



Civil works, Chheu Khmao, Kandal, feb 2015 (© GRET)

GRET

Professionnels du
développement
solidaire

iSEA

Supporting & promoting piped water supply in Cambodia

Key challenges in supporting the private sector in water supply

An original characteristic of the Cambodian context is the presence of an important number of private operators in the water supply sector. Indeed, 400 were counted and 127 recognized by the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft in 2014. In small towns, they have invested large amounts in piped water systems providing regular supply to hundreds of thousands of people. However, despite this investment, most of them have difficulties to extend their facilities, obtain sustainable funding (through commercial loans), invest in less profitable areas and in day-to-day management of their facilities (low quality design, lacks of skills in terms of technical and financial recording and management, ...).

Since 2000, GRET has accumulated an important experience in providing support to those operators mainly through grant schemes.

Create a business incubator

Launched in January 2012 and institutionalized in 2015, iSEA intends to be the first Cambodian business incubator dedi-

cated to Water Supply Entrepreneurs. iSEA's objectives and missions are to support, enhance and develop water utilities in the country so that a greater number of Cambodian entrepreneurs have access to competitive, quality, lasting professional services. The key added-value of iSEA among others is the offer of **professional, reliable and comprehensive** services to enhance the water service expansion and management. This offer is provided in three main packages:

- > Business brokering services to facilitate access to finance;
- > Smart engineering and business solutions for water supply infrastructures;
- > Coaching and training supports tailored for water supply entrepreneurs.

Objectives

The project aims to support the institutionalization of iSEA:

- > To test the existence of a market-based demand for quality technical assistance;
- > To standardize processes from feasibility studies to handover and commissioning of works;
- > To improve performances of operators keeping the objective to extend networks and reduce their tariffs.

Objective of project

- To scale-up technical assistance through a market-based approach.
- To increase access to piped water supply in small towns, properly managed by private operators.
- To improve knowledge sharing, references production on supporting the private sector in enhancing its services

The project in numbers

- At least 5 contracts signed and fully paid by private operators for technical assistance.
- More than 5,000 households connected will benefit from the improvement of the services.
- Propose services for brownfield projects as well as green field ones.

Problems of technical design (© GRET)



Implementation phases

> Launching marketing and communication around iSEA's concept:

- Preparation of corporate communication tools.
- Participation in workshops & dissemination through networking.
- Signature of at least 5 contracts.

> Standardization of tools for investment project support through the follow-up of 5 projects:

- Socio-economic & technical studies.
- Construction works supervision.
- Handing-over and commissioning.
- Technical and management training of the water service providers.

> Structuring the business model and developing tools:

- iSEA's business model and internal processes (financial, technical and HR management processes) are defined.
- Official registration underway.

> Knowledge sharing between GRET teams and production of references for the sector:

- Organization of regional seminar.
- Organization of an international workshop & articles.

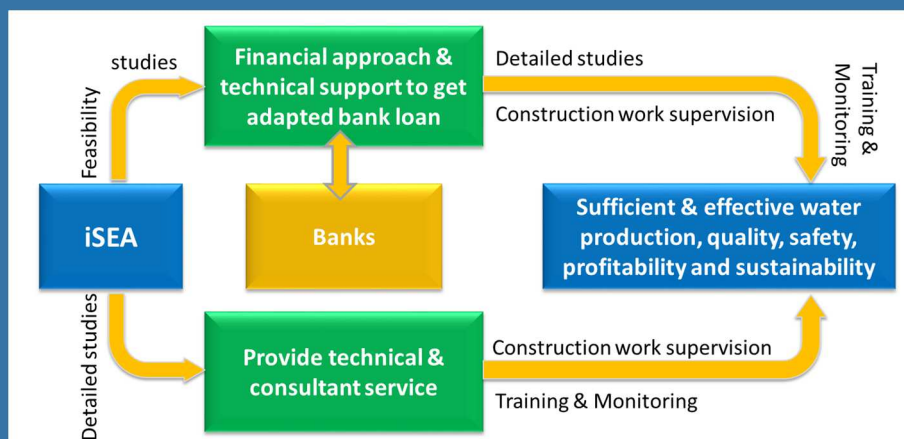
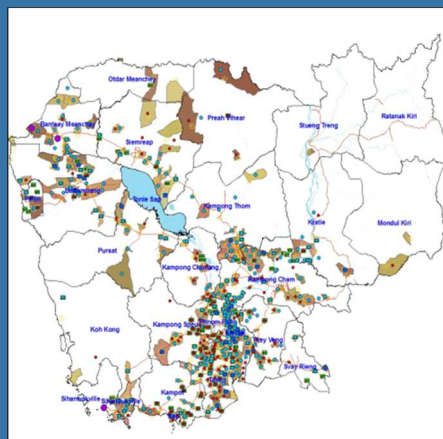


EXPECTED RESULTS

- iSEA is created, acknowledged as a key stakeholder of the sector providing high quality services to operators ;
- At least investment five projects are supported, implemented by iSEA in a standardized way, providing supply to more than 5,000 households.

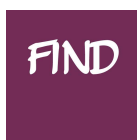
- In Chheu Khmao and Pouthiban projects, subsidized by UNICEF in the framework of a Partnership agreement, smart subsidy approaches are set-up in order to reduce the tariffs and the connection fees and encourage connections in arsenic affected areas.
- GRET shares its experience in providing support to private sector in small towns to the main development's partners.

iSEA's market and services flow



Photos: © GRET

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Active in Cambodia since 1988, GRET is a international development NGO that has been actively fighting poverty and inequalities for 38 years on all levels and in a broad range of subjects.

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