information on and ad hoc basis for M&E.	4
NGO/Other	Little information is provided in the PCR on NGO performance. It seems that the NGO SBK assisted the project well in strengthening the FWUC as well as in introducing water user fees.	4
Cofinancier(s)	The German Government collaborated with IFAD and the Gov't for the seven full years of the project. AusAID and the WFP also provided technical and food aid assistance respectively, prior to the MTR. The German Government has broadly met, or in some instances exceeded, its commitment to the project through GTZ and DED. However, some TA staff found quite challenging the change from the earlier, bilateral funded activities to the decentralised delivery of services by Gov't line agencies using funds channelled through the Gov't system. The Performance of the German Government is deemed satisfactory. WFP has generally kept to its commitment and has in fact provided greater quantity of food aid than agreed, although there have been some delays. In Kampot, some villagers are still waiting for "food wages" over a year after performing the work. (Clearly, where food insecurity is an important factor food wages must be delivered on time). AusAID had a satisfactory performance.	5
<i>Combined Partner Performance</i>	<i>The PCR depicts the project as an example of fruitful collaboration between different external development agencies and the government. No further details are provided.</i>	
<b>Rural Poverty Impact</b>		
Household Income and Net Assets	The PCR does not provide much information on the project's impact within this domain. It mentions that thanks to the road construction process, there was an increase in the value of land near these roads. The income generating activities were also an attempt to provide the MVFs with a way to increase their income. However, as these activities	3

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	started late in the project's life, it has not been possible to make an attempt evaluate their impact. Overall, the general perception is that the beneficiaries did not get higher incomes as a result of project's activities.	
Natural Resources and Environment	Project's impact within this domain has been poorly addressed in the report. In the correspondent annex of the PCR, few positive issues have been mentioned to back up project support to environment. No negative impact has been noticed.	4
Human, Social Capital and Empowerment	In terms of human capital, project's beneficiaries were provided with several infrastructures that positively affected their livelihoods. In fact, thanks to the infrastructure development of roads, wells, hand pump wells, target group was able to save time in fetching water and have a clearer and reliable drinking water for household purposes and for their animals, and better health due to improved quality of the water. With regard to social capital, the project has been successful in strengthening the community-based organisations (CBOs). The existing or self-established CBOs such as Rice Banks, cash associations, mutual self-associations, saving groups, benefitted from capacity building measures provided by the project. However, these CBOs were found to be functioning in some but not all villages.	4
Ag. Productivity	The project implemented several measures in order to raise agricultural productivity, such as farmer training and demonstration programme, improvements in water control and irrigation, introduction of improved agricultural technologies. The Farmer Promoters (FPs) and Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs) played an important role in disseminating services at the village level. In addition, the PCR reports that wet season rice yields increased by 30% following the adoption of System of Rice Intensification (SRI). However, it seems that better results would have been achieved if the project had pushed more attention and resources on the agricultural sector component from the beginning.	4
Food Security	Overall, CBRDP has contributed to improving food security throughout the project areas for both direct and indirect beneficiary households (hhs). The PCR reports that, partly as a result of CBRDP interventions, 57% of the direct beneficiary hhs and 46% of the indirect beneficiary hhs feel that their own food security has improved since 2001. Malnutrition rates have been reduced moderately in Kampong Thom (stunting: -10%, underweight: -10%) and considerably in Kampot province (stunting: -30% and underweight: -20%).	4
Agricultural Productivity and Food Security		4
Inst. & Policies	Within this domain, although there has been significant progress in developing functional institutions, systems and procedures to implement project investments, project's impact has been lower than desirable. On one hand, CDRDP has strongly contributed to implement the Deconcentration and Decentralization process and to broaden it. CBRDP also provided the necessary capacity within Excom and provincial line departments to effectively support the local level actors and provide genuine services to the poor. It has also contributed, mainly after the MTR, to put the commune councils at the centre of the project, together with the commune planning process. However, in doing so it has perhaps lost some of its focus on poverty reduction. In addition, it seems that the role of the commune councils was not commonly accepted and, as result, the reduced role for the village development committees.	4
Markets	The rural access roads improvement had brought significant benefits to project beneficiaries, such as: reduction in transport cost and time, better price for their products, increased commercial activity in the villages connected by these roads.	5
<i>Project Impact</i>	<i>(Additional comment: impact seems high if one considers the table in PCR on impact; based on the impact assessment)</i>	4
<b>Other Performance Criteria</b>		
Innovation	CBRDP was innovative as it was the first loan-multisector project, with several components and several financial agencies involved, with the aim of reducing rural poverty with investments in several sectors in two provinces. Its implementation was decentralised to the provincial authorities in support of the still evolving approach to the Government (D&D) policy. More specifically, it entailed a number of innovations, among which the Most Vulnerable Families (MVF) approaches. In terms of project management, another innovative feature has been the development of the Project Support Unit (PSU) to the point where it has the capacity to effectively coordinate and manage the implementation of the project. During the short period of the loan extension and grant phase of the project, there have been some innovations, such as the provision of services to the MVFs by the Village and Animal Health Worker (VAHW) Associations as well as by the Farmer Promoters (FP). These associations have been recognized by the subnational authorities as private sector service providers.	5

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Replicability and Scaling-up	The PSU will be retained to implement the next IFAD funded project. This retention and further utilization of the management and coordination skills developed in one project to be used in future projects is quite unique.	5
<i>Innovation, Replicability and Scaling-up</i>	<i>The CBRD approach to poverty alleviation with a multi-sector development program and decentralization has already become the model for subsequent IFAD projects in Cambodia.</i>	5
Sustainability and Ownership	The PCR does not appropriately cover this section, as the key issues pertaining to sustainability have not been dealt with. By reading the PCR, it seems that the sustainability of project's main achievements (mainly related to the infrastructure sector) is hindered by an insufficient emphasis on the operation and maintenance (O&M). There is a limited community participation in maintenance of roads; as far as the rural water supply, the Local Technical Committees (LTCs) are not fully functional with villagers tending to wait until a need arises to organize any maintenance. The long term sustainability of the Most Vulnerable Families (MVs) is also at risk, as the period of project assistance to the MVs has been too short to enable them to become sustainable organisations. The local authorities, particularly the Commune Councils, expressed their commitment in maintaining the MVs. However, in order to become sustainable, the MVs would need further support in terms of training, supervision, monitoring, and auditing. The sustainability of the project financed irrigation schemes (included the support of the Farmer Users Water Community) is equally doubtful, due to major maintenance and management issues. Finally, no exit strategy has been in place for supporting the MVs or the FWUCs after the end of the project.	3
Targeting	The initial targeting mechanism used by the project has been appropriate to the country context, for several reasons. First, the targeting of project activities started in the districts already supported by the GTZ with especially high levels of poverty. Second, the project targeted two provinces, which rank second and fourth in terms of vulnerability to food insecurity. In addition, the target beneficiaries were identified as living below the poverty line of USD 112 per capita per year. At the 2004 MTR, it was found out that the project was benefitting also the non-poor people, while the very poor and vulnerable hhs were not benefitting sufficiently. In order to strengthen project's poverty targeting, the project focused the Most Vulnerable Families (MVF), which were provided special support by being engaged in some income generating activities. These families were not the usual beneficiaries of IFAD supported projects, as many of them were landless, illiterate and facing serious food shortages.	4
Gender	The project has addressed women as an important part of the target group, due to their role in crop and livestock production as well as in the communities' activities. The project contributed to increase gender awareness within all its line departments and communities so that women were enabled to play a more active role in local governance. However, less of than the planned target of 50% of women participate in project management and decision making was achieved. In addition, women representatives in the Water User Committees are far below the planned target.	4
<b>Overall Performance</b>		<b>4</b>
Estimated number of beneficiaries		
<b>PCR Quality</b>		
Scope	The PCR is partly in line with guidelines. The stakeholders' workshop findings are missing.	4
Quality	The PCR quality is low, as quantitative and qualitative information is missing. In addition, the context of the sections is not coherent with what they should deal with. There are also some contradictions in presenting the results. In addition, the information provided, as from a quantitative as well qualitative point of view, is scarce. Finally, some sections of the report have just been taken out from the 2004 MTR.	3
Lessons	The Lessons learned are presented as some sketched points and do not constitute a coherent and comprehensive reflection on project's main strengths and weaknesses.	3
Candour	The PCR does not seem to be very reliable, as there are several contradictions and several of the critical issues that have been highlighted in the MTR have not been mentioned at all in the PCR (e.g.: Performance of UNOPS). Moreover, the crucial weaknesses have not been pointed out and dealt with.	3