

# ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT CHILD RIGHTS FOUNDATION YEAR 2016

## I. INTRODUCTION

CHILD Rights Foundation (CRF) is a child-focused, not-for-profit, non-political and non-religious Cambodian non-governmental organization that works toward the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) 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 treated. Established on November 20, 2000 and officially registered with the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) on March 6, 2001, CRF endeavors to build local capacity and ownership of duty-bearers to respect, protect and guarantee these rights as well as to empower rights-holders to exercise and demand their rights, which are essential elements of Cambodia's progress toward democratic and sustained development.

Since its inception, CRF has been working with governmental ministries and local authorities, especially with Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) with the financial support of several donor agencies. With commitment to professionalism and accountability, CRF has continued its effort of realizing children's rights in order to achieve sustainable changes in the attitudes and mindsets of individuals to take personal and collective responsibility to make children's lives safe, positive and wholesome, in accordance with CRF's vision and mission statements, as follows:

### Vision

*"A world where the children's rights are realized in all circumstances, as enshrined in the UNCRC"*

### Mission

*"To empower, influence and mobilize rights holders and duty bearers to advocate, realize and monitor the implementation of the UNCRC"*

In particular, CRF aims to:

- **Advocate** to duty bearers to be accountable for UNCRC implementation;
- **Empower** rights holders to meaningfully participate in age-appropriate decision-making and advocate for child rights,
- **Support** and **partner** with duty bearers and rights holders to realize child rights,
- **Mobilize** duty bearers to dedicate resources, commitment and efforts to realize child rights; and
- **Monitor** the implementation of the UNCRC in partnership with children and young people in Cambodia.

2016 was the first year of the new Strategic Plan 2016-2020 for which CRF focuses on 3 strategic programs: i) **Advocacy for Children's Rights** which joins like-minded agencies nationally, regionally and internationally to increase visibility and campaign for the RGC to prioritize increased resources toward the realization of the rights of children in Cambodia, ii) **Education** to support Cambodia's realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG) which promotes inclusive education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, and iii) **Child Welfare and Protection** which creates safe and healthy communities where children can thrive. During the year 2016, CRF implemented eight projects in 8 districts in the provinces of Siem Reap, Kandal, Kompong Cham, Stung Treng and Phnom Penh. A total annual budget of US\$416,981.28 was received from four donors: Plan International Cambodia, Anesvad Foundation, WeWorld and Norway House. Besides these external funds, CRF also contributed an amount of US\$26,711.04 (6.41%) toward project and administrative costs.

## II. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

### PROGRAM 1: ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

#### Knowledge Hub on Child Rights

The Knowledge Hub is an initiative being developed by CRF as part of its strategic plan and as a potential part of its fundraising strategy. CRF is already a knowledge based organization through the trainings it provides to other NGOs and community organizations, and through its publications. The Knowledge Hub is intended to strengthen and extend these services. However, only a discussion paper was developed during the year and the success of such an initiative may be dependent on how well it can be promoted to potential clients and customers and the range of services that CRF is able to provide.

#### Voice of children and young people

A project concept note targeting children within the age group of 13-17 and youth between the age groups of 18-24 was developed and submitted to a potential donor for financial support. The central goal of this initiative is to work with children and youth to hold duty-bearers (governments, local authorities) and responsibility-bearers (UN Agencies, INGOs, local CSOs and private sector) accountable to their obligations to end all violence against children. However, no funding commitment has been forthcoming so far.

#### Advocacy campaigns and networking

CRF is an active member of various networks working on children's issues such as NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (NGOCRC), NGO Education Partnership (NEP), Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC), National Committee for Child Protection and MoEYS Youth Development Sub-Sector Group.

CRF staff participated in meetings of Education in Emergency (EiE) with representatives of International and local NGOs, MoEYS and PoE, Network on Rural WASH, NGO Forum, etc.

### PROGRAM 2: EDUCATION

In 2016, CRF implemented three projects contributing to its education program, namely "Accountability for Improved Quality and Safety in Primary Education", "Child Scholarship Program" and "Promoting Child Friendly and Healthy Learning Environment".

#### Project 1-Accountability for Improved Quality and Safety in Primary Education

This project is a continuation of the project "Promoting Child Friendly Learning Environment for Quality Education-Phase 2," which was funded by WeWorld. The previous project saw significant achievements in promoting child rights, but a number of issues in target schools—including education quality and safe school environments, sanitation infrastructure and lack of community participation—require further interventions.

This 2-year project plans to address these issues in partnership with the MoEYS and its sub-national offices. Its implementation starts from May 2016 and will end in April 2018.

**Overall objective:** To contribute to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG) in Cambodia: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

**Specific objective:** To strengthen school accountability and performance of 29 target primary schools in Varin, Puok and Svay Leu districts of Siem Reap province.

To reach the above objectives, CRF will implement the following main activities:

- Promote community participation in schools through School Children's Councils (SCCs) and School Support Committees (SSCs),
- Build technical capacities of teachers and coach school directors on management and leadership,
- Supply schools with educational materials and textbooks and provide financial support for at-risk children to continue in school,

- Provide funding for infrastructure and WASH improvements,
- Promote mechanisms for prevention and reporting of child rights violations.

### ***Preparatory and initial activities***

3 sessions of project orientation were conducted for 54 officials who are school directors, DoE officials, Local Volunteers, and NGO's members. Field visits were made to target schools to conduct coaching to school directors on how to make household mapping in their respective school-surrounding villages. This mapping activity enabled schools to identify important and reliable information related to at-risk students, school-aged children's houses, long and short time of migrating families, disabled children, minority families, children living in violent families, etc. which is useful for school development plans and follow up for child protection and education for the new academic year 2016-2017, starting from 1st November 2016. The mapping of NGOs working with the 29 target schools was also carried out and identified the personnel, activities and processes being utilized to support targeted schools. Annual school self-assessments were conducted also to assist school directors, vice-directors from target schools and DoE officials from Varin and Svay Leu districts to evaluate their performance against the revised Child Friendly School checklist of MoEYS. Results from this assessment will be used for developing School Development Plan (SDP) in academic year of 2016-2017.

### ***Result 1: SSC and other community members, school staff and children are actively engaged in planning, executing and monitoring the SDP and the school budget in 8 targeted schools.***

Based on the above mapping, 10 (6 female) village volunteers were recruited at school level. 2-day training was provided to all of them on Child Friendly School framework, SDP, monitoring, meeting facilitation skills and community Participation Approach. 11 target schools re-established their SSCs in accordance with MoEYS guidelines. 2-day training was conducted for 75 SSC members on their role and responsibilities, Community Resource Mobilization, SDP and Social Accountability. 5 billboards displayed role and responsibilities of SSC were installed in 5 schools. Following up from the training, 05 target schools developed their SDPs for year 2016-2017.

### ***Result 2: Primary school teachers and school directors are supported to improve technical competencies in line with established MoEYS policies and standards.***

Training on CFS was provided to 40 educators of PoE and DoE officials, school directors, TTC trainers, and CRF project staff. As follow up, 11 school directors shared the trained topics to their teachers. DTMT monitored and provided technical support to 12 poor-performance schools to improve teaching quality, safe learning and child participation.

### ***Result 3: Targeted schools improved their infrastructure, equipment, furniture and materials in order to provide children with safe and inclusive environment.***

Sanitation and hygiene materials such as soaps, detergents, buckets, plastic mugs, long handle brooms, short handle broom, plastic rubbish bins, handkerchiefs, plastic tubs, toilet brushes, combs and mats were provided to 24 target schools in Puok and Varin. 3 latrines with 5 rooms each, 3 urinals, 4 hand washing place (3 faucets) and 1 disable slope were built at different schools. 3 playgrounds were erected in 3 different target schools, 2 pre-school buildings were constructed and opened for pre-school student at Lvea and Rolumrun Thmei.

### ***Result 4: Child protection system at school and community level has been strengthened.***

Refresher training on Child Protection Guidelines was provided to 112 teachers. Billboards on main contents of the Child Protection guidelines were installed in 24 target schools. 10 girl counselors were selected to serve as trusted people by children for child protection in schools. Coaching to key teachers and school directors of the 29 target schools on how to re-establish SCC was conducted. In total, 49 teachers and directors (19 females) coached. Later on, the 29 schools established its SCC respectively. 319 students became members of the SCC Executive Committees. The project also provided coaching to 48 (11 females) key teachers and school directors on skills to develop annual SCC's plan and organize SCC's monthly meeting. After coaching, the involved teachers and directors conducted echo training to all SCC members of the 2 schools.

The project also provided direct support to 2 sponsored students who got traffic accidents during their travel to schools.

## **Project 2-Promoting Child Friendly and Healthy Learning Environment**

The project entered its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of implementation with funding support from Norway House. The direct beneficiaries of the project are 579 school children (256 girls) and 12 teachers (7 female) of Prek Rokar primary school of Prek Rokar commune, Kandal Stung district, Kandal province. The achievements reported below are summarized results realized by the end of the project.

### ***Result 1: School director and teachers of the target school acquired relevant knowledge and skills for promoting child friendly learning and teaching environment.***

Two 2-day refresher training on effective teaching /learning methodology on primary mathematic from grade 1-6 was conducted for 13 teachers (8 females). Teacher Post- test scores (16% fair, 84% very good) indicated a significant improvement in learning compared with the pre-test scores (92% poor and 8% fair). 100% of the trained teachers committed to improve their teaching methodology and apply their gained knowledge to students.

### ***Result 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.***

3 echo trainings on safe food and nutrition were conducted by teachers for students in target school. As a result, 66% of the 489 students (213 girls) attained very good understanding and 34% have fair understanding. Child Rights and Deworming were conducted by teachers to students in target school. Two 1-day trainings on how to write meeting minutes and facilitation skills for School Children's Council (SCC) were conducted. 4 awareness raising sessions were also conducted by child-to-child groups, using quizzes on hygiene and sanitation, including Prevention of Worm Parasites with the students in classrooms. Venders in school compound were asked to sign on rules and applied by them (not sure what this means). Training on Prevention of Worm Parasites and Food Safety was conducted for 11 Commune Council members (6 females). As result, the level of understanding at pre-test showed: 18% poor, 82% fair and at the post- test showed: 54% fair, 46% good. 100% of the trained participants have ability to conduct echo training on the topic to community members.

The project also provided 2 pump wells for public water sources for community people who have been facing high difficulty in accessing water during dry season.

### ***Result 3: Target school equipped with facilities necessary for promoting school hygiene and sanitation as well as child friendly learning environment.***

The target school's windows and doors in 10 classrooms were repaired and painted. 6 concrete slopes were constructed adjacent to the staircase for disabled students with wheelchairs to gain access to classrooms/school facilities. A school pipe connection to pump water from the pond located about 85 meters away for watering the school garden and 12 new taps fixed for hand washing places were installed.

### ***Result 4: Health status of target educational staff and children improved through preventive measures from diseases.***

4 Optometrists from Holden Brien Organization provided eye check services free of charge to a total of 459 students (206 females), 12 teachers (8 female) and 4 commune council members (1 female). On initial diagnosis, 03 students (2 girls), were diagnosed with eye conditions - one with Isotropia R, and the 2 others with Astigmatism and Ptosis. 1 girl student of Ptosis was recommended to undergo eye checks and treatment at Khmer-Russian Friendship Hospital and 13 adults (7 teachers, 2 DoE and 4 commune council members) received reading glasses. It was recommended that around 3% of people tested attend healthcare centers for treatments. 1-day training was conducted for 12 teachers about vision screening. These teachers then conducted vision screening of children in their classrooms. Parents of the children who required further evaluation were informed or the children were referred to the local hospital. Afterwards, the vision screening program was integrated into school teaching plan. First Aid kits (alcohol, compress, bandage, etc.,) were also made available to schools. Hygiene and sanitation materials were provided in order to keep latrines clean and soap was also provided for students to practice their hand washing.

**Result 5: Vulnerable children (rights-holders) in the target school who received direct support from the project are able to maintain schooling that prevents them from being abused and exploited.**

The project provided 30 vulnerable students (17 girls) with direct support based on their actual basic needs of support in maintaining their schooling.

### **Project 3-Child Scholarship Program**

The scholarships for grade 12 children and youth have been provided since 2007 in cooperation with Khmer-France-Hungary Friendship Orphanage (KFO) and Norway House. The scholarship provides students with full assistance to cover their living and studying costs such as school/university preparation and fees, monthly allowance, study materials, transportation, accommodation and medical treatment. The overall goal of the program is to help deprived children overcome the poverty cycle by creating opportunities and possibilities to reach post-secondary education, enabling them to secure good careers in the future. Currently, 11 students (6 women) are being supported. Moreover, CRF staff has actively initiated parent-mediated communication and intervention for students' performance and attendance. Out of these 11 sponsored students, 5 (2 female) completed their vocational courses resulting in full-time jobs at different places, such as DIGI company, DFDL legal & Tax, Mongkul Phnom Penh, Finance PLC, Intercontinental Hotel and Kingtel Communication Ltd.

### **PROGRAM 3: CHILD WELFARE AND PROTECTION**

There are five projects implemented under this program, namely "Improving Hygiene and Sanitation of Cambodia Rural Schools and Communities", "Enhanced Children's and Youth's Accountability in Climate Change Adaptation", "Promoting Safe School initiatives in Cambodia", "Strengthening Children's Voices in Promoting Safe School" and "Endorsing the drafted Child Protection Policy for Schools in Cambodia".

### **Project 4-Improving Hygiene and Sanitation of Cambodia Rural Schools and Communities**

This 2-year project is a continuation of funding support from Anesvad Foundation after an evaluation of the 1-year pilot project. The project intervention reflects a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) and seeks to generate equitable improvement in access to water supply and sanitation for the prioritized population and thus contributes to the improvement of community health and life conditions of the population. The project has been implemented in 50 villages and 8 primary schools in 3 communes of Angsnoul district, Kandal province. The followings are major achievements of the project:

**General Objective:** Improve community health and life conditions of the population in 3 communes.

After a period of 18 months up to December 2016, the project has reduced child mortality and water-borne diseases in the under 5 years group in the target areas: **Child mortality** has been reduced 50%, **Child morbidity** has been reduced 37% through prevention of water-borne diseases infecting children under 6 months and under 5 years and **3 main water-borne diseases infected to children** has been reduced 62% in diarrhea, 36% of skin diseases and 13% of malnutrition.

**Specific Objective:** Equitable improvement in the access to water supply and sanitation for the prioritized population of the 3 communes.

The achievements realized under this Specific Objective are **Population access to improved water supply:** the assessment indicated that 60% of population in 3 communes has now access to improved water supply.

This implies that access has increased triple fold if compared with 20% at the baseline in 2015, **Coverage of latrines in the target areas:** 85% of population/ households had latrines at home (3,193 latrines out of 3,775 households), including 299 new latrines built by community owned resources, **Practice of hand washing with soap** has covered 69% of population/ households. This indicated that there is a slight progress of 29% if compared against the baseline which already had 40% in 2015, **WASH practice in schools:** 67% of students in eight target schools used the latrines for defecation (2,132 children, 46% are girls), **Status of ODF villages:** Additional 13 villages were evaluated and officially declared ODF villages and **Use of safe water for drinking (boil, filter chemical, water treatment)** has covered 88% of population/ households.

***Result 1: Water supply related hygiene and sanitation infrastructure is correctly operated and maintained by the communities and schools.***

Water Supply User Groups (WSUG) goals were restructured in a flexible and practical way in alignment with Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) instructions by dropping a number of criteria which requires only community people to be involved in these groups/CBOs. WSUGs were set up in 48 villages with 140 leaders equipped with tools and forms for monitoring Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of WASH facilities. Roles and responsibilities of relevant key stakeholders were revised and introduced for supporting WSUGs, such as Provincial Working Group, PDRD, DRD, village leaders, village development committee, local commune council, and WSUG. Moreover, WASH issues have been integrated into the training topics for awareness raising sessions among villagers. Owing to technical support from PDRD and DRD, the local hygiene promoters and WSUG became an important mechanism and have the capacity to carry out educational activities and play leading roles in the protection of water sources and O&M existing WASH facilities in their village.

The project also works with primary schools. 18 new rooms of latrines in 5 schools, 2 bio-sand water filters in 2 schools, were constructed, 3 broken rooms of latrines renovated, wells and connection system, waste water drainage system, school playground, etc. were retrofitted and improved. Furthermore, hygiene and sanitation improvement plans were jointly developed with SSC and put in SCC's personal hygiene practices in all schools and used as tool for fundraising in communities as well.

In 2016, the instigation for community participation and support to the operation and sustainability of WASH has become fundamental for the project. Activities for resource mobilization and fundraising were undertaken and somewhat proved effective in schools and in communities. Actually, WSUGs with support from the project staff and local hygiene promoters hosted household meetings in 22 villages and succeeded in prompting water-users to pay a small monthly remuneration of between 1000-2000 riels (\$0.25-\$0.50) per household for the protection and O&M of water sources supply in their respective communities. A financial contribution of USD 910.00 was raised for the construction roof of water filter in two schools. A number of sanitary items/equipment were also mobilized on a monthly basis from SSC and parents associations for the operation of water supply services and student practices personal hygiene and sanitation in all target schools.

***Result 2: Province, district and commune level authorities have the commitment, capacities, and tools for planning, managing and maintaining water supply and sanitation in rural areas, as part of their duties.***

Two DRD officials and 3 Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) members attended refresher training on MRD 2014-2018 National Strategic Plan on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation and Hygiene (RWSSH) with a focus on different key players in supporting the implementation of the plan and their roles as WSUGs in community-based organization (CBO) operation in target villages. With support from staff, an advocacy paper was developed by WSUGs and local hygiene promoters were developed and submitted to Commune Investment Plan (CIP) for inclusion in its annual budget for O&M infrastructures in schools and communities. 5 trainings to strengthen capacity of existing mechanisms in schools supporting O&M WASH facilities were also conducted.

***Result 3: Networks of duty bearers on community WASH and School WASH promoted at local and national level for further development in rural WASH in Cambodia.***

NGOs network on WASH were established through support from PDRD in quarterly meetings to share experiences, information, learning, etc. As a result, coordination to organize a public campaign was occurred in the project target areas with participation and contribution by potential NGOs (WV-C, IDE, Toeuk Saath-1001, Sunrise), government institutions and communities and schools. With the project financial support, PDRD coordinated quarterly meetings with NGOs. Approximately, 30-40 participants joined in each meeting, including 3 PRD, 11 DRD, and 12 NGOs. The meetings aimed at strengthening capacity, partnerships and building close relations between NGOs working on WASH sector and PDRD- Kandal province.

***Result 4: The local partner institutional management and capacity reinforced contributed to achieving the project results in efficient and sustainable ways.***

Two government officials from PDRD and DoEYS gained the ability to work directly with the target communities and schools. Topics provided are: MRD guidelines on RWSS and advantages of WSUG to play roles in the

maintenance and operation of water sources in their villages, building provided to relevant government institutions, the process of developing school improvement plans in their respective school for all school directors with participation of SSC, SCC and children's parents.

In 2016, members of PWG conducted four field visits and were involved in project monitoring and evaluation such as giving advice, technical support, assessing the project execution and review.

### **Project 5-Enhanced Children's and Youth's Accountability in Climate Change Adaptation**

This project is funded by Plan International Cambodia and is part of the CRF DRR/CCA Program. It targeted six schools (5 primary schools and 1 secondary school) in Kandal Stung district, Kandal province over an 18 month period (from 23 June, 2016 to 23 December, 2017). It responds to the urgent need for children in particular and communities to be provided with Climate Change Adaptation/Disaster Risk Reduction (CCA/DRR) strategies to mitigate the negative impact of 30 years of worsening drought conditions in Cambodian communities. The objectives of the project are:

- **Objective 1:** To sensitize children, youth and schools and local authorities in target communities with knowledge of climate change and its negative impacts.
- **Objective 2:** To provide children and youth in targeted communities with the knowledge and skills needed to secure sustainable, drought-adaptive livelihoods.

#### ***Result 1.1: Through school curriculum, children attain MoEYS-standard levels of knowledge on CCA and DRR.***

A kick-off meeting was conducted to introduce and inspire community support and participation in the project implementation in the target areas. 24 participants presented such as teachers, school directors, SCCs, local authorities, community people and relevant local government institutions. Quarterly meetings with all key stakeholders were organized to assess project progress against results set.

In October, 2016, a project baseline survey was carried out with 72 stakeholders by the project team in three target schools using participatory methods and tools such as KII, KAP survey, observation, FGD and risk mapping tool.

28 teachers in the target schools were equipped with knowledge on CCA/DRR curriculum. As a result, participants demonstrated their knowledge had improved on disaster, drought, climate change adaptation, cause and effect of climate, disaster risk reduction, school hazard mapping and how to respond to the disaster in the pre-impact, during impact and post impact phases. The post-test of training indicated that 14% gained outstanding score, 57% very good and 29% good. In addition, schools have developed the preparation plan for their schools and subjects to be integrated into their school improvement plan.

Preliminary echo-trainings on topics of climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and water sanitation and hygiene were conducted by school teachers for 560 students (299 girls).

#### ***Result 1.2: Increased understanding and prioritization of CCA and DRR by schools and local duty bearers.***

Progress made towards this result has not yet been fulfilled due to late start of the project.

#### ***Result 2.1: Secondary school curriculum prepares youth for local careers in sustainable, drought resistant fields.***

Progress made towards this result has not yet been fulfilled due to late start of the project.

#### ***Result 2.2: Improved school CCA/DRR practices in water sustainability and sanitation and food security serve as model for households in targeted communities.***

The project is providing necessary materials and techniques to target schools in order to enable them to practice adaptive vegetable garden. The materials include plastic mulch, fence net, seeds, hock, materials for compost making, etc. Two out of the six target schools have prepared their vegetable gardens by using the provided

materials and technical support from the project. Demonstration activity on school CCA/DDR practices related to food security as a model for households has yet started in schools.

### **Project 6-Promoting Safe School initiatives in Cambodia**

This project is funded by Prudence Foundation through Plan International Cambodia for a 3-year execution (01 July, 2016 to 30 June, 2019). It is implemented in 15 primary schools in 4 communes of Thalaboriwat district, Stung Treng province. The project aims at supporting the most at-risk community children who are attending public schools in the target areas. The key target group will be children; girls and boys aged 6-15 and attending primary schools.

#### ***Result 1: Promoted a culture of school safety and resilience in Cambodia by enforcing the networking and application of safe school guideline at all levels.***

The project was launched at district level with participation of key stakeholders from national and sub-national levels, NGO partners and representatives of Plan International Cambodia. Additionally, a baseline study was carried out in collaboration DoE in 8 schools. The Education in Emergency Network was reactivated with a composition of INGOs and LINGOs and MoEYS Disaster Management secretariat as members. This was followed by 2 meetings for promoting school safety and protection of children in education in emergency situations and enforcing the application of safe school framework and Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) developed by MoEYS to school level.

20 members of DTMT from target district were equipped with knowledge and skills through a ToT training on safe school guidelines, training module on 3 pillars of safe school comprehensive framework, DRR/CCA, search and rescue, first aid skill and simulation exercise. Results from the post-test proved that they gained necessary knowledge and skills to conduct echo-training to students. Successively, the safe school comprehensive framework was transferred through a 2-day echo-training by the trained DTMT to 43 stakeholders in Thalaborivath cluster school, and in turn the teachers spread the knowledge gained to their school students in all schools.

In order to strengthen existing networks on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Education Working Group in Cambodia, the project staff participated in two bi-monthly meetings of Education in Emergency (EiE) with representatives of International and local NGOs, MoEYS, PoE and DRR secretariat of MoEYS. Among the topics discussed were the dissemination of SSG, EPRP in education sector and support required to schools for EPRP development, school simulation exercises, materials needed for schools etc. Results from the EiE network meeting will be further shared at other network meetings such as Joint Action Group (JAG), Cambodian Humanitarian Forum (CHF), National DRR Forum, NGO Education Partnership (NEP) for better understanding and supporting of safe school framework application.

#### ***Result 2: Embedded the participation of children in establishment of safe schools in target communities.***

An activity to identify and prioritize facilities for school safety was conducted with 21 participants from target schools such as school directors, school support committee, school children's council, and DTMT to assist them to identify and prioritize activities and facilities for their school safety. Key hazards faced by each school were integrated into safe school action plans in order to mitigate risks and increase school safety. Concurrently, a monitoring tool/checklist was also in the process of development by adapting from existing forms/checklist to measure progress made toward the safe school action plan.

### **Project 7-Strengthening Children's Voices in Promoting Safe School**

With funding support from Plan International Cambodia the project "Strengthening Children's Voices in Promoting Safe Schools" is a 3-year project that started from January 2015 and will conclude in December 2017. The project is being implemented in 6 primary schools—two of them are in Khan Chroy Chongva, Phnom Penh, and four others are in Kang Meas district, Kompong Cham province.



**Result 1: Promoted a culture of school safety and resilience in Cambodia by enforcing the networking and application of safe school guideline at all levels.**

Following up from the Safe School Guidelines (SSG) developed in 2013 a SSG teaching manual was developed and officially adopted by H.E Dr. Hang Chhuon Naron, Minister of MoEYS which was a result of cooperation between CRF and National Core Trainer (NCT) of MoEYS. The SSG manual was printed in 1,500 copies and training provided to 9 DTMT of three target districts. The materials also shared with other NGOs for their safe school guideline dissemination workshop.

Advocacy actions were taken as well in joining force with other NGOs such as Save the children and Plan International Cambodia by demanding the government to increase sufficient budget allocation at national and sub-national for DRR & safe school preparedness and response.

*"I have presented about safe school initiative twice and my school's best practice to all primary schools in Kampong Cham Province including 43 primary schools in Kang Meas district during the provincial education congress. I am really excited when my school's achievements on safe school initiative activities were praised by PoEYS and other schools. In addition, I have promoted school safety activities, especially the three pillars of safe school framework within the cluster school in Sokong commune every quarter. My school have received 3 exchange visits",* impression made by Mr. Thou Rattana, Director of Beng Trave Primary School.

**Result 2: To embed the participation of children in establishment of safe schools in target communities.**

20 members of DTMT (4 females) from existing DoE mechanisms were mobilized as resources for the project. They were invited to participate in ToT training on safe school guidelines with a special emphasis on the "Three Pillars of Safe School Comprehensive Framework", DRR/CCA, search and rescue, first aid skills and simulation exercise. As a result, 80% of the trained DTMT gained necessary knowledge and skills to conduct echo-training at school level. Children's voices/opinions raised about risks and issues related to their safety in school were integrated into school DRR action plans. 1,499 school children (788 girls) were sensitized about educational messages on DRR and the safe school concept, Do and Don't messages. School Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans were developed and implemented from January 2016, based on hazard and risk assessment identified by 6 target schools.

The project also provided a variety of school infrastructure, ranging from classroom, floor, playground, roof, etc. repairs to schooling equipment and hygiene/sanitation facilities like latrines, garbage bins, etc.

*"Safe school training is really important for us, especially my DTMT members to gain more knowledge on DRR & safe school and to transform schools to become safer places for children".* Ms. Oeur Bophany, official of Kong Meas DoEYS said.

**Project 8-Endorsing the drafted Child Protection Policy for Schools in Cambodia**

The project aims to mobilize relevant key development agencies that work in the Education sector and also in Child Protection sector in a joint effort to push MoEYS to adopt the drafted child protection policy for schools submitted to MoEYS at the end of 2015. The objective of the project is to have the drafted Child Protection Policy for Schools in Cambodia approved by MoEYS in order to commence the implementation process.

The project activated a Technical Working Group which was assigned by MoEYS. This working group played role in converting the draft policy into the official format and pushed for adoption through TWG meetings, connecting with existing multi-mechanisms such as CNCC and INGOS such as Plan, ChildFund, Save the Children, World Vision, UNICEF, etc.

CRF coordinated 5 meetings and workshops at Prey Veng, Phnom Penh, Siem Reap provinces and consolidated comments and inputs from 40 officials from relevant governmental, international and local organizations/institutions into the final draft. Finally, the policy was officially adopted by MoEYS Minister on September 15, 2016.

Furthermore, PED of MoEYS and CRF are working to develop a long-term operational plan to implement the policy in schools and establish a national child protection committee at MoEYS level. UNICEF is also willing to support a Technical Advisor and providing funding support directly to MoEYS.

### **III. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Five-year Country Strategic Plan (2016-2020):**

In August 2016, CRF's 5-year Country Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 was further elaborated and finalized to include a Program Logical Frame which will serve as a roadmap and master plan to design and implement child-focused projects and contribute to realizing its VMGs. The CSP prioritizes 3 key strategic directions: i) Fundraising to include at least two new bilateral donors through targeted activities that meet the stated needs and priorities of children and youth; ii) Governance through improved administration, finance and human resources to meet best practice standards; and iii) Programs and Innovations to respond the needs of children, realize their rights to survival, development and participation.

#### **Staff Capacity Building:**

To strengthen the organization's capacity as well as to ensure the quality and effectiveness of its works, CRF sent staff to four external trainings/workshops/learning forums on topics such as climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and basic financial management with NGOCRC, and ICT forum with CCC.

As part of capacity building, a two-day training on "Coaching and Mentoring for Success" for 15 staff was conducted by an associate trainer from CAMFEBA in September 2016. Modules covered by the training included coaching and mentoring practices, GROW model for collaborative coaching and handling emotional behaviors.

Besides this training, staffs were also assigned to attend external meetings/workshops/forums such as: NGO Forum organized by CCC to update current situation of CSOs and striking the democratic space in Cambodia, government's commitment toward Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Two staff participated in Four Quarterly meetings conducted by PDRD with 12 members of INGO, local NGOs working on Rural WASH to report on main progress/achievements, challenges and plans, and share experiences and relevant guidelines policies tools and experiences.

#### **Board of Directors:**

Presently, CRF has five board members who have extensive knowledge and experience in the areas of child rights, laws, finance, development and fundraising. The five board members are:

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

Two board meetings were held this year. The first one was held on July 14, 2016 with four members to update and discuss with them CRF operations (program/ projects/ concept notes, staffing, budget), CRF CSP 2016-2020 endorsement/main programs, HR, CSP implementation and local fundraising. The second one was an urgent meeting held on September 16, 2016 as per request of two members of board to discuss and address staff motion for an early release 50% of their provident fund, Executive Director (ED) performance appraisal and the need of the Board's inputs to the drafted Strategic plan. The meeting came up with a proposed text and ED to circulate to generate an extraordinary voting process.

#### **Staffing:**

CRF has cut down its staff due to the completion of two projects in December, 2015. However, 5 new staff members were recruited to work on new approved and expanding projects in Stung Treng, Siem Reap and Kandal

provinces. Altogether, CRF now has 24 staff members (8 female). Additionally, two expatriates were also employed as technical advisors for short-term period to work on Program Logical Framework for 5-year Strategic Plan and Fundraising Strategy. However, 4 staff members resigned during this year.

### Financial Management

CRF tries its best to orient staff members on the organization's policies— and especially its financial procedures, so that all expenses meet the real needs effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, to ensure that the financial policy is on the right track and becomes a more reliable and credible mechanism for the organization, CRF usually hires an independent auditing service to audit its financial management. This procedure has been practiced since its inception in 2001.

### Annual staff meeting/conference

The annual staff meeting held on September 21-23, 2016 was attended by 15 project and supporting staff to create an opportunity for them to report about the progress of CRF work and to review and approve the organization policies. The team building, challenges and problems faced by the staff were also raised and discussed during the meeting.

### Field visits

Field visits were conducted on a regular basis and on one-off occasions by different donors, like Norway House, Plan International Cambodia, WeWorld, Anesvad to monitor achievements and progresses made in target schools and communities in eight districts of Siem Reap, Kandal, Kompong Cham and Stung Treng provinces.

### Volunteer support/Expatriate Advisor

Based on the new Five-year Country Strategic Plan (2016-2020), CRF have requested help assistance from Planete Urgence to support and strengthen staff capacity on specific areas of administration management, fundraising plan, human resource development and management, and social enterprise.

## IV. CHALLENGES

- Primary school teachers are generally under-qualified. It has been observed in previous projects that most school teachers take a positive view of the project actions to increase their capacities and improve community engagement. However, many teachers feel strained for time and do not appreciate traveling long distances to take part in project activities.
- Community members do not show much interest in, or place value on, volunteer work for their involvement in the protection and O&M of water sources supply/facilities in community.

## V. PROGRAM EXPENDITURE

*Currency: US Dollars*

Donor Agencies	Project Name	Donor Budget Received	Donor Budget Spent	CRF Budget Spent	Total Expenditure
WeWorld	Accountability for Improved Quality and Safety in Primary Education (Promoting Child Friendly Learning Environment for Quality Education-Phase 2)	161,292.82	115,719.37	9,101.32	124,820.69
Norway House	Promoting Child Friendly and Healthy Learning Environment	24,234.44	25,805.07	0	25,805.07
Norway House	Child Scholarship Program	47,619.14	24,765.69	0	24,765.69
Anesvad	Improving Hygiene and Sanitation of Cambodia Rural Schools and Communities	197,341.32	128,842.58	5,618.83	134,461.41

Plan International Cambodia	Enhanced Children's and Youth's Accountability in Climate Change Adaptation	17,434.80	9,609.23	0	9,609.23
Plan International Cambodia	Promoting Safe School initiatives in Cambodia	22,054.33	18,594.63	1,411.88	20,006.51
Plan International Cambodia	Strengthening Children's Voices in Promoting Safe School	65,328.18	58,151.93	332.96	58,484.89
Plan International Cambodia	Endorsing the drafted Child Protection Policy for Schools in Cambodia	9,402.50	8,781.74	0	8,781.74
CRF Fund contributing to general management and operation		28,673.76	0	10,246.05	10,246.05
<b>Total Budget for 2016</b>		<b>573,381.29</b>	<b>390,270.24</b>	<b>26,711.04</b>	<b>416,981.28</b>

## VI. LESSONS LEARNT

The recognition of CRF are well known as child rights experts at all stages of decentralized government, from province to commune and village levels.

Involving government structures in all project stages from identification up to monitoring by PWG and official local administrations is an important strategy.

The project is in line with MRD priorities in WASH using the same key hygiene and sanitation messages for preventing water-borne diseases.

### Integration of Human Right Based Approach

ANESVAD and CRF introduce the concept of HRBA into application in the whole cycle of WASH project: identification and designing, planning, implementation, monitoring/ follow up, evaluation. CRF has the HRBA present in its mission: 1-**Advocate** to duty bearers to be accountable for UNCRC implementation; 2-**Empower** rights holders to meaningfully participate in age-appropriate decision-making and advocate for child rights, 3-**Support** and **partner** with duty bearers and rights holders to realize child rights, 4-**Mobilise** duty bearers to dedicate resources, commitment and efforts to realize child rights; and 5-**Monitor** the implementation of the UNCRC in partnership with children and young people in Cambodia.

### Need for co-ordination and collaboration

Project management, coordination and integration of inputs for improving hygiene and sanitation in rural communities and schools are particularly important:

- among departments in government (education, health, water and sanitation)
- among school staff, school management and board of parents-teacher associations and School Children's Councils (SCCs)/school health clubs;
- among different agencies-NGOs/government/UN organizations;
- among hardware inputs and educational software;
- among community initiatives/projects and community-based organizations/WSUG linked with IHS project and community health/local hygiene promoters.

### Stakeholders' participation to ownership

Ownership can be built through sharing concerns and real needs expressed by the beneficiaries and stakeholders. Therefore, to get full participation from them, they have to know clearly about the project, and their involvement in developing the project plan. Generating collaboration, contribution, commitment and resources from school

directors and local authorities is imperative for the ultimate success and sustainability of the project because these values build the ownership of community people in decision-making on how to operate and maintain of facilities they built.

#### **Need for systematic monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring of on-going projects and evaluations of past projects can yield useful lessons that can be applied to current projects and programs. Monitoring can also be used for taking problem solving actions especially at the school and district levels. Unfortunately monitoring and evaluation are often not done systematically. This area therefore remains a major gap in improving hygiene and sanitation in rural communities and schools project.

#### **Need for teacher commitment, training and monitoring**

Teacher commitment is crucial but is frequently not given sufficient consideration. Teachers also need training. This is a key issue which is often forgotten or left out due to financial constraints. Refresher training should include instruction on how to involve children and staff in maintenance and use of school facilities; making work plans, School Children's Councils (SCCs)/school health clubs. Other constraints to successful teaching of Improving Hygiene and Sanitation in rural communities and schools include: encumbering teachers with too many responsibilities handed over in a top-down way, poor teacher pay and excessive numbers of students in classes. Capacity in building and monitoring appropriate learning methods is often missing from schools. Relevant learning materials are therefore needed. Most important, however, is the follow-up by supervisors, school management and teachers. Lack of follow-up after one short training event has seriously weakened the project in many places. Regular donor's visits to the school really encourage stakeholders to become dynamic, and build good relationship and trust among each other.

#### **Participation**

The project will also focus on a broader mobilization and empowerment of community members, including SSCs, community volunteer groups, school directors, teachers, children and young people, and parents of students in order to improve the school learning environment and development. Community contributions are critical to building ownership of project actions. Assisting the SSC and community volunteer groups mobilizes resources for school development and to increase local capacities to contribute to and monitor School Development Plans is an ongoing need. Additionally, work with SCCs is required in order to involve them in SDP planning, school and classroom management, and to serve as watchdogs for their own rights.

### **VII. CONCLUSIONS**

CRF is prepared to undertake its new 5-year strategic plan (2016-2020) and the revised organizational structure and strategies in order to cope with projects that have been affected by global funding and currency trends. With its new strategic plan and directions, CRF is now in the process of initiating projects on social enterprise and looking for funding to support implementation of these important strategies.

Two projects came to an end during the year, resulting in the loss of several highly valued CRF staff. However, it was also marked with continuation of support of Norway House, WeWorld and Plan International Cambodia to support existing and emerging initiatives regarding the quality, health and safety in education sector, CCA and DRR/Safe schools. Nevertheless, the funding support to projects under *Advocacy for Children's Rights Program* has not yet been reached after Save the Children funding support was discontinued in order to empower and work directly with the Cambodia Children and Young People Movement for Child Rights (CCYMCR) to review its policy and organizational structure for becoming independent organization.

CRF has played a leading and active role in coordinating NGO consultations for the development of Child Protection Policy for Schools in Cambodia pushing MoEYS adopted to the final draft of its organization.

Date: February 10, 2017

Consolidated by:

Ngeng Teng

Approved by:

Vorn Koy