



CARERE Area Development Programme

CAMBODIA

Background paper prepared for the UNDP/IRC Project: "Promising Water Resources Management Approaches in the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Sector", The Netherlands and Cambodia, 1996 and 1997.

Programme Title: CARERE/WATSAN
(CARERE*-Supported Drinking Water and Sanitation).

Initiator: UNDP
(United Nations Development Programme).

Implementor: UNOPS
(United Nations Office for Project Services).

Principal, current sources of funds:

- The Government of the Netherlands.
- The Government of Sweden.
- The Government of Norway.
- The European Union.
- La Caisse Francaise de Developpement.
- UNCDF (UN Capital Development Fund).
- UNDP.

(* CARERE: Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration)

Summary

The CARERE/WATSAN Project was initiated in 1992 as one of several CARERE-assisted projects aimed at providing basic services to returnees from the Thai/Cambodian border camps. Activities at the time were designed in such a way that they could be quickly implemented to meet an immediate need.

After the formation of the new government in 1993 CARERE's priorities gradually began to shift away from emergency relief to longer term, development related activities. There were fewer directly implemented projects, and more activities planned and implemented through the government.

In 1996 a second CARERE project, with a duration of four years and a proposed budget of approximately US \$ 40 million, in five provinces, was approved. The mandate of the new CARERE2 is to build the capacity of government institutions to decentralize their activities, in support of bottom-up planning that begins at the village level.

In this spirit, CARERE assistance to the WATSAN Sector stresses the need to develop the government's capacity to assist villages in identifying and solving their own WATSAN-related problems. As much as US \$ 1.5 million of CARERE funds could be made available to the sector during each of the project's four years, provided that well planned projects are produced and that the sector has the capacity to absorb the available funds.

Setting

Cambodia is classified by the UN as a least developed country, and the five CARERE-assisted provinces are among the poorest of the country's 23 provinces. As is the case for all CARERE support, the CARERE-assisted WATSAN Programme concentrates on rural areas of the four provinces of Bantey Meanchey, Battambang, Pursat, and Siem Reap in the Northwest, and Ratanakiri in the Northeast. Some support is also given to national-level activities.

The rural inhabitants of the Northwest are predominantly ethnic Khmer who observe the Buddhist religion, and who make a living from farming. Although there are mountainous areas, these are largely forested, prone to security problems that stem from the activities of the Khmer Rouge rebels, and are generally uninhabited. The majority of the population live in plains-like areas, and in the area which surrounds the *Tonle Sap*, a large inland lake.

The rural inhabitants of Ratanakiri Province are from a number of ethnic minorities, each of which tends to have its own language and religious persuasion, frequently animist, and sometimes Buddhist. Many of the minority groups in the area are nomadic and live off hunting and slash-and-burn agriculture.

For Cambodians in general, the village is the most complex social unit in which they participate. It is seen as a fluid aggregate of families whose interaction changes to suit the occasion but whose affairs are variously overseen by village elders, temple laymen, monks and, of late, designated village heads.

In the Northwest poverty can largely be associated with the intense security problems the area has experienced over the past 25 years, while Ratanakiri suffers from its geographical isolation from the rest of the country. Those who survived the horrors of the Khmer Rouge rule from 1975 to 1979 had all along to deal with the death and injury of family and friends, and the loss of their property and capital on a scale that is difficult to imagine. One of the consequences was the country's loss of a large proportion of the skilled workforce which would later have been required to rebuild it.

Hostilities of a military nature between the Khmer Rouge and the Viet Nam-supported Cambodian army resulted in large numbers of inhabitants fleeing to Thailand in 1979 and in lesser numbers during subsequent years. The refugees settled temporarily in camps along the Thai/Cambodian border. Meanwhile, within Cambodia, over the 1979 to 1989 period when there continued to be a strong Vietnamese presence, development aid was largely limited to sources in the former East Block countries, India, and a number of INGO's. Whatever little assistance did enter the country was channelled through the central government, and was in general directed at emergency needs. Contact with rural communities was very limited because of exhaustive travel restrictions.

As a result of the Paris Peace Accords of 1992, approximately 360,000 refugees were officially repatriated in an operation carried out by UNHCR. In addition, there was an undetermined number of refugees who returned "spontaneously" and outside the UNHCR umbrella. Approximately a third of the returnees settled in Battambang Province, with a slightly smaller number choosing Bantey Meanchey Province. The provinces of Pursat and Siem Reap also received a large proportion of the returnees, with the remainder distributed throughout the rest of the country.

In the North-western Provinces the returnees increased the total population by as much as 25%, putting a strain on an infrastructure system already made frail by decades of turmoil and war. Poor security due to the presence of landmines and other factors, lack of means to increase agricultural production, lack of a system of primary roads in rural areas to increase access to markets, and health problems associated with an inadequate water supply, all were constraints to the successful resettling of returnees

Background

To help address the problem, UNDP initiated CARERE1 in mid-1992 to provide basic, quick impact services, such as improved drinking water, rural roads, schools, clinics, small-scale agriculture, demining and rural credit. Altogether, CARERE1 delivered projects worth U.S. \$ 13.5 million, and technical assistance worth U.S. \$ 12.0 million, or a total of U.S. \$ 25.5 million. UNDP, and UNHCR through its QIP's (Quick Impact Projects) budget, were the main funding agencies for CARERE1. Approximately 20% of this amount was allocated to WATSAN projects.

Today the emergency resettlement work has largely been completed, and development priorities have evolved. The UN-sponsored elections held in 1993 ushered in the first democratically

elected and internationally recognized government in over 20 years. One of the results is that longer-term planning and development are increasingly becoming possible.

To assist the new government in this task CAREERE shifted from emergency-type projects and direct implementation, to activities that build the capacity of government and community groups to manage and implement development plans and projects. Decentralization and participation are prominent features of the government's strategy, which includes the establishing of a network of development committees at the village, commune, district and province levels. It is expected that this new structure will facilitate a bottom-up planning process that begins with villagers identifying the problems and constraints they themselves face, proposing solutions, and obtaining the resources required to solve the problems they have identified. Local level plans are to be progressively consolidated upwards into provincial and national level development plans.

Over the 1996 to 1999 four year period, CAREERE2 will continue building on the foundations laid by CAREERE1 in assisting the government with its bottom-up planning process, and with the implementation of the mandates developed at the World Summit for Social Development. It was anticipated at the planning stage that CAREERE2 would require a budget of some US \$ 40 million, approximately half of which would be allocated to projects, while the other half would cover administrative costs and technical assistance. The current indicative planning figure for projects for 1997 is US \$ 7.5 million of which approximately US \$ 1.5 million will be allocated to WATSAN.

Objectives

The evolution that has taken place within CAREERE since it was established in 1992 has simultaneously led to a change in its objectives.

The CAREERE1 WATSAN development objective was access to safe drinking water by returnees from the border camps.

The CAREERE2 WATSAN development objective is villages in selected areas of five provinces of Cambodia that are able to identify and solve WATSAN-related problems.

Methodology

In general CAREERE1-assisted WATSAN activities were either directly or INGO-implemented. This was justified by the fact that stress was on meeting an immediate need, and in recognition of the fact that there was no official government in the early stages of the CAREERE presence. In at least one of the CAREERE-assisted provinces, however, efforts to involve the new government at all administrative levels, from national to village, began soon after the government was formed in mid-1993.

The involvement of government continued to evolve until this approach--to encourage the government to take overall responsibility for WATSAN Sector planning-- was officially adopted by CAREERE2. Partly as a result of this new emphasis, the government is currently in the process

of developing a comprehensive policy for the sector which, once adopted, will apply in all 23 provinces of the country. The following are the main points of the new strategy.

Summary.

The government will continue to contribute to the reduction of mortality and morbidity rates in rural and peri-urban areas by supporting efforts to achieve universal access to safe water supply and sanitation services, as a basic right, and by promoting the behavioural changes essential to realize the full benefits from such services. It will encourage the expansion of services to the poor, improve the reliability of those services, design strategies and approaches for improved hygiene and sanitation, support policy development, and assist emergencies. In addition, the evolving situation suggests some new emphases in programme activities. These include:

- greater attention to sanitation and hygiene promotion, as well as to operation and maintenance in water supply.
- emphasizing communication methods, and behavioural and attitudinal change, with sanitation and hygiene education in schools as a key channel.
- greater focus on the utilization and sustainability of services, not merely on coverage.
- greater focus on cost-sharing, cost-recovery, and financing mechanisms for equity and sustainability.
- increased attention to health impact on populations and geographic areas with high prevalence of WATSAN-related disease.
- greater attention to environmentally vulnerable areas, including the poor in peri-urban areas and slums.
- attention to sustainable community based water resources management that link to national and sub-national programmes where appropriate.
- pilot research and development projects on cost-effective approaches, community participation and management, and inter-sectoral linkages, with continuous learning and dissemination of learning experiences.
- standardizing the definition of "coverage", and improving monitoring systems to include impact and process indicators, as well as coverage figures.

The WATSAN Sector has now reached a transitional point where the lessons and sound experiences of the past need to be more widely applied. **Water and Sanitation are no longer to be considered as vertical programmes for the delivery of physical services.** Greater emphasis needs to be placed on health and socio-economic benefits. Greater stress also needs to be placed on providing the knowledge, skills, tools and techniques required to generate motivation, and to develop supportive systems that enable communities and people to take decisions and make choices to help themselves.

Guiding Principles for WATSAN Strategies.

The following principles will be used to guide WATSAN strategy formulation:

- **Advocacy:** highlighting the needs and rights of the poor, and building political and public commitment to the adoption of appropriate policies and accelerated action.
- **Basic services:** managed by the community, they provide catalytic support to the expansion of cost-effective services by using appropriate technologies, by paying particular attention to sanitation, and by taking account of the potential for the upgrading of services by the communities themselves.
- **Capacity building:** adopting programme approaches that build capacity at all levels and in all segments of society, to ensure sustainable sector development.
- **Community cost sharing:** of capital and recurrent costs of basic levels of service, where and if possible, with recovery of full capital and recurrent costs of higher levels of services. This will generate additional resources that will extend basic services and ensure their sustainability.
- **Community management of the "water environment":** including water conservation, water quality protection, and solid and liquid waste management.
- **Gender balanced approaches:** recognizing women as key players and agents of change, and not solely as primary beneficiaries, in the context of overall efforts to empower women.
- **Intersectoral linkages:** with nutrition, the environment, and other programmes which support integrated rural development.
- **National and local goals:** defined and set in collaboration with appropriate partners at different levels and pursued through effective monitoring systems.
- **Participatory approaches:** to empowering communities and promoting their role in planning, implementing, managing, and monitoring services.
- **Partnerships:** formed and strengthened with government at all levels and with civil society, NGOs, the private sector, external support agencies, and others, ensuring co-operation and complementarity.

Implications for the Government.

Limited resources and the increased scope and complexity of problems demanding attention require an improved capacity for programme planning and evaluation processes. Situation and policy analyses of the WATSAN Sector are needed to assess interventions in terms of equity in access to essential WATSAN services. Such analyses need to highlight the link to other related sectors, such as nutrition and the environment, as well as to key epidemiological factors. The identification of vulnerable populations is required, and data and information management needs to be strengthened to advocate on their behalf. New capacities are needed for designing projects aimed at changing behaviour. Related activities will include training in planning, and implementation and management of WATSAN projects within the context of this new strategy.

Activities

The sector strategy outlined earlier makes it clear that in order to reach the stated objective of selected villages identifying and solving their WATSAN-related problems, support is required at all administrative levels, from national to village. It is for this reason that CAREERE-supported activities take place at all levels, as is indicated in the following summary.

1. Largely as a result of CAREERE advocacy, a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) for the WATSAN Sector was established at the national level. At the moment only the Ministry of Rural Development is represented, but other interested ministries may eventually participate. The major support agencies, such as UNICEF, LWS, AICF/USA, and CAREERE are members. The main role of the TAG is to support the development of a policy and strategy for the sector.
2. With the support of CAREERE and other agencies, a set of sector guidelines was developed and finalized. These are now serving as a basis for the development of policy for the sector.
3. CAREERE has over the past four years regularly participated in various sector co-ordination activities at both the national and provincial levels. An example is the monthly co-ordination meeting which is attended by representatives of government bodies and ESA's that are active in the sector. One of the CAREERE WATSAN staff has for the past three years served as interpreter at the monthly meetings, which sometimes have as many as 50 participants.
4. At the provincial level, a WATSAN Co-ordination Committee was formed in 1994 within the Battambang Provincial Government, to plan and co-ordinate activities.
5. Logical Framework Analysis was introduced as a planning tool in 1994. CAREERE-supported WATSAN projects now follow the Logframe approach. A simple model is being introduced at the village level to encourage due consideration of all aspects of projects that are planned by the villagers themselves.
6. Since early 1994 certain activities, such as the construction of latrines and rainwater storage reservoirs at schools, are being sub-contracted to the private sector, to encourage their involvement with the WATSAN Sector.

7. A considerable amount of effort has gone into the designing and building of rainwater storage reservoirs, particularly at schools. The largest of the tanks have a capacity of 30 cubic metres.
8. Water use and hygiene education is recognized as an essential component of a successful WATSAN Programme. Various related educational materials have been produced, and a national level WUHE workshop will be held in Phnom Penh in the first week of December 1996.
9. A country-wide groundwater database has been under preparation since 1994. In support, CARERE is providing technical assistance, and arranged to procure the related software that was developed by the Danish Geological Survey.
10. Security problems periodically result in large numbers of persons being displaced from their homes, sometimes for lengthy periods. For example some of the IDP's in Battambang Province have been away from their villages since December 1992. As necessary, special arrangements are made to provide water and sanitation to them. This is particularly important in the early stages when the IDP's have not yet had time to adjust to their new situation.

Water Use in the Project Region

In rural areas of the four North-western provinces water for drinking and household use is typically obtained from surface sources. Many families dig ponds that serve to store rainwater. Others live close to a river or lake, which serve as their source of domestic water. Typically wells are drilled or dug when surface sources are inadequate, and even then the taste of well water is generally not appreciated. Although well water is widely used for all other purposes, villagers will tend to seek surface or rainwater for drinking. Water availability varies widely from rainy to dry season. During the wet period of the year (June to November) surface water can be plentiful though often unsafe unless treated. During the dry season villagers are often forced to collect water at considerable distances from home.

The geography of the North-eastern province of Ratanakiri is generally hilly, and domestic water is normally obtained from surface sources as well: springs, streams or rainwater. Here, also, there is considerable variation in water availability from one season to another.

Villages throughout Cambodia do not normally have committees or groups that specifically address water availability problems. Each family tends to look after its own needs.

Relationships

A large number of government bodies, local NGO's, private sector groups, and INGO's are involved with the WATSAN programme in their efforts to assist target villages in identifying and solving WATSAN-related problems. The project's main counterpart at the national level is the Ministry of Rural Development, although other ministries, such as Health, also have a very important role to play. At the provincial level at least six departments, including Rural

Development, Health, and Education, are closely associated with the programme. Private entrepreneurs often serve as sub-contractors to the provincial government for CAREERE-funded projects.

The most important relationship, however, is between the various interested government bodies and the village. Villagers are encouraged to attempt to identify and solve, to the extent possible, their own WATSAN-related problems. The programme can assist. When the required resources, whether technical, material or financial, are not available within the village the programme can also assist with meeting the need. In the end, however, the responsibility for success or failure of a project within a village rests with the villagers themselves.

Project Achievements

- Safe drinking water provided to large numbers of returnees.
- The development of sectoral guidelines and strategies that will eventually lead to the definition of a policy for the sector.
- The introduction of new planning techniques, such as the Logical Framework, which makes it easier to define what is possible within the sector, and to develop clear workplans.
- Successful co-ordination of the various bodies and agencies that are active in the WATSAN Sector.
- The involvement of the private sector in WATSAN project implementation.
- The development of a national-level groundwater database which will serve as an important source of reference for project planners, monitors, and well installers.
- The introduction of new approaches to sanitation for institutions such as schools and clinics.
- The introduction of new rainwater harvesting techniques, particularly at the same institutions.
- Successfully providing IDP's with adequate quantities of drinking water.
- The installation of dug wells and handpump-equipped drilled wells.

Annex 1

The following are activities receive a significant amount of support, but which were not included in this paper's Activity section.

1. The introduction and standardization of handpumps that are relatively easy to maintain at the village level is an important activity. One of the results of a VLOM workshop held in Phnom Penh in 1994 was that three standard pumps were recommended for use in Cambodia: the "Afridev" for deep wells, the "Tara" for medium range wells, and the "Number Six" for shallow wells. The possibility of conducting a second VLOM workshop to discuss the addition or removal of pumps from the original list is under discussion.
2. The introduction of rainwater harvesting at the institutional level is being encouraged. Cambodians traditionally collect and store rainwater, typically in jars, but institutions such as schools and clinics normally do not. Battambang Province, for example, receives approximately 1.2 metres of rain a year: storing this water eliminates some of the need for wells and other water sources.
3. The project supports well drilling and handpump installation as an important technique for providing drinking water in rural areas. A number of drilling rigs, such as the large "Eureka" rig and the small "PAT" rig, have been supplied. At the same time drillers receive on the job upgrading training.
4. For the same reason, well digging projects are also supported, and well diggers are given appropriate training as required.
5. A Khmer/English/Khmer list of approximately 700 technical words and terms that are commonly used in the WATSAN Sector has been produced as an aid to interpreters and translators.
6. The project regularly supports INGO's that are active in the sector. In some cases equipment, such as drilling rigs and accessories, has been lent. In numerous instances INGO's have implemented CAREERE-funded projects. The following are the agencies with which CAREERE has had the most contact: SAWA, PRASAC, ANS, OXFAM, IFRC, CARE, CONCERN, and AICF/France.

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