

Legal Reform: *Awareness campaign for farmers and households on land rights and other issues related to land tenure in Cambodia*

EWMI is working to increase awareness on land rights and other issues related to land tenure in Cambodia through a contract with the European Commission, as part of its Economic and Social Relaunch of Northwest Provinces (ECOSORN) project. This project complements EWMI's existing work on land rights and education initiatives in Cambodia. EWMI, in cooperation with its local partner Action IEC, will implement a series of 14 full-day 'Road Show' festivals, which are expected to reach as many as 168,000 Cambodians in target communities.



EWMI is reaching out to people possessing unregistered land.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Integral to EWMI's land reform efforts in the past have been its innovative, informative, culturally sensitive and relatively inexpensive public outreach campaigns. In Cambodia, under its ADB-funded land legislation projects, EWMI has assisted the government in developing soap-opera style videos, picture books, comic strips and radio programs that have received overwhelmingly positive feedback and have been widely disseminated and broadcast in existing national and local media outlets. Under its Safeguarding Cambodians' Land Rights Project, EWMI is carrying out a coordinated public education program on land rights and the dispute resolution process targeting people possessing unregistered land utilizing a road show format.

Under the ECOSORN project, EWMI uses the same format for a series of road shows, which will be held in each target district and have the proven potential to attract between 10,000 and 12,000 local inhabitants per show. The shows deliver 6 hours of key messages on land related matters in a variety of entertaining and engaging formats designed to attract and hold the attention of all members of communities – from farmers, wives, children and grandparents to local merchants, and local authorities. This strategy ensures that the same message is heard by the entire community and authorities – no one can claim that a different message was delivered to them. Teams of artists and performers are trained in basic land law so that everyone is clear on the messages they need to convey at the show. On the morning of the shows, 'feedback agents' survey a limited number of people living in the area to find out what questions or concerns people have about land issues, so the other members of the team will be prepared to respond to these issues. The feedback agents also conduct surveys of people in the audience before and after the show to assess their understanding and comprehension of issues. Printed publicity materials are distributed in conjunction with the shows to support key messages delivered throughout the day. People can ask questions at an information booth staffed by teams of land law experts. A useful laminated calendar with key land law messages and contact details for district and provincial land offices will

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be distributed for local households to retain and refer to long after the road show moves on. Follow up surveys will be undertaken to assess the extent of coverage of the road shows and the level of impact.



Through public outreach, EWMI is providing an understanding of land law issues to Cambodian farmers.

The road shows are complemented by the widespread distribution of previously produced radio and printed public education materials. These materials include: two soap-opera style videos, a shadow puppet show, a live theatre production, two picture books, a series of newspaper photo strips and radio program series, and are being expanded to include newspaper articles, posters and hand-outs, such as laminated calendars.

The project will provide a broader understanding of relevant land law issues and increased capacity of everyone in the target areas, including residents and local government officials. The tools developed and used during the road shows will also help bring sustainability to the project by increasing knowledge and capacity to speak about land law and raise awareness about the issues, which is expected to go well beyond the life of the program.

The Awareness campaign for farmers and households on land rights and other issues related to land tenure in Siem Reap, Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, Cambodia (2007-2010) is funded under the Safer access to arable lands by safeguarding land tenure through awareness on land laws and support to provision of land-titles to poor farming households for ECOSORN project with the European Commission.

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