



**EC/FAO Food Security Programme -
Phase II**
'Food Security Information for Action'

Programme Workplan for the Kingdom of Cambodia

Donor:	European Commission
Implementing Agency:	FAO
Proposed Funding:	€ 186,188 \$ 249,492 (Exchange rate US\$ / EURO = 1.34)
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The activities selected under the EC FAO Food Security Programme for Cambodia will add value to on-going initiatives in terms of "Information for Action", in line with the Programme's emphasis during the second phase on the use of information for more effective interventions and policy and programme formulation. Cambodia is currently receiving support from FAO and other partners for strengthening food security information systems, including from the Japan-funded Asia FIVIMS Project (GCP/RAS/170/JPN) and the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP).

The Programme will support the activities that were prioritised during a mission in November-December 2005, in collaboration with the Government of Cambodia, the EC Country Delegation, FAO staff in Cambodia and other international organizations collaborating with the Government of Cambodia on Food Security. Activities include:

1. Capacity-building for the development of food security information products for greater impact on policy and action: support will be provided to the national FIVIMS Secretariat for identifying and developing quality food security information products that are useful to food security planning within the overall context of food and nutrition security in Cambodia.

2. Introduction and implementation of a Crop Yield Forecasting System: the system will enhance more timely and accurate crop yield forecasting, strengthening networking and partnership with neighbouring countries, possibly in collaboration with the Thai Government.

3. Capacity-building in the analysis of food consumption data from the national Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey: technical assistance will be provided for statistical capacity building in the analysis of 2003/2004 CSES food data.

January 2006

Background

Cambodia is one of the twenty countries selected under the EC/FAO Food Security Programme Phase II under the Group I Category, i.e. Chronically Food Insecure Countries. The country did not receive assistance in Phase I of the Programme but support is being provided by FAO and other partners for strengthening food security information systems, including the Asia FIVIMS Project (GCP/RAS/170/JPN)¹ and the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP).

The activities proposed for Programme support have been identified during a mission in November-December 2005² that involved the main stakeholders: national institutions and partner organizations concerned with food security and nutrition, FAO staff in Cambodia and the EC Country Delegation. FAO divisions participating in the Programme were consulted before and after the mission. These activities are expected to add value to the country in terms of "Information for Action", in line with the focus of the programme during the second phase on the use of information products for more effective interventions and policy and programme formulation.

Problems to Be Addressed

Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in the world with an estimated 36% of the population living below the income poverty line. The country has not yet fully recovered from twenty years of war and internal conflict, which destroyed the economy and completely interrupted education and development. As a consequence, there is very low human capital, insufficient infrastructure and low capacity to implement policies and reforms. In the past decade, there has been a steady improvement in food production, but droughts and floods are responsible for regular food deficits in some areas of the country. Chronic malnutrition affects approximately 45% of children while 15% are wasted. Agriculture is the source of income for about 80% of the population, and contributes approximately 33% to the GDP.

Food insecurity in Cambodia is strongly associated with poverty. The most important threats to food security are natural disasters, small landholdings, lack of adequate rural credit, lack of irrigation and limited off-farm employment opportunities. In Cambodia, most people depend, to an important extent, on their own capacity to produce food to meet their needs. They grow crops such as their staple food (rice) as well as other annual and perennial crops, raise livestock, and harvest wild foods from fisheries and forests for food and income. Despite Cambodia being self-sufficient in rice at the national level, the country's rice balance varies significantly from area to area within the country, as well as from year to year. Crop agriculture is largely rice-based, with very limited diversification in many food-insecure areas of the lowland flood plains, while fish production is declining. Many rural households have insufficient land for crop production and must depend on casual low-wage labour or informal-sector enterprises to make income with which to buy at least part of their food needs.

Human capital remains low despite increasing enrolment in schools and universities since the country stabilized after years of war and internal strife. Although decentralization of government activities is taking place, sub-national entities remain very weak and most decision-making and planning continues to be centrally driven. However, at the national level, salaries are very low and consequently there are transfers of technical expertise from Government to international agencies who offer greater incentives.

The ability of Government institutions to collect information with full national coverage, to manage, analyse and disseminate accurate food security information in a timely and consistent manner to aid decision makers and food security stakeholders is limited due to the factors previously described. There is insufficient capacity to analyse data on key indicators, such as food consumption and energy intake indicators related to the first goal of the MDGs. The recent household income and expenditure

¹ FIVIMS is an interagency initiative which promotes good practices in building information and mapping systems on food insecurity and vulnerability. The acronym stands for Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems.

² See mission report of Terri Ballard, December 2005.

surveys recently carried out in Cambodia, the CSES, collected data relevant to food insecurity and poverty, but the food consumption data have not yet been analyzed due to low capacity and limited resources. A more comprehensive exploitation of this data would allow the assessment and monitoring of food insecurity, in particular the identification and analysis of characteristics of the most vulnerable groups, in addition to providing specific indicators for global initiatives. Similarly, data on climatic conditions are collected in Cambodia but not utilized fully because of limited national coverage and low capacity by Government institutions to use the information effectively in relation to agricultural data for improving crop yield forecasts throughout the growing season. At the present time, there are many partners involved in producing and using food security information, but there is a need to strengthen linkages between these organizations in order to improve utilization of food security information for more relevant policy and decision-making.

Capacity-building of government institutions, and not only single individuals, is needed to improve technical ability as well as sustainability of on-going Government-led activities pertaining to food security analysis, policy-making and programme planning. Cambodia may benefit from technical expertise from neighbouring countries, in particular from Thailand whose progress in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition through effective policies and interventions from highly trained experts would be useful.

Ongoing Activities

Many initiatives have been undertaken to address poverty and food insecurity, including the incorporation of food security and nutrition-related goals and objectives in national strategies and frameworks such as the Cambodia Nutrition Investment Plan (CNIP) 2003-2007, the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs), the Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2006-2010. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2003-2005) has expired and poverty reduction strategies are now included in the NSDP, whose draft is in the final phase (as of Jan. 2006).

The Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) was established on 31 December 1998 by Royal Decree, to support the implementation of activities in the Government's priority sectors of agriculture and rural development. Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen is the Chairman of CARD. CARD's role is to promote integrated, coordinated and intensive efforts to boost the Agricultural and Rural sectors, in order to improve the standard of living of the rural poor. The Government has made CARD the coordinating body for food security and nutrition activities in Cambodia and responsible for working with relevant ministries, local authorities, and international and local organisations. The Food Security and Nutrition Information System (FSNIS) under CARD is a food security web-based portal of all information related to food security and nutrition in Cambodia. This portal has information on meetings, activities and forums taking place, on organizations involved in FSN, on indicators for various programmes and activities, as well as any other FSN data made available from line ministries and organizations. A link to CAMINFO is provided, which is a socio-economic database that is updated every 6 months. CARD sponsors the Food Security Forum to promote information sharing and enhance coordination of strategies of a wide range of government, civil society and donor agencies working in the field of Food Security and Nutrition. While the structure of CARD is well accepted and established, much technical assistance is still needed from international organizations for effectively meeting its mandate.

In late 2004, the Royal Government of Cambodia created a Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition (TWGFSN) to promote the "mainstreaming" of food security and nutrition in sectoral policies and strategies and to support the integration of food security and nutrition in the decentralized planning process. The TWGFSN is chaired by CARD together with WFP and FAO. Members include food security and nutrition-related organizations and national/international NGOs.

GTZ, the international development cooperation agency of Germany, lead the Food Security and Nutrition Policy Support Project in Cambodia, which ended in Dec. 2005. The project's objective was to assist the Ministry of Planning, the National Council on Nutrition Interministerial Steering Committee, CARD and relevant sector ministries to build capacity for food and nutrition security and operationalization of food security-related strategies and policies. GTZ also supported information management through the FSNIS. Some of these activities will be carried on through support from the FAO Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP). FNPP proposes to engage in activities beginning

in 2006. It will support three main areas: (a) capacity building for policy formulation and analysis; (b) CARD's information, networking and knowledge management and advocacy work; and (c) decentralised food security planning. The FNPP project will work mainly by directly supporting CARD, conducting targeted training activities in the country and abroad, and supporting national and provincial authorities in mainstreaming food security and nutrition issues in their development plans. The project will work in strategic partnerships with CARD and with national and international stakeholders, particularly via the forums organized by CARD and by the Technical Working Group on Food Security and Nutrition.

The Asia FIVIMS Project supports FIVIMS activities in Cambodia, with backstopping by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The national FIVIMS Secretariat is located within the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. It is composed of a National FIVIMS Committee, a Technical Subcommittee and FIVIMS Secretariat, with technical support from a FIVIMS Core Analyst Group (CAG) who carry out the analytical work. A Manual of Operations setting out FIVIMS guidelines and procedures has been written and one newsletter has been produced and disseminated. FIVIMS is a member of the TWGFSN. The CAG has received several specialized training courses on analytic techniques in support of the overall FIVIMS effort.

FAO supports the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), which was launched in Cambodia in 1997, as an innovative approach for improving food security at the village and farmers' household levels. SPFS has evolved as the National Programme for Food Security and Poverty Reduction (NPFSPR), which the government of Cambodia desires to expand nationwide under its own ownership. FAO supports up-scaling the NPFSPR to 12 provinces from the seven provinces where the NPFSPR is being implemented. The NPFSPR, following the SPFS philosophy and principles, pursues rapid increases in productivity in food production on an economically and environmentally sound basis through improved water resources management, intensification and diversification of farming systems, transfer of appropriate technologies through farmers field school method, small-scale processing and agro-industry, micro rural finance, market development, and participatory (farmers groups) and self-reliant (ownership) approach.

Objectives of the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme in Cambodia

The main objective of the Programme in Cambodia is to strengthen the capacity of national institutions at the central and decentralized levels in the collection, analysis and reporting of food security information and the communication of this information to selected target user group through:

- Producing quality food security information products that meet the needs of users to improve policies, programmes, and response mechanisms to crises (activity 1).
- Increasing capacity of national institutions to use environmental monitoring tools for food security assessments in the area of crop yield forecasting, through strengthening capacity to collect quality data on climate and agricultural production (activity 2).
- Promoting the development of appropriate methodologies that integrate multiple sources of food security and vulnerability data for the purpose of creating information-based policies and programmes (activities 1,2 and 3).

Expected Outcomes at the End of the Programme

The following outcomes are expected to be achieved at the end of Phase II:

- Increased national capacity to manage food security information and to improve the state of food and nutrition security through strengthened capacity of ministry staff in the analysis and dissemination of food security information arising from periodic national surveys and ongoing monitoring activities. Outputs will include publications (food security information products, food security forums and users' needs workshop,

analysis report of food security situation from the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey). (Logical framework outputs 1.A.1, 1.B.1, 2.C.1, see Table 1)

- Increased capacity to identify vulnerable groups and distribution of food insecurity through analysis of food security data at sub national level that is collected from periodic national surveys and ongoing monitoring activities. Outputs will include publications (food security information products and analysis report of food security situation from the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey). (Logical framework outputs 3.A.1)
- Improved crop yield estimates to assist in planning related to agriculture and to provide necessary information for planning food needs of the population. Output will include training of two national specialists and periodic bulletins that will be disseminated to appropriate ministries and other organizations working in agricultural production and food security. Exchange of methods and findings with other countries in the region will improve data acquisition at border areas and refinements in methodologies. (Logical framework outputs 1.B.1,2.B.1,3.C.1)

Results, Activities and Inputs

The activities envisaged in the present workplan are consistent with the overall logical framework defined in the EC-FAO Food Security Overall Programme Document. The three activities proposed for the Kingdom of Cambodia are listed below.

1. Capacity-building for the development of food security information products for greater impact on policy and action

Support will be provided to the national FIVIMS Secretariat for identifying and developing quality food security information products that are useful within the overall context of food and nutrition security in Cambodia. This activity will contribute towards strengthening institutional linkages across structures that are responsible for the use for food security and nutrition information in programmes, policy and targeting. Technical support will be provided by the Secretariat of the FIVIMS Inter-agency Working Group on FIVIMS which is hosted by FAO.

The activity will include :

- Identify main food security information producers and users in Cambodia and their needs;
- Host a seminar/workshop with main food security partners (FIVIMS Secretariat and Core Analysis Group, CARD and TWGFSN members, other appropriate government institutions) to define what types of food security information products are needed in Cambodia and how this information can be best packaged and used for action (policy, programmes). Out of this seminar, the most relevant types of information products for Cambodia will be identified;
- Provide short-term technical and financial support for the purpose of refining information products that are consistent with the needs of users, as identified by the seminar. Training modules developed by the EC/FAO Programme for use in several countries covered by the Programme and lessons from the FAO Distance Learning Module on Food Security Information for Action will be utilized.

This activity will help improve linkages between the Cambodia FIVIMS secretariat and the broader food and nutrition security community and should facilitate improving sustainability of these activities in the long-term.

Inputs:

- International expertise to provide technical assistance for food security information products;
- Financial resources for travel, workshops, publications and dissemination of products.

Outputs:

- Information products (bulletin, report, website, maps, press releases, etc.) which will contribute to support evidence-based action defined (type, contents, frequency, etc.) following a seminar/workshop with main food security partners;
- 10 to 15 key producers of information products related to food security trained in producing information products that are consistent with users needs, based on training modules developed under the Programme;
- Information products prepared, following the recommendations of the seminar/workshop and made available to a large group of users.

2. Introduction and implementation of a Crop Yield Forecasting System

FAO will provide technical assistance for capacity building in establishing a system to improve the timeliness and the accuracy of crop yield forecasts. The activity concerns the customization of an existing forecasting software using historic and current agronomic, meteorological and satellite data. After appropriate data have been collected from Cambodia, two agro-meteorology professionals from the appropriate ministries will be trained and supervised in the customization and use of the system during a three month stay in Rome working with the Research, Extension and Training Division of FAO. At the end of the three months, the software will be operational for one crop (rice).

This activity will increase the capacity of national organizations to more efficiently and effectively collect and analyze agro-meteorological data and forecast crop production of the most important staple, starting at the time of planting. The activity will promote collaboration across ministries, with food security information analysts and food security information producers. Outputs will include regular and timely reports of forecast tables and maps for distribution through appropriate lines of communication for use by decision-makers and agricultural/food security planners. A manual with national guidelines for conducting the forecasting will be produced. The Crop Yield Forecasting System will provide original key inputs (forecasting data) into the content of the information products being developed (activity 1).

Discussions are on-going with the Thai Government, through the Thai International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) to build a partnership for the implementation of this activity in Cambodia and in Lao PDR as well. The involvement of the Thai Government in implementing the Programme activities will be coordinated with the EC delegations in Cambodia and Bangkok. There is a significant expertise in crop forecasting in the Center for Agricultural Information (CAI) of the Ministry of Agriculture in Thailand that could be relied upon for the implementation of the CMFS, in particular for strengthening networking and partnerships with neighboring countries on crop forecasting, taking advantages of CAI relationships under two projects: the Asian Food Security Information System (AFSIS) Project (funded bilaterally by Japan); and Project GCP/RAS/184/JPN on "Strengthening regional data exchange system in food and agriculture in Asia and Pacific countries", implemented by FAO with financial support from Japan.

Inputs:

- International and national expertise to customize and implement the forecasting system;
- Financial resources for data collection, materials, workshops, travel.

Outputs:

- The Crop Yield Forecasting System (CYFS) customized with national data to produce yield forecasts for rice;
- Two agro-meteorology professionals trained in customizing and using the CYFS;
- Regular and timely reports of forecast tables and maps for distribution;

- Manual with guidelines for producing forecasts.

3. Capacity-building for the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) in the analysis of food consumption data from the Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey

FAO will provide technical assistance for statistical capacity building in the analysis of existing food data collected from the 2003-4 Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES) for assessing and monitoring food deprivation and deriving useful national and subnational food security statistics. Food consumption data from the survey, used to estimate energy consumption with comparison to energy needs as well as the number of undernourished, addressing the MDG goal number 1 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, has not yet been undertaken. This is due in part to low statistical capacity to conduct this type of analysis in a systematic way. This activity will build capacity within the national institutions responsible for assessing and monitoring food security, in particular the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), and in processing and analyzing food consumption related statistics. This will produce reliable statistics on food consumption for measuring progress towards achieving the targets established under the country policy reference frameworks and international initiatives.

The activity will be a combination of direct country technical assistance and on-the-job training for country experts of the NIS and other national institutions responsible for assessing and monitoring food security. Outputs will include a report with the main findings of the analysis. Support will be provided for validating and disseminating results during a national workshop with country food security stakeholders. Technical support will be provided by the Statistics Division of FAO.

Inputs:

- International and national expertise to conduct analyses and report results;
- Financial resources for travel, and for publication and dissemination of results

Outputs

- About 10 staff in NSC trained in processing and producing food consumption statistics and a similar number of staff from key food security institutions in interpreting and using food consumption statistics for food insecurity assessment;
- Updated statistics on food insecurity at national and sub-national levels for identification of food insecure population groups made widely available to a large number of users;
- A national nutrient conversion table;
- A technical report on "Food Security: Food Deprivation and Determining Factors", prepared by staff from NSC and key food security institutions and validated by main stakeholders during a national workshop.