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Cambodia has long stretches of pristine beaches. However, tourism is highly concentrated in the area around the temples of Angkor. To spread the economic benefits of tourism, the Asian Development Bank is helping the Ministry of Tourism promote coastal tourism by improving infrastructure and environmental management.

## Transcript

**Kampot, Cambodia** - Cambodia has long stretches of pristine beaches, widely recognized as the world's most beautiful landscape.

However, tourism is highly concentrated in the temples of Angkor.

To spread the economic benefits of tourism, the government is prioritizing the coastal areas.

"The government has been working on new policies to diversify tourism products and attract tourists to other destinations, especially the coastal and the northeast region," explains Sok Sokun, Deputy Director General of Cambodia's Ministry of Tourism.

"I think the coastal area has a huge potential for tourism growth."

ADB is a key supporter of this diversification policy. The Greater Mekong Subregion Tourism Infrastructure for Inclusive Growth Project is helping the Ministry of Tourism promote sustainable tourism in three provinces of Kampot, Kep, and Koh Kong.

Construction of the first marine passenger pier in Kampot is ongoing.

It is expected to service 360,000 international tourists, including from Viet Nam and Thailand, when it opens in 2020.

“The development of the seaport will promote waterway tourism, connecting tourists from neighboring countries,” says Soy Sinol, Director of Kampot region at the Department of Tourism.

“I think the number of tourists visiting Kampot will increase, thus boosting local economic activities.”

The development promotes local economies and offers income opportunities for local people, including women.

Kep is Cambodia’s smallest coastal town. Its popular crab market hosts 300 vendors and 1.8 million tourists annually. Some 100 cubic meters of wastewater flowed directly into the sea every day, damaging coastal environment.

To address the issue, the project built a wastewater treatment plant, connecting restaurants to the sewage system.

“Before authorities installed the sewage system, my restaurant had no customers because of the dirty wastewater,” explains Loung Kim Koun, a restaurant owner from Kep.

“After the sanitation system was installed, there is no waste flowing into the sea and no smell. I now have at least 20 customers each day.”

It also improved the crab market structure, constructed a tourism information center and toilets, and upgraded walking paths.

“ADB would like to make sure that there are adequate infrastructures in the tourism site and also to ensure that all tourism stakeholders have the capacity to address potential negative impacts, such as the degradation of the environment and cultural heritage, which may be caused by tourism mismanagement,” clarifies Nida Ouk, a senior project officer at ADB.

Over 2,700 people, including women, benefited from training on services delivery, market promotion, and hospitality. Many of them now have better jobs and income.

They have greatly developed themselves. Before they joined the training, they were low-level staff,” says MOUNG SOMAVATEY, a hospitality trainer from Kep.

“Following the training, they gained better skills and knowledge and have become fixed term staff with good salaries.”

The project supports ADB’s strategy in helping Cambodia transform secondary towns into more economically inclusive and competitive tourist destinations.

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