

## GENDER ACTION PLAN

1. The Rural Roads Improvement Project II will benefit about 600,000 rural people in 93 communes in 9 provinces. More than 80% of the country's 14.7 million people live in rural areas. Cambodia's rapid economic growth has contributed to significant poverty reduction from 47.8% in 2007 to 19.8% in 2011, but rural poverty remains a challenge at 22.9% in 2009. The under-5 mortality rate was 54 per 1,000 live births in 2010, and the rural population with access to improved drinking water sources was 61% in 2010. Access to basic facilities and services is difficult in rural areas, especially during rainy season. The improvement of about 729 kilometers of rural roads will improve year-round all-weather access to markets, jobs, schools, and health centers. However, better connectivity can also have unintended negative consequences such as increased risk of HIV/AIDS and human trafficking, and an increase in road accidents. These risks will be mitigated through outreach on HIV/AIDS, anti-trafficking, and road safety.

2. **Gender and Road Infrastructure.** The benefits of improved roads, particularly for women in rural areas, include reduced travel time, greater mobility, and better access to basic facilities and services. With easier access, children will be motivated to go to school and girls' attendance and completion of secondary school should increase. Improved access to health centers should contribute to improved health outcomes, contributing to reduced incidence of child and maternal mortality. Improved roads are also a factor in increased household income when there are greater opportunities for business and trading, and local employment.

3. **Poverty reduction and public works.** Poverty reduction and promoting gender equity are two of the government's main goals. The 2011 National Social Protection Strategy envisions a national labor-intensive public works program that is targeted to poor men and women who derive benefits from short-term unskilled employment opportunities. A public works program prioritizes labor intensive construction methods to maximize employment. The International Labor Organization and the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) published manuals for small-scale contractors using labor-based appropriate technology for rural road construction in 2000. These should be referred to during implementation.

4. **Gender mainstreaming.** Access of women to road construction and maintenance jobs will provide significant social benefits to participating households. Women's access to rural road jobs brings gains in terms of income during the civil works, as well as empowerment to participate in decision-making, gain new skills, increased awareness on gender equality, climate change, road safety, and HIV/AIDS and trafficking prevention. Recent work with the MRD Social and Environmental Office (SEO) under a Gender and Development Cooperation Fund grant is enhancing road project related opportunities for women through targeted capacity development and the *Ready for Roads* information and education tools and materials.

5. **Implementation arrangements.** The SEO will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the gender action plan (GAP) in coordination with MRD's Gender Working Group. Social safeguards and gender consultants under the detailed design and implementation supervision consultants of the Project Management Unit (PMU) will be engaged to assist SEO in: (i) capacity building for the contractors prior to the start of civil works; (ii) establishing a sex-disaggregated registry of available local labor; (iii) conducting gender mainstreaming training for communities and local authorities; (iv) establishing sex-disaggregated indicators for project performance monitoring and evaluation; and (v) assisting the SEO in GAP implementation, monitoring, and reporting. The Provincial Department of Rural Development will incorporate GAP monitoring tables in quarterly progress reports to the PMU and/or SEO.

**Table 1: Gender Action Plan**

Project Output	Proposed Activities and Targets	Agency/ Person Responsible
<p><u>Output 1:</u> Rural Road Improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil works subcontractors will prioritize the use of local unskilled labor where possible</li> <li>• Contractors will hire women for at least 20% of the required unskilled labor days through enhanced awareness using the MRD <i>Ready for Roads</i> tools and outreach materials</li> <li>• Unskilled men and women workers will receive equal pay for equal work.</li> <li>• Contractors will not hire child labor.</li> <li>• Contractors will ensure strict implementation of the safeguard measures during civil works and at the camp sites, including wearing personal protection equipment, hard hats, gloves, safety boots, etc.</li> <li>• Road shoulders will have a sealed bituminous surface enabling carts with wheels to reduce the burden on women and girls who haul water in rural areas.</li> <li>• Green planting will include work programs that involve community women in planting and maintaining roadside plants, and at least 70% of the workers will be women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEO</li> <li>- PDRDs</li> <li>- Consultants</li> <li>- Contractors</li> <li>- Commune Councils (Gender Focal Person)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Output 2:</u> Rural Road Asset Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity of the local contracting industry will be built, including gender and labor-based approaches to routine maintenance.</li> <li>• A sex-disaggregated registry of local unskilled labor will be available for contractors, and PDRDs will be able to track the use of local labor.</li> <li>• A road maintenance action plan for MRD and PDRDs will support sustainable road maintenance regime, with works delegated to rural communities through small community contracts.</li> <li>• Training on road maintenance will be provided to local women and men.</li> <li>• At least 20% of road maintenance workers will be women.</li> <li>• Strict enforcement of the core labor standards (equal pay for equal work for men and women, no child labor, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEO</li> <li>- PDRDs</li> <li>- Consultants</li> <li>- Contractors</li> <li>- Commune Councils (Gender Person)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Output 3:</u> Road Safety and Community Awareness Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All project roads will have road safety signs and safe speed reduction measures especially on busy sections (i.e., in front of hospitals, clinics, schools, markets, etc.) to ensure the safety of the local residents and especially women, children, disabled, and elderly persons.</li> <li>• A community road safety program will involve community members as facilitators, of whom at least 30% will be mothers who lead daily road safety activities at schools.</li> <li>• An HIV/AIDS and Human Trafficking prevention program will mitigate potential negative impacts during and after construction. The program will target communities, construction workers, schools, and other stakeholders. 40% of residents (50% women) and all contractor personnel will participate in the HHTPP.</li> <li>• All socio-economic baseline data will be sex-disaggregated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEO</li> <li>- PDRDs</li> <li>- Consultants</li> <li>- Contractors</li> <li>- Commune Councils (Gender Person)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Output 4:</u> Project Management Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building will be provided to the SEO, contractors, and PDRDs.</li> <li>• Recruit 3 additional staff for the SEO (at least 1 woman).</li> <li>• Recruit 1 international social development specialist and 2 national gender specialist consultants.</li> <li>• All PMU staff (currently 7 men, 5 women but likely to increase to 14 men, 8 women) will participate in training on social and gender issues.</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Output 5:</u> Connectivity Improvements for Mekong River Island</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Island road improvements using concrete will be labor-based</li> <li>• At least 40% of the unskilled work days created will be for women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SEO</li> <li>- PDRDs</li> <li>- Consultants</li> <li>- Contractors</li> <li>- Commune Councils (Gender Person)</li> </ul>

HHTPP = HIV/AIDS and Human Trafficking Prevention Program; MRD= Ministry of Rural Development; PDRD = Provincial Department of Rural Development; SEO= social and environment office.