KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA
Nation Religion King

Inter-Ministerial Resettlement Committee

Cambodia Rural Electrification and Transmission Project
Rural Electrification Fund Component

Ethnic Minorities Development Strategy

Phnom Penh, Cambodia
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Introduction

The World Bank is preparing with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) a Cambodia Rural Electrification and Transmission Project (RE&T) to support sustainable power supply in fast urbanizing provincial communities and peri-urban areas of Phnom Penh city. The project consists of three main components: (a) 115kV transmission reinforcement around Phnom Penh; (b) the expansion of the EDC grid in four provincial areas; and (c) off-grid power supply through establishment of Rural Electrification Fund (REF). While there are no ethnic minorities in the project areas for both the transmission component and the grid expansion component, for activities under REF component, as a national component, they might benefit ethnic minority populations. In order to ensure that affected minority populations will derive benefits under the project, an ethnic minority development strategy will be developed, under which, a screening criteria will be built into the application and approval process for REF, identifying projects that involve ethnic minorities, and set a consultative process in place, where this is the case.

RE & T and OD 4.20

As a prerequisite to IDA support, RE&T must meet the requirements of Operational Directive 4.20 (Indigenous Peoples). This policy directive requires that special planning measures be established to protect the interests of ethnic minorities, i.e. social groups with a social and cultural identity distinct from the dominant society that makes them vulnerable to being disadvantaged in the development process.

Indigenous peoples can be identified in particular geographical areas by the presence in varying degrees of the following characteristics:

(a) A close attachment to ancestral territories and to the natural resources in these areas;
(b) Self-identification and identification by others as members of a distinct cultural group;
(c) An indigenous language, often different from the national language;
(d) Presence of customary social and political institutions; and
(e) Primarily subsistence-oriented production.

Based on the above characteristics, the largest ethnic minority groups in Cambodia include people of Vietnamese and Chinese descent, Muslim Chams (who are in the Sub-Project areas)
The project design recognizes that ‘meaningful’ participation by poor and disadvantaged sections of society requires special focus that goes beyond routine project implementation management. In the operation manual for REF, detailed guidelines on social assessment and resettlement aspects are included. Under these guidelines, the developer of each Sub-Project will carry out preliminary social assessment during the preparation of project feasibility report, which will be prepared by experienced consulting team to be funded under the project TA. Such effort is designed to understand the basic social economic needs of the communities and support key activities aimed at empowering beneficiary populations to exercise their voices and choices.

The project is, therefore, committed and has the organizational instruments to ensure that ethnic minorities are: (i) consulted in matter relating to each Sub-Project, (ii) provided opportunities for participation in decision making related to the Sub-Project, and (iii) provided opportunities for participation in project activities should they so desire.

Screening for Indigenous People among Beneficiary Populations

The Bank has determined that OD 4.20 applies with reference to Cambodian “Highland Peoples”, because these groups maintain cultural and Socio-Economic practices different than those practiced by the Khmer national majority.

In the context of this project, it is important to note that the OD 4.20 refers to social groups and not to individuals. The primary objectives of OD 4.20 are:

- To ensure that such groups are afforded meaningful opportunities to participate in planning that affects them;
- To ensure that opportunities to provide such groups with culturally appropriate benefits are considered; and
- To ensure that any project impacts that adversely affect them are avoided or otherwise minimized and mitigated.

Investigations during project preparation indicate that for both transmission and grid extension components, there are no individuals belonging to Cambodian ethnic groups (i.e. Highland Peoples), who would attract the provisions of OD 4.20. However, for REF, since it is a national component, the supported Sub-Projects, including mini and micro hydropower plants, solar powers, and REE isolated systems, might benefit some ethnic minorities. This strategy note has been prepared in order to provide some general principles and procedures that will be applied during project implementation, if indigenous people / ethnic minorities are reported in any of the Sub-Projects. In the RE&T project, therefore, the purpose of the strategy is one of ensuring consultation, giving ethnic minorities a voice, and an opportunity to participate in the project.
Re-confirming that there is no IPs among beneficiary populations will be undertaken in the social assessment process. By gathering both qualitative and quantitative data in the project areas through a range of PRA techniques, the basic social economic profile of beneficiary population will be developed. Such procedures have already been used in the feasibility studies of some pilot Sub-Projects, which are aimed at ensuring that all minority voices and opinions are heard through the project preparation and implementation process.

Principles and procedures applied where the project involves Indigenous Peoples / Ethnic Minorities

PMU-MIME, and REF once it is set up, will ensure that full consultation, in a language spoken by the indigenous people / minority group, and invite participation of indigenous people / ethnic minorities are fully taken into account during preparation and implementation of Sub-Projects, while respecting their current practices, beliefs and cultural preferences. The outcome of the consultations will be documented into the project proposal. (See annex 1 for detailed procedures of such consultation efforts).

If the indigenous people conclude that the project will be beneficial, or non-harmful to their way or life or cultural beliefs, and the adverse impacts are minimal, measures and assistance will be developed in consultation with tribal elders, community groups, and independent assigned NGOs. The community should also be consulted to ensure that their rights and culture are respected. The assistance may also include institutional strengthening and capacity building of tribal elders and community groups working with the project.

Reporting, Monitoring and Documentation

The proposed screening, social assessment and consultation process will provide comprehensive baseline data on social, economic and technical aspects of each Sub-Project. This includes also participatory mapping of community access to power supply and key services. If the social assessment confirms that no ethnic minority populations exist in the project areas, no further action is necessary. If the social assessment indicates that there are potential social issues because of ethnic minority populations in such Sub-Project, it will be ensured that the responsible developer will undertake specific measures to consult with, and give opportunity for ethnic minority populations in participating decision making related to the Sub-Project, should they so desire.

Besides specific attention to ethnic minority issues in supervision and monitoring, the PMU in MIME / REF will include these matters in their progress reporting. The IDA supervision
missions will periodically pay special attention to ensure that the Sub-Project affords benefits to vulnerable groups and ethnic minorities.


The consultation framework aims to ensure that indigenous people / ethnic minorities are well informed, consulted and mobilized to participate in the Sub-Projects to be supported by REF. Their participation can either provide them benefits with more certainty, or protect them from any potential adverse impacts of Sub-Projects to be financed by the Project. The main features / process of the consultation framework includes a preliminary screening process, then a social impact assessment to determine the degree and nature of impact of each sub-project to be supported by REF, and an action plan will be developed if warranted. Consultations with and participation of indigenous people / ethnic minorities, their leaders and local government officials will be an integral part of the overall Indigenous People Development Plan (IPDP), which could be included in the project feasibility report. The IPDPs consist of the following sections:

(a) Preliminary screening  
(b) Social assessment  
(c) Mitigation measures  
(d) Development assistance  
(e) Monitoring

The Project will provide a series of training to all implementers and local agencies preparing and implementing IPDPs.

Preliminary Screening

All Sub-Project areas, which have indigenous people / ethnic minority communities and are candidates for REF support will be visited (at the time of first consultation with communes) by developers, relevant local authorities, and consultants. Prior to the visit, respective developers will send a letters to the communities informing their leaders that the respective developers will visit them and local authorities and consultation will be conducted on the Sub-Project. The letter will request that the communities invite to the meeting representatives of farmers, women associations and village leaders for discussion on the Sub-Project. During the visit, the community leaders and other participants will present their views with regards to the Sub-Project.

At this visit, the social scientists (consultants) will undertake a screening for ethnic minority population with the help of ethnic minority leaders and local authorities. The screening will check for the following:
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(a) Names of ethnic groups in the affected village
(b) Total number of ethnic minority groups in the affected villages
(c) Percentage of ethnic minority of village population
(d) Number and percentage of ethnic minority households along the zone of influence of the proposed Sub-Project.

If the results show that there are ethnic minority communities in the zone of influence of the proposed Sub-Project, a social impact assessment will be planned for those areas.

Social Assessment

The social assessment (SA) will be undertaken by the social scientists (consultants). The SA will gather relevant information on the following: Demographic data; Social, Cultural and Economic Situation; and Social, Cultural and Economic impacts - positive and negative.

Information will be gathered from separate group meetings: ethnic minority leaders; ethnic minority men; and ethnic minority women, especially those who live in the zone of influence of the proposed work under Sub-Project. Discussions will focus on Sub-Project impacts, positive and negative; and recommendations for design of Sub-Project. If the SA indicates that the potential impact of the proposed Sub-Project will be significantly adverse or that the ethnic minority community rejects the project, the Sub-Project will not be implemented in that locality; no further action is needed in this case. If the ethnic minority supports the Sub-Project implementation an IPDP will be developed.

Indigenous People Development Plan

The IPDP will consist of a number of activities and will include mitigation measures of potentially negative impacts, modification of Sub-Project design, and development assistance. Where there is land acquisition in ethnic minority communities, the project will ensure that their rights will not be violated and that they be compensated for the use of any part of their land in a manner that is culturally acceptable to them. The compensation and rehabilitation will follow the Resettlement Policy Framework of the project. An IPDP will include:

(1) Legal Framework
(2) Baseline data;
(3) Land tenure information;
(4) Local participation;
(5) Technical identification of development or mitigation activities;
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(6) Institutional arrangement;
(7) Implementation schedule;
(8) Monitoring and evaluation; and
(9) Cost and financing plan.

Implementation Arrangement

Consultants will also be responsible for training respective developers or local NGOs to undertake the work of consultation, screening, social impact assessment, analyses and preparing IPDPs.

Developers of individual Sub-Projects and local authorities are responsible for implementing IPDP (arrange adequate staff and budget).

Monitoring

Implementation of the IPDPs will be regularly supervised and monitored by IRC and MIME / REF. The findings and recommendations will be recorded in quarterly reports and to be furnished to IDA.

The independent agency, which would be used by IRC and MIME / REF to undertake external monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of Resettlement Action Plans for the REF will also be tasked with monitoring the activities for IPDP. While, the external monitoring agency will visit a sample of affected households for resettlement in each relevant province on an annual basis, it will also visit a sample of at least 10% of ethnic minority households in the project affected areas.

Schedule

The IPDP should have an implementation schedule that is coordinated with the Sub-Project implementation. Logically, social assessments and group meetings should be undertaken before Sub-Project designs are prepared. Compensation for land acquisition should be satisfactorily completed at least one month prior to start of civil work. Monitoring should take place at the recommended times during and after civil work.
Budget

The IPDP will include information on detailed cost of mitigation measures and other rehabilitation entitlements for ethnic minority in the affected areas. Sources of funding for the various activities and financing plans will be clearly specified in the cost tables.

Reporting / Documentation

The IPDPs will be prepared and submitted by individual developers to REF and then the IRC and IDA at the same time that respective developers submit their Sub-Project applications to REF and the IDA for review.