Laos PDR
POVERTY REDUCTION FUND (PRF III)
Road Maintenance Groups (RMG)
What are Road Maintenance Groups (RMGs)?

- Small groups of 3-10 local people hired (women only) to carry out routine maintenance through the Poverty Reduction Fund project
- Basic cleaning and clearing activities + minor repairs
  - Clean and excavate side drains
  - Clean culverts
  - Clear causeways and bridges
  - Control vegetation
- Average input of 50 person-days per km per year
  - RMG paid a fixed monthly lumpsum
  - Monthly inspection of road conditions
  - Deductions if road conditions do not comply with performance standards
- All RMG members were women selected from poorest families and most of them illiterate
- RMG members trained for ½ day theory + ½ day practical followed by on-the-job training during first 3 months:
  - 2 visits per month (including 1 inspection)
  - Further explanation and demonstration (especially work programming)
RMG maintenance activities - Side and mitre drains

- Clear drains, excavate new drains and place scour checks if needed.
RMG maintenance activities - Culverts

- Clean culvert pipes and inlet/outlets and repair erosion to pipes or headwalls
RMG maintenance activities - Causeways and bridges

- Clear blockages and repair erosion
RMG maintenance activities - Obstacles and landslides

- Remove obstacles and landslides and report large landslides and damages
Shoulders
Side drains
Vegetation control
Bridges/Causeways
Scour checks
Potholes
Landslides
Ruts/rills
Culverts
Tools and safety equipment

• Tools and safety equipment provided by PRF
  – High transport costs (wheelbarrows)
  – Not always suitable tools (bush knife)
  – Some RMGs insufficient quantities (rake)
  – Some tools broken – no tool repair budget

• Safety equipment
  – Reflective vest (often not worn)
  – Warning flags – to be replaced by safety cones
  – First-aid kit to be supplied in future (bandages, antiseptic, alcoholic wipes)
  – Hats and boots to provide additional protection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pickaxe</td>
<td>1 per 3 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoe</td>
<td>1 per 2 members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shovel</td>
<td>1 per 2 members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rake</td>
<td>1 per RMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bush knife</td>
<td>1 per member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wheelbarrow</td>
<td>1 per RMG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety vest</td>
<td>1 per member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warning flags</td>
<td>2 per RMG</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• Road conditions improved in all instances
• Heads of village, community members all mentioned improved road conditions and improved access (especially during rainy season)
• Ministry of Public Work remarked that RMG roads were significantly better than other roads
• Women truly empowered by these activities and demonstrated that social norms improvement are possibly in Laos!
• A successful pilot phase with great evidences led to have the activities fully integrated in the Project
THANK YOU