

Forestry Extension in Cambodia

Proceedings of the First National Forestry Extension Workshop
03-05 May 2000
Department of Forestry and Wildlife Conference Room

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Background	
Activities Leading to the Workshop	2
Results of the Workshop	4
Summary of Results	10
Recommendations	12

Abbreviations

AEA	Agro-Ecosystem Analysis
AEW	Agricultural Extension Worker
AIS	Agricultural Information System
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CAAEP	Cambodia Australia Agricultural Extension Project
CARDI	Cambodian Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARERE	Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project
CGFP	Cambodian-German Forestry Project
CIAP	Cambodia IRRI Australia Project
DFW	Department of Forestry and Wildlife
DTEE	Department of Technique, Economic and Extension
EWG	Extension Working Group
EPP	Extension Program Package
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IO	International Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MOE	Ministry of Environment
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development

NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OTE	Office of Technique and Economic
OTEE	Office of Technique, Economic and Extension
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
PRDC	Provincial Rural Development Committee
SMS	Subject Matter Specialist
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VDC	Village Development Committee

List of Annexes

1. Workshop Schedule
 2. Participant's List
 3. Action Planning Working Group Outcome
 4. Transect Profile
 5. Venn Diagram
 6. Consultant Terms of Reference
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1. Introduction

Contemporary forestry issues and conditions in Cambodia are complex and varied. Ranging from national parks and conservation zones to concessions and multi-use forested lands, a great number of persons and organisations are involved in some way or another at various levels. Historically it has been the conservation and management aspects to forestry that have received the most attention and recognition. However, these approaches are not always adequate or specifically the most appropriate for certain aspects of forestry. With this in mind it has been proposed by the Department of Forestry and Wildlife, and the Cambodian German Forestry Project, to strengthen and promote a system of forestry extension throughout the country in order to better meet the challenge of improving the Nation's stewardship of its forest resources. To this end, a National Forestry Extension Workshop was held from 03-05 May 2000 at the Department of Forestry and Wildlife.

2. Background

The GTZ Cambodian-German Forestry Project has been in operation in Cambodia since November 1996. The project is being implemented in partnership with the Royal Government of Cambodia, through the Department of Forestry and Wildlife. The GTZ CGFP works in the areas of Forestry Extension, Community Forestry, Forestry Education (SAPL, RUA), Forest Policy and Institution Strengthening.

With ever-growing demands being placed on Cambodia's forests today, including at the community level, it is becoming increasingly important to raise the awareness of forest-related issues and sustainable solutions, a task in which forestry extension will play a major role.

The workshop itself was proposed with this in mind, with the goal of ***Improving Forestry Extension Practices in Cambodia***.

The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

1. Examine existing extension systems in Cambodia.
2. Identify the various stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities.
3. Recommend improvements to be made within the extension system.
4. Define cooperation and coordination linkages.
5. Produce an Action Plan addressing the issues raised during the workshop.

3. Activities Leading to the Workshop

a. Field Survey

A survey was conducted in Kampong Speu Province, Oudong District, in four Communes in February 2000. The forest and environment of the survey area has rapidly degraded since a large number of families migrated into the region in 1979. The supply of firewood and other forest products has steadily decreased. The people rely on firewood for cooking and especially for palm sugar production.

The project is now in the process of continuing to analyze the survey results and the data from 13 villages surveyed.

b. Case Study

The target area of the CGFP forestry extension component is in Oudong District, Kampong Speu Province. The DFW and project are preparing further activity in the area following on the results of the survey. To build a solid base of information and experience for the *Forestry Extension Working Group* (EWG) and to increase their confidence level in forestry extension, a case study on forestry activities in the target area was conducted prior to the workshop.

Prior to the case study, members of the EWG were trained by the Consultant in methods and techniques in agro-ecosystem analysis, transect modeling, PRA and matrix modeling.

In the early stages of the case study, a series of meetings were held between the EWG members, the Provincial Forestry Office, the Provincial Extension office and the Provincial Department of Agriculture. Similar meetings were later held at the District level. A key result of these meetings was the active participation of the local authorities both during the case study and for the workshop.

The target area has been determined, after conducting an analysis based upon available secondary data, to be dominated by three *agro-ecosystems*:

1. Degraded forested land.
2. Recently cleared of forest/newly cultivated land.
3. Rice paddy fields.

Within this set of environmental conditions, the majority of families make a significant part of their living from the palm sugar industry, which is heavily dependant upon fuel wood for boiling of the sugar palm sap, rendering it into sugar.

Palm sugar production is the dominant source of income in the area and also a major work activity, as is wet

season rice production. The bulk of the production of each takes place at different times of the year. Some marginally forested areas are being cleared for rice land, continuing the decline in fuel wood availability for cooking and palm sugar production.

Along with the decline in fuel wood due to the disappearing forest, the market price of palm sugar is decreasing. The problems are magnified by the fact that most of the inhabitants possess no knowledge or skills to adapt to other forms of income generation. Low income from both rice and palm sugar production often places the people in a position of vulnerability. When there is a crisis they have to borrow rice, money or other items, placing them into debt. Families without access to forest resources are the most vulnerable of all to this phenomenon. They are likely to have the highest debts and the least amount of income.

The majority of the people recognize the importance of tree planting to mitigate some of the causes of their problem. They will also need to take some of the responsibility at the local level for the management of their forest resources.

The current condition of this system is deteriorating and is not sustainable in its current form. The pressure on the degraded forest is too great. The degraded forests need better management and at the same time, the people need to diversify their livelihood activities and turn to income generating alternatives to palm sugar production.

Part of the case study entailed the villager's analyzing their problems and making a community action plan. These and other outputs were presented at the workshop.

c. Forestry Extension Working Group, Cooperation With the Department of Extension

Formation of a Forestry Extension Working Group (EWG) was a first step in the process of organising the workshop. The EWG was formed consisting of various DFW staff, three from the Forestry Extension Unit and two from the Administration Section. The GTZ Community and Forestry Extension Advisor and Consultant facilitated the EWG meetings.

The Department of Extension cooperated with the development of the workshop by preparing and presenting an overview of the extension system in Cambodia. Staff of the DTE also assisted the EWG in the early phases of workshop development.

4. Results of the Workshop

a. Presentations

The presentations went as scheduled and formed an important foundation for the main discussions and group sessions of the workshop. Material from these presentations can be found in the annex of this report.

b. SWOT Analysis of the Extension System for Forestry

Four working groups were involved in the conducting of a SWOT analysis of the Extension System for Forestry. Each group presented their findings to the Plenary. The main results of the SWOT Analysis are as follows:

Strengths

1. Forest Resources: Preserves, Concessions, Community, Plantations.
2. Forestry extension unit has been formed within the DFW.
3. Professional DFW staff are enthusiastic.
4. Duties, procedures and regulations exist.
5. Cooperation with the Department of Extension and T.V.K. (Government Television Station) in media production and programming.
6. Professional forestry staffs at provincial level are in place.
7. Received support from NGOs and IOs.
8. National Arbor Day recognised.

9. Working plan.
10. Interest and commitment from DFW and the Government.
11. Have some extension materials including publications, posters, brochures and videos.

Weaknesses

1. Low skill level and capacity of Forestry Extension Staff.
2. Roles and functions of the extension workers not yet clearly defined.
3. Low Motivation.
4. No Action Plans.
5. Lack of communication between DFW and Provincial Forestry Office.
6. Equipment for forestry extension officers to implement their work is unavailable or is insufficient.
7. DFW "extension system" or "extension liaison" is not clearly defined within the Department of Extension.
8. An official declaration or sub-decree concerning a "forestry extension system" has not yet occurred.
9. Tendency exists towards setting up and implementing a parallel forestry extension system.
10. Legal and enforcement framework for forestry extension workers not yet defined.
11. Extension Program Packages for different forestry extension messages and methods are not yet available.
12. Forestry staff is more concerned with "Logging check points" than with delivering extension.
13. No forestry extension network from National to local level exists.
14. Forestry units are not linked to the district agriculture office or local authority.
15. Unified "training system" for forestry extension worker is not yet developed or available.
16. Provincial and district forestry intervention activity plans are not yet readily available.
17. Linkages of forestry staff with agricultural extension staff are under developed.
18. Working environment is underdeveloped.
19. Operational budget for an effective "forestry extension system" does not exist.
20. Presently the forestry offices at the provincial level are mainly advising on technological matters and not so concerned with villagers and their role in forestry.
21. IO's and NGO's ideas of forestry extension strategies and systems are not necessarily in line with the government system.
22. Monitoring and Evaluation for forestry extension is not yet available.

Opportunities

1. Conduct forestry research because the information would help improve extension program development and delivery.
2. Increase cooperation with local authorities & NGOs.
3. Work with Office of Extension in the province.
4. Operate through the extension agents to promote forestry extension awareness and issues.
5. Work through "contact farmers" in the VDCs and CDCs to get forestry extension information across to villagers.
6. Give the forestry extension unit in DFW the mandate to run forestry extension system activities in cooperation with other stakeholders.
7. Identify alternative income generating opportunities.
8. Adapt existing extension services by other organizations, harnessing their best practices.
9. Clearly define roles & responsibilities of forestry extension services and programs.
10. Learn from existing agricultural extension personnel in the province.
11. Collect, maintain & share information relevant to the forestry extension program.
12. Make training in forestry extension a priority for farmers.
13. Define the mission of the forestry extension system.
14. Prepare a strategic plan.
15. Secure funding support from NGOs, especially for local projects and activities.
16. Develop an annual Action Plan.
17. Define the Roles and Responsibilities of extension officers.
18. Develop forestry extension program packages.
19. Foster cooperation between people, authorities and stakeholders.
20. Establish a clear line of communication through all levels (networks).

Threats

1. Contradicting messages from the government telling people to protect the forest while forest concessionaires openly extract timber.
2. Pressure from powerful persons.
3. Local people have no conception of forestry extension.

4. Security concerns from mined areas, robbery and banditry.
5. Market demand on forest products outstrips sustainable supply (as the situation currently exists).
6. Weak land titles or titling system.
7. Land grabbing and encroachment.
8. Stakeholders do not want to cooperate (lack of interest).
9. Some development activities in the forest area negatively affect forestry extension work.
10. Natural disasters.
11. Traditional coping strategies of local people extracting forest resources.
12. Funding support from Government & NGOs late, not received or not enough.
13. NGOs recruit qualified extension workers by providing higher salaries (brain drain).
14. Local people have very low education or none at all.
15. Government policy on extension system is not clear.
16. Shifting cultivation

c. Focus Group Action Plans

Two working groups were formed to address selected problems brought out by the SWOT analysis. Six of the major weakness were selected by the Plenary for further examination. One group focused on developing an action plan at the national level and the second group worked from a provincial perspective.

National

Problem Issue 1: Low Capacity of Staff

Activities Addressing the Issue:

1. Develop National Forestry Extension System that includes all levels.
2. Support Forestry Extension Workers with Material Support.
3. Provide appropriate training to the staff.
4. Develop management and leadership capabilities of the staff.
5. Establish National Forestry Extension Working Group.
6. Encourage Linkages between stakeholders.
7. Create Forestry Information Management System.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- National and Provincial DFW.
- University or private training centers.
- JICA, other NGOs.
- MRC.
- IO's.

Expected Results:

- Increased Forestry Extension Skills of Staff.
- Staff highly trained in Management and Leadership abilities.
- Staff actively working at their jobs.
- Information freely and readily available for exchange.

Problem Issue 2: Role and Function of Forestry Extension Workers not yet clearly defined.

Activities Addressing the Issue:

0. Establish clear lines of communication at all levels.
1. Define the Mission of the Forestry Extension System.
2. National Forestry Extension Working Group Created.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- DFW and GTZ.
- DFW and Provincial/District Offices.

Expected Results:

- *Roles and Responsibilities of Extension Workers clearly identified.*
- *Improved performance of Extension Workers.*
- *Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Forestry Extension System.*

Problem Issue 3: No Action Plan or Forestry Extension Program Packages.

Activities Addressing the Issue:

1. Identify staff roles and responsibilities with TORs.
2. Provide proper equipment and material support.
3. Identify scope of cooperation between authorities and stakeholders.
4. Develop relevant forestry extension program packages.
5. Perform regular monitoring and evaluation of activities.
6. Conduct regular reporting.
7. Expand target area to two more pilot sites.
8. Implement the workshop recommendations.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- DFW.
- PFO.
- GTZ
- Stakeholders.

Expected Results:

- *Roles of extension workers clearly defined.*
- *Improved functioning of forestry extension program.*
- *Effective Monitoring and Evaluation system established.*
- *Activities implemented and extension packages developed.*

Provincial

Problem Issue 1: Lack of Communication between DFW and PFO regarding Forestry Extension.

Activities Addressing the Issue:

1. Establish Provincial Forestry Liaison Office.
2. Train PFO's staff and develop their TORs.
3. Provide support for developing Staff Training.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- MAFF
- DFW.

Expected Results:

- *Improved functioning and communication between National and Provincial Levels.*

Problem Issue 2: Lack of Equipment for Forestry Extension.

Activities Addressing the Issue:

1. Identify Material Needs.
2. Develop proposal with budget.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- MAFF
- DFW

Expected Results:

- *Staff better equipped to Manage Forestry Extension Programs.*

Problem Issue 3: Lack of Motivation

Activities Addressing the Issue:

1. Have regular staff meetings.
2. Initiate staff development program.
3. Prepare development goals.
4. Establish Forestry Information System.
5. Support Staff initiatives and field activities.

Responsible Actors to address some or all of the above:

- DFW.
- GTZ.
- MAFF.
- PFO.

Expected Results:

- *DFW and PFO show Improved Cooperation and Coordination.*
- *TORs are established for all Offices/Units.*
- *Job Descriptions are produced for all staff.*
- *Staff Effectively Trained.*
- *Study tours add to Staff Confidence levels.*

5. Summary of Results

In the course of the SWOT analysis and Focused Action Planning Groups, five major, dominant themes emerged for attention concerning future Forestry Extension System development. These are:

1. Capacity Building.
2. Roles and Functions of Extension Staff Defined.
3. Extension Material Prepared.
4. Increased Networking among stakeholders, including other government institutions,
5. Monitoring and Evaluation system established.

In addressing these issues, action is proposed as follows:

1. *Capacity Building:*

- a. Improve the management of the Extension Unit.
- b. Perform a Training Needs Assessment.
- c. Conduct Training where appropriate.
- d. Hold regular meetings at regular times.
- e. Provide supporting materials and equipment.

2. Roles and Functions of Extension Staff:

- a. Define the job tasks of extension unit members at national and provincial levels.
- b. Likewise, produce job descriptions for the same staff.
- c. Prepare an operational plan with appropriate amount of stakeholder participation.
- d. Facilitate formulation of Forestry Extension Policy with guidance for provincial levels.

3. Preparation of Extension Materials:

- a. Identify the appropriate topics for development of forestry extension program packages.
- b. Hold a workshop regarding preparation of forestry extension materials. .
- c. Disseminate the materials and establish a mechanism for feedback on their effectiveness and appropriateness.

4. Networking:

- a. Establish National Forestry Extension Working Group
- b. Establish links amongst different stakeholders at all levels and between levels. Cooperation with the extension offices at the provincial level will be of crucial importance in this area.
- c. Conduct further case studies to build a foundation upon which to build the national forestry extension system.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- a. Determine suitable M&E Tools.
- b. Set up an effective M&E system.

6. Recommendations

a. National

- i. Initiate National Forestry Extension Working Group
- ii. Promote GTZ-CGFP support to FEU through leadership development, staff training, and assistance with job descriptions.
- iii. Foster cooperation among stakeholders and other government offices through further workshops and forums.

b. Provincial

- i. Establish Forestry Extension Liaison Unit in each provincial forestry office to work in close coordination with the provincial offices of extension as Subject Matter Specialists.
- ii. Where established, the PFO and district extension workers cooperate with the PRDC, VDCs and CDCs, a part of the CARERE SEILA system. The main advantage to this is many of the structures and systems already in place by SEILA can be utilised by the forestry department and offices for extension and other purposes as required. Where they do not yet exist, lessons learned from the SEILA system can be helpful in establishing and assimilating needed organisational and administrative structures
- iii. Regular meetings are held between central and provincial extension units, and between provincial and districts level.

c. General

- i. That the GTZ-CGFP facilitate the flow of adequate and fair budgetary support for material needs and implementation of field and other activities.

d. Specific Recommendations from the Consultant, from the point of view as a former Advisor to the Cambodian Department of Extension.

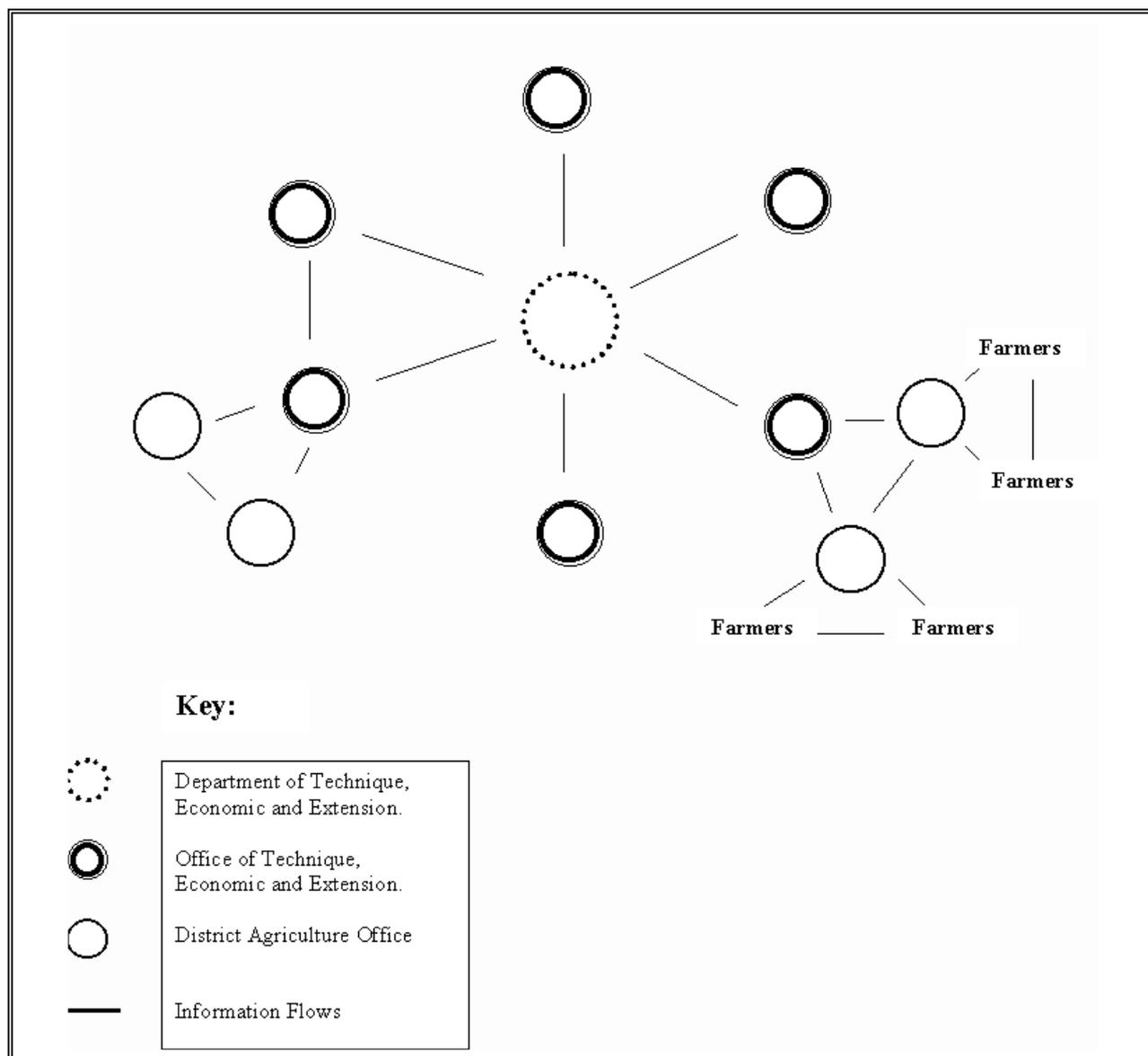
- i. That the DFW Forestry Extension Unit set itself up as an Extension Liaison Unit (ELU), and work with and contribute to the existing and still developing extension system in Cambodia.
- ii. That this model be expanded to the Province, setting up Provincial Forestry Extension Liaison Offices (ELO).
- iii. That both the ELU and Provincial ELU's cooperate and coordinate closely with DTEE and OTEE counterparts.
- iv. That this cooperation focus on but not limit itself to:

Acting as the *Forestry Subject Matter Specialist* within the context of the Extension System

- a. Work with the DTEE and OTEE as appropriate in further development of Agro/Forest-Ecosystem Analysis and Transect Modeling for the existing Target Zone, Oudong, and for Future Target Zones.
- b. Work closely with the DTEE and OTEE as appropriate in the development of Forestry Extension Program Packages (FEPPs). The ELU will need to take responsibility in developing the overall framework regarding the structure of the FEPPs.
- c. Work closely with the provincial OTEE in setting up and managing any type of demonstration activity.
- d. Review the guidelines developed by the DTEE regarding the formation and empowerment of groups, especially regarding community forestry activities.
- e. Become an active component of the Agricultural Information System, in the drive to foster a two-way flow of information from the field to central levels and vice versa, and from and between remote field locations.
- f. Actively engage in extension activities jointly with DTEE and/or OTEE staff during the second phase of the CAAEP, which will begin in late 2000, in thirteen provinces, including Kampong Speu.
- g. That the above considerations include the district level where by the actual base of extension activity dynamically interfaces in a two-way flow of information, between communities and farmers, extension workers, the Provincial Forestry and Extension Offices, and the Central levels in Phnom Penh.

For this to be effective, the forestry and extension sections of the district agricultural offices need to work closely with their offices at the provincial level. In addition to being the main interface between communities and the authoritative offices, extension related data on forest information and other types of information are gathered and compiled by the district offices. It is therefore extremely important that the extension information system has a unified and standardised procedure of data compilation, storage, dissemination and feedback, which is primarily the responsibility of the provincial extension offices. Figure 1, based on the existing agricultural extension system in Cambodia, illustrates this concept.

Figure I: Model Depicting Extension Information System Flows.



Alternative Strategies.

a). A Dedicated Forestry Extension System.

A parallel extension system for forestry was one of the proposals brought out during the workshop. This would give the DFW FEU greater responsibility in the overall development of a forestry extension, including development of forestry extension delivery guidelines, media production, and development of forestry extension program packages.

In addition, a massive undertaking in training of staff in the above procedures would need to be programmed and funded. Also, means of delivery, such as provision of extension worker motorbikes, fuel and per diem allowances, etc, would have to be considered.

Finally, cooperation and other linkages between the forestry extension unit and other NGOs, IO,s and government agencies would take on a level of focus forestry-based extension activities, rather than a holistic systems approach. This would need to be considered carefully, especially in the area of community forestry where extension is concerned.

b). Community Based Forestry Extension.

This is an adaptation of the farmer-led extension approach, which is gaining in popularity in Cambodia and has met with some success in other countries. Given the fact that a national extension system is continuing to be developed in Cambodia through the Department of Extension, it would make sense to coordinate such an activity with them. The DFW forestry extension unit could perhaps even take a lead role in refining some of the community based extension techniques applicable to the unique situation of farmers and communities dependant upon forest resources in Cambodia.

For further reading:

1. Mason, P. (2000) Data Sets Standardisation and Management for Extension in Cambodia. CAAEP.
2. Mason, P. (1999) Model for the Development of a Cambodian Agricultural Information System. CAAEP.
3. Cox, P., Mason, P. and S. Mak (1999). Agricultural Research and Extension Systems in Cambodia: the Management of Change. CIAP-CAAEP.
4. Extension System Guidelines (1999). DTEE-CAAEP.