



The Global Partnership on Output-Based Aid

Vietnam: Inauguration Ceremony for the Binh Chanh Water Scheme

September 17, 2008

Speech Given by Xavier Chauvot de Beauchêne, Task Manager for the GPOBA Vietnam Rural Water Project

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to be here today for this important event marking the inauguration ceremony of the water scheme of Binh Chanh.

This scheme will provide clean and safe water to more than 400 families here in Binh Chanh. Until now, the source of water was open shallow wells, smelling bad, due to high concentrations of iron sulfate; drying out from time to time during the dry season, and potentially polluted by chemical and bacterial contamination. Of course, this water was boiled before it was used. It certainly killed the bacteria present in the water. It may not have removed the bad smell. It certainly did not remove the chemical pollutants. I am sure all of you know someone around you who suffered at some point from digestive problems, disease or skin problems due to the water coming out of these wells. The water to be provided out of this scheme is treated to the highest standards and is safe to drink. On top of that it is delivered right at your doorstep. No need to spend a lot of time to go collect this water and to carry these heavy jerry cans around any more. Of course, you will have to find another use for these jerry cans. In the meantime, this water scheme will bring you a real comfort.

This scheme was developed thanks to a fantastic collective effort. East Meets West Foundation, with support from the World Bank through the Global Partnership on Output-Based Aid, managed and orchestrated this effort from the very beginning. They have done an excellent job and we can thank them very much for that. Their work was carried out in close collaboration and with the help of the Commune People's Committee, of the head of hamlets, and with the contribution and collaboration of all the families who requested a connection to the service. Your efforts and good work together led to the realization of this important accomplishment for the hamlets of the commune of Binh Chanh, leading to 430 households connected to date, a figure significantly higher than the 358 households who originally registered for a connection. This gives you a token of the good work carried out here.

What is happening today is an important step. It marks the end of the construction period and the transfer of responsibility from the East Meets West Foundation to the Commune People's Committee, who will be responsible for its operation and maintenance from today on. This responsibility will be shared. The CPC chose two water managers, who will have the day-to-day responsibility to manage this scheme, under the leadership of the system management

board. The water managers will work to ensure delivery of a good quality service. They will rely on you to enjoy the service, pay for water fees in accordance with your consumption, and be vigilant to report possible operations problems, such as pipe breaks or leaks, to the water managers. And if you are satisfied with the service, tell people around you as it may encourage other families to request a connection to the service as well.

You heard previous speakers insist on sustainability. This will only work if all of you do your part to ensure that this system remains a wealth to the people of Binh Chanh for a long time. This scheme is among the first to be developed with support from the grant from the Global Partnership on Output-Based Aid. As such, you have an opportunity to make of Binh Chanh an example, as the authorities all the way to Hanoi are looking into successful models to develop similar schemes in other communes in Vietnam. I would like to congratulate you for making this a reality. I count on you to ensure that this scheme continues to provide the people of Binh Chanh with clean and safe water for a very very long time.

Thank you very much. Cảm ơn.