

# CHILD RIGHTS FOUNDATION CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT YEAR 2014

## I. INTRODUCTION

Child Rights Foundation (CRF) was established on November 20, 2000 and officially registered with the Royal Government of Cambodia on March 6, 2001 as a child-focused, not-for-profit, non-political and non-religious Cambodian non-governmental organization that works towards the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which Cambodia ratified in 1992 and other instruments related to children's issues in Cambodia. It aims to promote long-term change in the way children are viewed, cared for and well treated. Toward this end, CRF endeavors to build local capacity and ownership of **duty-bearers** to respect, protect and guarantee these rights and as well as to empower **rights-holders** to exercise and demand their rights which are essential elements in Cambodia's progress, democratic and sustained development.

Since its inception, CRF has been mainly working with government's ministries and local authorities, especially with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) under financial support from several donor agencies. With commitment to professionalism and accountability, CRF has significantly contributed to sustainable changes of individuals and relevant institutions to take personal and collective responsibilities in making children's lives safe, positive and wholesome as guided by its vision and missions as follows:

### **Vision:**

CRF's vision is "a world where all children enjoy their rights in all circumstances".

### **Missions:**

- 1- To **educate state** and non-state actors to become accountable duty bearers in the implementation of the UNCRC,
- 2- To **empower** children and young people to actively and meaningfully engage in age-appropriate decision-making processes and to become their own advocate for the respect of children's rights at all levels,
- 3- To **support** duty-bearers and rights-holders in realization of the child's rights,
- 4- To **mobilize** individuals, communities and government to dedicate resources and efforts toward making the lives of the children and young people in Cambodia safe, positive and wholesome and
- 5- To **monitor** the implementation of the UNCRC in Cambodia with meaningful participation of children and young people.

In 2014, CRF implemented 7 projects covering 161 primary schools and surrounding communities in five provinces, namely Siem Reap, Tbong Khmum, Kandal, Rattanakiri provinces and Phnom Penh municipality. The projects targeted education officers, teachers, students, child and youth-led groups' members, commune councilors and parents with primary focusing on child rights education, children empowerment, quality of learning

environment, child protection and hygiene and sanitation for schools and communities. Our achievements from these projects not only benefited the immediate target groups that we have worked with, but also the communities and policies and practices at different institutional levels-namely from the school level to commune, district, provincial and national levels, particularly for the MoEYS in its formulation and implementation of future policies and directions.

As immediate results this year, CRF projects have built capacity of 50 education officers (17 women), more than 1,420 teachers (660 women), around 52,000 students (25,200 girls), 1,250 children and youth (701 girls) who are members of CCYMCR (Cambodia Children and Young People Movement for Child Rights) and communities, 59 School Support Committee (SSC)'s members and commune councilors (11 women), 465 parents (312 women) and 16,950 people (8,581 females) from 3,605 families of 3,175 households through various trainings, workshops, meetings and consultations to equip them with extra knowledge and practical capability in promoting the application of children's rights and effectively addressing all child rights-related issues in their environment. Meanwhile, CRF keeps working with and building a strong, close and sincere cooperation with MoEYS, especially with the five relevant departments under the 5-year term 2013-2017 of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Not only has CRF gained strong support from MoEYS, but also from various important donors such as ANESVAD Foundation, WeWorld, Plan International Cambodia, Save the Children, Norway House and such, which have demonstrated their full support in making these projects realistic and operative. As a result, these have led CRF to making progress and gaining more credibility through all enumerated activities and achievements to be highlighted below.

## **II. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Project 1: Mainstreaming Child Rights in Schools**

Under financial support from Plan International Cambodia and close cooperation with MoEYS, this project has been implemented in 124 schools, in which 43 schools are in Dambae and Ponhea Krek districts of Tbong Khmum province and 81 schools in Angkor Chum, Angkor Thom and Srey Snam districts of Siem Reap province. During the period of 2014 with good cooperation and support from MoEYS, PoEYS, teachers and Cambodia National Council for Children (CNCC), the project has led to, at school level, a significant decrease of punishment against students as well as, at national level, a greater child protection consideration.

#### **Result 1.1: Teachers, education officers and School Support Committees are capacitated in child rights, child participation and positive discipline to reduce corporal punishment and encourage child participation in schools**

The project has capacitated educational officials from national and provincial levels, including those who are part of the project steering committee, core trainers as well as key teachers to conduct echo trainings to members of the School Children's Council (SCC) and to all students. Through interview and discussion with teachers and students in the target schools,

70% of the capacitated teachers and education officers in the target schools apply positive discipline in their teaching and encourage child participation.

**Result 1.2: Girls and boys are capacitated and have more opportunities to participate, express their opinions and influence decision-making at all levels**

The project has stimulated good articulations and practices of child participation by the ministry officials, teachers and the students themselves in compliance with CRF's strategies for capacity building that consist of national consultation to trainings, monitoring and empowerment. This process enabled students to raise their concerns and issues to their teachers when joining the development of resource mobilization plan and school improvement plan. And this has led to a new schooling culture and empowering environment for the students.

The project has conducted SCC such as its structure, selection process, working mandate and its functionality. As a result, the findings implied that an approximated 38 % and 57 % of SCC have respectively well and moderately functioned by comparison with minimum standard set in SCC Guidelines, in which concerns raised by their peers have been solved with most of good results. However, this area requires more involvement of SSC with more encouraging efforts to involve more children in their meetings or discussions on any child-related issue.

**Result 1.3: child rights are officially integrated in primary education to promote general understanding on child rights among children**

In addition to the new SCC's statute, the guidelines on functioning SCC and teacher's manual in Social Study subject with CR integration for grades 4, 5 and 6, the project has achieved another important milestone this year, which is the project's contribution to the CNCC Child Participation Guidelines with some accepted Child Protection concepts for child participation safety. This particular achievement means that the project has reached a wider impact through nation-wide application under this broad mechanism.

CRF sees the achievements from this year as a major success in terms of fulfilling our vision and missions, since the MoEYS and the CNCC are very important bodies to trigger child rights practice by government officials, teachers, parents and the children themselves. CRF are now seen with a more important and long term role in continuing to support these bodies in the future.

**Project 2: "Strengthening Children's Voices in Promoting Safe Schools"**

This project was initially implemented for 2 years, 2012-2013 and followed by a 1-year extension for 2014 under support from Plan International Cambodia. It was implemented in 4 provinces including Tbong Khmum, Siem Reap, Rattanakiri and Phnom Penh. Accomplishments at school level includes successful building of capacity for school directors, in-service teachers, children's councils executive committee (CC-Excom.), SSC and Commune Committee for Disaster Management (CCDM) on 1) Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), 2) Hazard Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA) and 3) development of DRR plan and School Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan. The project has directly influenced 12 school directors, more than 100 teachers and more than 4,500 students, resulted in significant changes in knowledge, attitude and practices toward promoting school safety and disaster risk in their respective schools and communities.

**Result 2.1 : To promote a culture of school safety by advocating policies, regulations, and guidelines at all decision-making levels on structural safety**

The project has introduced the MoEYS a process in forming a Working Group and National Core Trainers (NCT) for research and developing Safe School Guidelines (SSG), which was officially approved by H.E Hang Choun Naron, Minister of MoEYS on 13th December, 2013. By far, copies of the SSG were disseminated to all target schools, 27 UN agencies and relevant NGOs/INGOs who participated in the National Workshop for Launching the SSG and the 27th national DRR forum in Phnom Penh. In addition, the Primary Education Department is continuing to distribute the guidelines and in the process of advocating the Ministry to issue a circulation to enforce SSG implementation countrywide.

The SSG is applicable to primary and secondary schools across Cambodia. To enable an effective application, CRF has cooperated with MoEYS officials to conduct various training workshops at national, communities and schools level with the involvement of PoEYS, DoEYS and District Training and Monitoring Team (DTMT). The project has also enabled the trained PoEYS, DoEYS and DTMT had also conducted echo training to school directors, SSC, CCDM and key teachers in order to transfer their knowledge of SSG to their schools and students properly. The whole process has provided a strong foundation for enforcing a new standard for safe schooling in all the target schools.

**Result 2.2 : To embed Child Participation in Safe School in local and national processes for establishing safe schools in the target areas.**

The project has enabled all the 12 target schools to develop and implement school safety plan with active participation and leadership of the CC-Excom resulted in 108 child-to-child DRR/WASH/CR activities across the schools. The CC-Excom groups have also participated in the 2014 end-project participatory workshop in Phnom Penh to identify the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact, sustainability, challenges, recommendations of the project, and lessons learnt for an exit strategy and a future project/program design in order to improve DRR initiatives implementation at school and communities level and make resilience with all kind of hazards.

**Result 2.3: To strengthen the role of civil society organizations to lead in developing and monitoring disaster risk reduction and preparedness measures in schools through capacity building and networking in-country.**

To extend the safe school practice, CRF has involved and trained 12 target commune councils and CCDMs on safe school, and DRR. Moreover, CRF has also shared best practice documents, SSGs and 5,500 posters to National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), 25 PCDMs, 9 INGOs, 11 NGO and 7 UN agencies during the 27th DRR Forum on Sep. 12th, 2014.

In order to strengthen SSG effectiveness implementation at community level in all target city/provinces, CRF incorporated with Ministry of Interior (Mol) to conduct one day training in 2 target communes on how to integrate DRR/CCA into Commune Investment Plan (CIP) and Commune Development Plan (CDP) for commune councils, CCDMs, CWCC, CC-Ex.com and other community authorities. Each school in the target commune was required to send 4 student representatives to participate in CIP process supported by the trained commune councils.

The project has also set aside some efforts to enable the trained CC-Ex.com to conduct meeting to raise DRR/WASH/CR initiatives/activities integrated into CIP and CDP process

and the project also allocated budget for commune councils in implementing DRR/WASH/CR initiatives/activities, which have been raised and identified in their community.

### **Project 3: Empowering Child/Youth-Led Groups for meaningful Child Participation in Child Rights promotion and monitoring**

Under the financial support from Save the Children, this project aims at enabling children and youth network to play a role in promoting the awareness on UNCRC to communities and authorities and promoting the participation of the children themselves in local decision making processes. To achieve these, CRF has conducted simultaneous empowering, capacity building, coordinating and monitoring activities with and through the children and youth network (CCYMCR), which is CRF strategic counterpart that has been benefiting from its coaching and coordination since its establishment.

One of the main lessons learnt from our experience in supporting such group is to invest in their organizational developments. To date this nation-wide network has reached a mature developmental stage, where major comprehensive policies are in place and reviewed from time to time, including this year and that members of network are now widely recognized by donors, policy makers at national level and local governments such as at commune level.

Their capacity to educate, advocate and monitor key issues on children's rights has demonstrated through the following project results:

#### **Result 3.1: Children and youth networks are actively involved in CR implementation, monitoring by producing children situation report, providing inputs to government policy framework.**

With CRF support, CCYMCR has played their active role in working with the government and child rights organizations at different levels to promote and monitor the implementation of children's rights at national and sub-national levels. 60 (36 girls) CCYMCR members have involved in the discussion with CNCC, UNICEF, Plan International, World Vision, NGOCRC, CAN and other civil societies through a number of events and processes such as Children's Forum with Policy Markers on the Commemoration of UNCRC's 25th Anniversary, ASEAN's joint statement, International Children's Day and the development of Action Plan for Children's Development by CNCC. Some highlights of their achievements are as followed:

- Five issues namely 1) lacking of care from parents, 2) alcohol use among children, 3) investing in children, 4) children on the move and 5) complaint mechanism related to children were integrated in the joint children's statement from Cambodia to the ASEAN people Forum 2014, in Malaysia.
- Two main concerns of CCYMCR on domestic violence and protection of children from drug and alcohol abuses were integrated in CNCC and children's statement submitted to senior government Officials.
- The best practice of Prek Roka commune and recommendations from children's club successfully influenced, Long Vek commune council, Kampong Trach district of Kampong Chhnang province to enforce commune's notice to local sellers prohibiting the sale of alcohol to children under 18 years old.

CCYMCR is now a member of the national committee on planning and reporting on children established by CNCC for reporting to UNCRC committee on CRC implementation in Cambodia.

**Result 3.2: 1,000 children and youth & 300 community members increased knowledge on child rights, child participation.**

CCYMCR has collaborated with local authorities to conduct awareness activities such campaigns, forums, consultation meetings with 465 (312 Women) parents and 1250 (701 girls) children and youth for promoting the knowledge of children’s rights and children’s participation in their communities in 15 targeted provinces.

CCYMCR also conducted a research on the topic of children’s lack of care from parents, which was disseminated to relevant government and civil societies at national and sub-national levels.



CCYMCR&CAN work together raising up children’s issues and draft statement bring to children’s forum with policy maker



CCYMCR- advisory board address children’s issues at children forum with policy makers

**Project 4: Promoting Child Friendly Learning Environment for Quality Education**

This project was executed with support from WeWorld (formerly Intervita) to enable the target groups, primary and pre-school children, teachers, and PoEYS officers to address

the CR-related problems in schools such as corporal punishment against children in schools, poor quality of education, poor hygiene and sanitation, low school enrolment, high dropout and repetition rate. It is a three-year project starting from February 2012 to January 2015 and being implemented in Siem Reap province's 2 remote districts, Varin (22 schools) and Puok (2 schools).

With full cooperation from the provincial education department and relevant stakeholders such as Provincial Teacher Training Centre, school directors, assigned teachers and students, the project has created a set of systematic interventions over the years and has impacted the schools in the following ways:

**Result 4.1: By the end of 2015, 70% of all teachers (176) in CRF target schools in Varin and Puok districts, Siem Reap province are able to promote child safety and friendly learning environment**

Over 95% of planned or 168 target school teachers, who received training on child-centered teaching methods and positive discipline, indicated their change in level of understanding on the trained topics. Significant reduction in the practice of corporal punishment by teachers was taking place in all target schools, which has brought about a better learning environment as witnessed by final project evaluation report. "Findings were there during the final evaluation. Based on the interaction with respondents, mainly teachers and students, it was revealed that corporal punishment was reduced by more than 90%." (Page 14 of final project evaluation 2014).

In focus group discussion with students and the teachers in the target schools, dynamic interaction among them could be primarily observed. The students revealed that there has been improvement in discipline and learning due to code of conduct for teacher and students developed in close consultation among themselves under the full support of their teachers. The project also found that more than 70 % of students expressed their satisfaction over teacher's behavior change in terms of positive discipline in their teaching approach.

**Result 4.2: By the end of 2015, 60% of School Children's Councils in CRF target schools in Varin and Puok districts, Siem Reap province take active role in actions promoting child participation and child protection in schools.**

The project has enabled the trained teachers to conduct trainings for SCC Ex.Com members, which is established every year at the beginning of the academic calendar in order to for them to take active roles and responsibilities in leading students' initiated activities. Regular monitoring and follow up activities revealed that more than 80% of established SCC in 24 schools has an implementation plan; SCC Executive Committees in the 24 schools have regular monthly meetings and are able to coach their sub-committees in thematic activities.

Students in the target schools provide positive feedbacks that most students understand well the four child rights basics: right to survival, right to development, right to participation and especially right to protection where they could elaborate with more detailed measures to protect themselves in case there is any abuse. About 80 % of students interviewed responded well in relations to quizzes related child abuse or harmful situation.

**Result 4.3: By the end of 2015, at least 70% of CRF's target schools in Varin and Puok districts, Siem Reap province improved hygiene and sanitation status**

Although all target schools originally possessed a few latrines, but those with high or average number of students find two or three latrines insufficient. Water supply and management on the other hand was an issue affecting the hygiene and sanitation across the board before the project's intervention. The project has therefore provided 80 % of the target schools with wells or water storage and has upgraded their hygiene and sanitation status to a decent level through its material contribution.

**A Story of Change:** *"I have seen my students use latrines..." "My name is Lei Cheak. I'm 56 years old. I've been working as a teacher for nearly 35 years, i.e. since 1980 up to now (2014) at Kork Srok primary school, Kork Srok Commune, Varin district, Siem Reap province. " said Mr. Lei Cheak introducing himself to project staff when interacting with him during a field visit.*

*When asked about the result of project intervention made in his school so far, Mr. Lei Cheak said: "...Well, Child Rights Foundation has helped my school function well in terms of teaching and learning environment. It has provided the school with adequate materials for classroom decoration and sanitation. The school environment has also changed significantly as there is no scattered trash around, school latrines are clean and students know how to use those latrines as well..."*

*"...there has been much change in students' habit of having good sanitation with latrine use. Good habits of going to latrines have been built up in them. Thanks to CRF intervention, such good practice could imply good defecating habit among surrounding communities as well..." concluded Mr. Lei Cheak with expectation of seeing more latrine use in school surrounding communities.*

**Result 4.4: By the end of 2015, relevant stakeholders including DCWC, CCWC and PWG members in the target areas enhanced capacity in CR promotion and protection**

Capacity of DCWC, CCWC and PWG regarding child rights promotion and child protection has been enhanced through trainings that focus on four baskets of child rights, practical way to intervene children's issues, child protection, migration, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. There was one 2-day training on Child Rights, Child Protection and Intervention provided for 30 participants with 6 women. The training was facilitated by a Government official, the Deputy Chief of Anti-human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection Office of Siem Reap, Provincial Headquarters, in cooperation with CRF staff. After the training, the trained participants who are members of CCWC are capable of further disseminating their knowledge through sharing meetings with community members.

Further on, in January 2015, with support from the project, CCWC members who had been trained on the above topics initiated a conduct of disseminating sessions on Child Rights with the focus on four baskets of CR, practical ways to addressing children's issues and child protection to members of school surrounding communities in 24 Villages, 5 Communes of Varin District, Siem Reap Province.



**Result 4.5: a child protection policy/guidelines adopted and applied in the target schools.**

Child Protection policy, after all, was developed through a series of consultations with school directors and representatives of SSC and children's representatives. The guidelines formulated according to the project's context were then approved by Head of the PoEYS of Siem Reap province. After the adoption of the guidelines, PWG and DOEYS officials have shared the guidelines with all teachers in Varin and Puok Districts. Once shared with the guidelines, all the teachers have agreed to sign on the Code of Conduct as presented in this guidelines and start applying from the signed date.

All in all, after a period of implementation, the project "Promoting Child Friendly Learning Environment for Quality Education" has gained some praiseworthy achievements. Based on results of the project's final evaluation conducted in September, 2014, the evaluation team identified both intended and unintended impacts resulted from the execution of the project.

**Code of conduct (CoC):** after the implementation of the code of conduct, the impact has been seen in context of both students and teachers. Teachers realized the CoC and impact seen was they come in class on time, use appropriate and friendly words, build good learning environment for the children, explain children in detail, and encourage students for participation and so on. Similarly, impact of CoC on students were that they come to school on time in classroom with proper uniform, request for teachers permission before leaving class, do homework regularly, listen to teachers and respect teachers. It is noteworthy that through observation and interaction with children on punishment in schools, a significant decrease in punishment against students has been also a result of the CoC observance.

**School Children's Council:** Since the launch of Guidelines for promoting the application of SCC in 2013, the project implementation has yielded impact that has been seen on SCC well-functioning because of the SCC members who have better understanding on role and responsibilities, children are able to develop annual plans, implement various activities through the eight sub-committees, peer to peer education, children are able to express their own views and concerns and more open to other surrounding people.

**Training:** Due to training activities, impact seen was reduction on corporal punishment in schools and communities, understanding of child rights and child protection at school and commune levels.

**Hygiene and sanitation:** after the project period of implementation the students managed to develop the habit of cleanliness, washing hand with soap, wearing suitable school uniform, cleaning and tidying up classroom and using latrines.

**Project 5: Promoting Child Friendly and Healthy Learning Environment**

This project forms a part of CRF new Hygiene and Sanitation Program starting from August 01, 2013 and intended to end on July 31, 2016. The objective of the project is to promote friendly, healthy and safe learning environment for boys and girls in the target school contributing to their accomplishment of basic education as stipulated in Child Friendly School Policy of the MoEYS.

The project has chosen a primary school as target in Prek Rokar commune, Kandal Steung District, Kandal Province, as a pilot target aiming at the following results:

**Result 5.1: School director and teachers of the target schools acquired relevant knowledge and skills for promoting child friendly learning and teaching environment.**

For 2014, a series of trainings was provided for school director and teachers to enhance their capacity in working with their school children. 2 trainings were conducted for 12 teachers, one of which focuses on CR refresher, Positive Discipline and Prohibition on Punishment against children in school and another one was on Health and Sanitation and Community Resource Mobilization conducted for 12 teachers.

Pre- and post-test results during those training indicated that 100% the trained teachers have capacity to conduct the echo training for students and are able to facilitate the setting up process of SCC in their school. The trained teachers have also the capacity in following and using the child-friendly Participatory methods and IEC materials.

**Result 5.2: Target school children gained necessary knowledge and skills promoting good health, hygiene and sanitation and preventing themselves from abuses and harmful situation; and increased positive hygiene and sanitation behaviors in daily practice.**

A number of IEC materials were produced in 2014 followed by a series of trainings and echo trainings under this component.

Four echo training sessions were conducted by teachers to students on topic of CR, Hygiene and Sanitation and Positive Discipline and Punishment in school. Session on Children Council for approximately 550 target students (girl 263) gained the level of understanding of topics. In the echo-trainings indicated a high 90% increase at end of the course. In practice, teachers committed to develop the lesson plan and methods and spent 15 minutes for reflection meeting among the staff after the events to share the good point, obstacle, feedback in order to improve next event.

Children have learnt more about hygiene and sanitation through these IEC materials posted in classroom and information board, and used by teachers for echo training. They acquired capacity to conduct child-led activities on their own such as awareness raising, quizzes on hygiene and sanitation of 10 good practices and CR with students in and outside classrooms-through observation the students gained capacity of conducting the awareness and dissemination sessions for their peers as proven by the pictures attached in 5.3.

**Result 5.3: Target schools equipped with facilities necessary for promoting school hygiene and sanitation as well as child friendly learning environment.**

A preliminary need assessment on the current status of the existing classrooms was done, and taken into consideration factors such as water reservoir and hand wash basin, the latrine, water filter in classroom. It was found that there were some gaps that need to be filled with materials to keep classrooms and latrines clean, rubbish bins, the information board, medical check-up for school children (mouth, teeth, eye, ears,) clean water, first aids facilities/kits to target school and training need assessment for building capacity to teachers.

As a result, students know how to use the rubbish bin in the proper way (e.g.: put the usage of the rubbish bin of the three different colors, the yellow, green and black ones), daily use

these materials to keep classrooms and latrines clean based on Children's Council action plan and also learn what profits of drinking clean water from the filter water etc.



Safe Drinking Water



Peer-Education on Hand Washing



Regular use of latrines at school



Session on Hygiene and Sanitation

**Result 5.4: Health status of target educational staff and children improved through preventive measures from diseases.**

2 cooperative meetings with relevant stakeholders on eyes and ears specialist from Brien Holden Vision Institute and Krousar Thmey organization and School Health Department were conducted in purpose to engage the collaboration activities.

600 tablets of Mebendazole were from School Health Department of MoEYS. These donated tablets will go both to each students and teachers for anti-parasites and deworming.

There are 3 ophthalmologists from Brien Holden Vision Institute, 2 nurses from Chey Cham Nas hospital, 3 ear specialists from Krousa Thmey conducted the service eye and ear checking and MD ear and one nurse provided the ear treatment service. The total of 568 (Girl: 250) students and 13 teachers received the eye and ear checkup and 109 students found and made the initial diagnosis in such of dirty ear, inflammatory, otitis and ruptured eardrum. 58 students were received the treatment and medication, one student receive the

glasses and 8 teachers received the reading glasses. Around 10% of students received treatment services in this year.

600 tablets of Mebendazole were provided by Health Education Department of MoEYS. These donated tablets will go to approximately 582 students and teachers.

**Result 5.5: Vulnerable children (right holders) in the target schools who received direct support from the project are able to maintain schooling that prevent themselves from being abused and exploited.**

The project also provides support for poor and vulnerable children who are in urgent need for their schooling. For a period from March 2014 to 2014-2015 new school year fifty students received study materials from the project such as bikes, uniforms, books, pens, pencils, rulers, erasers, boards and markers, slippers and bags. Among them, seven, whose mother or father died from chronic disease of HIV/AIDS or got divorced, were provided with additional food supplies and equipment such as rice, milk and fish sauce and bikes in order for them to maintain their schooling.

Most of students who get support from the project are regularly keeping schooling even they sometimes have struggled with their family or faced with personal problems. e.g., One family migrated to Thai border in search for job and income, but their children still decided to stay with their aunties or relatives and continue going to school. According to the school's record-book and monitoring conducted by teachers, the supported students regularly attend class and study hard.

**Project 6: Improving Hygiene and Sanitation of Cambodia Rural Schools and Communities**

Under the support of ANESVAD, this project aims at promoting healthier community livelihood through sustainable practices of hand-washing with soap, drinking only safe water and consistent use of latrines as well as strengthening capacity in government, local authorities in promoting improved sanitation and hygiene. Fifty (50) rural villages of three (3) selected communes, namely commune of Krang Mkak, Tuol Prech and Chhak Chheu Neang of Angsnuol district, Kandal Province. 16,950 people (8,581 females) from 3,605 families of 3,175 households and their communities serve as the primary beneficiaries.

The approach used to promote sanitation is Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) and School WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), which are innovative methodologies for mobilizing communities and schools to completely eliminate open defecation (OD). Communities are facilitated to conduct their own appraisal and analysis of open defecation and take their own action to become ODF (open defecation free).

**Result 6.1: Government relevant officials, school children and their households in the target communities have increased knowledge on improved hygiene and sanitation practices.**

Once 2-day training on 3 Key-Hygiene Behaviors for officials from Ang Snuol district and its commune councils, target school directors and key teachers, completed, the training's result indicated that up to around 70 % out of 78 participants understand the topics ranging from fairly to very good levels. In total, 304 echo-sessions for 50 villages and 8 target schools on the same topics were further conducted by the trained officials.

As a consequence of the trainings, 364 households accounted for nearly 56 % of community members from target villages are able to describe the 3 Key-Hygiene Behaviours, while another 48 % of students in the target schools could tell about the topics or share them further with their peers.

**Result 6.2: Access to water and sanitation facilities is improved in 50 villages of Angsnoul district.**

An updated data of households that have latrines revealed that home latrines have reached 2401 in the target area. This figure shows an increase of 651 latrines compared with 1750 at the project start in 2013. Out of these, 355 latrines were built with the project material support and 296 others built by the target villagers as the immediate impacts of the triggering activities with communities through campaigns on National Sanitation Day, dissemination on Benefits from Latrine Use, safe drinking water and hand washing .

At the end of the project, the target schools have access to improved water and sanitation facilities, including: 8 hand-washing places, 7 water storage tanks, 2 new latrines with 5 rooms each, 36 small water-filters with stand & 2 large size water-filters with roofed-shelter, 32 garbage bins, 8 sets sanitary materials (12 items/set).

Minor interventions for improving and supplying new water sources have also been taken in schools including 1 pump-well and 2 toilets (with 2 rooms each) renovated, water drainage to storages, improved pathway for access to latrines, roofed-shelters for water filter system.

**Result 6.3: People in 50 rural villages of Angsnoul district improved consistent use of sanitation and hygiene facilities toward eliminating open defecation.**

An appraisal conducted in September 2014, found that 1,995 households accounted for 59 % out of the total 3,378 visited households in 50 target villages have stopped open defecation. Furthermore, an upward trend in stopping open defecation has proved an important change in terms of hygiene and sanitation through recent door-to-door visits in late December, 2014 conducted to 3,482 households in 3 target communes found that 2,401 households or almost 69 % have quit practice of open defecation. Not only has the practice of open defecation diminished the villagers' commitment to keeping the facilities functional is also praiseworthy. On average, 76.0 % of households having/using latrines in the target areas have demonstrated sustained maintenance of their sanitation facilities.

## **Project 7: Child Sponsorship Program**

This project has been implemented in partnership cooperation with Khmer-France-Hungary Friendship Orphanage (KFO) and Norway House (NH) since 2007. The objective is to help deprived children overcoming the poverty cycle by creating opportunity and possibility to go for post-secondary education that enables them to catch good careers in the future.

The project provides full scholarship support to individual sponsored students including living and studying costs, transport, accommodation, healthcare, etc. CRF administers all scholarship and conduct close monitoring to each and individual child with their best interests at the core of all consideration.

Up to now 19 children and youth have been sponsored and 5 of them had graduated and have jobs while other 14 are still under project coordination and support. Most of the

sponsored students are pursuing university degrees. The following cases are the results of the Child Sponsorship Program.

**Miss Kong Din** born in October, 1989 was a sponsored student under Norway House Sponsorship Program through CRF. She got a full scholarship in 2008 to continue her Higher Education once she had graduated from upper secondary school. Living and studying with the scholarship support, Miss **Kong Din** was a hard working student with strong discipline observance both in school and KFO/NH Center. She successfully finished the Higher Education majoring in Accounting and graduated at Royal University of Laws and Economics in 2012. Her work experience started with CRF as volunteer in 2010. She was formally selected as cashier in 2012, since then she has been a finance officer for CRF finance section.

**Miss Nuon Theary** born in May, 1993 is a sponsored student under Norway House Sponsorship Program through CRF. Under this program she got a full scholarship for one year in 2011 to continue her Higher Education majoring in Information Technology (IT). Fortunately, she further got a second term of scholarship in October 2012 for studying at Cambodia Mekong University on English for Business and expected to be graduated in 2015. Following Miss Din's footprint, Miss **Noun Theary** has built her work experience with CRF initially as an administrative volunteer, then Administrative Assistant. With nature of a hard working personality and trustworthiness, she was selected as full time staff for CRF's administration section up to the present day.

### III. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Capacity Building:** To strengthen the organization's capacity as well as to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the programs, the management team decided to send three support staffs and two program staffs for some different training topics. Three support staffs and one project officer were sent to participate in two 1-day trainings on "Finance Learning Forum" organized by CCC, and one aforementioned and another support staff was also sent to participate one day training on "Human Resource Forum" organized by CCC. Then, one support staff was sent to participate one day training in "ICT learning forum" organized by CCC. More importantly, one program staff was sent to 2-day training on "AADMER and leadership" organized by Plan International Cambodia, ADPC and NCDM in December 2014; one program staff was sent to 5-days training on "Library Management" which organized by SIPA; two program staff were sent to 1-day training on "Monitoring and Evaluation Forum" which organized by CCC; and one program staff was also sent to 1-day workshop on "Fundraising" which organized by NGO CRC with facilitator from GAC/Cambodia. One program staff and Executive Director were participated in an exchange study visit in Philippine which organized by Plan International Philippines.

Two internal trainings on "Resources Mobilization" were shared by staffs of Plan International Cambodia, to all program staff and some support staff and on "Climate Change Smart".

**Board of Directors:** Presently, CRF has five board members who have extensive knowledge and experience in the areas of CR, Laws, Development and fundraising. One board member, Mr. Men Setharoat, has resigned this year due to his health and difficulty in travelling. He has been replaced by Ms. Van Mary, former staffer of CRF through the vote of the Annual Assembly. The present five board members are:

- Ms. Peng Sokunthea, Program Officer, DIAKONIA
- Mr. Bun Sok Seila, Senior Project Officer at RWI
- Ms. Van Mary, Former CRF Program Manager
- Ms. Mom Thany, Ministry of Agriculture, forestry and Fisheries
- Ms. Tiv Tithvanna, Program Manager, Aide et Action

Two-board meetings were held this year. One was held in the second quarter in June, 2014, in which three members were available in this meeting together with the CRF Management Team and the Senior Advisor. The second meeting was held in early November 2014 in which three members attended.

**Staffing:** As CRF has expanded its scope of work, this year, 14 staffs were recruited and one volunteer was promoted to be a staff member of finance section. Altogether, there are 27 staff member of which 18 are program staffs and 9 are supporting staffs. However, nine staffs have resigned during this year.

**Financial Management:** Almost every quarter CRF always tries its best to orient staff members on the organization's policies, especially its financial procedures so that all the expenses meet the real needs effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, to ensure that the financial policy goes on the right track and becomes a more reliable and credible mechanism for the organization, CRF usually hires independent auditing service providers to audit its financial management. This procedure has been practiced for many years since its inception in 2001 and no major frauds found.

In October 2014 the CCC-GPP monitoring and evaluation team conducted FIRST TIME FOLLOW UP & MONITORING ON NGO CODE AND MINIMUM STANDARDS and its finding report concluded that “CRF has been still complying with the minimum standards, especially those ten highlighted in the follow up outline. The NGO certificate and minimum standards have been found to play an important role for them as they were trying to compliance with the standards, they did not want to lose the certificate. CRF had a good BOD and they functioned as governing body, especially they came from difference sectors and they had difference experiences to support CRF. Moreover, CRF got truth from donors and its reputation has been known by many stakeholders such as government, local authority, and communities. The new revision code and standard will be assessing more strictly than previous code, however BOD, MT, and staff of CRF had a commitment to compliance with”.

#### **IV. NETWORKING**

CRF is a member of several networks including NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (NGOCRC), Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC), NGO Education Partnership (NEP), Child Helpline Cambodia (CHC) and special attention is generally given to close cooperation with those partners for good performance. As a member of these coalitions, CRF has been actively involved and participated in their membership meetings and contributing inputs and information for their publications. CRF also has opportunity to learn and explore in other countries experiences through regular exchanges of publications, information on good practices and lessons learnt among the network members.

## **V. CHALLENGES**

In spite of having undertaken these project tasks with such accomplishments in the target areas, there still have been some difficulties and challenges that hamper the smooth implementation. The most recognizable obstacles to the implementing process are as follows:

- Project staff members in remote areas have difficulty in finding quality receipts from suppliers, which causes a waste of children and youth's time to implement their activities. However, CRF's payment bill is encouraged to be used instead in case there is no appropriate receipt or written receipt by suppliers is also acceptable.
- Staff are invited for working in cooperation with other institutions such as CAN through NGO CRC, CNCC but due to the project has no budget allocated for such work, it causes project staff to lose some opportunities to get involved in those activities at national level.
- PWG members and school directors have many other duties, and the learning schedule is tough, causing difficulties in coordinating joint schedules for some activities.
- Some teachers and SCC members who have been trained about necessary skills to work with children were transferred to other schools and replaced with new teachers and SCCs.
- The conducting of remedial classes by school teachers for poor learning students in order to upgrade their capacity to normal score is a real challenge for the project staff as well as for school directors to tackle due to the fact that some students were absent as they were forced to work for their family's sake in the field.

## **VI. PROGRAM EXPENDITURE**

In 2014, CRF has received fund commitments from various donors to support its programs. Those donor agencies/sources are ANESVAD Foundation, WeWorld, Plan International Cambodia, Norway House (NH), Save the Children International (SC), and other contributors. A total grant for this year was US\$715,305.00 and the total expenditure for the 12 month period was US\$726,235.00. For more details, please kindly find in the enclosed audited statement of revenue and expenditure.

## **VII. LESSONS LEARNT**

The following lessons learnt have been found during the project implementation period:

- The projects that have been implemented by CRF are meeting gaps in MoEYS' efforts to reform in depth the very institution, for instance, promoting quality education, physical education and so on.
- Any activity that is linked to MoEYS' policy or recommendations often gains welcoming support from grassroots level, for instance, initiative to promote children's



physical recreation or exercise has hooked up to some contributions from schools. This is the case of setting up a long-jump pit with small financial support from the project.

- Creating a strong SCC requires attention from the teachers, school principals and a system of planning, monitoring and feedback.
- The process of developing document in cooperation with MoEYS may take longer time than expected due to we need to consult with many layers of responsible mechanisms/institutions. Therefore, we should be more cautious when setting up project planning time-frame for such kind of activity. For example, cases of developing students and teacher's textbooks, and the revision of CC guidelines.
- Reflecting from these lessons learnt, through quarterly partnership meeting CRF and other Plan International Cambodia's partners would share achievements and the lessons learnt to improve our work plan in the future. We will strengthen in-service teachers and CC Ex-Com's knowledge on CC guidelines revised through trainings and coaching in order to make schools become safe and friendly place for children. Moreover, we will work closely with SSCs to boost SSCs members to take more attention to school development and have good cooperation with school principals.
- Working through the existing mechanism of the MoEYS, particularly through the District Training Monitoring Team (DTMT) is a key approach to build ownership of the government and ensure sustainability of the project, particularly in monitoring and reporting mechanism and mobilizing resources to support safe school initiatives.
- In order to make school support committee functioning effectively, close cooperation between school principal and SSC members and encourage them to involve in all school's activities especially in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation are key factors to build trust and transparency. By doing this, the school will be able to mobilize support and local resources from surrounding community to develop school as well promoting school safety.
- To reinforce the application of safe school guidelines nationwide, building capacity of MoEYS officials on safe school as national core trainers is a key approach to spread the knowledge to DTMT at the provincial and district levels.
- CYLGs got support from CCWCs for their activities in communities. The projects involve CCWC representatives from each target of CCYMCR members to participate in CCYMCR activities as chaperone/ observer/ participant such as child rights analysis, research planning, data collection in communities, quarterly meetings, awareness raising plan and implement etc. it make them understand about the way of working with young people, what kind of support that they can give, sometime could give advice to CYLGs for any obstacle etc. Beside the training and coaching activities this is one of strategy to linkage CYLGs with CCWCs. This strategy was applying within CCYMCR target communes and also shared to all CCYMCR parental organizations who wish to link up Child club with CCWCs.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Year 2014 saw CRF's successful performance of its missions and advancement in accountability and professionalism in working for the benefits of the children, especially in realizing CR concepts, advancing the practice of safe schools and promoting healthy and sustainable livelihood within the education system and communities as well as supporting meaningful children/youth participation in child rights reporting, monitoring and relevant decisions and policy development.

More importantly with reference to MoEYS' reform these days, one remarkable context that has been observed in target areas where CRF is operating is that the target schools have significantly changed in terms of environment and learning atmosphere and the down trend of punishment against students. Students have friendlier relationship in the playground and classrooms; teachers have given the consideration and the value of their students' views and have almost totally dropped the practice of punishment against their students and accepted the value of non-violent approach in teaching, which serves as one of the factors that could pave the way to child friendly atmosphere in schools as a whole.

An important factor for these impacts lies with our fruitful cooperation with the MoEYS' 5 departments through our 3rd term MOU and the CNCC. Because of this systematic cooperation, implementation at school and local levels has been very much welcomed and speedy. The major success in this year is the inclusion of child participation Guidelines and child protection draft concepts in cooperation with CNCC and coupled with outstanding involvement of MoEYS departments' officials, teachers, local authorities and students.

All achievements point to the sustainability of our projects' impact on children as could be seen from deepened stakeholders' commitment to the cause of children's best interests and the spirit of the government's MGD, especially the eight-point reform in Education field promulgated by H.E. the Minister for Education, Youth and Sport. With these effects, it is clear that CRF has played a very important role in Cambodia's progressive realization of children's rights and demands that it continues its important missions for years to come.

Date: April 08, 2015

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