Formulating Rural Road Policy and Strategy in a Developing Country Environment with Key Stakeholders including Academic Institutions

iCEER 2007, Melbourne
Presentation Content

- Cambodia & Rural Roads
- Main Challenges
- Policy and Strategy Development Process
- Vision
- Examples of policy and strategy
- Lessons learnt
Cambodia & Rural Roads

- One of the poorest countries: GDP per capita $320
- Rural population: over majority – 90%
- Poverty reduction: reduction of rural poverty and inequality
- Rural population have substantial transport burden
- Improved rural roads can reduce the transport burden and socio-economic wellbeing of rural population
Rural Roads in Cambodia
Rural Roads: Policy and Strategy

- Ministry of Rural Development responsible for rural roads
- MRD started strategic plan development in 2005 & completed in 2006:
  - To set out long-term direction & framework
- Started the updating of rural roads policy in 2006
  - One of the seven most important issues identified in the strategic plan
- Clear policies and strategies: will help better management of the rural roads by MRD
Main Challenges

- Identification of key issues
- Absence of reliable data
- Involvement of stakeholders in the process
- Integration of the policy and strategy messages into the academic curriculum
- The approval process and dissemination of the documents
The process

Step 1: Form official Working Group

Step 2: Identify the development objective & key issues

Step 3: Collect, assess and analyze relevant data

Step 4: Identify options to address the key issues

Step 5: Assess risk and rank the options

Step 6: Consult Stakeholders

Step 7: Draft and translate the documents

Step 8: Consult Stakeholders

Step 9: Finalize documents

Step 10: Obtain Government approval

Step 11: Disseminate policy and strategy

Step 12: Develop a university module
Vision Statement

“Every Person living in rural Cambodia will have year-round access to basic needs, economic and social facilities, services and opportunities.”
Issues

- 21 issues identified
- **Planning and Programming:**
  - Road inventory, Investment prioritisation, Network improvement rate, Inter-modal integration etc.
- **Financing**
  - Overall funding and improvement vs maintenance
- **Sustainability**
  - Maintenance, private sector’s involvement etc.
- **Institutional**
  - Role of local governments; institutional capacity development etc.
A Policy Example: Road Inventory

**Policy objective**
- To have a reliable database of the rural road network and related infrastructure to enable informed decision making.

**Policy direction**
- a. It will be a top priority of MRD to complete the Cambodia-wide rural road and related infrastructure inventory.
- b. Efforts to capture the spatial and attribute data in an electronic database will continue. Each rural road will be categorised and assigned a unique identification number.
- c. IRAP/GIS units at MRD headquarters and PDRD offices will be expanded and strengthened for the effective management of the rural infrastructure database.
A Strategy Example: Road Inventory

Strategic Options

- **Option 1**: start the development of a complete rural infrastructure inventory immediately, including that of roads, building on the experience gained during the implementation of the Integrated Rural Accessibility Planning (IRAP)/Geographic Information System (GIS) project.

- **Option 2**: progressively develop a complete rural infrastructure inventory under different rural infrastructure projects as done in four provinces under NRDP

Selected option: Option 1

Barrier level in the implementation of Option 1:

- **Financial**: medium; **institutional**: medium; **legal**: low and **technological**: high
Module Updating for an Academic Course

- Developing countries: involvement of academia in government development initiatives is rare
- Teaching staff and students are unaware of the government policies and strategies
- Cambodia rural roads policy and strategy:
  - Academia involved in their development
  - Outputs incorporated in the academic curriculum
- University faculty
  - considered as one of the stakeholders
  - Involved in the consultation process
- Existing module on the development policies
  - Updated in consultation with the faculty
Impact of Updating the Academic Module

Too early to comment on its impact
There is ongoing cooperation between the academic institutions and ministries in Cambodia
Relevant module is only updated
- A part of the development engineering course
- Highlight the key issues, contexts, policies and strategies

Cooperation from academics was encouraging
- One or more people attended the consultation meetings
- Cooperated fully during the development of the module

The potential impact may include
- strengthened cooperation: academia and ministries
- Potential entrants to the ministries – better prepared: anecdotal evidence also suggest so
Lessons Learnt

- The process approach: found very effective
  - Stakeholder involvement at all stages
  - Formulation of a Ministry Working Group
  - Helped in promoting ownership
- Inadequate data availability can be overcome
  - Collection of crucial primary data may be necessary
- Inclusion of university faculty as one of the stakeholders found helpful
  - Renewing links between the university and ministry
  - In dissemination of the outputs
- Assistance in the formal promulgation of the policy and strategy is important for country like Cambodia
Presentation Summary

- Cambodia & Rural Roads
- Main Challenges
- Policy and Strategy Development Process
- Examples of policy and strategy
- Involvement of academia in the process
- Lessons learnt
Thank you for your attention