

Entry No. IRRC-0203

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
Select Theme	: Sustainable and equitable farming systems
Endorsement email	:
Keyword 1	: Mechanization
Keyword 2	: Sustainable management practices
Keyword 3	: Sustainable intensification
Title of Entry	: Recent developments in supporting value chain support services for agricultural mechanization of rice based cropping systems in Cambodia
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Select only one type of presentation : 15 minute oral presentation

Abstract : Abstract: In Cambodia about 60% of the work force are employed in agriculture with rice as the major crop. Rice production has increased over the last decades leading to increasing exports, but still falling short of the 1 million tons targeted in the country's rice sector development strategy. Labor shortage and an ageing farming population are main drivers for mechanizing rice based farming systems. Land preparation is fully mechanized and most of the fields are now combine harvested. Transplanting almost completely disappeared due to high labor requirement and most farmers establish the crop by broadcasting, either manually or using simple machines. Fertilizer and pesticide application is still done manually or with backpack spreaders or knapsack sprayers. To increase resource use efficiency and decrease pollution and negative effects on operators' health these operations should be further mechanized. Various institutions from the Government and development projects are providing technical solutions like rice seeders, fertilizer spreaders, land leveling equipment, mechanical weeding, and equipment for grain and seed cleaning but often lack capacity; even small manufacturers come up with their own designs, which sometimes are not very efficient. Value chain support services like after sales service provision or financing are only rudimentarily developed, some farmers bring their machines to Vietnam for repair. IRRI is therefore working with national partners on capacity building at different levels. To increase Cambodia's innovation system capacity we collaborate with the Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) on establishing an academic curriculum for the Faculty for Agricultural Engineering. For building up after sales services we are working with Don Bosco in Battambang on the establishment of a vocational training program for Agricultural Machinery Mechanics. By 2017 24 agricultural engineers have graduated and 23 apprentices completed their training and found employment in the agricultural industry and are contributing to a more sustainable mechanization.

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