

# ASIAN OUTREACH CAMBODIA SIX MONTH REPORT 2013.



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# DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

## SUSTAINABILITY: LASTING CHANGE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Sustainability has been the pet concept of the development sector for some time now. Here is our Director, Thong Romanea's take on what sustainability really means for AOC as a Christian organisation.

### WHAT SUSTAINABILITY MEANS FOR AOC:

I do not really like to use this word myself, I prefer the term lasting transformation. To me it's more about the spirit, the soul; the person must have peace inside themselves. If there is no transformation of spirit and soul, there is no real platform from which to transform the physical situation.

Government records show that in 2011 there were almost 4000 registered NGOs in Cambodia, all apparently working towards sustainable change. What have we achieved that is lasting? I believe in order to really see change, we need to understand the deeper background, the psychological and spiritual issues of our nation.

### UNDERSTANDING OUR HARVEST FIELD

For the past 100 years, Cambodia has gone through so much conflict and unrest, with no peace time in which to build, and no leaders to look up to. From civil war, to wars with our neighbours, to the Khmer Rouge, our nation has been from one calamity to the next. At the close of last century, our infrastructure was decimated and there was nothing on which to base any kind of rebuilding. When the NGOs came in the early 1990s, they found it challenging to find human resources, there was no one left with any skills or capacity. The first 10 years of humanitarian work it was all about capacity building, training the locals to be agents of change.

While many NGOs may have provided capacity building, not all of them understood the real damage to the heart of the nation. The Khmer people have lost their soul. Violence, hatred, mistrust, killing, malnutrition, hunger, these were the daily realities of the people. No one was left to lead us, and our national self-confidence was shattered. What remained of the older generation were cowed and damaged, none were there to advise the younger ones. Many Cambodians of my age or older are frustrated in their role as parents; what we pass on to our children is the damage, hurt and resentment we have from our past. So the cycle continues.

Our parents told us if you want to survive, you have to plant a tree within yourself that is deaf, dumb and blind. So when you see corruption in the community, an official taking money, or someone being abused by power, you do not speak up.

Many are frustrated by their situation, but they have no confidence, no hope for the future, no forgiveness, no love towards others, and so nothing changes. Personal vengeance is the only way to stay alive.

It doesn't matter if you are a Christian NGO or not, often if you go into a village to put in a well or a health centre, you will find that they are not being used. Roads are not being maintained. This is related to the mindset and the damaged dignity of our people. If people don't have inner peace, any help you offer they won't appreciate, but will be trapped by fearful or limited thinking, suspicions, ungratefulness and many other worries. They may appear to receive the gift, but they will not care for it. When they truly appreciate something, they will own it. It will be sustainable.



Cambodian refugees during the Khmer Rouge occupation

### THE ANSWER IS INNER PEACE

To make lasting transformation, there has to be inner healing; healing of broken dignity and rest for lost souls. We have to understand our harvest field. When we understand the deep hurt of the people and our role as Christians, then we can be a channel for healing.

The work of Jesus Christ was to come from heaven to earth to walk like us, to eat like us, to be with us. He can understand and heal us from the inside out. We are called to do the same.

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage.” John 14:27

As followers of Jesus we have the grace of God, so while the scars are still there, the power of grace is healing us. Today there are approximately two percent Christians in our nation and only a few of these are being a real influence in their lost communities.

### THE LVEA EM EXAMPLE

We first started in Lvea Em district, across the river from the capital, in 1994. At that time there were no Christians and there was a very hopeless atmosphere. Today, with our focus on building up the local church, around 15% of the population claim to be Christ followers. The local authorities say that where there are believers, there is less violence and people seem to love and care for each other. They have more of what we call a “life talent” - knowledge and motivation to plan for their future, because they have hope and peace.

The people in Lvea Em know AOC, that we are Christian. All teachers, community leaders, authorities welcome us through the local churches who we work with, in stark contrast to when we first came. Many come to our Christian activities, because they realise that the change it brings is real. They accept us, they are open to the gospel, and they realise that there is peace in their community.

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### HOW TO COMMUNICATE TRANSFORMATION

Sometimes I’m frustrated because what we do seems to have only a small initial impact. I know it takes time to transform the person from within and you cannot see it or easily express it to the world. It’s easy to talk about the number of wells you build or the number of families you give loans to, but it’s much harder to talk about how many have been really transformed, free from the inside out.

**The best we can do is tell stories of change.**

Please go to the Project Reports section, where you can read some stories of people’s lives being transformed. Please also keep our nation in your prayers. Pray for God’s peace to prevail in people’s hearts and communities.

A beneficiary from the Water & Sanitation project



Believers in Lvea Em



## PERSONNEL & TEAMS UPDATE

AOC has had some recent expatriate staff changes. Katy Dyer returned to New Zealand to join Grahame and their children for nine months leave. Matthew and Kerrie-Anne Crosby have joined the team to work in marketing, communications and strategic planning. Young married couple Ben and Hannah Wideman join us for six months as interns from our close partner, Samaritan’s Purse Canada.

In June we also received a visit from John Grover and friends Jeff and Tim, who come from California and have partners and friends in ministry in Cambodia. It was great to spend time with them, share our heart and show them some of our projects.

# FIELD PARTNERS UPDATE

## FOOD MACHINE & HUNGRY FOR LIFE STUNG TRENG AGRICULTURE PROJECT

This project has been run in partnership with Hungry For Life and Food Machine and is a part of the broader land development plan for the Agriculture project in Stung Treng. Hungry For Life are the main funding partners for the Agriculture project. One aspect of the project is to trial innovations and efficient intensive farming techniques that can be implemented by rural farming communities. One of these innovations is hydroponics, which provides an extremely efficient and low-maintenance method to grow large amounts of food. Food Machine specialise in hydroponic units that simultaneously grow fish and vegetables, in a mutual nutrient cycle (go to: [foodmachine.org/how-it-works/](http://foodmachine.org/how-it-works/) for a short animation).

In mid-May, Morrie and Linda Pigott from Food Machine came to Stung Treng for a week to help set up the unit and teach the selected AOC staff how to use it. While they were with us they helped to install the liners, pumps and plumbing necessary to get the unit working properly.

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Construction began on the Food Machine in March 2013. A 30m x 30m fence was initially built with two entrance gates around the area where the Food Machine is to add extra protection for livestock. The Food Machine grow beds are constructed from timber, as it is the cheapest building medium in Stung Treng, both 20 meters long. The fish tank is made from double-layered bricks, holding up to 13,000 liters of water, with the complete unit holding 22,000 liters.

### CURRENT PROGRESS:

The Food Machine unit is currently functional in its unfinished form. Water is being pumped between the fish tank and grow beds, and 400 fish have been put in the tank. Vegetables have not yet been planted, as it will take up to three months for the fish to produce enough nutrients in the water to sustain the plants.

Morrie suggested it will be up to six months before we can plant out one full grow bed and up to nine months for both, so we will be looking at planting the first lot of vegetables shortly. With the current shortfall in funds, we have been unable to finish off the complete unit, including the framing and shade cloth covering to go over the grow beds and the planting/sorting shed. It is hoped once the remaining funds come in we will be able to complete the whole project quickly.

### EXPECTED COMMUNITY IMPACT:

As the food machine is still in the trial stages there has been no impact as yet on the communities we hope to reach. At this stage it will take a minimum of 12 months of set-up and trials before we are ready to roll out, but already we are excited by the incredible potential this project has to change the lives of rural Cambodians. One Food Machine unit of the same size as this one, has the capacity to ensure food security for at least 50 families, and for more if the unit is made larger.



Adding fish into the Food Machine hydroponics unit

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# ASSISTING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL (ACTS)

## Prey Veng & Kandal

### OVERVIEW

The ACTS project provides an opportunity to children from vulnerable and poor families to go to school, providing all the requirements needed, as well as further support for students who have missed out on schooling, parental training, support and evangelism with the families.

The project has been implemented in the remote districts of Por Rieng, Prey Veng province and Lvea Em in Kandal province. The activities involved in this project include: Extra tuition classes, offered to younger students to accelerate their school learning; Part-time classes for older children in grades three-nine; School visits; Home visits, which sometimes leads to further helping families in poverty or suffering debilitating illness; Parent training, particularly on the value of educating the next generation; And evangelism, which involves Sunday school classes for children.

A highlight in this first half of the year was celebrating International Children's Day on June 1st. The celebrations took place at Hun Sen Porthom primary school in Tameng village, and involved games, songs and an interactive question time. At least 280 children plus 40 adults (including education officers, teacher, commune authorities, and police and community members) participated.

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Sokaphana and children from the ACTS project



### Impact this year

- Improved the quality of education for 132 pupils, through 4 Extra Tuition Classes.
- At least 11 children among 51 have opportunity to access part-time classes in Math, Khmer or English to strengthen their capacity.
- 183 children have adequate clothing for attending school.
- 264 children & 36 adults participated in the child rights and safety awareness program as part of International Children's Day.
- Home and school visits.
- Every Sunday some of children from the project come to Sunday school.

### STORY OF CHANGE

Phy Charni is a seven year-old boy, studying in grade one at Hun Sen Porthoum Primary School in Tameng Village, Prek Antash commune, Por Reang district, in Prey Veng province. He has three younger brothers and two sisters. All six children are living with their grandmother and aunt, as their parents have been working in Thailand because of difficulty finding work in Cambodia.

On the 3rd of April when the ACTS teams visited Tameng village, to visit and follow up some of the children in the project, we met Phy Charni's aunt. We spent nearly an hour building relationship with her and the boy. We talked about the family situation, and about the boy's studies. Charni had not been sufficiently taken care of or encouraged by adults. The family live in a desperate situation, awaiting money from the children's parents in Thailand. Charni has not been pushed or motivated to study so he was a very slow learner and did not want to go to school.

Our staff often went to visit him at home and encouraged him to go to school and join the Extra Tuition Class (ETC) which is part of the ACTS project.

Today Charni is glad to be at school and is good at learning in class. Charni's aunt passed her thanks to AOC who also helped with the family income as well. "As I am his aunty, I really thank you for loving my nephew the same as other children in this village. I will help to teach him more at home. I also hope to see my nephew have a good future."

In the last few weeks, Charni's aunt met his teacher and he told her that, "Phy Charni is now clever, his score is at number one out of thirty-five students. His study is improving fast, although sometimes he is very quiet, and he has very good behaviour in class."

"I like school uniform and study materials like note books, pencils, pens, bag, and shoes. Thank you very much for everyone from Assisting Children to School Project for helping me with those things," Phy Charni said with a smile. "When I grow up I want to be a policeman, because I don't like bad people and I want to help good people," he said.

# AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

## Prey Veng

### OVERVIEW

**The intent of the Agricultural Livelihoods project is to increase the income of Cambodian farmers through improved agricultural technologies, to promote hygienic practices, and improvements to the rural diet.**

The Royal Cambodian Government (RCG) wants to enlarge the base of sustainable economic growth and accelerate poverty reduction. Around 85% of the population live in rural areas making a living through agriculture, but due to lack of skill and knowledge many only grow enough to survive on from day to day. The challenge is that many people don't have enough land to farm on or are landless, and they also do not have access to irrigation systems, technical knowledge in sustainable farm yields, or experience in animal raising.

The strategy of this project is, in tandem with the Water and Sanitation (WatSan) project, to provide technical training on home gardening, rice farming and animal raising, providing small loans for initial small business inputs. The project is run by two staff who work with village authorities to select 60 needy families from a lower socio-economic demographic. Additionally, the project aims to expand to more types of farming systems and to promote more widely in other villages in the region.

The Agricultural Livelihoods project shares expertise and successes with other AOC income generation projects, and works closely with the WatSan project in establishing village connections. We also look to work together with other organisations and projects in the target area and also with Pearang district Agriculture Office of the RCG.

#### Impact this year

- 30 households trained in: Rice planting; Effects of using chemical fertiliser and pesticide on environment; Natural compost and pesticide production; Mushroom planting; Crop planting; Home gardening; Animal raising (pigs and chickens); Agriculture marketing.
- Training also covers how to reduce expense and increase yield.
- 3 farmer support groups formed, so that people can help each other now and in the future.
- 30 households trained and monitored on health and hygiene practice.
- 30 household representatives were trained about diet and balanced nutrition; People understand what they are eating and the consequences.
- 30 household representatives received loan from AOC.

### STORY OF CHANGE

Mrs. Vong Savy is 38 years old and is one of the beneficiaries of the Agriculture Livelihoods Project in Lvea Kong village, Kompong Brang commune, Pea Raing district of Prey Veng Province. Savy is married to San Mean and they have two sons.

Savy and Mean are farmers, with two hectares of rice field. Savy also raises pigs for income and chickens for food supply. It was after participating in the training with AOC that she decided to raise pigs.

Savy purchased four female pigs for producing piglets. One sow raised eight piglets until four months of age, when Savy was able to sell them for \$1,690 USD, while paying only \$320 USD for their feed. The next female raised nine piglets and Savy sold them for \$1,900 USD. Because of the extra income, her family could buy wood for making walls for their house, as before they were made from palm leaves. In the rainy season they no longer have to be concerned about leaks.

Savy told us that she will continue to raise pigs. In the past many families in her village raised pigs the traditional way, which takes a lot of time and money, but now Savy's family have learnt about efficient ways of raising of pigs. AOC not only provided them the knowledge but also a start-up loan with low interest.

Savy has shared this new knowledge with her community. "Now I am raising three young pigs which will provide money to build a new cage that my husband is building. Three of the mother pigs will give birth in July and the other one in September this year. I want other farmers in my community to have the same knowledge and success in raising pigs," she said.



Vong Savy and her pigs

# AGRICULTURE & LAND DEVELOPMENT

## Stung Treng

### OVERVIEW

The Agricultural Livelihoods project has two goals. The first is to provide food security, reduce malnutrition and related illness, and bring an economic uplift to rural farmers. The second is to develop a model of ministry which is financially sustainable from an operational level.

The goal of developing the land is to establish a multi-purpose training facility and intensive farming trials area to be used to improve the livelihoods of the people in Stung Treng.

This will be achieved through training farmers in sustainable agricultural techniques, facilitating the development of marketing strategies, facilitating farmer cooperatives, building capacity for business, and providing micro-loans.

For more information about current land development activities, please refer to the Field Partner Update at the start of the report (Food Machine & Hungry For Life).

### Impact this year

- 2 farmer support groups formed with 25 households (11 females)
- 25 households are selected and trained in the two support groups. In the first group we trained 15 households (4 female) at An Lung Kromourn village and in the second group we trained 10 household (7 female) at Sre Ruessei village. We invited two trainers from Stung Treng department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to train on rice planting and pig raising.
- 25 target families received loans. These loans were used to grow cassava, cashew nut, sesame, soybean, beans, peanuts, rice, pigs, chicken, and vegetables.
- We met once with the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, twice with the Commune Council, twice with villagers and twice with the farmers support group leaders.

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Agricultural training sessions



### STORY OF CHANGE

Mrs. Sun Phun is 50 years old and has seven children. She lives in Sre Ruessei village, Sre Ruessei commune, Thala Borivath district, Stung Treng province. Here is her testimony from the recent Agriculture project training in her district:

“I am a farmer who has been working in my rice field and home garden for a long time in the traditional way. I have never before received training on relevant topics regarding agricultural techniques, as there were no agricultural trainers to help the people in our village. So we faced many problems with our crops, such as poor fertilisers and many pesticides that damage our crops. We suffered from low yields and food shortages every year. We have not had enough money to support our families because our income depends on our crops.”

“After AOC gave us training we all understood how to plant crops better. They also showed us how to produce natural fertilisers and natural pesticides. We will use these new techniques, we hope that our crops will improve and have better yields and good land and quality crop products. When we sell our crops we will now have more money to support our families.”

“Finally, on behalf of our village, I absolutely appreciate AOC in helping to train us in topics such as agriculture and health.”

# LIVELIHOODS / INCOME GENERATION

## Kandal

### OVERVIEW

**The Livelihoods project in Kandal province is a natural extension of the former HIV/AIDS/TB Homecare project. The goal is to provide much-needed income and greater food security to vulnerable families in the region.**

With the recent Royal Cambodian Government refocus from AIDS prevention and cure to economic sustainability as a result of dramatically improved infection rates, AOC has determined to appropriate this change in its projects. The result is that the former Homecare project will be working mostly with the same target group towards sustainable incomes. The target group include people living with HIV/AIDS and at-risk families, including widows, migrants and those otherwise classed as being “under the poverty line”.

Food security (and attendant issues such as unemployment, lack of land ownership, and/or lack of space for cropping) is the next natural concern noted by those suffering from debilitating illness such as AIDS or TB. By focusing on sustainable livelihoods for at-risk people, AOC is providing a way out of the illness/poverty cycle, rather than only focusing on short-term medical treatment (which is still important).

The project team together with village and commune leaders will select those who meet the at-risk criteria and who are dedicated to working with the AOC staff to make their business a success. Each group of beneficiaries will have 12 leaders, and there will be 12 groups covering all 60 families. The project has recently moved medical activities towards true sustainability activities, and some monitoring is still required for previous activities. Greater funding is required to fully support the intended livelihood goals.

#### Impact this year

- Loans were provided to 46 beneficiary families, to build their business and improve their quality of life. Some of the businesses include: selling goods, phone cards, raising vegetables, growing mangoes, animal raising, selling hot noodles, tailoring, and making fishing gear.
- Provided financial and business training to 21 families.
- Provided pig raising training to 34 families (22 families are beneficiaries and 12 are neighbours who indirectly benefit from the knowledge).
- Livelihood staff continue to visit with 47 HIV patients with whom relationship has been built (from previous Homecare project); ARV medicines are provided to 44 patients and all are encouraged to go to the community health centre when they are sick. (The project does not directly/only work with HIV patients; this is follow-up from the Homecare project last year).

### STORY OF CHANGE

Mrs. Yeng Sokhon is a 50 year old lady, living in SomBour village, SomBour commune, in Kandal province. Her husband grows corn, rice and also transports water to neighbouring farms. They have five children, three daughters and two sons.

Sokhon joined the Livelihoods project in 2013 through her relative. She spent much time discussing with her family before she decided to borrow the money - 1,000,000R (\$250.00 USD) - for her corn growing business. Sokhon has two pieces of land (one hectare total) for her corn and has spent three months growing corn with good results.

Initially Sokhon met with some problems. There was no rainwater, so her husband took the water from the lake into the cornfield. She also had a problem with mice that were destroying her corn. She was very worried, and this time her husband could not help her as he did not have the knowledget for dealing with rodents.



Yeng Sokhon and her corn

The Livelihood staff and people in the village told Sokhon that a good way to solve this problem is to place plastic around the cornfield, to kill the grass in the field and to place rat poison inside the field. In a short time, Sokhon reduced the number of mice destroying her corn. Now Sokhon has a good harvest, and she sold 24,000Kg for a total money of 2,784,000R (\$696.00 USD). After costs, she gained 1,484,000R (\$371.00 USD) in only three months.

Sokhon told us that, “I was very happy that I got a good result with my corn harvest. I think that it is all about hard work, trying and believing in my business.” She also went on to say, “Thanks to the Livelihoods staff who have helped me and encouraged me, given good advice to me, and I hope that the Livelihoods project will continue next year”.

# RESTORING HOPE (FORMERLY MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT)

## Kandal, Prey Veng & Stung Treng

### OVERVIEW

**Developing the local church so they can have a positive impact their communities, providing them with the understanding and resources to share the gospel and fully express the values of the Kingdom of God to those around them.**

The project has six focus areas: leadership training, discipleship, empowering women, youth group and Sunday school development, and income generation for church members in need.

Working with the local rural church presents challenges. Communities are suspicious of Christian groups, and building trustful relationships takes time. Many churches in village communities are young and immature, and don't have the discipleship grounding to handle the responsibility of being the catalyst for church ministry. They can see the process as an opportunity to grow the church by offering aid as an incentive to people to convert. They may also be motivated by personal gain, and lack transparency in the use of funds.

Many Cambodians today consider the indigenous Christian church to be foreign, since the church culture and institutional structure are so unfamiliar to most people. For a Cambodian, becoming a Christian is not an easy thing. The convert experiences not only a spiritual transformation, but faces rejection and isolation from their friends and relatives. They also struggle to adapt to church culture. For this reason, most of the churches have a difficult time discipling new converts, as they tend to return to Buddhism after a brief sojourn as Christians.

#### Impact this year

- 29 (17 women) key church leaders have been trained through 3 levels of GCI training.
- 7 key church committees from four different denominations promoted 22 new cell group leaders.
- There were 3 training sessions conducted for 25 Sunday school teachers in Lvea Em and Por Reang district.
- 3 women's empowerment groups currently running, each with 15-20 women. These groups have met 46 times in different places, to share daily lives, Bible study, pray and have fellowship together as well as discuss parenting issues.
- 30 youths (20 females) studied basic administration skills, and 25 of them are also enrolled in the English class facilitated by AOC since January 2013.
- 47 FBG families have been through 3 business training sessions in their community. Businesses include raising livestock, mango plantations, rice farming, home gardens.

### STORY OF CHANGE



Morn Savy receiving her leadership training certificate

Mrs. Morn Savy lives in Sombour village, Sombour commune, in Lvea Em district of Kandal province. She has two children with her husband, Mr. Leourn Win.

Savy works as a commune councillor. Before becoming an influential person in her village, Savy acknowledges that the support of AOC in her emotional and spiritual growth was important. Savy admits that she used to persecute Christians and hated when evangelists came to share the good news with her. She said, "I didn't let myself see, even when these Christians wanted to come and do good. I didn't care or trust them, and I was determined not to betray my Buddhist religion that brought good deeds and peace into my life."

One day, Savy visited a lady who owed her money and who did not have enough to repay. Savy got angry and wanted to fight. A pastor from the Baptist church who took part in AOC's training and inter-church meetings, and his denominational leader, Pastor Chea Sokhom, came and intervened for the woman in debt. The pastors asked Savy to explain what had happened. Pastor Sokhom then paid her all the money owed her. Savy was shocked and could not understand why he would do that! She then heard the good news and this time it made her think. She said, "I couldn't sleep a full night because of this man who paid instead of the woman in debt."

A few months later, Savy met again with the pastor and spent time talking about God with him. By the end of that year, Savy had changed her behaviour towards others, begun attending church regularly, and accepted Jesus as her saviour. In 2010, AOC conducted three days Christian leadership training. Savy came to learn and then returned to her village to start a small group, which now averages 15-20 members.

Today Savy has two goals; one is to focus on her spiritual development group, and the second is to facilitate the commune department to promote greater gender equality within her community.

# WATER & SANITATION

## Prey Veng, Kandal & Stung Treng

### OVERVIEW

The WatSan project aims to provide BioSand water filters, hand pump filters, household latrines, wells and health care education to needy communities.

In line with the Millennium Development Goals for 2003-2015, the Royal Government of Cambodia plans to see 50% of rural Cambodians having access to clean water and 30% to community latrines.

In Prey Veng province, we are currently working predominantly in Pea Reang district because there are currently no other NGOs focusing on water and sanitation. A baseline community survey conducted in this area indicated low levels of sanitation and latrines, a high prevalence of typhoid, influenza, and a subsistence living standard. Over 80% of all households do not have access to a latrine, and 89% of all households do not have any form of household water treatment. A large portion of the population's main water source comes from pump wells and the river, however, although their water supply is in abundance, the safety and cleanliness of that water is the project's main focus. This can be very labour and resource intensive, which is why the project implements a point-of-use filter that has proven durable in varying climates and outdoor conditions. This is the BioSand water filter (BSF).

In Stung Treng province, the WatSan team have been working in Siem Bok and Omreach districts. Because of Stung Treng conditions, hand pump filters, as well as mobile Sawyer filters and community wells are more appropriate than what is used in the southern districts.

This last quarter the Stung Treng project had to combat difficult rain and road conditions, which affected the timeframe and made it impossible to enter the community

with supplies. The team are planning to stockpile needed materials before the rainy season begins in earnest, and to take road conditions into account for future seasons.

In both regions, the most critical element of the project is in the health promotion training, where communities learn about the basics of health and sanitation, as well as how to care for their filters and toilets.

#### Impact this year: Prey Veng

- Constructed 240 community latrines.
- Constructed and installed 270 BSFs, providing improved access to clean water and latrines for 726 people.
- 380 participants took part in 12 health promotions in 12 villages across 2 communes, leading to improved knowledge and behavioural changes in the communities.
- 24 participants, 4 Village Development Committee training in Kompong Brang and Prey Phov communes.
- 360 BSF has been monitored, in 12 villages and 2 communes.

#### Impact this year: Stung Treng

- Constructed 12 hand pumps, providing improved access to clean water for 180 people.
- Conducted 3 health promotions.
- 60 participants (30 women) attended training to learn about disease due to dirty water and hygiene practices, in 4 villages.
- 12 monitoring trips

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Lots of new toilets



Building wells in Stung Treng

# WATER & SANITATION

## Kandal, Prey Veng & Stung Treng

### STORY OF CHANGE

Somour village is located in Prey Pnov commune, Pea Rang district and Prey Veng Province about 20 kilometers from Snay Pol village. About 80 percent of people work in farming; others have migrated to find work in Thailand, particularly parents and young people. Those who stay at home are mostly the elderly and children.

In 2012 the WatSan project provided the BSF to Somour villagers, so recently the nine monthly monitoring period came around. A staff member and one of our volunteers arrived at the house of Mr. Sot Meoun.

Meoun is 29 years old, his wife Preang Chreum is also 29 years old, and they have two daughters. We interviewed Mrs. Preang Chreum about their use of the BSF, and she told us that her family is glad to use it because it makes life easier. There is now no need to boil water, buy firewood for the kettle or to wait until the water boils. Continually boiling water can also be dangerous for the children as they are very young and can't yet help out.

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Before having the BSF, Chreum's children regularly got diarrhoea from drinking raw water. When the AOC team first came to conduct health promotion with her village, she and some other villagers didn't understand how the BSF could be effective in killing bacteria and viruses, being a simple filter made from cement. After our staff provided the training about water and sanitation, and we explained how disease is caused by dirty water and we also let them taste the filtered water, they were really interested and many registered to get it. Since receiving the BSF Chreum has shown her children how to get a glass of water from the filter when they want a drink. She admires how the water not only stays cool and tastes good but also how her family has not suffered from diarrhoea at all since installing the filter. She keeps it in good condition, cleaning it at least once per week.

Besides drinking, she uses it to cook rice and for stewing every day. Furthermore, her neighbour who hasn't registered to get the BSF often asks her for a barrel of water for drinking as well. Chreum would like to say many thanks to AOC and the WatSan project for providing BSF and latrines to her village, and for taking the time to monitor and answer questions.

