



Climate Change Adaptation through Small-Scale
and Protective Infrastructure Interventions in
Coastal Settlements of Cambodia (CCA4CS)

Report on Capacity-Building of Government Officers to Sustain and Enhance the Project's Adaptation Benefits in Kep and Preah Sihanouk Provinces



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PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

BRIEF SUMMARY

The project focused on installing a water gate and reinforcing a 370-meter embankment to protect 3,500 beneficiaries (at least 50 percent women) in Pong Teuk and Angkaol Communes from flooding and saltwater intrusion.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

A capacity needs assessment, completed in September 2022 by a consultant, was conducted to guide the intervention. This assessment identified key training needs in climate trends, government responses, adaptation planning, and financing.

The first training session was held from 8 to 9 December 2022, engaging 57 participants, including 16 women (28.1 percent). Participants actively discussed challenges, shared their experiences, and expressed the need for continued capacity-building and financial support to advance local adaptation actions.

A follow-up refresher training was conducted on 7 September 2023 with 68 participants, including 17 women (25.0 percent). This session focused on reviewing climate change adaptation concepts and developing actionable plans to support the integration of adaptation into sub-national planning and budgeting frameworks.

GOOD PRACTICES

1. Exceeded Participation Targets, Including Women

One of the key successes of the intervention was exceeding the participation targets, both in total numbers and in female representation. The project mobilised 125 government officials, more than double the original target of 60, and included 33 female participants against a target of 20. This broad-based engagement encouraged cross-sectoral dialogue and supported collaborative discussions on mainstreaming climate adaptation into local development plans.

2. Adaptive and Responsive Training Design

The training programme also demonstrated adaptive and responsive design. Based on participant feedback collected through post-training evaluations, a refresher training was organised to reinforce key concepts and address emerging gaps. This iterative approach enhanced the relevance and practicality of the training, strengthening the participants' ability to apply climate adaptation concepts in their daily work.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Need for Practical, Hands-On Training

While the training sessions significantly improved conceptual knowledge, the evaluation revealed that more hands-on learning opportunities were needed. Participants would have benefited from reviewing existing Commune Development and Investment Plans to identify climate adaptation gaps and propose actionable improvements. Additionally, field visits to successful climate adaptation sites were cited as valuable opportunities to deepen understanding and enhance the sustainability of planning outcomes.

2. Importance of Reviewing Plans and Field Exposure

The importance of plan review and field exposure was strongly emphasised. Practical experiences such as evaluating real plans and observing on-the-ground adaptation initiatives allow participants to translate abstract knowledge into real-world planning and decision-making contexts. These elements are essential for strengthening the effectiveness and long-term impact of sub-national adaptation planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Incorporate Practical Training in Capacity Building

It is recommended that future capacity-building programmes incorporate practical components into their training structure. This should include sessions focused on reviewing and improving existing Commune Development and Investment Plans, demonstrating how climate-sensitive planning principles are applied in practice, and organising field visits and site assessments.

2. Sustain Support Through Mentorship and Tools

The project should also provide continuous mentorship and technical support following the training sessions to ensure long-term sustainability. The development of user-friendly tools such as case studies, planning templates, and progress-tracking instruments will further support participants in applying what they have learned. These measures will empower sub-national authorities with the ownership, leadership, and confidence needed to embed climate adaptation in their planning processes and sustain project benefits beyond the training period.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Since August 2021, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) have been implementing the "Climate Change Adaptation through Protective Small-Scale Infrastructure Interventions in Coastal Settlements of Cambodia" Project (CCA4CS), with financial support from the Adaptation Fund.

The project aims to strengthen climate resilience and adaptation in Cambodia's most vulnerable coastal settlements, in Kep Province and Prey Nob District of Preah Sihanouk Province, through targeted interventions around three interconnected components:

Component 1: Community-scale knowledge and capacity enhanced to sustain the adaptation benefits of the project's investments.

Component 2: Government planning and technical capacity enhanced and knowledge captured and disseminated to sustain and enhance the project's adaptation benefits.

Component 3: Resilience built through investment in small-scale protective and basic service infrastructure and natural assets.

These initiatives will enhance communities' capacity to withstand climate-related challenges by focusing on areas where ecotourism can support long-term sustainability. Through these components, the project addresses immediate climate risks and lays the foundation for long-term sustainability and resilience in Cambodia's coastal communities.

RATIONALE FOR THE INTERVENTION

The Royal Government of Cambodia developed the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCCSP) 2014–2023 to foster a green, low-carbon, climate-resilient, equitable, sustainable, and knowledge-based society. Strategic Objective 5 of the plan emphasizes improving capacities, knowledge, and awareness among stakeholders regarding climate change responses.



Ensuring sustainable management, monitoring, and operation of rehabilitated and repaired small-scale infra-

structure requires continuous activity and budget integration into commune development and investment plans. However, the capacity of provincial and district levels for effective planning, budgeting, and the integration of climate change adaptation into local governance remains limited. Thus, targeted capacity-building initiatives were deemed essential to sustain the project's adaptation benefits beyond the project period.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

Under Component 2, the project aimed to build the capacity of provincial and district government officers to better integrate climate adaptation infrastructure maintenance and monitoring into sub-national budgets and development plans.

The intervention targeted 60 government officers from provincial and district levels, including at least 20 women. The objectives were to enhance officers' understanding of climate change adaptation, government responses, planning, and financing processes and to support incorporating adaptation activities and related budgets into local development frameworks.

This report summarises the project's experiences, achievements, good practices, lessons learned, and recommendations to strengthen sub-national stakeholders' capacity to sustain the project's adaptation benefits.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The project implemented several key activities to achieve the intervention objectives. The project recruited a consultant to conduct a capacity needs assessment, which was completed and submitted in September 2022. The evaluation identified essential training topics, including climate change trends in Cambodia, governmental responses, and the importance of planning and financing for adaptation.

First Training

The training activities consisted of two major sessions. The first training was conducted on 8–9 December 2022, engaging 57 participants, including 16 women (28.1 percent). Participants represented sub-national government institutions such as the Provincial Halls, Provincial Department of Environment, and District Halls. Training methods included lectures, group discussions, and Q&A sessions, with active engagement where participants discussed challenges, shared experiences, and requested ongoing capacity-building and financial support for adaptation actions.

Refresher Training

The project organised a refresher training on 7 September 2023, which engaged 68 participants, including 17 women (25.0 percent). This session reviewed climate change adaptation concepts and developed action plans to integrate adaptation into sub-national planning and budgeting frameworks.

GOOD PRACTICES

1. Exceeded Participation Targets, Including Women

The project notably exceeded its participation targets, including for women. One hundred twenty-five government officials were mobilized, compared to the original target of 60, with 33 female participants engaged against the original target of 20. This broad participation fostered opportunities for collaborative discussions around integrating climate adaptation actions into existing local plans.

2. Adaptive and Responsive Training Design

Additionally, the project demonstrated flexibility by adapting to local needs. Based on participant feedback gathered through post-evaluation surveys after the first training, the project organized a refresher training to reinforce participants' practical understanding of climate change adaptation planning and budgeting.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Need for Practical, Hands-On Training

While conceptual knowledge sharing was successful, the mid-term evaluation highlighted the need for more hands-on, practical training opportunities. Practical exercises will better equip participants to apply their knowledge to real-world planning and decision-making.

2. Importance of Reviewing Plans and Field Exposure

Recommended enhancements included reviewing existing Commune Development and Investment

Plans, identifying gaps, proposing feasible adaptation actions, and conducting field visits to observe existing climate adaptation projects. Incorporating these practices would have deepened participants' understanding and increased the sustainability of adaptation initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Incorporate Practical Training in Capacity Building

It is recommended that approaches that include hands-on training components be developed to strengthen future capacity-building interventions. This should involve sessions where participants can review and improve existing Commune Development and Investment Plans with sub-national officials, demonstrate practical applications of climate-sensitive planning principles, and participate in field visits and site assessments.

2. Sustain Support Through Mentorship and Tools

Additionally, ongoing mentorship and post-training technical assistance would ensure improved plans are effectively implemented. The development of user-friendly case studies, templates, and monitoring tools would further support the practical application of climate adaptation knowledge and enable systematic tracking of progress. Implementing these measures will enhance sub-national authorities' ownership, leadership, and commitment to sustaining climate change adaptation benefits.

DOCUMENTATION

Name	Type	Produced Date	Location
Training Needs Assessment Report	Report	September 2022	Link
First Training Report	Report	December 2022	Link
Refresher Training Report	Report	September 2023	Link



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