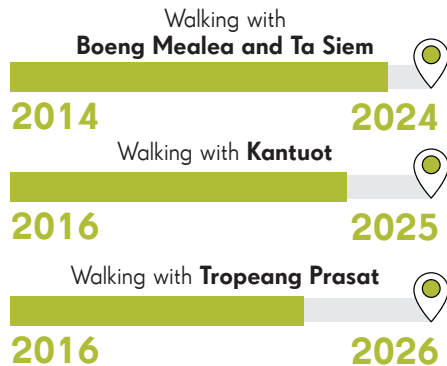




FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

BOENG MEALEA, TA SIEM, TROPEANG PRASAT, AND KANTUOT CAMBODIA MID-YEAR COMMUNITY UPDATE 2023



FH COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA

12 IN SVAY LEU 2
6 IN SVAY LEU 1
17 IN TROPEANG PRASAT

POPULATION

44,362

HOUSEHOLDS

9,792

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

16,267

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Food for the Hungry Cambodia is working with communities to help them achieve sustainability by accessing and managing financial resources, living in harmony with their neighbours, improving childhood education, and increasing children’s access to nutritious food, safety, and social protection. It’s a tall order! But the communities are passionate about accomplishing their goals, and are proving to be more than up for the challenge.

Many families continue to feel the impact of losing their source of income and livelihoods during the pandemic. To help families recover in Kantuot, Ta Siem, and Boeng Mealea, FH staff are strengthening community networks like Savings and Loans Groups and health groups. These networks help families leverage their achievements and resources as they prepare to transition out of FH partnership by 2024 and 2025. FH staff are promoting the resilience and sustainability of communities by passing on key responsibilities to local leaders and authorities, including strengthening Lead Farmers, volunteers, and the most vulnerable households.

“ This year, I withdrew \$4,020 CAD from my savings group that I had saved for five years. I used some to start a small business selling groceries from home and some to buy one cow for raising. I now earn income from my small business! I often share the benefits of saving with my neighbors and my life is full of hope. ”

- Sokhum, Savings Group Member, Prey SaArk Community



Hope for the Next Generation

Story and photographs collected by Lonh Chamroeun

Cham comes from a family that didn't know the value of formal education. Instead of attending school, they worked hard at their farming and did their best to survive. But Cham is determined that her family will be different.

When Cham's mother passed away, she and her husband Thea became responsible for her three younger brothers, and their own toddler son. It wasn't easy. "My husband and I had to work so hard to earn more money to raise my three younger brothers and support their studies," she explains. My husband and I lived apart from each other since he had to go to work in Kampong Thom Province and comes back home only on special occasions and public holidays."

As she worked to help provide for her family, Cham came to see how the low level of education in her community affected everyone. "From my own observation, I found the main root cause for their poverty was due to a lack of knowledge," she shares.

Through working with FH Cambodia over the past five years, Cham has played an instrumental role in boosting the level of education in her community. She's invested in building good relationships with other parents and teaching them how to make learning and play tools for their children to stimulate their development. She's also shown caregivers how to set up home-based learning and encourages children to think about the future and set goals.

"I've learned a lot, particularly on teaching and caring for children," Cham says. "Right now my husband and I send my son and three brothers to school regularly through saving money with a community-based savings group. I am proud of our family, that we are able to share some of my knowledge with neighbours."

In addition, her family has learned how to raise fish and chickens for meat and income as well as plant vegetables to boost their daily nutrition and reduce their grocery bill. "I believe our future hope is within our next generation who will finish their studies and have good jobs to support their families, and then develop our community to be more prosperous. To achieve that, I'm committed to promoting awareness for education more effectively and open to learning more new knowledge and skills related to education."

"I believe our future hope is within our next generation who will finish their studies."

- Cham



Rebooting Education Post-Pandemic

To promote reading in the communities, FH equipped multiple schools with books and library supplies, helping classrooms set up “reading corners”, and more. They conducted aggressive awareness campaigns in cooperation with local and regional bodies to promote school enrolment and attendance. In the wake of two years of school closures due to the pandemic, Cambodia has seen a drop in school attendance. The awareness campaigns proved successful—increasing the number of children going to school this year.

FH staff continue to work with caregivers to help them see the benefits of sending their children to school—a difficult task in light of the economic needs causing parents to bring their children to work the family farm.



Treating & Preventing Malnutrition

The majority of the men in these communities are not involved in childcare. Women tend to take responsibility for cooking for the family and raising children. FH health and nutrition staff collaborated with the Provincial Health Department, health centres, and community health workers to equip families to cook meals that will help children recover from malnutrition. As a result, men have become more involved in helping their wives care for malnourished children and assist in their recovery.

FH also worked with local health professionals and volunteers to assess children at risk of malnutrition. They relocated children suffering from severe malnutrition to rehabilitation facilities where they received care. Nine have already recovered and 10 continue treatment.



147 people participated in cooking demonstrations

2 new community preschools established

183 children under 2 years old assessed for malnutrition

494 people trained on hygiene, handwashing, and safe drinking water



I'm very excited about the health and nutrition program! FH provided us with knowledge on vitamin rich foods that our family is able to find at home. Even though our family is small, FH cares about our health. As a volunteer, I was trained on health and nutrition so I can now help eight children who are malnourished recover and become healthy through home visits, awareness, and monitoring.

- ChengEm, Community Health Volunteer



Livelihoods & Leadership



Climate-Smart Farming

FH supported Lead Farmers and vulnerable families by partnering with the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries to facilitate training in growing techniques, crop care, composting, and raising chickens, fish, and frogs as ways to start family businesses. The families are now earning income for daily expenses, savings, and education. Lead Farmers shared their new knowledge and experience with other farmers in their communities, creating a sustainable flow of knowledge to lift up the community.

FH trained and equipped schools to practice climate-smart agriculture. Produce from school gardens is used to feed the students breakfast. The life skills they're learning in the garden will help them provide for themselves, their families, and their communities in the future.



Building Trust and Collaboration

Good development requires collaboration to avoid overlap, gaps, or conflict in programming. FH Cambodia gathered together NGOs working in the area so they could share their programs, approaches, and strategies including vision, goals, groups, and activities. Through this sharing, the organizations learned from each other and identified opportunities for future partnership. FH staff conducted similar meetings with local authorities and stakeholders who appreciated being brought into the process and committed to supporting FH in their local work.

Transparency and accountability are key to trust-building. FH trained community leaders on the four ways community members can give feedback or complaints about FH work. These include installing a suggestion box, phone hotline, face-to-face and media communication.



251 children, youth leaders, and caregivers attended child rights and protection training

73 community leaders trained to use FH feedback tools

151 people trained in agriculture and raising chickens, fish, and frogs

211 students and teachers across six schools trained in adaptive agriculture and given seeds and tools



Thank You!

FH Cambodia, FH Canada, and the communities in Boeng Mealea, Ta Siem, Tropeang Prasat, and Kantuot thank you for your generous support of their journey out of poverty! Your gifts are increasing food security, providing educational supports for children, facilitating cooperation among leaders, and so much more.