



■ ADB, Japan Assist Grassroots Push to Reduce Disaster Impacts in Cambodia

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 Subjects **Show 4 tags**

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA (6 October 2014) – The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Japan are supporting a grassroots project to manage risks and reduce impacts from floods and other natural disasters in vulnerable communities in Cambodia.

The Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction project, financed by a \$2.5 million grant from the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, will support 54 selected communes in 18 districts in the 6 target provinces of Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, and Prey Veng, to put in place disaster risk management and climate change adaptation plans. These provinces have borne the brunt of recent natural calamities.

“Strengthening community resilience to disasters is essential for preventing vulnerable families from sliding back into poverty during times of calamity,” said ADB Country Director for Cambodia Eric Sidgwick. “This project will provide hazard and vulnerability assessments, early warning systems, and emergency response and recovery plans, reflecting the needs and vulnerabilities of communities.”

Cambodia has suffered hundreds of deaths and large economic losses as a result of extreme floods in recent years, which are expected to worsen as climate change impacts accelerate. Building disaster risk reduction planning and management capabilities at the grassroots level are seen as the most effective way of getting the best results, and ensuring local ownership. The project will develop model systems that can be replicated by other communes and districts.

Among actions to be taken at the village level are development of community early warning systems, establishment of safe evacuation routes and areas, community education campaigns, disaster simulation exercises and the formation of village disaster teams.

The project will strengthen the capacity of commune councils and district committees, ensure equal participation from women and men, and promote engagement of civil society organizations and local communities to plan and implement community-based disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation initiatives. The project aims to reduce economic losses from floods by 15% over a 5-year period from 2015.

The project, which also includes government support equivalent to \$441,000, will be carried out over 3 years and is due for completion in the second quarter of 2017.

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