



ACTIONAID CAMBODIA

# NEWSLETTER

JULY 2021

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1

Covid-19 Community Outbreak: ActionAid Cambodia partnered with CFSWF and IDEA to support workers in the informal sector



CFSWF distributed food package to workers in the informal sectors. (Photo supplied: CFSWF)

Linda is a 35-year-old widow living in an urban area of Krong Ta Khmao, Kandal provinces. She worked as a service worker in a KTV until the Covid-19 outbreak. Since she needs to pay loans and feed eight dependants in her rooms, including her child, her mothers, and her orphanage-nephews, she has been hard finding jobs as labour workers such as clothes washing, dishwashing, garlic peeling, etc. which could earn between 4-8 USD per day. This small amount is not enough, and her family has been struggling very hard with the crisis.

During lockdown in the red zone, her family received small amounts of food items from the government, and she is also the one who received additional relief food and hygienic kits from ActionAid Cambodia.

With the support of IHART, ActionAid Cambodia, in a partnership with Cambodian Food and Service Worker's Federation (CFSWF) and Independent Democratic Association of Informal Economy (IDEA), is supporting workers in the informal sector, mainly women in the entertainment sector, people who have occupations in the (local) transportation sector and street vendors through cash transfer and food package distribution. This project, implemented from May to July 2021, will directly benefit 710 families in Phnom Penh and Kandal provinces.

ActionAid Cambodia so far has transferred the budget to Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) to support 500 families (amount of 50\$ per family) through cash transfer in Phnom Penh and Kandal Province for COVID-19 response. At the same time, ActionAid Cambodia has also provided fund support to CFWSF to support 210 families in food distribution with a total amount of 50\$ per family.



CFSWF was distributing cash to workers in the informal sectors during the spread of Covid-19. (Photo Supplied: CFSWF)

2

ActionAid, CSOs, and Union urged the Royal government of Cambodia to ratify ILO C190

Harassment and violence can and does happen anywhere, including on the way to work, at home and online. That's why C190 protects workers' safety wherever they find themselves in the course of doing their jobs. So far, 6 countries have ratified C190 to abolish violence and harassment in the workplace. It's time for Cambodia to do the same! 42 unions and CSOs urge the Royal Government of Cambodia to ratify ILO C190.

The UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) specifically recommended that RGC ratify C190 in its 2019 Concluding Observations from its review of Cambodia's implementation of the CEDAW treaty. In ratifying C190, the government will have successfully responded to this CEDAW Committee's Concluding Observation. The CEDAW Committee further expressed concern about the absence of a comprehensive law that defines and effectively prohibits violence and harassment, including all forms of GBVH and sexual harassment, arising from or linked to work, particularly considering the prevalence of such violence in the garment industry and while commuting to and from work. The Committee recommended that RGC "adopt and implement comprehensive legislation to prevent and respond to all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, in the world of work, and establish an independent complaints mechanism to ensure that victims have effective access to redress and that perpetrators are held accountable." Such legislation needs clear definitions of gender-based violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, plus specific processes that conform to ILO C190.

Let's make 2021 the year we #RatifyC190!

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TIME TO #RATIFYC190

3

ActionAid Cambodia presented preliminary findings from “Participatory Research on Vulnerability of Women with Disability on Climate Change Impacts”

ActionAid Cambodia presented preliminary findings from “Participatory Research on Vulnerability of Women with Disability on Climate Change Impacts” to partner organizations and stakeholders working with people with disabilities. This workshop was held on June 17, 2021, to disseminate preliminary results and discuss input and feedback on findings.

The study aims to comprehensively identify barriers and vulnerabilities that women and girls with disabilities and their careers experience to their meaningful inclusion in climate resilience. We conducted participatory discussions with 32 women and girls living with disabilities in four communes of Kampot and Pursat provinces. The discussion involved the following participatory exercises:

- Resource and hazard mapping
- Historical timeline
- Visioning exercise
- Venn diagram
- Seasonal calendar
- Vulnerability matrix
- Decision-making matrix

Legal and policy frameworks related to disability and climate change in Cambodia

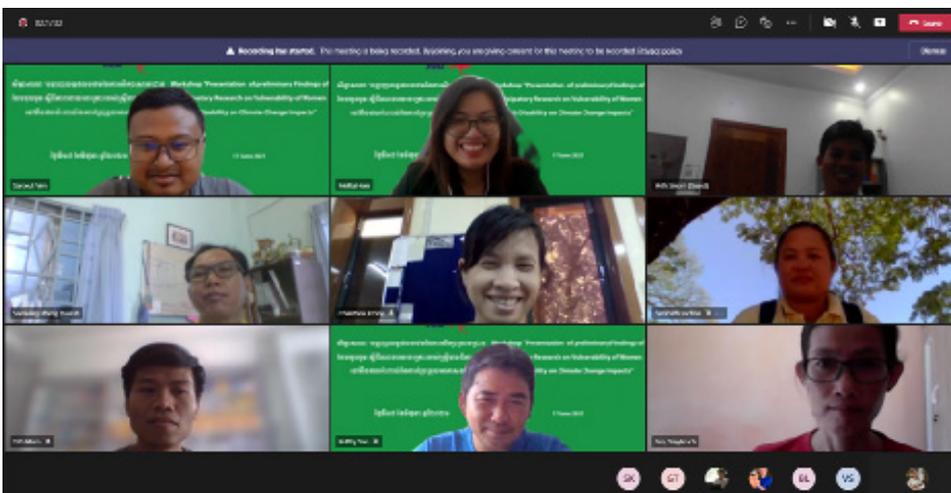


We also employed desk review, in-depth interviews with 10 women/girls living with disabilities, and key informant interviews with 20 governmental officers, NGO staff, and women champions at the local and national levels to triangulate the findings.

We found out that WLWDs are more vulnerable to climatic hazards than any other vulnerable group because most of them are physically and mentally weak and have minimal education, economic power, and decision-making power related to climate change adaptation. In addition, though the study finds out some WLWDs have to some extent contributed to household income, they are mainly engaged with less physically demanding income-generation activities, including mending and cleaning fishing nets,



dishwashing, house cleaning, taking care of livestock, or weeding. Women living with disabilities (WLWDs) in the studied locations have limited power and influence on important household decisions. Decision-making dynamics within the household is particularly men-centric when women have less economic power, helpful information, networks, hands-on experience and support.



Group photo during the online workshop to present the findings.

Moreover, they also concede power to men to make crucial decisions and lack the confidence to discuss or challenge their husbands in decisions related to livelihood and income.

As a result of physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers, WLWDs are always isolated and excluded from voicing their concerns and participating in the decision-making process related to climate change intervention in the community. For instance, public consultations to develop community disaster preparedness plans are commonly held at inaccessible locations and have no or inadequate assistive tools (hearing aids/sign language) for physically, vision and hearing-impaired people. Due to the lack of WLWDs in leadership roles or decision power who can represent the needs of disabled people at the sub-national level, especially commune level, challenges and support needs of WLWDs are unlikely to be discussed effectively.

The study recommends mainstreaming disability into climate change adaption intervention, advocating and funding allocation for disability inclusion, increasing WLWDs' leadership, and ensuring representation of WLWDs at the local and national levels. To empower more at-risk groups, especially WLWDs, training programmes and communication tools and materials should be adapted and be accessible to WLWDs.



## 4 From an ordinary to an active youth in the community

Prior to joining the training under Greater Young Women Empowerment in Decision Making and Accountable Public Service Delivery, Masitas was just an ordinary youth who paid less attention to what was happening in her community and what issues people in the community face.

Math Masitas, 19 years old, living in Trapaeng Sangke Commune, Teuk Chhou District, Kampot Province, joined the pieces of training in late 2020. After entering the training, Masitas and another team member had a collective idea to produce a video on the importance of ID poor cards and how the authority provides such service to vulnerable people.

Masitas said, “Before, I had no idea what the IDPoor is, its process to get it and the benefits. Fortunately, I got the chance to produce a video related to this topic to explain this matter further. I have learned a lot from this assignment.”



Masitas was practising what she has learned in class. (Photo supplied: TT)

A variety of governmental and non-governmental programmes aim to support the poorest to access social assistance interventions in health and other sectors—with a frequent focus on women and children. The Ministry of Planning in 2014 implemented a nationwide programme called the Identification of Poor Households Programme (IDPoor), which provided authorization to the local authority to identify vulnerable households in their respective community.

The series of training on “Social Media and Smart Phone Video Production” and “Gender Responsive aims to provide youth with the basic understanding of principles and practices of journalism, media ethics, social media campaign, basic understanding of Gender and Public Service Delivery Concept. It is organised under the project “Greater Young Women Empowerment in Decision Making and Accountable Public Service Delivery”, with financial support from European Union (EU) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Without any hesitation, Masitas emphasized that “I was delighted because I was warm welcomed by the village chief during my fieldwork to produce the video, which makes me braver and confident to produce more public serviced related videos.”

After joining the training, Masitas also managed to form a Trapaeng Sangke Commune group”, and they plan to produce more videos on the public serviced delivery related topic. Masitas believes that youth plays an essential role in improving accountable public service delivery.

Her team was occasionally also invited by the village chief to join their monthly meeting once Covid 19 situation gets better.

## 5 ActionAid Cambodia conducted Media Monitoring on Gender-Based Violence Reporting

ActionAid conducted a monitoring on gender-based violence cases reported by media between April and May 2021. 40 cases of violence against women and girls were counted while there was only one reported case of violence committed by a woman on her intimate partner. The 40 cases recorded committed by 47 men and affected 16 girls and 26 women.

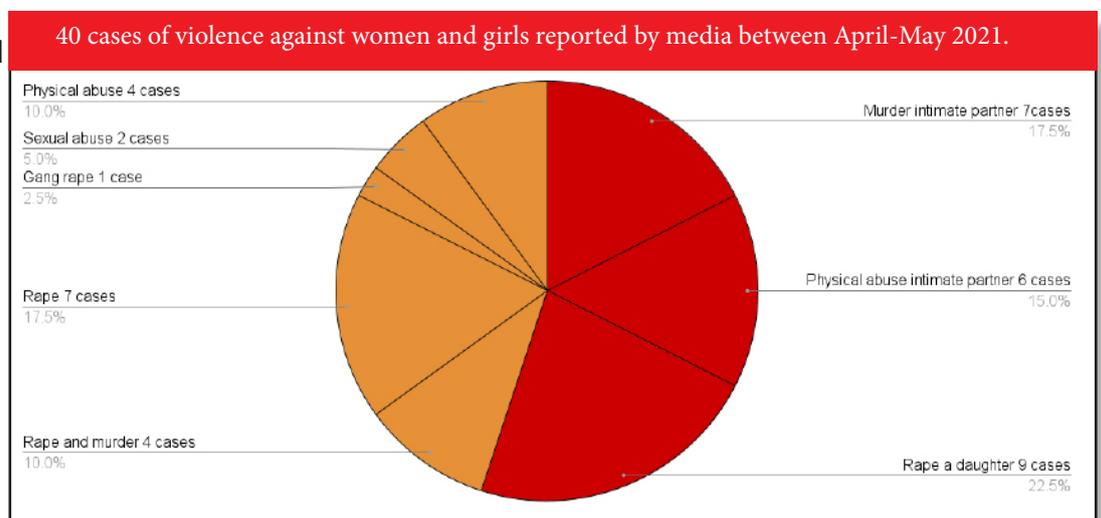
What shocking was the high number of rape cases on girls, rape and murder, murder of intimate partner, sexual and physical abuses. 55% of the cases happened on intimate partners and within the family.

8 cases happened in Phnom Penh where other 32 cases happened in 15 provinces.

35 cases, the perpetrators were arrested, 3 cases were under investigation including the case of Oknha Heng Sier.

The cases were reported by 9 media outlets:

- Fresh News
- Kampucheamey
- Khmer Top news
- Koh Sontepheab
- Nokorwat News daily
- Post News
- Raksmei Kampuchea
- The Phnom Penh Post
- Thmey Thmey



## 6

## School Improvement Plan: Turns Plans into Actions

School improvement plans are essential tools to inform and guide School Support Committees and School Management Committees on the school's requirements. However, without the required financial resources and knowledge on how to acquire these resources, the plans are not worth the paper they are written.

With your support, ActionAid is working with the four model schools to develop the School improvement plans through a proper consultative process and then train the relevant school staff to mobilise resources to turn their plans into reality.

Mr Kong Sok Him is the director of Chroysvay Secondary School. Along with other members of his School Support Committee, he attended ActionAid's training on developing and implementing a School Improvement Plan. Through this training, he learnt how to lobby organisations, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the community to leverage financial contributions to support the school.



Hand washing facility in the school. (Photo Supplied: HOM)

Following the training, Mr Kong Sok Him and his team reviewed their School Implementation Plan. They identified potential sources of funding and ringfencing school budget to implement priority actions from the plan. He successfully convinced a Japanese NGO to provide a set of handwashing facilities in the school to ensure the children and teachers could maintain good hygiene – something even more essential since the outbreak of the Covid-19 infection. Most recently, he acquired the support of a local donor to build a teachers' office and a school library. Construction was completed in February 2021, and the teachers and students alike are delighted with the results.

Mr Kong Sok Him expressed his deep gratitude to you for making the ActionAid training possible. The impact of the training can be seen by the improvements that have taken place, and the school has more



Kong Sok Him, Director of Chroysvay Secondary School.

"Before participating in the process of developing the School Implementation Plan, I wanted to build an office for teachers, a library, and handwashing facilities, but I did not know where I could get money to build all these things. So far, we have negotiated with an excavator owner to dig a pond for water, vegetables, and trees in the school. Then we used the school budget to pave the path to the classroom to keep the classroom clean, set up a school garden, and grew trees to create a friendly environment."

## 7

## Career skill in school play a role model for children

Local life skill is the main subject that promotes project learning and supports the development of basic life skills practices by researching and understanding their particular contexts, focusing on social and career skill. It was developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in 2006. However, it has not been implemented countrywide as limited resource allocation to roll out the guideline.

To enhance life skill in public schools, in 2019, ActionAid Cambodia, in Cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, provided 3 days of training on local life skills to 129 teachers and school directors (40 women) from 38 schools in 4 provinces namely Koh Kong, Pursat, Kampong Thom and Oddar Meanchey. After training, the teachers and school directors applied the life skill in their schools from grade 4 to grade 6 by sharing the concept of life skill. Then, the school directors invited students, SSC, commune council, key farmers and police posts to analyse issues and select the topics to address the issues. The involvement from stakeholders above is to provide support as needed.

Vegetable growing considered as career skill for children was selected as the main topic as life skill to be practised in Kondol primary school in Kondol commune in Botumsarkor in Koh Kong province. Different varieties of vegetables were grown at school compounds, such as cabbages, radishes, eggplants and spinach. To get knowledge on how to grow vegetables effectively, 2 key farmers living nearby the school were invited to share experiences on vegetable growing like preparing the land, taking care of the vegetable by watering and nurse ring them by using natural fertiliser harvesting it. Meanwhile, the school director told the students to bring cow dung to the school for vegetables.

After getting knowledge from the key farmer on growing vegetables, children from the 3 grades applied it in the school garden. Sreynich, 14 years old in grade 6 of Kodol primary school and other 23 students grew 3 kinds of vegetables such as cabbages, radish and spinaches in the school garden.

She shared with a smiling face, "When the first start of growing vegetables, I did not understand anything about it as it is different from general subjects". However, when I saw the vegetable grown well, I am happy as we can sell them to villagers nearby the school". As she witnessed the school could get income from selling vegetables, and she wanted to save income of her parents, Sreynich piloted to grow morning glory for 3 rows and used cow dung to nurture it while before the project, she did not know how to grow it, she just helped her grandfather to water the vegetable.

As a result, she could get income from R8,000 to R10,000 per day by harvesting the morning glory. She spent the income on buying the morning glory seeds and her extra class on mathematic and paid 10\$ for 3 months-English class.



From the left side, Sreynich and her friends were growing vegetables in the school garden.

7

## Solar water pump helps women farmer better access to water for their vegetable production

Ms Hang Sreymich, 33 years old, is living in Koh Krabay village, Kampong Ko commune, Kampong Svay District, Kampong Thom province. She married with three children (two boys and one girl). In the past, she was lacking at the knowledge of agriculture techniques and grew only a few varieties of vegetables by using traditional practice use only traditional practice.

Since she joined HOM in 2018 and became a production group leader in 2019, she received a lot of training on agriculture techniques that contained agroecology practices (multi-purpose farm, rotation crop) and growing techniques compost making natural pesticides producing, and production planning. She has been increasing vegetable productivity by gaining new knowledge by growing more vegetables such as Chinese cabbage, Tomato, Luffa gourd, Wax gourd, Chili, Mint, and Cilantro.

Although her vegetables increased by applying the agroecology principle, Sreymich still challenged water as she had to carry water to water her crop. She spends around 2-3 hours a day carrying out water from the pond and watering her crops. "I always wake up at 5:00 am in every morning to water my crops. I spent a lot of time carrying out heavy water to water my crops while my husband was busy doing another job to earn income. I took about 70-90 minutes in the morning for water crops". She added, "Sometimes, I spent money on gasoline for pump machines to pump water from the pond, which I can't afford the price of gasoline".



To deal with the challenge women farmer faced in accessing water, AAC, with funding support from ElectricAid, has provided a set of portable solar water pumps to their production group in late December 2020. Farmers are pleased and really appreciated receiving the solar water pump because it helps them save watering crops, reducing the workload on carrying out water for crops, saving cost on gasoline, and easy access to water for their farming and family consumptions.

With a smiling face, Sreymich told us, "Solar water pump really helps me a lot, especially on saving time and reducing workload in carrying out water for watering my crops". I now spend about 1-2 hours per day watering the crops. I have time to do other things like look after my children and doing housework. On the other hand, I have extended the garden plot to grow more crops, and currently, I earned about 100\$ per month compared to 40\$ of my income before having the solar water pump".

We are thankful to the donor (ElectricAid) for funding to purchase the solar water pump for the women smallholder farmers group, making us easy to water our vegetables. Also, special thanks to HOM and AAC for providing the agriculture techniques to our production group. We have produced more and increased safe vegetables for families and generated income, farmers said.



Sreymich was checking the solar water pump before she used.



Sreymich is cleaning the solar water pump after used it.

# Action Aid Cambodia in the News

Media Coverage on AAC's Joint Statement on Urging the Royal Government of Cambodia to Ratify the ILO Violence and Harassment

Media Coverage on AAC's Joint Statement on domestic violence and sexual harassment issue in Cambodia

**TV presenter jailed for stabbing after accusing tycoon of attempted rape**

Former Miss Grand Cambodia contestant Mean Pich Rita has been jailed on charges of theft and the use of violence after having allegedly stabbed Oknha Heng Sier in the stomach with a knife. Ms Pich Rita has filed a counterclaim accusing the tycoon of sexual harassment and attempted rape.

Wroch Sophang, Ms Pich Rita's defense lawyer, told Cambodia that his client had been charged by the Phnom Penh Municipal Court on May 11 in relation to an incident on...

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៩ មិថុនា ២០២១ | Publication: 09/05/2021 10:34:17

**The Phnom Penh Post**  
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## CSOs urge labour standards

Orm Bunthoern | Publication date 22 June 2021 | 20:58 ICT



Forty-two civil society organisations (CSOs) urged the government to ratify the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention No 190 on Violence and Harassment (C190) in the world of work.

In their June 21 joint statement marking the two-year anniversary of the C190 adoption, the CSOs said the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) specifically recommended that Cambodia ratify C190 in its 2019 concluding observations from its review of Cambodia's implementation of the CEDAW treaty.

They said the CEDAW had expressed concern about the absence of a comprehensive law that defines and effectively prohibits violence and harassment, including all forms of gender-based violence and harassment (GBVH) and sexual harassment, arising from or linked to work, particularly considering the prevalence of such violence in the garment industry and while commuting to and from work.

The CEDAW recommended that the government "adopt and implement comprehensive legislation to prevent and respond to all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment" and "establish an independent complaints mechanism to ensure that victims have effective access to redress and that perpetrators are held accountable".

The CSOs said ratification of ILO's C190 by the government is more important and urgent than ever so that Cambodia may contribute to delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in the context of Covid-19 response and recovery.

They said Covid-19 had worsened the working conditions of all workers including through greater degrees

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