

Management capacity of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport in Cambodia.

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Lessons from "The study of the reorganisation of the Ministry of Public Works & Transport of Cambodia" project.

The Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT) is responsible for major transport sectors in Cambodia including roads, railways, airports, ports and inland waterways.

Cambodian transportation infrastructure is old, heavily damaged and cannot adequately support the country's social and economic development. The road system's deterioration is such that more than 60 % of the 7 700 km of the primary road network are unusable during the rainfall season. Restoration of the primary road system is considered to be a high priority for the government. Railways services are at present in very poor condition. Dredging canals and rivers and upgrading ports are necessary for safe and reliable transport.

Moreover, two decades of war have weakened MPWT's capabilities for planning and policy making as well as its operational efficiency. As a result of these difficult years, MPWT's mission and organisational structure are not well defined and the means of fulfilling that mission are limited. Cambodia does not have a national transport strategy yet.

Cambodia's transportation systems significantly contribute to fighting poverty and supporting the country's social and economic development. In rural areas where 90 % of the population resides, the road system provides access to basic health and education services and ensures the transportation of goods.

The country must therefore rely on a strong Ministry of Public Works and Transport that has the capability to set medium and long term objectives consistent with the population's needs and Government policies and to efficiently manage Cambodia's transport systems.

The project objective was to improve the MPWT's performance, first, by proposing institutional strengthening measures that include a clear definition of the mission and role of the Ministry and directions for the re-engineering of its organisational structure, and second, by setting-up and initiating efficient co-ordination and communication mechanisms among the parties involved.