



**Mekong Region Water and Sanitation Initiative
MEK-WATSAN**

Assessment Report for the Roll Out Phase 1

**Towards Achieving the MDGs in Water and Sanitation
in Secondary Towns in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam**

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Acronyms

ADB – Asian Development Bank
CA – Cooperation Agreement
CBO – Community-based organisation
CEDS – Center for Environment and Development Studies
CfD – Center for Development (Cambodia)
CSCS – Cooperation for a Sustainable Cambodian Society (Cambodia)
DHUP – Department of Housing and Urban Planning
DoS – Department of Statistics (Lao PDR)
DPWS – Department of Potable Water Supply
GM – Gender Mainstreaming
GMS – Greater Mekong Sub-region
GoN - Government of the Netherlands
GSO – General Statistics Office (Vietnam)
GRET – Group of Research and Technological Exchange
GWA – Gender Water Alliance
HDI – Human Poverty Index
HVWSHE – Human Values-based Water Sanitation and Hygiene Education
IDWA – Index of Drinking Water Adequacy
IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature
IEE – Initial Environmental Examination
JICA – Japan International Cooperation Agency
JMP – WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme
MDGs – Millennium Development Goals
MIME – Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (Cambodia)
MoC – Ministry of Construction (Vietnam)
MOLISA – Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (Vietnam)
MoP – Ministry of Planning (Cambodia)
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
MPWT – Ministry of Public Works and Transport (Lao PDR)
MRC – Mekong River Commission
MRD – Ministry for Rural Development (Cambodia)
MTSIP – Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan
NGPES – National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (Lao PDR)
O&M – Operation and Maintenance
NPSE – Nam Papa State-owned Enterprise (Lao PDR)
PMU – Project Management Unit
PPME – Project Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
PPP – Public-Private Partnership
QTWASUCO – Quang Tri Water Supply and Construction One Member Limited Company (Vietnam)
RBM – Results based Management
SC – Steering Committee
TNA – Training Needs Assessment
ToT – Training of Trainers
UIS – Urban Inequities Survey
VHLSS – Vietnam Household Living Standards Survey
WCDM – Water Conservation and Demand Management
WDM – Water Demand Management
WSSD – World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTTC – Waterworks Technical Training Center (Lao PDR)
WWF – World Wildlife Fund



Executive Summary

The Mekong Region Water and Sanitation (MEK-WATSAN) Initiative was formulated in response to the GMS initiative as a collaborative effort between UN-HABITAT, the Governments of the Greater Mekong Sub-region and ADB. The objective of the MEK-WATSAN Initiative is to support the participating countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) attain their water and sanitation related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Water and Sanitation Programme at UN-HABITAT

UN-HABITAT is the “city agency” of the UN system. Through a multi-donor supported, the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund of UN-HABITAT provides assistance to support community-based water and sanitation projects in urban and peri-urban areas of Africa, Asia and the Latin American and the Caribbean Regions. These projects demonstrate innovative approaches that can effectively and sustainably improve access for poor people to adequate sanitation and clean water.

Millennium Development Goals on Water and Sanitation

Lack of access to basic services by the world’s poor is an enormous barrier to development. Yet in 2000, more than 830 million people in the Asia Pacific region did not have access to safe drinking water. More than 2 billion lacked sanitation facilities. These problems are worsened by high rates of urbanization worldwide, with the highest levels in the poorest countries.

To meet the MDG targets for sustainable access to water, the challenge is to provide 30,000 people per day with access to improved water during 2005-2015. This calls for stepping up the current efforts by one third; for sanitation, doubling the current rate is needed.

The Mekong Region Water and Sanitation Initiative (MEK-WATSAN)

The MEK-WATSAN initiative is a collaborative effort between UN-HABITAT and the Governments of the Mekong region to support participating Governments attain their water and sanitation related MDGs agreed in 2000, **to halve the proportion of people without access to improved water supply and sanitation services by 2015.**

MEK-WATSAN promotes:

Pro-poor urban water governance,
Urban water conservation and demand management,
Integrated urban environmental sanitation, and
Income generation for the urban poor through community-based water and sanitation services.

This initiative provides an ideal opportunity for targeting water and sanitation investments to secondary cities linked to sector reforms and capacity building within a process of decentralization to enable them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

First Phase Ground Work in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam

A rapid town assessment involving local communities, Governments, utilities and stakeholders was carried out. This involved questionnaire surveys and focus group discussions. This resulted in a refined understanding of gaps in water supply and sanitation services for the poor. It was found that the engagement with the community will also provide an opportunity to build wide support for the project including its objectives and implementation methodology. The rapid assessment also provided preliminary data for the water and sanitation indicators for the Project Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME) data base.

Table 1 - List of proposed interventions

Proposed Interventions	Proposed Target Area	Population in Target Towns	Main Opportunities / Challenges	Facilitating Government Entity
Cambodia				
Community-based water supply (system expansion), capacity building, MDG monitoring and improved sanitation	Kampong Cham town	43,799	Significant Government investments to upgrade water supply systems. Increased capacity of the system creates opportunities for expansion including the poor. High cost of connection fees prevent poor households from connecting to the network Low sanitation coverage	Ministry of Industry Mines and Energy (MIME)
	Kampong Thom town	52,743		
	Pursat town			
	Svay Rieng town	45,174		
Lao PDR				
Extension of water supply and improved access to sanitation towards reaching the MDGs	Xieng Ngeun district (6 villages in northern area), Luang Prabang province	3,006	Significant Government investments to upgrade water supply systems. Increased capacity of the system creates opportunities for expansion including the poor. High cost of connection fees prevent poor households from connecting to the network Low sanitation coverage	Department of Housing and Urban Planning (DHUP), Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)
	Sayabouly district (peri-urban areas), Sayabouly province	4,406		
	Kongsedone district, Saravane province	3,327		
Rehabilitation of the water supply system and improved access to sanitation services towards reaching the MDGs	Lamam district and Thateng district, Sekong province	18,213	Deteriorated pipes impact the quality of the water and have more than double the percentage of water losses Significant investments already made to expand and increase capacity of the system Low sanitation coverage	Department of Housing and Urban Planning (DHUP), Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)
	Samakhixay district, Attapeu province	12,313		
Establishment of a water supply system and improved access to sanitation services	Atsaphangthong district, Savannakhet province	5,863	No water supply system in place High costs to access safe water or reliance on unsafe surface water Low sanitation coverage	Department of Housing and Urban Planning (DHUP), Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)
Improved access to sanitation towards reaching the MDGs	Urban and peri urban areas of Paksan district, Bolikhamxay province	11,782	Low sanitation coverage	
	Peri urban areas of Thakkek district, Khammouane province	8,424		
PPP – Models	Thabok area in Thaphabath district, Bolikhamxay province	4,228	Opportunity to set up a small-scale piped water supply system under public-private partnership to inform future initiatives	
Vietnam				

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