



EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO CAMBODIA



STORIES FOR 10 YEARS



20 stories for 20 years of the European Union in Cambodia

EU development aid making
a difference in Cambodia...

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Foreword



This year, the European Union and Cambodia mark 20 years of partnership. I am honoured to represent the EU, a major development partner of Cambodia. The relationship between the EU and Cambodia, which started in the early 1990s, has developed considerably since the opening of the EU Delegation in Phnom Penh in the early 2000s. In Cambodia, EU-funded initiatives in sectors ranging from education and agriculture to public financial management and trade related assistance have benefited millions of Cambodians. The EU supports Cambodia's efforts towards sustainable and equitable development through aid designed to help implement the Royal Government of Cambodia's policies: EU programmes are firmly based on Cambodian government priorities and strategies. Over that time Cambodia has seen significant successes -- primary school enrolment have risen by 11 percentage, maternal mortality rate fallen by 85percentage and access to safe drinking water has increased by 37 percentage.

In September 2015, at a special United Nations summit, world leaders endorsed an ambitious new universal sustainable development agenda. The EU is determined to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Cambodia.

Eradicating poverty, eliminating inequalities and combating climate change are not competing objectives: they go hand in hand. The EU in Cambodia and its Member States are playing a leading role in making these new global commitments a reality.

2017 is also a momentous year for the European Union. 60 years ago, with the signing of the Treaty of Rome, our leaders laid the foundation for the European Union. The European story is one of peace, democracy, solidarity and freedom but also one of equality, prosperity and sustainability. These are the fundamental values we have been promoting in Cambodia every day of the last 20 years. In 2017 ASEAN and the EU will also celebrate the 40th anniversary of their formal relations. The two regions can look back at 40 years of friendship characterised by their shared goals of peace and prosperity for their peoples, and look forward to further deepening relations based on trust, mutual respect, common interests and values.

The many great stories collected in this book are about girls and boys, women and men from across the country whose lives have been touched by our cooperation through the last 20 years. I am proud of what we have achieved together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "George Edgar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

George Edgar
Ambassador of the European Union to
the Kingdom of Cambodia

Introduction



This year, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) joins the European Union (EU) in celebrating 20 years of EU development cooperation and partnership with Cambodia which have produced rich dividends and strengthened our relationship. I am very pleased to provide the introduction to this Coffee Table Book - 20 Stories for 20 Years on behalf of the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the RGC. In these last two decades, Cambodia has achieved outstanding socio-economic progress with a sustained average economic growth rate of 7% and remarkable reduction in the poverty rate to 13.5%. Cambodia has also been recognized as one of the best performing Millennium Development Goal (MDG) achievers in the world. The past decade of development in Cambodia has seen

significant social and economic transformation as the country moves towards the middle income status and a stronger economic integration within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The RGC has adopted a vision of a prosperous and harmonious society with a strong economy that is diversified, dynamic, and resilient with an equitable distribution of opportunities. Going forward, Cambodia aims to reach the upper-middle income country status by 2030, and high-income status by 2050.

I wish to acknowledge the positive contribution made in the past two decades by the EU and its Member States to the socio-economic development in Cambodia. Today, the EU plays a key role in the world economy and international development. The EU has been an active and important development partner for Cambodia since 1990s providing financial assistance for post-conflict recovery, rebuilding infrastructure, education, agriculture and the promotion of good governance policies and reforms. Currently, the EU is one of the largest development partners in terms of development grants, supporting the RGC's policies, as reflected in the Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan, in agriculture and natural resource management, basic education and skills development, as well as governance and trade-related assistance.

Cambodia highly appreciates the assistance by the EU to promote alignment to RGC's policies and to reinforce ownership and accountability through the budget support modality in the key government reforms

- Public Finance Management and Sub National Democratic Development and also in education.

In the key areas of trade and economic relations, the EU is the largest export market for Cambodian products. Cambodia is currently benefiting from granted duty-free/quota-free access for all products, except arms and ammunition under the European Everything but Arms (EBA) scheme. This has facilitated the creation of hundreds of thousands of sustainable jobs in our industry sector and improving the livelihood and living standards of a very large number of the Cambodian people.

The RGC is very pleased to have worked in close partnership with the EU over the past years and looks forward to further strengthening the collaboration to achieve our shared goals in the sustainable and inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction.

On behalf of the RGC and the Cambodian People, I am very happy to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our very fruitful relationship and commend the EU for this publication to share 20 stories from the 20 years of development cooperation with Cambodia.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and lines, positioned above the name of the signatory.

Dr. Aun Pornmoniroth
Senior Minister
Minister of Economy and Finance

The EU at a Glance

Sixty years ago, inspired by the dream of a peaceful, shared future, the EU's founding members signed the Treaty of Rome. They embarked on an ambitious journey of European integration and opened up the path for other countries to join, reuniting Europe and making it stronger. Today, the EU is a unique economic and political union between 28 European countries that together cover much of the continent. With 500 million inhabitants, the EU has become a global force responsible for around one-quarter of the world's gross domestic product. It is the second biggest economy and the largest exporter and importer of goods and services in the world, accounting for one-fifth of worldwide trade.

From economic to political union

What began as a purely economic union has evolved into an organization spanning policy areas from climate, environment and health to external relations and security, justice and migration. A name change from the European Economic Community (EEC) to the European Union (EU) in 1993 came with the changed vision. The EU is based on the rule of law: everything it does is founded on treaties,

voluntarily and democratically agreed by its member countries. The EU is also governed by the principle of representative democracy, with citizens directly represented at the European Parliament and Member States represented in the European Council and the Council of the EU.

Mobility, growth, stability and a single currency

The EU has delivered more than half a century of peace, stability and prosperity, helped raise living standards and launched a single European currency: the Euro. In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the causes of peace, reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe. Thanks to the abolition of border controls between EU countries, people can live, work and travel freely throughout most of the continent.

Human rights and equality

One of the EU's main goals is to promote, both internally and around the world, the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human

person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law. These are the core values of the EU. Since the Lisbon Treaty's entry in force in 2009, the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights brings all these rights together in a single document. The EU's institutions are legally bound to uphold them, as are EU governments.

Transparent and democratic institutions

The enlarged EU remains focused on making its governing institutions more transparent and democratic. More powers have been given to the directly-elected European Parliament, while national parliaments play a greater role, working alongside European institutions. In turn, European citizens have an ever-increasing number of channels for taking part in the political process.

Looking forward to the future

The EU is firmly committed to supporting countries and their people around the world on their path to democracy, peace and prosperity.



EUROPEAN UNION

28 MEMBER STATES



Founded in 1957
Motto: "United in Diversity"

24 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

POPULATION
508 Million

Land Area
4,422,773 km²

ASEAN

10 MEMBER STATES



Founded in 1967
Motto: "One Vision, One Identity, One Community"

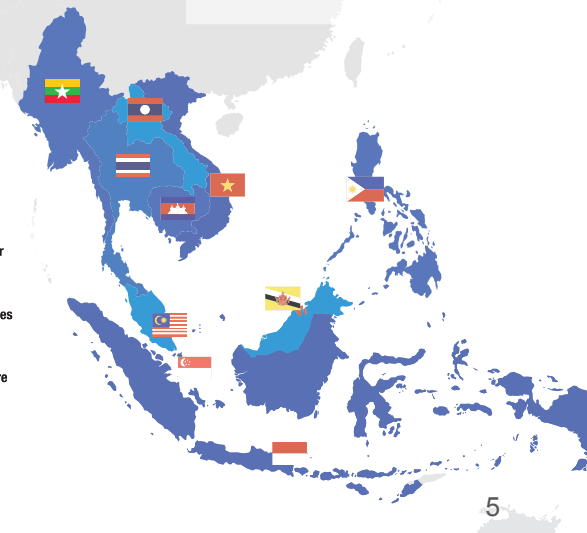
WORKING LANGUAGE
English **1**

POPULATION
625 Million

Land Area
4,479,210.5 km²

Friendship and Cooperation since
1972

Formalised Relations since
1977



- | | | | |
|----------------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Austria | Estonia | Italy | Portugal |
| Belgium | Finland | Latvia | Romania |
| Bulgaria | France | Lithuania | Slovakia |
| Croatia | Germany | Luxembourg | Slovenia |
| Cyprus | Greece | Malta | Spain |
| Czech Republic | Hungary | Netherlands | Sweden |
| Denmark | Ireland | Poland | United Kingdom |

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Brunei Darussalam | Myanmar |
| Cambodia | Philippines |
| Indonesia | Singapore |
| Laos | Thailand |
| Malaysia | Vietnam |

Cambodia and the EU

The EU has long enjoyed a close relationship with Cambodia. From support for reconstruction in the 1990s to substantial development assistance, the EU has helped Cambodia to build a brighter future for Cambodian citizens. At the heart of the relationship is the EU-Cambodia Cooperation Agreement signed in 1997. A Joint Committee held every two years allows the EU and the Royal Government of Cambodia to set goals together according to agreed priorities and to deepen the partnership.

“ Cambodia development could have been difficult without the presence of the EU in the country ”

Miss Soeung Sophari

Spokesperson for the Ministry of Commerce

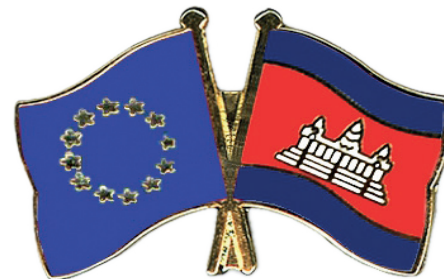
Cooperation also takes place at the regional and international level following Cambodia's accession to the 1980 EC-ASEAN (The Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Cooperation Agreement in July 2000. 2017 is the 40th Anniversary of the EU-ASEAN Dialogue Relationship. Both partners are

committed to address issues through a multilateral approach that supports regional integration, as the most effective way to foster stability, build prosperity and address global challenges. The EU is supporting the process of economic integration in ASEAN which includes support to investment and trade initiatives in Cambodia.

Cambodia joined the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in 2004 and ASEM has provided a platform to address international matters such as United Nations reforms through open and inclusive dialogue. By remaining an informal dialogue-based process, ASEM aims to promote overall Asia-Europe relations on international and inter-regional issues of common interest. It is with this simple premise in mind that the ASEM was created in 1996 with 22 EU-ASEAN partner states.

A commitment to democracy and human rights

The EU seeks to mainstream human rights concerns into all its policies and programmes, and it has additional human rights policy instruments for specific actions. The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is the practical expression of the EU's commitment to support and promote



democracy and human rights. In Cambodia the programme was launched in 2010 and aims to support civil society initiatives that contribute to promoting democracy and protecting human rights.

The new European consensus on development

“Our World, Our Dignity, Our Future” was adopted in 2017. The purpose of the new consensus is a stronger and more effective EU action in a changing world. It aims to leave no-one behind and seeks to reach the furthest behind first. It also guides the action of EU institutions in their cooperation with developing countries. EU is committed to a life of dignity for all that reconciles economic prosperity and efficiency, peaceful societies, social inclusion and environmental responsibility. EU support to Cambodia is targeted towards eradicating poverty, reducing vulnerabilities and balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Trading together

The EU promotes trade as a driver of economic development and provides open markets to exports from least-developed countries such as Cambodia. Under the most favourable regime available within the EU's Generalised Scheme of Preferences, the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme, Cambodia has duty-free access to the EU for exports of all products, except arms, weapons and ammunition, opening the door to the biggest single market in the world. In 2016 the EU was the prime export market for Cambodian products such as garments, footwear and textiles. Exports of light manufacturing goods and rice are also rapidly expanding. The EU provides technical support and training through its development and cooperation assistance to help Cambodia take advantage of the opportunities offered by international trade. The EU also supports Cambodia in the process of economic integration within ASEAN, drawing on the EU single market experience.

“ In 2015 exports reached a new record of €4 billion, a 34% increase compared to 2014, making the EU the first export destination for Cambodian products ”

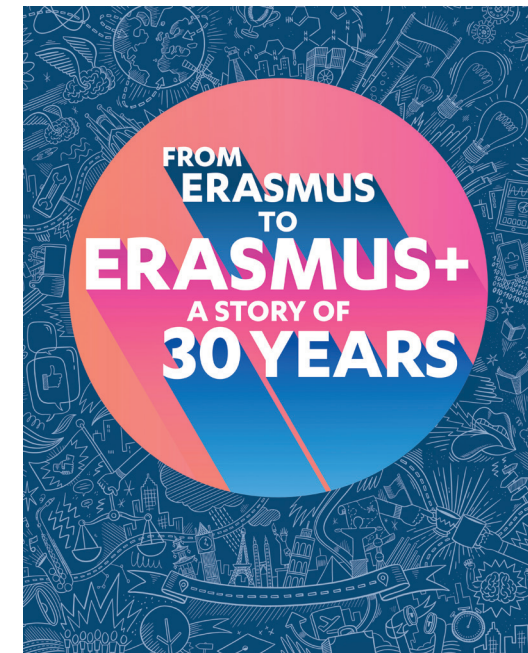
The Royal Government of Cambodia on the occasion of the EU Day, May 2017

Cultural and educational exchange

The EU-Cambodia relationship is much broader than trade and development. EU Member States, Embassies and cultural institutions actively promote cultural exchange. Higher education links are particularly important.

The Erasmus+ programme supports the establishment of partnerships between European and Cambodian higher education institutions for networking, research, scholarships, and curriculum development. 2017 is the 30th anniversary of the ERASMUS programme, which started in 1987 and up to now has involved more than 9 million participants as students or teachers. ERASMUS+ is a platform for European and international academic mobility and cooperation that brings people from different backgrounds together. In Cambodia it provides funding for about 50 students and academic staff each year to study, teach or

conduct research in Europe. Between 2005 and 2015 the EU-funded Erasmus+ and Erasmus Mundus programmes have given scholarships to 600 Cambodian students and academic staff to study and lecture in Europe.



Joint programming

Stronger partnerships are at the heart of the EU's approach to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. The EU and its Member States will work more closely with all relevant actors to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and strengthen their capacity for democratic ownership. Parliaments and political parties as well as regional and local authorities must play their respective roles fully, including their scrutiny role, alongside national governments, and must actively participate in the decision-making process. National and regional parliaments have an important role in legislation, agreeing budgets and holding governments to account.

In response to global challenges, the European partners will further improve the way they deliver their cooperation, including by working together better, taking account of their respective comparative advantages. The EU and its Member States will deepen their partnerships with Civil Society Organisations in support of sustainable development. They will promote an operating space and enabling environments for CSOs, to allow them to play their roles as independent advocates, implementers and agents of change, in development education and awareness raising and in monitoring and holding authorities to account. They will support CSOs commitments to effective, transparent, accountable and results-oriented development cooperation.

In 2016, Cambodia
exported
€4.5 billion
worth of products to
the EU

Partnership: Working Better Together



The European Development Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia 2014-2018 establishes a joint long-term vision for European partners' development cooperation in Cambodia and reaffirms their commitment to supporting Cambodia and responding to the country's needs as identified by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

The strategy is supported by a joint programming process which includes a joint analysis and response to Cambodia's national development strategy, defines the division of labour among the European partners and presents indicative financial allocations per sector and per partner. European partners' indicative financial projections for the period of this strategy are about EUR 1.4 billion.

“ The Ministry appreciate the partnership between the EU and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. We wish for continued EU support and collaboration on the occasion of the 20 years anniversary of the EU in Cambodia ”

Dr. Hean Sahib
Secretary of the State of the Ministry of Economy and Finance

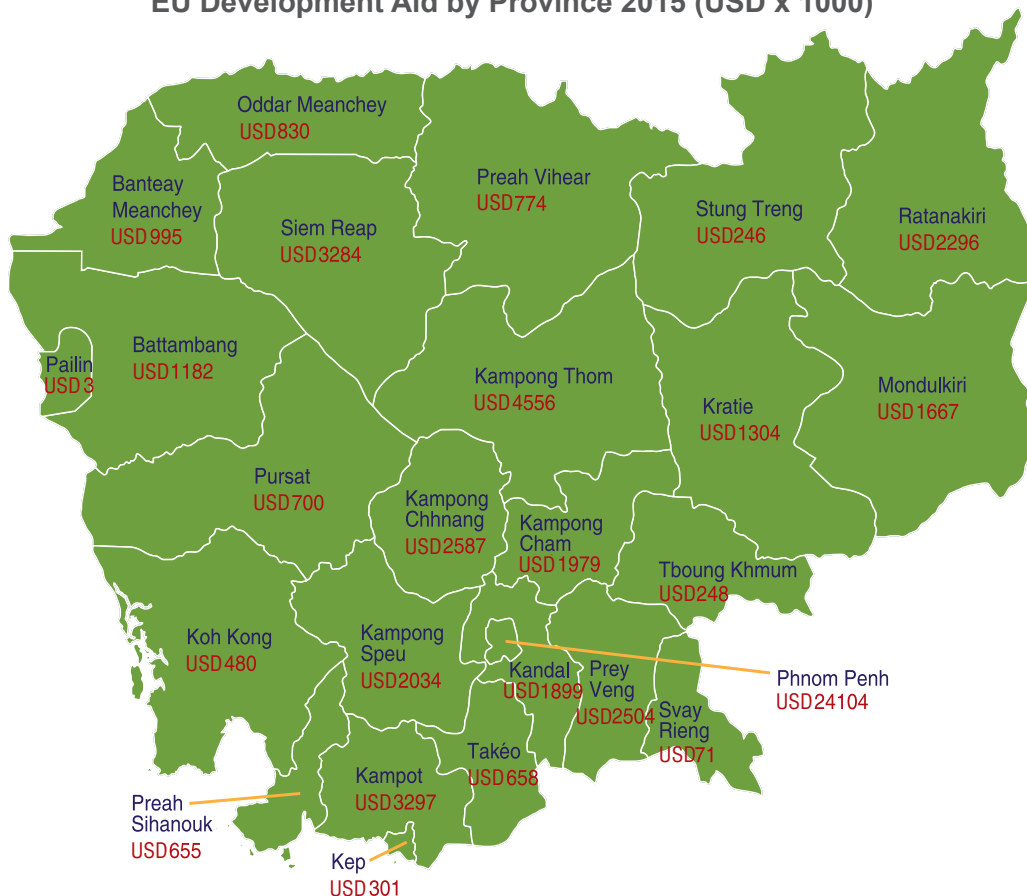
“ Cambodia has made great progress in reducing poverty from 60% to 14% in less than 20 years. I am proud of the contribution that the EU has made to support the achievements of the Cambodian government ”

George Edgar
EU Ambassador to Cambodia



The EU - Cambodia Partnership

EU Development Aid by Province 2015 (USD x 1000)



Data source: Government development cooperation report, May 2016

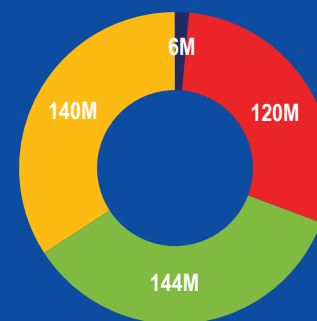
EU-FUNDED BILATERAL PROGRAMMES

Spent from 1992 to 2013

€ 410 million

Planning to spend from 2014 to 2020

€ 410 million



- Support Measures
- Education and Skills
- Good Governance
- Agriculture & Natural Resource Management





PEOPLE

Human Development and Dignity

Eradicating poverty, tackling discrimination and inequality and leaving no-one behind are at the heart of EU development cooperation policy. Poverty is multidimensional and has economic, social, environmental, cultural and political aspects. The EU will pursue an end to hunger and all forms of malnutrition, and promote universal health coverage, universal access to quality education and training, adequate and sustainable social protection, and decent work for all within a healthy environment. Progress in these areas will provide a stronger foundation for sustainable development.

“ *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport appreciates the EU’s overall cooperation with the Government of Cambodia, especially their support to the Cambodian Education System* ”

His Excellency Dr. Hang Chuon Naron
Minister of Education, Youth and Sport

Quality Education for All

Education is not only about counting and reading, you can fulfill your dreams with it. It is a human right and every child in Cambodia deserves it.

All children have the right to receive good quality education. To achieve this requires qualified teachers, strong community involvement, easy access to education and a robust education system.



Mrs. Aim Vireak is teaching, using the new methods at the primary school in Kandal province after attending a training programme.

The Khmer Rouge regime and the civil war shattered Cambodia's education system. As a result, it needed to be built up from scratch. Since the early 1990s, Cambodia has made considerable progress in expanding its education system. However, there is still more to be done in terms of both quality and easy access. There is a great need for school buildings and learning centres, and for core and supplementary teaching materials. It can be difficult to attract teachers to work in remote areas.

Toch Sam is 13 years old, studying in grade 6 at Teuk Laak public school. He has three siblings, two brothers and a sister. After his parents died, he and his siblings lived with their grandmother on the streets of Phnom Penh. In the ensuing months, his grandmother enrolled him in a non-formal educational programme in 1st grade and his other siblings in vocational skills training. After two months, he was integrated into 2nd grade in the public school. His siblings also successfully completed their vocational skills training (hairdressing, laundry and wedding beauty make up). Today, the siblings are working and earning a decent salary.

Now Toch Sam is in 6th grade at public school and ranks 1st or 2nd in his class. He is also strong in maths. He studies half a day at the public school and half a day at the vocational centre where he learns Khmer language. Thanks to the NGO support programme funded by the EU, he receives a uniform, sandals, school materials and transportation to his public school. He is happy with his teachers and the support they provide to the students to expand their horizon. In the future, Sam wants to continue his studies in engineering, as he dreams of becoming an architect one day.



Toch Sam is in his classroom.

“ *Teachers are more knowledgeable and confident to teach the children and parents are now well aware that education has the potential to change their children's lives* ”

Mrs. Aim Vireak, A school teacher

Education and economic growth are closely linked. Education makes a critical contribution to Cambodia's future as a developed nation. The EU is a key partner of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. The focus of current support is on increased and equitable access to quality education at primary and lower secondary levels. The EU also supports civil society organisations working to ensure the right to education for every child.



Chicken Farming has Transformed a Farmer's Life

Farming livestock such as cattle and poultry has improved the income and quality of life in Da village, Kratie province.



Mr. Chamnak looking after his chickens.

Mr. Chamnak and his wife started with 28 hens and four cocks, now they have more than double. Since starting in September 2016, 32 chicks have hatched, with more arriving weekly as the hens mature.

In 2016 Mr. Chamnak was given USD250 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to buy few hens and cocks to start the enterprise, as well as a brooder to speed up incubation of the eggs and netting to protect the birds. This was part of an initiative by Cambodia's Department of Animal Health and Production (DAHP) to strengthen and promote alternative farming methods in rural areas.

"At first, I just treated animals as a village animal health worker. Later on I started raising pigs but it wasn't profitable," he explains, adding that this did not stop his desire to raise his own animals. "I am an animal health worker, so I should be able to raise animals because I know the techniques to keep them healthy" he said.

"When commune agricultural officials mentioned that they had received funding under an EU project to raise cattle and poultry and asked if I was interested in rearing chickens, I immediately said yes, I wanted to try it," he remembers.

"If we let the hens hatch the eggs normally, the loss is around 10 percentage; but if we use hatching boxes, we will save the eggs." explains Chamnak. Outdated

traditional techniques are now being replaced and farmers are reaping the rewards.

Mr. Chamnak has also been involved in demonstrating to others in his village how to provide vaccinations to their livestock. For chickens, he has taught the farmers how to mix antibiotics or vitamins - depending on the ailment- into food to ensure better efficiency.

“ *By practising these new techniques for selecting breeds, providing vaccinations to prevent illnesses and so on, we will make more profit – around 70 to 80 percentage more than using the old methods* ”

Mr. Chamnak, Farmer

Mr. Chamnak is vocal about his business venture and would like more farmers in the district to follow his lead.

“My message for them is that the demand for locally raised chicken is high. I advise them to follow the technical standards as prescribed by the experts, and by following them they will become successful chicken farmers themselves”, Chamnak said.



Mr. Chamnak is in his farm.

The EU supports the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' efforts to strengthen Cambodia's agricultural sector by providing technical and financial assistance, including through non-government institutions. EU support aims to promote sustainable development in agriculture, including the promotion of livestock and aquaculture as well as enhancing productivity, modernization and commercialization of agricultural products. EU investment in rural infrastructure has focused on improving the living conditions of poor and vulnerable households.



Scholarships Help Poor Students Stay in School

Over the 2015-2016 academic year, nearly 160,000 students from primary and secondary schools received scholarships from the government.



After receiving a scholarship in 2015, Sreymao (right), 12, attends school, equipped with all the study materials she needs in Phnom Penh.

For nearly four years, Phorn Sreymao did not have a proper school uniform or adequate school supplies. Her family's financial situation was compounded by the fact her parents were already in debt from covering school expenses.

But after receiving a scholarship in 2015, 12-year-old Sreymao now walks happily to school, content in the knowledge she has all the supplies she needs to continue her studies.

"I was very happy to get the scholarship because now I have enough money to study and to buy a uniform, books, pens and a bag," she said. I have more study materials than ever before. It eases the money problems which caused me so much trouble before." Sreymao receives USD60 per school year. She is one of three classmates awarded the scholarship when they were in Grade 4.

Now in Grade Five, she still remembers the day when her teacher asked students who needed financial help to raise their hand if they were interested in the scholarship fund. Sreymao did not hesitate.

"I raised my hand and I was interviewed. I told my teacher about my hardship and eventually I got the scholarship," she said. Nowadays, Sreymao and her mother are not as worried about spending on her studies and Sreymao is never absent from class.

Sreymao is the younger of two siblings. Her father is a security guard and her mother works at a garment factory in Phnom Penh. After school she takes care of her one-year-old niece and cooks for the family in addition to doing other household chores and school homework.

Although the scholarship does not completely meet all of Sreymao's needs, it goes a long way. Her mother Mrs. Leas Puk, 55, said the scholarship encourages her daughter to study hard. "I spent the money from the scholarship to buy a set of uniforms and study materials and the rest of the money is for her to go to school every day," she said.

"She always goes to school and studies hard even if we are poor and don't have enough food to eat sometimes." She studies hard in order to achieve her ambition of becoming a dentist so she can support her parents.

School principal Mr. Khut Mony said the school has had the scholarship scheme in place since 2015. He also mentioned that there are many poor students. Consequently, the school must intensively examine and select those living in serious poverty who meet the criteria for the award. A qualifying factor is having a good school record and high grades.

81 students, including Sreymao, have received financial support so far at the school. "After getting the scholarship, the condition of students has greatly improved, their class attendance and results have substantially increased." Khut Mony said.



Sreymao helping her teacher in the classroom

“*Sreymao's teacher said she is one of the most outstanding students in his class. "She is a good and clever student. The scholarship is good and helpful for poor students to continue their study. The more students get a scholarship, the better it is*” he added.

Mr. Sat Boramey, Teacher

The EU supports the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to effectively implement and manage the scholarship programme through both financial and technical assistance. Specific attention is paid to capacity development for implementation of the current national strategy and ongoing reforms, and to areas such as early childhood education, school operating budgets, teacher qualifications, quality assurance and national learning assessments.



Food Production and Public Health

Farmers experience increased food security, income diversification, and poverty reduction by taking simple steps to become more resilient to climate change and climate hazards.



Mr. Chan Panhavoin, Head of the Animal Health and Production office, Kampong Thom province.

As Cambodia's economy continues to grow, consumption of meat has also risen in line with similar trends across Asia. This has led to an increase in the number of slaughterhouses, and with it the need to ensure hygiene and safety.

For Mr. Chan Panhavoin, the Head of the Animal Health and Production office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Kampong Thom province, the job has definitely got busier. From lunchtime onwards, farmers bring their animals to one of the 10 abattoirs in the province. This is when his staff must inspect the animals, check their ownership and certify them as fit for slaughter.

Cambodia's expanding population, urbanization, economic growth and changing consumption patterns have created opportunities for the growth of the livestock sub-sector in the country. With an estimated annual human population growth rate of 1.8 percentage, the projected meat demand in Cambodia from 2014 to 2024 is anticipated to increase from 274,479 to 328,085 tons per year.

In addition to checking for diseases, Chan Panhavoin says that his busy team of 25 inspectors also needs to make sure that the cattle have not been stolen. "If we are not cautious enough, we'll face problems. So we need to look into this carefully."

Chan Panhavoin is modest about his team's successes in ensuring food hygiene in the province. "I dare not say that my province is better than the others, but let the Ministry come and see our work and evaluate what we have done," he says.

Mr. Ngoy Chheng Guan is the manager of the Stung Seng district abattoir. He describes his role as being straightforward, especially with the increased professionalism and support from Chan's team of experts and officials.

The abattoir staff have been trained in hygiene standards, Ngoy Chheng Guan explained, and this abattoir is much cleaner than the ones he had managed previously.

“ **Maintaining good hygiene is not that difficult to understand. An expert or vet is here with us, so we just work with them to clean the slaughterhouse thoroughly. So, that's not difficult** ”

Mr. Ngoy Chheng Guan, Manager

All members of the staff wear proper uniforms. Chan Panhavoin frequently comes to inspect and give advice.

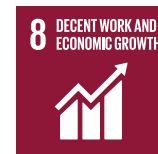
According to Ngoy Chheng Guan, the abattoir slaughters about 10 cows and 30 pigs a day. Between regular training sessions and workshops, and the official visits, he is confident that his facility is safe and hygienic.

“I can't think of what else we need to do. Most importantly, we have good cooperation with the experts.” The only thing he would like to change is how loud his staff members talk as they work. “The workers sometimes talk very loudly. But that has never caused any problems,” he quickly adds.



Government Official in action.

The EU support the Department of Animal Health and Production in monitoring livestock disease outbreaks. Since 2015, the EU has assisted the inspection team in their work by providing office materials and spraying equipment to clean the abattoirs, training vets and giving modest financial assistance for the inspections.



Bringing Classrooms Closer to Home

Seeing the benefits of the inter-commune cooperation mechanism the government is now considering integrating this in its national policies for local governance.



Students from secondary school at Tuol Pongro in Banteay Meanchey province.

The Inter-Commune Cooperation (ICC) is a pilot mechanism to encourage commune councils, which normally have a limited budget, to work together on prioritizing development plans such as building more secondary schools that are closer to villages and can bring benefits to their communities.

Mrs. Soy Pheap, a mother of seven children, recalls making a tough decision several years ago when one of her daughters began secondary school. Because her village school lacked classrooms, she had to send her daughter to live with her grandmother in Battambang province, 130 kilometres away, so that she could continue her studies.

But now she doesn't need to make such a choice anymore for her second daughter. "The new school is quite near to our house now, so I will send her to study there instead of the other province - Battambang," explains Soy Pheap, who lives in Tuol Pongro commune, Banteay Meanchey province in north-western Cambodia. The possibility for local children to pursue their higher education in the nearby village has finally been realised after the newly-built Tuol Pongro Secondary School opened in January 2011.

In the past, many of the village children, after completing primary school, had to make a two-way eight - kilometre trip daily to attend secondary school in another commune. Some simply dropped out to avoid this journey and instead preferred to herd cattle or work in the rice field with their parents.

Another villager, 21 year old Mrs. Prum Sokheng, had to drop out of school when she was in the 8th grade because the secondary school she was attending was far from her home and she was scared to ride a cycle alone for eight kilometres, particularly when it rained and the road became slippery and impassable.

“ Now my daughter will be able to go to school next door, instead of walking eight kilometres every day which I suffered during my school days ”

Mrs. Prum Sokheng, Farmer

Responding to the plight of the children, local officials began planning to build a new school.

Mr. Kim Morn, the Tuoi Pongro commune chief, managed to secure allocation of a piece of land after it had been cleared by land mines. But instead of developing the project alone, he decided to team up with councillors in the neighbouring Sampor commune.

In January 2011 the school was inaugurated and since then 170 boys and girls have enrolled. Local officials said the school can enroll up to 270 students from the surrounding villages.



Students attending a class in Battambang province..

For Kim Morn, his mission is not over yet. He plans to raise more funds to build a high school building in the commune so that students can continue their studies beyond the nine years of basic education.

The EU supports the construction of new schools as well as rehabilitation of old schools with a focus on upgrading water and sanitation facilities in schools.







PLANET

Protecting the Environment and Managing Natural Resources

The EU supports the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural resources, and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems, including forests, oceans, coastal areas and river basins, for the provision of ecosystem services. The EU also integrates environment and climate change throughout its development cooperation strategies, including through promoting a sound balance between mitigation and adaptation.

“ *The Ministry of Environment recognises the important role of the EU in protecting Cambodia’s natural resources and environment* ”

His Excellency Mr. Tin Ponlok
Spokesperson, Ministry of Environment

Agriculture in a Changing Time

Farmers have started converting their unused lands into kitchen gardens, growing and consuming fresh vegetables for their families and selling the additional stock in the market. Earnings have increased by USD 5-10 per day.



Mr. Men Khorn shows off vegetables grown after DRAT training.

Cambodia is considered one of the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters. Over the last few years floods and droughts have affected thousands of Cambodians, particularly small-scale farmers, rural women and vulnerable groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

Since 1993, Mr. Men Khorn, now 61 years old, has lived in Trach Khpos village in the Outdong district of Kampong Speu province. The main occupation of his family of seven is rice farming, and they possess 1.5 hectares of rice fields and another 0.4 acres of housing land. Apart from rice, Khorn earns money from growing vegetables around his home.

However, dry seasons exacerbated by climate change and a lack of agricultural skills have recently caused his rice yields to fall to under a tonne per year, putting the family in danger of poverty and hunger.

In June 2015, Men Khorn participated in Drought Resilient Agricultural Techniques (DRAT) training. "I gained knowledge and techniques that helped reduce the effects of drought by using less water and improving soil fertility. Besides that, I have learned how to develop a seasonal calendar and land use planning, particularly crop rotation, for growing vegetables."

After the training, Men Khorn turned the land around his house into a vegetable garden. He has planted pumpkins, cucumbers, string beans, sponge gourds and many other vegetables while using less water. He has also planted papayas, cassava and sweet potatoes in plastic bags and boxes along the fence.

“*Now I am practicing these techniques and I am getting more yield than before, more than we need to just support my family's consumption*”

Mr. Men Khorn, Farmer

“We not only have enough vegetables to eat, but can also sell some of those vegetables,” he remarked. The daily income from selling his products ranges from USD5 to USD10 per day. Men Khorn has spent some of these earnings on agriculture inputs to invest in his land. “I hope that my family's lives will be better within the next few years,” he says. “We will have enough rice to eat and earn more daily income from the vegetables. I will not just apply these techniques myself but share them with other people in my village too.”



A member of Men Khorn's family.

Since 1995, through European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the EU has committed close to €13 million for disaster preparedness projects in Cambodia. Under this programme farmers are getting training on climate change adaptation as well as new technical training on farming. The programme also focuses on disaster preparedness education and public awareness campaigns.



Adaptation to Climate Change

Peam Krasaop commune has been piloting an adaptation project to protect agricultural fields and mangrove forests from climate change impacts.



Rising sea water floods the beach of Peam Krasaop commune in Koh Kong province in southwestern Cambodia.

Cambodia's vulnerability to climate change is linked to its characteristics as a least developed country, with 80 percentage of the population relying on subsistence crop yields in rural areas. Climatic variations are expected to further increase the severity and frequency of flood and drought events, with the potential for severe impacts on food security and poverty in Cambodia.

For quite some time, Cambodian fisherman Mr. Lim Seanghy, 38, has noticed that the beach of Peam Krasaop commune, where he lives, is shrinking. That makes him and his fellow villagers, who rely on fishing and piloting tourist boats for a living, worry. "The beach is getting smaller because of coastal erosion caused by big sea waves. A lot of pine trees that protect beach sand from erosion have also been destroyed by storms," says Lim Seanghy.

The Peam Krasaop commune is located in Koh Kong province, one of the four coastal Cambodian provinces that have been considered vulnerable to rising sea water levels caused by global warming. Here, local livelihoods are at stake.

However, a plan to help the villagers cope with the looming threat is underway. The commune has been selected as one of several sites in Mondul Seima district for piloting an adaptation project to protect agricultural fields and mangrove forests from climate change impacts.

For Peam Krasaop commune, where 95 percentage of its 282 families depend on fishing, the pilot project could not have come at a better time. Increasingly, the

area is being affected by floods. “Because of rising flood levels, now people have to build their houses even higher as well,” said Mr. Chut Tith, the commune chief. He added that storms destroyed 10 to 20 houses every year.

Lim Seanghy sees the impacts of climate change are beginning to affect his business already. He says that the weather has become more severe than before.

“ *The climate in the present day is completely different from the climate five years ago. It has more storms not only in the rainy season, but also in the dry season, which makes it difficult for me to go to fish* ”

Mr. Lim Seanghy, Fisherman

Pine trees have been replanted on 4 hectares of the beach to stabilize the sand and reduce coastal erosion. The trees are also helping to protect the villages from storms. Mangroves will be replanted in a 30 hectares area in the sea to provide a spawning ground for marine life, as well as to protect against storms. A rural road measuring 3.5 kilometers in length will be raised 1.5 kilometres from the ground level (above the flood level) so that the villagers can use it even during the flood season. A natural lake will also be dredged deeper to hold more water for drinking and agricultural purposes and a 1.5 kilometres dyke is planned to prevent sea water from flooding rice fields.



Koh Kong forest.

The Cambodian Climate Change Alliance is a multi-donor funded programme in partnership with Cambodia’s Ministry of Environment. The EU supports its work to assist Cambodian institutions at all levels in responding to the impacts of climate change and in designing and implementing innovative approaches to addressing climate change.



Affordable Solar Home Solutions

In 2016, 1,387 rural households purchased a certified solar product from one of the six accredited solar suppliers. Quality product and associated customer services are now available in 14 out of 25 provinces in Cambodia.



Mrs. Suon Dyna (32), mother of 3, standing next to her solar-powered television and a stand fan.

The project has so far provided home solar power for 25,000 households in rural Cambodia.

Small solar home systems represent an excellent opportunity to bring modern energy to off-grid locations in Cambodia, but the initial investment is a barrier for many rural families.

Many households in Cambodia are not yet connected to the electric grid and instead use car batteries. The costs can be three or four times more than they would pay for grid electricity – up to USD1 per Kwh – a major drain on limited family incomes. Only 35 percentage of households in Cambodia have access to grid electricity, mostly in urban areas. More than 1.6 million rural households currently depend on kerosene and rechargeable car batteries for basic lighting and electricity.

Mrs. Suon Dyna, 32 is married to Mr. Vorn Mao and they have 3 children. She is a farmer and a clothes seller in the nearby market in Kampong Kuo Krom Village in Kampong Thom Province. Her family decided to replace car batteries with a solar home system from NRG Solutions solar company in Kampong Thom when the company came to promote its solar products in her village.

Suon Dyna spoke about her life changing experience with the solar home facility “I decided to buy this solar home system because the company promoted their solar products well and they provide a long warranty and services up to 2 years.

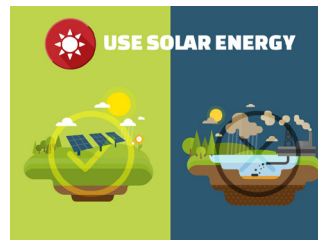
I got a loan from Vision Fund and it is affordable for me to pay back in installments in 2 years". I have been using it since January 2016. I faced an initial problem with the TV signal, I just called the company, and the technician arrived at my house the day after to fix it", said Suon Dyna. Now I recommended to my sister to use a solar home system from this company, Suon Dyna added

“ *Now her family has light in the house as well as outside. She feels safer after dark. They enjoy watching TV and also using a small stand fan in the house. We all are happy!* ”

Mrs. Suon Dyna, Clothes seller

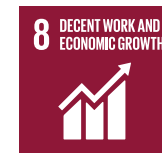
Through the solar microfinance programme, trainings are conducted for solar companies and business consulting services on the 'Business Development Services (BDS) Hub' and 12 awareness raising campaigns helped to reach and educate 12,000 rural Cambodians.

To raise awareness and stimulate demand for solar technology, the programme conducts a variety of social marketing and awareness raising interventions, reaching out to 100,000 people through road shows, school engagement, women's groups, and evening community events.



A solar panel being fixed by NRG Solutions solar company on the roof of Suon Dyna's house.

The Solar Microfinance Program is funded by the European Union and the French Development Agency (AFD). The EU also supports the Cambodia Climate Change Alliance and the Green Microfinance project with the collaboration of civil society in addressing the problem of electricity in rural areas and broadening access to clean energy in Cambodia.



Sharing the Fruits of Our Labour

The community in Chambok realised the potential of their natural resources and developed the site for tourists. Chambok was a National Geographic World Legacy Award winner in 2017.



Ms. Sat Sreytoch working as a tourist guide in the Community.

Located on the border of the Kirirom National Park in Kampong Speu province, southwest Cambodia, Chambok is a community of 9 rural villages where visitors can experience village life and explore the area's beautiful natural surroundings. It is one of 63 community forestry and community protected areas across Cambodia.

15 years ago, villagers in Chambok had no sustainable income sources, engaged in illegal logging, charcoal and fuel-wood production, as well as wildlife hunting. Now more than half the population (500 of 750 households) has joined the Chambok Community Based Eco-Tourism (CBET), trained in eco-tourism skills, and received initial infrastructure improvement support. Today the program is self-sufficient and the operations are run by the villagers, generating regular income.

One of the recipients of the CBET training, Ms. Sat Sreytoch, has realised her dream of becoming a tourist guide in her community. The 20 years old used her free time after school hours to visit Chambok community to learn English from the tourists and now uses this language in her work, teaching visitors how to make traditional bamboo cake, known as Kralan.

The community uses 40 percentage of its income for the conservation and protection of their site, 25 percentage for supporting vulnerable members, 20 percentage for a community development fund, and 15 percentage for a reserve fund. The community development fund is used, for example, to support the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs), health projects, micro enterprise projects,

“ We now understand the value of nature, and protecting it against illegal activities. We are transferring the knowledge to our children, visitors and other communities to preserve it for the future ”

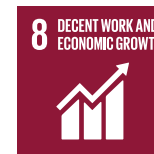
Mr. Morn Touch, A leader of the community

and the development of a community water supply system to provide water connectivity from the nearby waterfall for household consumption and livelihood purposes. Members also established a patrol of the Community Protected Area to conserve the surrounding rainforest, prevent illegal activities, and grow saplings for reforestation.



The Women’s restaurant, run by a rotating roster of 328 women, is a special part of every visitor’s stay in Chambok. All meals are made from locally sourced ingredients and are freshly prepared using traditional cooking methods.

The EU has supported the CBET since 2010. Chambok community has become a model for protecting the environment, improving livelihoods and providing an authentic eco-tourism experience in Cambodia. The EU also supports civil society initiatives that strengthen Cambodia’s climate change response.



Building Capacity in Fishing Communities

Fishermen are experiencing a positive impact on their livelihoods. With an increase in fish catches they can earn more income and as a result their debt has reduced.



Mr. Douk Sokha catching fish.

Fisheries play an important role in the daily food production of many Cambodians as well as contributing to the national economy. Freshwater fisheries in Cambodia are one of the most productive in the world due to the presence of large floodplains around the Tonle Sap and the Mekong Rivers.

Mr. Douk Sokha is the head of Srey Check Community Fishery. He is 34 and has five children. “Fisheries and the lake are my life” he says. “There were many problems when the community was created such as illegal fishing activities, lack of environmental awareness in the neighbourhood and misunderstandings about the role of the community”.

In 2016, he attended a training on capacity building and the management of community fisheries around the Tonle Sap. “Now I understand the role – we need to protect the fish for our future generations”. “I have been able to increase our daily income from 15,000 riel to 45,000 riel.” Douk Sokha added.

The project worked with community fisheries committees to define and protect fish conservation areas and community protected areas to enhance fish stocks.

The villagers are very happy with the demarcation and protection of the fish conservation area. The community also created a group to give loans and the

interest generated from the loans is being used to buy fishing nets and fuel for patrolling boats. Douk Sokha proudly mentions: “we already collected USD600 from the membership fee and we are going to buy more patrolling boats to protect the area 24/7.”

In these areas, there have only been two cases of illegal fishing since 2016. 300 ‘net poles’ which were blocking most of the channel that allows fish to pass into the river have been removed. This was a bold action against illegal fishing. “In the past we were afraid, but not anymore”, Douk Sokha added.

“ *In the beginning, I was sceptical. Now I see the advantages of correct methods for fishing and the community’s participation to protect against illegal fishing. More fish, more income* ”

Mr. Ket Srey, Head of the community fisheries

This was the first time that the community fisheries committee has been able to secure law enforcement assistance from the local authorities.



Fishermen attending a training course.

In cooperation with the Fisheries Administration, and working through a number of NGOs, the EU supports better management of community fisheries and the creation of conservation areas to maintain fish stocks.







PROSPERITY

Inclusive and Sustainable Growth and Jobs

The EU promotes an economic transformation that creates decent jobs, increases productive capacity, generates sufficient revenues for public services and social protection, and fosters sustainable value chains and diversification, including sustainable industrialisation. This includes promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns in a circular economy.

“ The EU’s role is appreciated in supporting the Ministry’s strategic planning work, strengthening the capacity of Ministry officials as well as providing financial support for the implementation of work plans and activities in the provinces. We are keen and enthusiastic about the partnership between the EU and Cambodia and look forward to this continuing in the future ”

His Excellency Mr. Veng Sakhon
Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Exploring Advanced Techniques in Rice-Fish Farming

Rice fish farming provides extra food and income to many households in Cambodia. The prospect of a ready supply of cheap fish is attractive for the residents of Prey Pdao village. While a kilo of rice paddy sells for 800 riel, a kilo of fish fetches as much as 8,000 riel.



Fish in the rice field of Mr. Prak Khim.

Growing fish in a paddy field is an easy and effective method to increase the overall productivity of the paddy field and generates additional income, without causing a reduction in rice yields.

Fish farmer Mr. Prak Khim has been raising fish in Pursat province for the last four years. In addition to his four fish ponds, which hold about 6,500 fish, he also has a rice paddy. Last year, he started to raise about 1,500 fish in his paddy fields.

The number of fish Prak Khim raised last year marks a vast improvement compared to previous years, when all of his stock was eaten by the invasive and destructive snakehead fish. Officers from the provincial Fishery Administration visited his village in Bakan district three years ago and provided support by conducting training for the fish farmers.

“After learning better farming techniques, I then laid nets to prevent snakehead fish and snakes from entering the ponds,” he explained. The community-based training sessions also gave me the idea to breed fish in the paddy field as well”, he added.

For 67 year-old Prak Khim, the shift has clearly been the right decision. “I prefer farming fish in the paddy. There is no issue about the water as the rice plants keep it clean and transparent. While farming fish in the ponds, the water become very dirty and it is difficult to clean it and maintain it. The fish also eat insects that might damage the rice plants, and their manure adds fertilizer to helps the plants grow, Prak Khim explains.

“The fish are healthy and grow very fast, faster than fish farmed in the ponds. The fish in the ponds are caged; they just don’t have any of the freedom enjoyed by the fish in the paddy.”

Prak Khim is currently the only farmer in his village using the technique, but it has drawn the attention of his fellow villagers.

“**Rice fish farming is beneficial in two ways – good fish catch and increase in good quality rice**”

Mr. Prak Khim, Fisherman

“I am not afraid of competition. I want them to farm fish efficiently. We could set up our own small group to help each other. Then we wouldn’t need to go to buy fish at the market.”

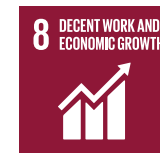
Demand for fish is so high in the village, says Prak Khim, that when people learn that his fish are ready they come directly to him, even offering to catch them themselves.

“When they know that the fish are big enough to eat, they’ll come to buy some. They also buy luffa gourds and beans,” he says, referring to two vegetables he grows in addition to the rice. They could be another addition to Prak Khim’s financial stability. “So in the near future, I’ll grow more beans as well as fish.”



Mr. Prak Khim giving food to his fish.

The EU has provided financial support to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to increase the economic value of agricultural products and strengthen capacity in additional sectors in agriculture such as fisheries, cattle and poultry farming. Further, the EU is committed to strengthening the capacity of the Ministry by supporting policy development and reviewing policy impacts within the sector.



Frog Farming - a New Source of Income

Frog farming is easier and responds to demand in the market, providing profits to farmers.

Frogs are rich in protein and can be found on the menu in many restaurants all over the world. With EU support, running a frog farm can now be a profitable activity in Cambodia, as highlighted by successful frog farmers.



Mr. Norng Piseth's frog farm.

Mr. Norng Piseth, 51 is from Trapaing Thom village in Kampong Chhnang province. He has a wife and six children; two of them are still at school. On a parcel of land behind his house in Ro Lea Pha Ear district, he and his wife grew rice and vegetables, and raised chickens, ducks and cows for their living. What they do not eat, they sell and this contributes about 20 percentage of the family's income. The rest comes from his wife and their three eldest children, who are all local primary school teachers.

"We used to start catching tadpoles early in the year, and then kept them in mesh and plastic cages in a pond to grow them as frogs, but we did not achieve much success" he says, explaining how rural communities in the province had long caught wild frogs and tried to breed them in captivity. "We tried the old methods but it was not effective," he admits.

Largely unsuccessful practice was the reason frog farming remained a very small-scale endeavour, until the arrival of experts from the department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. Officials from the provincial Fisheries Administration conducted training in frog farming in Pong Ro commune in 2015 for Norng Piseth and six fellow farmers.

The results were good. The frogs eat less than the chickens and ducks,” Norng Piseth says with a smile. Now with a better understanding of how to raise frogs, it is actually not too difficult and needs less investment and less time.

He manages to sell 30 kilograms of frogs for around USD60 which is a higher price than he achieved in selling poultry. “They taste good, almost the same as wild ones.” said the buyer.

“ *The reason I decided to raise frogs again was due to my attendance at a training course, where I learned about the correct techniques for feeding the frogs* ”

Mr. Norng Piseth, Frog farmer

“We are helping each other and sharing our practises. I want the project to continue supporting us as we are still in a trial period. Although this is my second year, it feels like we can still improve from testing new and advance techniques, but if we succeed in this farming, our farmers can become economically strong.” Norng said enthusiastically.



Mr. Norng Piseth with his wife and government officials.

The EU supports the Fisheries Administration of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to develop and disseminate aquaculture techniques that can help diversify rural incomes and support poor households.



Erasmus Alumni Typically have Jobs

Erasmus: changing lives and opening minds. Scholarships have been awarded to more than 600 Cambodian students and academic staff since 2005 to study in Europe.



From left to right: Erasmus Mundus alumni Oeun, Neang and Yeang.

Every ambitious Cambodian university student dreams of finding an opportunity to continue studying abroad after graduation. This is not always easy to accomplish. Scholarships are competitive, especially for the Erasmus Mundus Programme for which students worldwide can apply. Three returned Erasmus alumni share their experiences and advice for future Cambodian applicants.

Mr. Yeang Donal received a scholarship in 2008 to study European Forestry with a first year in Finland and a second year in The Netherlands. Yeung Donal now works as a Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) specialist for the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Cambodia Programme.

“I first heard about the Erasmus Mundus programme in 2006 from scholarship winners. I then searched the internet for more information and applied. It is most important that applicants prepare their applications thoroughly. I now often advise students who want to apply for the scholarship to read the instructions and conditions two or three years in advance, even when you have not yet completed your university education here,”

“It took me two or three weeks to get accustomed to the educational system in a European country, Donal remarks”. It is a system that relies heavily on self-study. Your English also has to be good. Studying in Europe overwhelmingly involves writing and reading. Assignments and documents are provided in English, and you have to read them and sometimes summarize them for your professor.”

Ms. Neang Sophina received a scholarship in 2012 to study International Relations in Latvia. Back in Cambodia, she has worked for GiZ and BBC Media Action, before deciding to pursue a Master's degree in Hospitality for which she will soon leave for Australia. "There are many positive things about studying in Europe. The experience has opened up my eyes to the world. I see and do things differently. I have become more confident and responsible for my life than ever before. It has been a life changing experience for me. It has made me more mature. It makes me show greater appreciation for my community, my family and my country."

“*Erasmus is extremely crucial for Cambodian students, given that they have little exposure to the world and to the practical skills that most educational institutions in Europe can offer*”

Mrs. Neang Sophina, Erasmus Alumni

Mr. Oeun Makara was awarded a scholarship in 2009 to study Sociology in France. He now works at the Department of International Cooperation and ASEAN Affairs of the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts. "After passing the application process, I signed a learning agreement for credits to be completed in one academic year. The agreement also contained a promise to transfer my knowledge to Cambodia on completion."



Erasmus Awardees.

"Remember that if you are in Europe for the first time, things there are different. Refrain from judging. But also do not forget your Khmer culture. You can share Khmer food with your peers and friends. Be open-minded, brave, communicative, friendly and independent in life, be an ambassador for your culture," Oeun Makara added.

Through the Erasmus Mundus programme the EU provides grants to study in the universities of Europe that include a monthly allowance, travel, insurance and tuition fees to young people from Cambodia.



Mrs. Kroeun is Taking Actions to Improve Safety in Construction Work

Up to 30 percentage of workers in the construction industry in Cambodia are women. 40 female leaders are now helping their colleagues understand their rights as women and as workers. There are now 2500 women workers in Phnom Penh. The EU is supporting the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training to strengthen the construction sector in Cambodia.



Mrs. Kroeun, 52 at the construction site.

An EU funded project aims to improve the lives of female construction workers. The construction companies and property developers are now engaging with the project to understand what they can do to protect women in the workplace and encourage women's participation so they can retain skilled workers of all genders.

Mrs. Kroeun, 52, has been working in construction for over 20 years. She speaks about the recent changes in her life. She explains how the knowledge she has gained through education sessions on sensitizing on domestic violence, safety measures at the construction site, labour rights etc at the construction site is helping her at home and at work.

"I left my home province of Prey Veng 20 years ago in search of work in construction. I am now married to another construction worker and together we have five children.

"For many years, people used not to wear helmets or proper footwear when working on the site. The company provides belts when we are working on top floors of the building but most workers would leave them and climb without safety equipment."

"I have joined all the educational sessions provided at the construction site where I work, I have a better understanding of safety measures in the workplace. Now I experience fewer instances of swollen feet, and the hard hats make me feel safer from falling debris at the construction site."

“From the lunchtime sessions I have also learned more about communicating with my husband. He used to drink 1-2 liters of alcohol every day, which worried me in terms of his health and the debt due to the large amount of alcohol purchased every day.”

“After the training, I explained to my husband about the negative impact of drinking and told him it is important to cut down drinking alcohol for better health and the danger of drinking and driving.” He reduced drinking and doesn't shout or cause trouble after drinking, which is a relief. My son also followed his father and stopped driving after drinking. As a result we reduced the cost of buying drinks and our family can save more money now.”

“ I am no longer worried and I feel happy that my family is safe now ”

Mrs. Kroeun, Construction worker

“My children work in construction too but on a different site. I shared everything I learned with them. I am happy they are making changes to stay safe. In addition, the company now takes action when people do not follow safety rules and guidelines.”



Mrs. Kroeun, working at the construction site.

The EU supports a three-year project to strengthen the capacity of female construction workers, civil society and government on labour rights and increase the voice and influence of women working in construction.



Kampot Pepper: a Success Story

The quality of Kampot pepper is rated as one of the best in the world. In 2015, the region produced 60 tons of Kampot pepper, of which 70 percentage was exported, mostly to the EU, the United States and Japan.

Pepper cultivation in Cambodia is a 700-year old tradition. Kampong Cham and Kampot provinces are the most important Cambodian pepper plantation area due to the excellent soil and climate conditions. Around 85 percentage Cambodia's pepper is cultivated here.



Him Anna at her pepper plantation.

Mrs. Him Anna started cultivating pepper seven years ago. She never thought it would turn into a profitable business one day. Starting with half a hectare of land, the 43-year old and her family initially planted the famous Kampot product solely for their own use. Today, Him Anna is the chief executive officer of a Kampot pepper plantation. Her company was established in 2010 for the local market and now her company exports pepper to international markets as well.

“We never had any experience in planting pepper, but we are lucky that we have an uncle who loves his agriculture profession, so I asked him to help us,” Him Anna says. So far, the pepper farm consists of five hectares of land, but only three hectares are currently bearing crops, while the rest will become productive in about two more years. Him Anna employs 25 people to take care of the pepper plantation, while another 15 people work in processing and packaging the harvest. According to Him Anna, her farm in Kampot province produced about six tons of pepper in 2016.

However, as demand was higher than the output in her farm, she bought about 1.5 additional tons of pepper from the local farmers and an extra two more tons from other farmers in the area.

Her company invested significant work sorting out the best quality peppercorns for export. About seven to eight tons, the bulk of her company's pepper production, is exported to Germany, Canada, the US, France, UK, and Australia.

In 2016 Kampot Pepper was the first Cambodian product to be awarded and registered as a protected European Geographical Indication.

“ Now farmers are happy because they can sell their good quality pepper to the international market and are satisfied from the benefits ”

Mrs. Him Anna, Bussiness woman

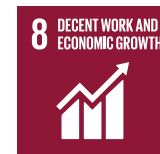
The EU works closely with Cambodia in the framework of the EU-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement to ensure an effective environment for trade and investment relations.



Anna's pepper plants.



The development of geographical indicators can give a much-needed helping hand to Cambodia's farmers and traders, to improve Cambodia's agriculture and to protect its cultural and culinary heritage. Today, Kampot pepper is protected on the EU market against any imitations trying to benefit from its reputation.







PEACE

Democracy, Rule of Law and Human Rights for all

The EU and its Member States promote the universal values of democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights for all, because they are preconditions for sustainable development and stability. The EU and its Member States promote accountable and transparent institutions, including national parliaments, and foster participatory decision-making and public access to information.

“ We appreciate the EU’s consistent support to the ECCC in seeking justice for victims of the Khmer Rouge regime ”

Mr. Neth Pheaktra

Spokesperson for the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia

Youth are Active in Elections

Transparency and accountability at all levels of the electoral process are paramount in order for Cambodian citizens to have confidence in the outcome of future elections.

2017 and 2018 are very important years for Cambodian democracy. The election of Commune/Sangkat Councils in 2017 is followed by the National Assembly Elections in 2018.

Young people play an important role in motivating their friends to register to vote in the 2017 and 2018 elections.

Mr. Hang Panrachna, aged 20, is one of the active young volunteers for the on-going initiative “Youth Participation in Democratic Election Project” (YPDE). Hang Panrachna highlights that “Before participating in the project, I was shy and didn’t know the methods of the new voter registration system. I was not brave enough to work with the local authorities. More importantly, I was not at all aware of the registration and voting process. After getting training as a focal youth in my community, I have gained confidence and understand the procedures in the election.” He adds that “currently, I am trying to engage youth to attend the training courses on democracy and elections.”

Hang Panrachna has now attended many activities, including training on election observation. He has also made a commitment to register to vote and shared this commitment with his friends. “Many of my peers believe that participating in the upcoming elections will be our chance to shape the future of our country.” One of his peers, Ms. Phearong Sdeung adds “we have the feeling that these two years are very important for the young generation. All my peers will vote for the first time.”



Mr. Hang Panrachna and his peers with their certificates.

“ Thanks to the EU’s training programmes, I learnt many things about the electoral process and youth involvement. I will communicate more with my colleagues to encourage their participation. Only then Cambodia can be a prosperous country ”

Ms. Phearong Sdeung, Trainee

Hang Panrachna is also helping to improve communication between local authorities and youth groups and he feels this relationship is significantly better now. Sometimes, the local authorities contact the youth groups, especially focal youths to attend other social activities. “Now there are more potential voters influenced by the young people at the commune level to improve the process of voter registration than compared to the past, when young people were afraid to talk”. Hang Panrachna has committed to mobilising more youths to work for the commune election in 2017, in order to guarantee free and fair elections in his commune.

“It will be a test for all of us - for the government, political parties and people before next year’s elections to the National Assembly.” Many of these young people dream of becoming candidates themselves one day, to represent their communities in Parliament.



A training programme on election procedures.

The EU has provided financial support to the elections in the form of policy advice to ensure fair and transparent elections and facilitates with equipment, technical assistance, training on election registration and voting procedures in Cambodia. The EU also provides support to civil society groups working on voter education and election observation.



Community Services Improve with Citizen Involvement

Decentralisation reform delivers more responsive and accountable public services to communities in Cambodia. Chanlin looks forward to further improvements in services from her commune. The positive changes in her own life are a great example to those around her and she loves sharing her knowledge with others.

The National Social Accountability Framework (ISAF) aims to reduce poverty through democratic, inclusive and equitable local governance and to provide more accessible and equitable public service delivery. Improved access to local information, transparency of budgets and citizen-led monitoring, with a specific focus on the engagement of women, youth, and ethnic minorities, are core aspects of ISAF.

Mrs. Voeun Chanlin, 31, is a chicken vendor in Kampot who also takes care of her young son. Since she received training to become a Community Accountability Facilitator, she has been helping people in her community to ensure that when they need support from local government services, they can access the help they require.

Mrs. Chanlin coaches others in her community to understand on their service entitlements from their local commune council, schools and health centre. She has already noticed some progress, clinics have improved in the way they deliver their services. For instance, more people are trusting the commune administrative and now they are using the local health centre which is taking less time in processes.

Another positive change Chanlin has observed was when her neighbour, Mrs. Chreb went to get a birth certificate for her child from the commune hall. Thanks



Mrs. Voeun Chanlin gathering information from the health centre for her community.

to the information Mrs. Chreb received from Mrs. Chanlin, she understood the procedure and time needed to obtain the certificate, she prepared the documents properly and she was able to get her child's birth certificate without any additional hassle. Mrs. Chreb was obviously pleased with the outcome: "The service is fast when we have the correct documents," she said.

“ I learned a lot about our rights as citizens at the health centre and the standard of services they should provide ”

Mrs. Voeun Chanlin, Chicken vender

Mrs. Chanlin herself has also noticed that the commune staff is more friendly and efficient. "When I asked the commune staff for a new family book, they politely informed me that I could approach the nearby police station directly. It was delivered to my house just two days later."

Becoming a Community Accountability Facilitator has also had a personal impact on Mrs. Chanlin. She is now well known by others, seen as a leader in her community and thanks to her training she has seen an improvement in her own life skills.



Mrs. Chanlin leads a well-attended information session.

Promoting gender equality is a core activity for the EU. Gender equality is essential for poverty reduction and sustainable development. The EU supports greater gender equality through specific projects and by mainstreaming gender equality throughout development cooperation programmes.



Promoting Safe Migration Practices

The EU supports the Cambodian authorities at national and provincial level in improving safe channels of migration, monitoring and advocating for the implementation of effective solutions.

Many Cambodians travel to neighboring countries, including Thailand, to seek jobs that will enable them to build up their savings and send money home to their families.



Ms. Ouey Sarom, one of the GVC Social Ambassadors.

Many Cambodians who travel outside the country for work do so without proper documentation, and through informal channels.

In an effort to address this problem, GVC (Gruppo di Volontariato Civile) organized a Self-Help Group meeting in the Siem Reap province to inform the community of Mok Phen village about migrant rights and promote safe migration practice. This was part of the EU funded Migra Action project.

Since 2014, from its field office in Siem Reap, the Italian NGO GVC has been acting to address the risks linked to irregular migration, from labour exploitation to human trafficking. Together with its partners, GVC organized Self-Help Groups in vulnerable communities where returned and potential migrants can voluntarily share their experiences, and where information on legal procedures to acquire work in Thailand and workers' rights is shared.

During their previous field visit, GVC representatives met with Mok Phen residents, listened to their stories and provided them with information on safe and regular ways to migrate. The aim of the visit was also to familiarize the group with the legal documents they needed to obtain regular work in Thailand, and the complaint mechanism in case they are being abused or exploited.

This time, a local representative of the Ministry of Labour joined the Self-Help Group meeting to interact directly with the villagers. He encouraged them to file a complaint with the relevant authorities if facing problems with the Cambodian employer, and to be aware of their rights before taking the decision to migrate.

“ *I knows this issue very well since I started to migrate to Thailand to work in the sugarcane fields when I was 16 years old. This technical training has provided me knowledge on various aspect of migration and now I help my community* ”

Ms. Ouey Sarom, Trainer

GVC recorded the discussions and documented the reasons that pushed Cambodians to migrate, the means of transportation chosen, the nature of jobs found in Thailand, the working conditions experienced and the challenges faced on a daily basis as a migrant worker, regular or irregular, in Thailand.



GVC local facilitator Mr. Sok Sethypong addressing the Self Help Group.

Under the EU funded Migra Action project GVC and its partners raise awareness among vulnerable communities on the risks linked to irregular migration and keep them better informed about their rights and the tools they can use to regain dignity and have the courage to stand up for themselves.



Women Shaping Local Politics

Within one year 421 women councillors were trained from the province, district and municipal levels. Seeing the positive change that resulted the Cambodian authorities officially adopted this training programme with the intention of enrolling all female councillors of Cambodia.



Mrs. Phat Sothy, Director of Non Formal Education Office, Prey Veng Department of Education Youth and Sport attending a session.

The EU has been working with the Royal Government of Cambodia over the last two decades to advance the rights of women and promote gender equality.

In order to strengthen the position and confidence of female councillors and to encourage them to get involved in all issues and decision making of council work, a special training course was designed and piloted in Kampong Chhnang and Battambang provinces in 2011. The course was a joint initiative of Cambodia's National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S) and its partners. The aim was to develop soft skills of female district/ municipal councillors. Public speaking, facilitation, advocacy and proposal writing were top training priorities.

Mrs. Meang Chayra, a female councillor of Monduliri's Koh Nhek District stated, "In the past, I did not speak during council meetings because I felt that no one will hear me and no action would be taken. After the trainings, I made proposals to line offices in mobilising support for primary students who were forced out of schools. My proposal was accepted and I can see the male peers are changing their attitude towards me".

When the female councillor training course was evaluated by the Ministry of the Civil Service, the findings were positive. Involvement of female councillors in decision

making has grown, their behaviour, attitude, knowledge and skills too have improved and these changes led to greater respect both from their communities and their fellow councillors. They have also established networking opportunities that enable them to exchange lessons from other regions and to help each other.

“ I am confident about my work and responsibilities after attending the training. I encourage my female colleagues to express their views and participate fully during the meeting. I have learned to make my own decisions ”

Mrs. Meang Chayra, Councillor

The self-evaluations of participants speak volumes. A Prey Veng provincial councillor remarked “After the trainings I was invited to give a speech in the provincial public forum. My fellow councillors were surprised and asked where I had learnt these skills. Since then I have been requested to give speeches at forums on various community issues and to transfer my skills to other council members”.



Women representatives participating in a session.

The EU is promoting women’s active participation in political processes in Cambodia. With support from the EU, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs has facilitated a series of soft-skill trainings and networking events in five regions and is now replicating it in all regions of Cambodia.



Fuelling Entrepreneurial Success

Mrs. Keo Mom's company started with one machine and a flavoured rice cracker product: now she is producing rice crackers in more than 20 flavours. From its humble beginnings in her home, the company now has over 250 employees, creating employment opportunities in rural areas of Cambodia.

In 2002, Mrs. Keo Mom and her husband started their business with very little capital and one imported rice cracker processing machine, working out of their home. The couple produced rice crackers in small quantities to sell at markets in Phnom Penh and its outskirts.



Packing activities in Keo' Moms factory.

Mrs. Keo Mom participated in a workshop where she learned about intellectual property rights and decided to register her company as a trademark. After consultations with government authorities, Keo Mom decided to register her business as a handicraft manufacturing outlet and decided on the name Ly Ly Food Industry, Co. Ltd. (Ly Ly Food). Her rice crackers then became the first locally-made rice crackers widely sold in Cambodia.

Mrs. Keo Mom also protected her company name and packaging designs as its trademark. The company now owns Ly Ly trademarks. Furthermore, she invested considerable resources to continuously improve her packaging. This has been an important factor in developing the brand name as well as promoting the company's image in the country.

Step by step, Mrs. Keo Mom has led her company to become a strong local food producer with a good reputation associated with healthy food. The company's trademarks and attractive packaging designs have been fundamental to its outstanding achievements. She also got to know about other subjects related to the development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs).

With the knowledge she acquired at these events, she set out an intellectual property (IP) strategy which continues to play an important role in the development of her business.

Mrs. Keo Mom has found that the registration and promotion of trademarks are an effective means of upgrading the value of the company in a competitive market.

“ Women should commit and build trust with high responsibility for themselves. Do not care about who criticizes you, just do the right thing with awareness ”

Mrs. Keo Mom, Industrialist

Mrs. Keo Mom has also established a principle that her company’s products must be of good quality, healthy, safe and attractively designed and packaged for consumers. In an effort to contribute to the improvement of maternal and child nutrition in Cambodia, her company also created a range of vitamin-enriched products.



Mrs. Keo Mom's food products.

Many small entrepreneurs with SMEs in areas such as food products, pepper farming and rice farming are participating in the Export and SMEs Training and Coaching Project funded by the EU, to support the Ministry of Commerce. The EU fosters sustainable economic growth in developing countries by supporting private sector development, mobilizing private capital, and providing advisory and risk mitigation services to businesses and governments.



EU BOOK 2017



EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION TO CAMBODIA