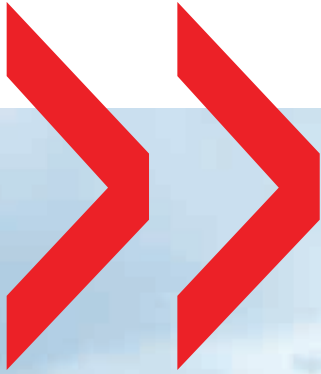




Humanitarian Aid  
and Civil Protection

**act:onaid**



# BUILDING DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA II



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This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



*Monks at a pagoda in Pursat province upgraded by People in Need to serve as a safe site test the clean water supply (People in Need)*

## ACRONYMS

<b>BDRC II</b>	Building Disaster Resilient Communities in Cambodia project II (see also 'DIPECHO IX')	<b>HVCA</b>	Hazard and Vulnerability Capacity Assessment
<b>CBDRR</b>	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>INDC</b>	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
<b>CCDM</b>	Commune Committee for Disaster Management	<b>IVR</b>	Interactive Voice Response
<b>CHF</b>	Cambodia Humanitarian Forum	<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Country
<b>CHR D</b>	Cambodia Human Resource Development	<b>LWD</b>	Life With Dignity
<b>COP21</b>	21st Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC	<b>MoEYS</b>	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>NCDM</b>	National Committee for Disaster Management
<b>DCA/CA</b>	DanChurchAid/Christian Aid	<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>DCDM</b>	District Committee for Disaster Management	<b>PCDM</b>	Provincial Committee for Disaster Management
<b>DM</b>	Disaster Management	<b>PDWRAM</b>	Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology
<b>DIPECHO IX</b>	ECHO Disaster Preparedness programme (Tranche 9). See also 'BDRC II'	<b>PIN</b>	People in Need
<b>DRAT</b>	Drought-Resistant Agriculture Techniques	<b>RGC</b>	Royal Government of Cambodia
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction	<b>SCI</b>	Save the Children International
<b>ECHO</b>	European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection	<b>SID</b>	Small Island Developing State
<b>EPRP</b>	Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>EWS</b>	Early Warning System	<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>HRF</b>	Humanitarian Response Forum	<b>UNFCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
		<b>VDMG</b>	Village Disaster Management Group

## A PEOPLE-CENTRED PROJECT

### ‘BUILDING DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA II’

<b>Project period</b>	: April 2014 – December 2015
<b>Funding</b>	: EUR 2.4m (USD 2.6m)
<b>Funded by</b>	: European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)
<b>Consortium partners</b>	: ActionAid, DanChurchAid/ChristianAid (DCA/CA), Oxfam, People in Need (PIN), Save the Children, plus 10 local NGO partners
<b>Project areas</b>	: Pursat (PIN), Kampong Thom (Oxfam), Kampong Speu (DCA/CA), Bantey Meanchey (ActionAid)

**Estimated number of direct beneficiaries:** 200,000

## WHY THIS PROJECT?

About 80% of Cambodian territory lies within the Mekong basin, known to have large fluctuations of water levels between the dry and wet seasons. This causes an annual cycle of droughts and floods, damaging agricultural production and livelihoods and constraining development and poverty alleviation. The 2014 World Risk Report puts Cambodia as the ninth most at risk country in the world.

While sub-national committees from the provincial to the district and commune levels are reasonably aware of flood and drought risks, they lack adequate human and financial capacity to support mitigation planning.

At the village level, there are pressing concerns about the loss of livelihoods and assets as a result of recurrent disasters; and there is strong community demand for the development and implementation of proper disaster plans.

## HIGHLIGHTED ACTIVITIES

- ❖ We helped villages conduct hazard assessments, while supporting Village Disaster Management Groups (VDMGs) to properly plan and prepare for emergencies in cooperation with provincial, district and commune officials.
- ❖ We set up women’s saving for change groups, a community banking and microfinance initiative to help women help each other; installed a mobile phone early warning system in the target provinces; and integrated disaster risk ideas into the national school curriculum.



## THE PROJECT IN DETAIL

Funded via the European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) and coordinated by ActionAid, and in close cooperation with national and sub-national authorities, the consortium covered the following:

- ❖ Capacity building of disaster management institutions on Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) and climate change adaptation;
- ❖ Promoting synergies between disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation through integration into development planning;
- ❖ Integration of DRR measures into local planning processes;
  - More than 450 village Hazard and Vulnerability Capacity Assessments (HVCAs) to better understand the issues faced at the grassroots;
  - More than 50 new Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs) for communes and schools; reviewing and strengthening existing plans in target areas;
  - More than 100 commune DRR plans;
- ❖ Establishing or supporting nearly 150 women's saving for change groups;
- ❖ Supporting DRR in selected communities focusing on mitigation activities such as:
  - Drought Resistant Agricultural Techniques (DRAT) eg. drip irrigation
  - Rice banks and small-scale canals
  - Safe sites for flood evacuation
- ❖ Installation and training on 15 rain gauges and weather stations;
- ❖ Scaling up mobile phone voice message-based Early Warning Systems across Pursat, Kampong Thom and Banteay Meanchey provinces, including setting up nearly 100 water gauge systems;
- ❖ Developing age-appropriate curriculums for Grade 4, 5 and 6 on DRR in collaboration with MoEYS;
- ❖ Developing teacher training module and training of core trainers to support DRR in schools;
- ❖ Training of journalists and government spokespersons to report on DRR and emergencies;
- ❖ Supporting development and implementation of the Cambodia Joint Action Group on DRR (JAG) advocacy strategy;
- ❖ Raising awareness on national and international policy and legislation.



*HVCA training in Kampong Speu province (Philip Sen/ActionAid/DCA/CA)*

## OVERALL PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthened coordination and institutionalization of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) across the preparedness, response and recovery sector;
2. Strengthened capacity of disaster management sub-national institutions and communities to roll out proven community-based DRR models and activities to mitigate the impact of disasters;
3. DRR is integrated into targeted sectors at the national and sub-national levels.

## UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY RISK

Prior planning prevents poor performance, goes the saying, and nowhere is this more important than in disaster management. Through the project, the consortium has helped hundreds of villages be ready before disaster.

In line with the Sendai Framework priority one, the first step is to understand disaster risks. The process begins with training on how to conduct Hazard and Vulnerability Capacity Assessments (HVCAs) at the village level.

After completing these learning workshops, and supported by experts from local NGO partners, VDMGs, CCDMs and focal points from DCDMs and PCDMs go out to conduct the assessments. This involves talking to communities, applying 'eight tools' to collect the right information:

- ❖ Resource maps and hazard and vulnerability maps
- ❖ Village histories
- ❖ Historical timeline of disasters
- ❖ Seasonal calendars
- ❖ Climate trends
- ❖ Stakeholders' analyses (Venn diagrams)
- ❖ Gender roles (activity profiles)
- ❖ Hazard ranking

With this data in hand, villages are able to forward information to their communes to inform Disaster Risk Reduction plans. These are subsequently discussed for

possible funding through the annual government money granted via the Commune Investment Plan.

"We're very happy with our DRR plan," said Chorm Savy, Chief of Wat Trong village. "It's good because it helps us to inform our people about disaster on time. We have an evacuation plan and an early warning system to inform the village about disaster."

At the district and provincial levels, it's also essential to have more complex Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs). These also allow the authorities to identify larger-scale and longer-term risk reduction needs.

For each EPRP in Banteay Meanchey province, for example, ActionAid and local partners Ockenden Cambodia and Cambodia Human Resource Development (CHRD) conducted a series of three workshops, starting with an introduction to the EPRP format. Data from village HVCAs and other sources is then compiled and analyzed at the district level for verification in the second workshop. Finally, the end product is launched at a third workshop to ensure buy-in from local authorities.

"We never had an EPRP in Ou Chrov district," says Ouk Pheary, the Deputy District Governor. "Children and communities now understand about disaster and prevention; for example how to reserve clean water for flood or drought."



A village emergency evacuation map in Pursat province (Philip Sen/ActionAid)

## CALLING IN CAMBODIA'S FIRST EARLY WARNING SYSTEM



*A village chief in Pursat province with the water gauge for the EWS system. (Philip Sen/ActionAid)*

The phone rings, it's the 1294 Early Warning System (EWS), Ms. Chonn answers and, through a clear and engaging message, she is warned by her local authority that the water levels are rising in her village and she needs to start to get ready for a disaster. The message explains what to prepare, where to go and how to care for her family.

A day later, she receives another call. The voice tells her to evacuate - "Take your family, some pre-prepared food and water, and your livestock to the safe area"- in her case, the pagoda.

People in Need and partners Open Institute and InsTEDD launched Cambodia's first ever Voice based early warning system in April 2015.

"Knowing that mobile phone use in Cambodia is significantly high," says Paul Conrad, Disaster Management Program Manager at People in Need, "with around 90% of families having access to a mobile phone, using IVR technology to deliver early warning voice messages can be one of the most effective methods to deliver such important information. We hope that the system continues to expand reaching national coverage in the near future,"

In 2013, more than a million people were affected by heavy rain and flash floods across 20 Cambodian provinces. Many families did not know the intensity of the rain, nor how it would affect them; they were unprepared and thus there was much natural and economic loss.

Floods in Cambodia can devastate the livelihoods of vulnerable people. Ms. Chhon, mother of six from Samroach village in Pursat province, remembers clearly the year 2013, when more than 1 million people were affected by heavy rain and flash floods across 20 Cambodian provinces. "The flooding completely destroyed our rice field. We don't have any other livelihood, so when the rain ruined the field, we had nothing to eat... it was a very difficult time for me and my family..."

During and after the floods that year, People in Need and consortium partners through the ECHO Flood Recovery project provided direct emergency response and rehabilitation services to 1,889 households in Pursat. This provided much needed assistance to affected communities, but the consortium also decided to go beyond emergency response and towards resilience-building.



The system is operated in collaboration with the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM), the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, the Open Institute Cambodia, and telecoms providers Cellcard, Metfone and Smart.

To register, anyone with access to a mobile phone in the target provinces can dial the short code 1294. An interactive voice menu will guide users through registration, through which they can specify their location.

Meteorological information, gathered at the national and the community levels, is analysed by the NCDM plus the Provincial Committee for Disaster Management (PCDM) in each province. When a risk is identified, messages are created and delivered by the EWS focal point at PCDM.

Village Chiefs also have a crucial role. They receive training from PIN and the PCDM, and are responsible for spreading information and assisting users to register their phones.

Mr. Meron, Village Chief of Tamon Village, Bakon District, Pursat Province, has helped register more than 70 people in his village. He knows that having information before a disaster can protect many. "With this system I hope many families can be protected from disasters. I cannot save them, but I can help them get registered. I can do that for them" he says.

Some Village Chiefs like Mr Meron are also in charge of reading water gauges fitted in tandem with the EWS ,and inform the local government when water levels become alarming. For example, Mr. Meron would call the Provincial Department of Water, Resources and Meteorology (PDWRAM) and provide them with the water readings. With this information, the PDWRAM, PCDM

and other subnational departments assess the risk and decide if an early warning message is necessary.

If the risk is high, Mr. Sophal, the PCDM EWS focal point, will record the early warning message into the online platform (Verboice), select the communities at risk by location, and with a simple click the message will be sent. The EWS System can send a message that can reach up to 1440 households in 1 minute!

"This system is much more efficient. In the past, information had to go through several channels before it reached the village. That often meant that people received the warning message too late. Now, with only a few phone calls we can assess the situation and inform communities what they can do before, during and after a disaster happens" says Mr. Paat Sophal, EWS expert in Pursat's PDCM.

To date the system has more than 17,000 people registered in Pursat and Banteay Meanchey provinces, and it is currently being launched in Kampong Thom Province.

"We hope that after this first phase, the government will continue to expand the system nationally, so that everyone in Cambodia has access to it, so that families can make informed decisions and be protected before disasters strike," concludes Paul Conrad.



## WHICH SITUATION WILL YOU CHOOSE?

**The Early Warning Message Saves Lives**

.....

**REGISTER NOW!**

**At:**

**1294**

A promotional poster to encourage registration for EWS 1294. (People in Need)

## A LIFELINE FOR WOMEN



*Drought Resilient Agriculture in Kampong Thom province (Savann Oeum, Oxfam)*

Rokar Village in the Krong Stung Sen district of Kampong Thom province is frequently affected by floods and strong winds. The villagers experiences property damages and agricultural production losses.

The Old Age and Miserable People Help Organization (HOM) received financial support from DIPECHO IX through Oxfam and mobilized the community to form a saving for change group. The group named 'Krom Sansam Prak Rik Chamroeun' [Prosperous Saving Group] was formed on 1 May 2015 with 10 members; it currently manages 2,387,000 KHR (approximately USD 600).

Like other farmers, Mrs. Ken Sin and her family are mainly reliant on rice cultivation and farming. She has had difficulties when she faced natural disaster in the past, and had limited access to financial resources recovery.

"I get a lot of benefits from being a member of this saving for change group," said Mrs. Sin, 48 years old. "It has helped me change my saving behaviour, and I can easily get a low-interest loan with low interest rate, when needed"

As well as savings, members also contribute to a social fund to be used as a grant when members face sickness, accident or death of a close relative. This currently stands at 686,000 KHR (USD 170).

The Saving for Change Group has become a space for women to meet regularly, and to share agricultural information, knowledge and techniques. It has also become a regular exchange learning of other development agendas related to natural disaster mitigation including HVCA exercises and village disaster reduction plans, disaster preparedness, and other techniques in cropping.

As Mrs. Sin is also on the Village Disaster Management Committee (VDMG), she has also taken part in fitting water gauges for the EWS 1294 system, and provided progress updates of the saving for change groups in her village to commune council meetings.



**OXFAM**



## AGRICULTURE IN CHANGING TIMES

Since 1993, Mr. Men Khorn, now 61 years old, has lived in Trach Khpos village in Outdong district of Kampong Speu province.

The main occupation of his family of seven is rice farming, and they have 1.5 hectares of rice fields and another 0.4 acres of housing land. Aside from rice, Khorn earns money from growing vegetables around his home.

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

“If drought happens in my village,” says Khorn, “we face food insecurity for five or six months a year. My major challenges are a lack of irrigation systems, agricultural inputs, agricultural techniques and unfertilized soil.”

In June 2015, Mr Khorn participated in Drought Resilient Agricultural Techniques training organized by Life With Dignity (LWD) under the BDRCI project. He commented: “I gained a lot of knowledge and techniques that help reduce the effects of drought by using less water and improving soil fertility. Besides that, I have learnt how to develop a seasonal calendar and land use planning - particularly crop rotation - for growing vegetables.”

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

“Now I’m practicing these techniques, I’m getting more yield than before, more than we need to just support my family’s consumption,” he remarked. “We not only have enough vegetables to eat, but can also sell those vegetables.” The daily income from selling his products ranges from \$3.50-\$5 per day.

Mr. Khorn has spent some of these earnings buying agriculture inputs to invest in his agriculture land. “I hope that my family’s lives will be better within the next few years,” he says. “We will have enough rice to eat and earn more daily income from the vegetables. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the donors and LWD that have helped me – and I will not just apply these techniques myself but share with other people in my village too.”



JOINT PROGRAMME | MEMBERS OF **actalliance**



Mr. Men Khorn shows off vegetables grown after DRAT training (DCA/CA/LWD)

## SAVING MAKES A CHANGE

Russei Chas village was seriously affected by floods in both 2011 and 2013, bad news for Mrs. Lean Dea and her neighbours. To keep the family going, she had to sell her property, assets and other belongings and also borrowed money from private money lenders at a high interest rate.

Mrs. Dea is 38 years old and married with three sons and two daughters. Russei Chas village is in the Kampong Svay district of Kampong Thom province, where people mainly rely on cultivating rice and vegetables, plus animal husbandry.

In 2014, Mrs. Dea decided to join a Saving for Change group facilitated by Angkar Ponleu Akphivat (APA) with technical support from Oxfam through BDRC II. She was elected as the group leader of 'Krom Sattrey Rong Roeng' [Women Prosper Group], which has 18 members.

The group has been trained on everything from basic group management to cash management and bookkeeping – so that next time there's an emergency, they can rely on each other.

"I used to save money under pillows or sleeping nets which is totally unsafe," says Mrs. Dea, "and sometimes it got lost for no reason." But she now feels more comfortable with regular weekly savings through the group. Members can access loans with lower interest rates compared to other moneylenders when needed, and the recording system is simple.

"My family's standard of living has been improving," she explains, "as I have set up plans to prioritize expenditure, reduced unnecessary expenses, and carefully use loans for livelihood and income generation activities such as livestock, rice and vegetable growing, and selling groceries."

The first cycle of the Saving for Change group concluded in September 2015. Mrs. Dea earned 700,000 KHR (USD175) from her savings. She has also helped to form a new savings group with nine members after neighbours expressed their interest.

On top of just saving, the group has also become a platform for discussion and learning other disaster preparedness topics, such as health, hygiene and agricultural techniques.



**OXFAM**



Facilitator Khon Sophea explains roles to the Kandal village women's saving for change group in Ou Chrov district, Banteay Meanchey Province. (Philip Sen/ActionAid)



## BUILDING UP SAFE SITES

“The floods of 2011 and 2013 were terrible,” says Nu Sim from Kahn Chor village. “They affected most of our livestock, rice, vegetables and livelihoods. Our houses were unusable and we had no safe place to stay and keep our cows, pigs, chickens and other important belongings during the flooding... Almost every house in my village has been affected by floods in recent years.”

During the floods that devastated the Tonle Sap lake area in 2011 and 2013, families from Kanh Chor, Beuong Kranh and Prek Trabek villages in Pursat province fled with their possessions and livestock to what they thought was a safe area.

But, insufficiently elevated and too small for the large number of people, it didn’t cover the villagers’ needs. In reality, many people who fled their homes found themselves living for several weeks in wet makeshift tents alongside roads, the only areas above the flood level. They had no clean water and no sanitation facilities.

In 2014, People in Need’s (PIN’s) partner’s organizations EPDO, PK, and AK started working with villagers and communities throughout Pursat, conducting community based hazard vulnerability assessments in 105 village. Through these, villages throughout Kanh Chor Commune were able to work with their local government and trained disaster risk reduction staff to identify and document the safe site improvement needs.

However, they still lacked the funds to make the enhancements required. Kanh Chor Village Chief Kreil Neath notes: “We have faced difficulties during each flood, yet don’t have the budget to develop or upgrade our safe areas. Support for developing raised safe sites with access to clean water and toilets means people will find it much easier to cope with flooding in the future.”

The new safe sites, mostly constructed with landfilling at schools and pagodas, offer improved elevated dry spaces for tents and shelters, access to clean water via several large rain water harvester systems, and access to toilets built in line with humanitarian standards. The safe site in Kanh Chor primary school when can shelter around 100 households, and the spillover can be accommodated at the pagoda safe site which can house up to 400 families.

The community’s enthusiasm for the new safe sites goes further than their utility during floods. Mr. Em Kim Orn, director of Kanh Chor Primary School, states: “I can see two potential benefits from the safe site in my school.



The cover of a safe sites guidebook produced during the BDRC II project (People in Need)

First, it can house people directly affected by flooding, giving them a dry safe place to stay. Secondly, it can improve the safety of my students since they do not need to fetch water from across the road, and they will be healthier as they can drink clean water and wash their hands every day at school with the water from the tanks.”

Communities in the first line of emergency now have the basic tools they need to react to a natural disaster rather than await external assistance. “Taking into account the challenges we faced in 2011, the new safe site is much more suitable to live on for longer periods during wet season,” concludes Kreil Neath.

“Last time, we not know where to go,” adds Nu Sim. “But now, I feel a lot happier after seeing that there is a safe site nearby my home... And my children have clean water too.”





## INSTITUTIONALISING DISASTER EDUCATION

Education is a major asset for DRR. Once students have a grasp of the key ideas, they can spread these to their families and wider communities, inspiring preparedness and disaster risk reduction measures at the grassroots level while laying the foundations for further changes in society.

However, over the last few years, formal teaching on Disaster Risk Reduction has been very fragmented; and it may have relied too much on external resources such as short-term NGO interventions.

With the support of Save the Children and partners, DRR is therefore being 'institutionalised' or 'embedded' within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) curriculum and mindset. The idea is to give officials, school directors, teachers and students long-term ownership of DRR; and to become advocates of change with the tools to put principles into practice.

Rather than teaching DRR as a separate 'subject', it is now integrated into Social Studies and Science lessons for Grades 4-6. The curriculum allows creative space for the teachers, and is intended to encourage child-centred investigative learning.

"While developing the idea, we used an education lens rather than a disaster risk lens," says Samban Seng, Humanitarian Manager at Save the Children Cambodia. "His Excellency the Minister of Education likes the idea, and has been very receptive and supportive."

Save the Children first drew on existing materials produced by NGOs and other partners. Consultants were hired to go through it all and edit the good practices into new sets of training materials integrating into lesson planning guides for teachers.

Further discussion also occurred via the Joint Technical Working Group on education, a forum for cooperation between government, NGOs, the UN and other development partners. The Group is co-chaired by the MoEYS and UNESCO.

The final draft of the DRR curriculum for Grades 4-6 was completed in 2015 and will be piloted in Kampong Cham and Prey Vieng provinces. MoEYS intends to roll it out nationwide in 2016.

Save the Children will also assist with national-level 'training-of-trainers' at Provincial Teacher Training Colleges so that the teachers of the future will be well-informed too.

With support, teaching staff themselves can annotate appropriate DRR knowledge into the texts they use, especially while taking part in DRR and Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan (EPRP) training events in schools. Teaching staff for grades 4-6 can thus bridge the gap between training events and the new curriculum roll-out in 2016, as well as support its successful take-up.

This kind of support can be repeated with teaching staff for grades 7, 8 and 9. It will further embed DRR throughout the education community, especially if carried out alongside DRR and EPRP training. Again this will provide crucial capacity to teaching staff, while consultations continue on developing the DRR curriculum.



*Learning about the importance of mangroves to the local environment in Koh Kong province: mangroves also provide an important barrier against disaster. (Shailendra Yashwant/Save the Children)*

## EVENTS TO REMEMBER

Also under the ECHO 'Building Disaster Resilient Communities' project, Save the Children, Oxfam, ActionAid and other partners conducted EPRPs and related interactive learning events at schools to raise awareness of DRR. These have involved quizzes, prizes and drawing activities as well as official launch events for the EPRPs.

"[Today's event] has highlighted the importance of EPRPs," said Mr Eng Vath, from the MoEYS Curriculum

Development Department at the EPRP launch and International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction at Aranh School in Kampong Chhnang. "It reinforces the announcement issued by MoEYS in 2012: all schools in disaster prone areas are required to be involved in developing their own disaster preparedness plans."

He added: "MoEYS has already prepared and provided human resources to all levels of education offices to assist schools in making these plans."



*A local monk gives prizes to children demonstrating a good understanding of DRR at Save the Children's launch event at Aranh School in Kampong Chhnang province. (Philip Sen/ActionAid)*



*Not only do schools like this one in Banteay Meanchey province need EPRPs to make them ready before disaster, they also often serve as community safe sites too. (Philip Sen/ActionAid)*



## GETTING PUBLIC INFORMATION FLOWING

Installing Early Warning Systems, upgrading safe sites and drafting plans are all vital, but there's more – people have to understand what to do in disaster too. Media and government spokespeople therefore play a crucial part in passing information to communities, a role where clarity, accuracy and speed are the essence.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Information and NCDM, ActionAid therefore organized a series of trainings covering nearly 90 people altogether: one for journalists held in Phnom Penh during November 2014; and two for government spokespeople held in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh during July 2015.

More than 30 journalists from newspapers, television and radio stations were invited to the first training, and learned about how to report on natural disasters in the Cambodian context. Subjects covered included the definitions and factors of disaster, news angles, and reporting with sensitivity.

Undersecretary of State for Information, H.E. Huy Saravuth, presided over the closing ceremony. He noted the importance of building Disaster Management knowledge in the media, stressing that if journalists don't understand the subject they write, the readers won't understand either.

“With the early warning system and cooperation structures now in place,” added Meas Kimsuon, Director of the Cambodia Media Training Centre, “active and reliable spokespersons can provide even better information to local journalists in hazard areas.” With this in mind, ActionAid brought together 52 officials from 25 provinces to improve their public information skills.

There were 33 participants in Phnom Penh and 19 in Siem Reap, including NCDM and Ministry of Information officials, plus various Provincial and District Governors or Deputies. Keynote addresses were given by H.E. Ponn Narith, Secretary-General of the NCDM and Denis Schrey of German think-tank Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.



ActionAid, Oxfam and the Club of Cambodian Journalists put Government spokespeople on the spot during a training roleplay involving real journalists (Chhay Sopal for ActionAid)



The ActionAid-Oxfam training team was assisted by local expert Chhay Sophal, Executive Director of the Club of Cambodian Journalists. The workshops consisted of a number of practical lessons on dealing with crisis communications and understanding the press and public, backed by role-play simulations during which participants were given hands-on experience.

Mr. Lem Eang, Bureau Chief of the Pailin Provincial Administration said the course was useful for him and other participants. "This was a new subject for me," he explained. "Until now, I did not know how to work with

the media and I did not want to give them information. But after joining this training, I found that the authorities must work closely with the media closely to provide information on disaster. If I hadn't joined this training I wouldn't know how to deal with a crisis."

"We must be confident in ourselves to speak out to the media," added H.E. Ponn Narith. Establishment of a mechanism to effectively share information on disaster with the public, especially with the media, is absolutely necessary."

## actionaid



*After ActionAid and partner NGO Ockenden Cambodia showed her how to make her livelihood drought-resistant, in Banteay meanchey province Mrs. Soun Lin is diversifying into vegetable farming. (Philip Sen/ActionAid)*

## THE ROAD TO PARIS

Cambodia is one of the 194 parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and participates in the annual Conference of Parties (COP).

In 2015, COP21 was organized in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015, and was widely said to be one of the most significant meetings since Copenhagen in 2009. Despite being a small country, Cambodia has equal representation, and its voice needed to be heard in the Paris negotiation process.

Until this year, the Cambodian government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have had separate climate positions. They had also had been missing supporting documents and analysis to back up development of their positions.

DanChurchAid/ChristianAid (DCA/CA) therefore hired an independent consultant to produce a policy brief for COP21. This aimed to provide an update on the negotiations, state of play, political dynamics, policy options and recommendations. Another rationale for producing the policy brief was the need to understand the different perspectives and views to be incorporated in the country position.

In preparation for COP21, at the end of October the Cambodian government submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the UNFCCC secretariat as its input for the proposed Climate Global Agreement. INDCs mainly outline aspects such as mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation.

Initiated by DCA/CA, during the drafting process CSOs engaged in sharing perspectives with the Ministry of Environment on 16 September 2015. Most comments from CSOs were reflected in the document for example: quantitative mitigation targets, financing needs, and clear adaptation priorities for smallholders. However, large hydrodam schemes were deemed part the mitigation plan, while CSOs opposed this.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and umbrella group the NGO Forum, the policy brief was launched in October 2015, targeting stakeholders from government delegations to CSOs, development

partners, community representatives, and even the National Assembly and Senators. The paper was also distributed in a meeting with high-level representatives of the Ministry of Environment, who led production of Cambodia's COP21 formal country position paper.

A group of five delegates coordinated by DCA were financed by DIPECHO IX funds to attend COP21 in Paris, aiming to take part in to reaching a fair, ambitious and binding outcome or a climate global deal.

In order to engage as effectively as possible, the delegates were tasked according to a clear Terms of Reference and workplan. Strategy and actions beyond Paris will also be discussed.



JOINT PROGRAMME | MEMBERS OF **actalliance**

## CLIMATE POLICY BRIEF SUMMARY

The policy brief called for the following:

- ❖ As referred to by science through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, limit the temperature increase to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius by increasing the ambition of emission cuts towards a net-zero emission goal by 2060;
- ❖ Ensure predictable financing of at least \$100bn per year by 2020, with preferential access for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The finance must be new and additional money. At least 50 percent should be sourced from public finance and goes towards climate adaptation support;
- ❖ Create a periodic review mechanism on the implementation of the convention: in particular mitigation commitments, support pledges and adaptation measures;
- ❖ Put in place a transparency framework with common Measurable, Reporting and Verifiable principles for all except LDCs and SIDS;
- ❖ Recognize loss and damage, and strengthen the Warsaw International Mechanism anchored in the agreement. Loss and damage, long-term climate adaptation and resilience goals shall be an integral part of the Paris package, committing all Parties in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the Sustainable Development Goals, to increase climate resilience by systematically assessing and reducing climate risks, adapting to climate change impacts, and reducing vulnerability.

Policy brief for COP21: <http://bit.ly/1NSCNKS>



*World leaders celebrate after the historic adoption of Paris Agreement on climate change. (UN Photo/Mark Garten)*



## ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS



*Filming the comedy-drama public service announcements for television during July 2015 (Philip Sen/ActionAid)*

The Joint Action Group for Disaster Risk Reduction (JAG) is a non-formal group of civil society organisations working in Cambodia on Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management. Members coordinate relevant activities and share information, knowledge, skills and experience.

Full members (as of December 2015): ActionAid – ACTED – AVSF – CARE – Caritas – DanChurchAid – Khana – Habitat for Humanity – IFRC – Life With Dignity – Muslim Aid – Oxfam – Plan – People in Need – Save the Children – World Vision  
Regular Observers: CHF/ ADPC – UNDP – UNICEF (on behalf of UN system)

During the project period – which saw JAG expand from 12 to 16 members – each DIPECHO IX consortium member took responsibility as the rotating secretariat, organising meetings and coordinating inputs. Meanwhile, under 'Building Disaster Resilient Communities II', the consortium led development of a JAG communications and advocacy strategy.

The keystone of the strategy is a series of advocacy position papers drafted through consultative processes throughout 2015. These tackle the following issues:

- 1A. DRR policy recommendations
- 1B. Disaster Management Law
- 2A. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in DRR
- 2B. Health and Nutrition in DRR
- 3A. Environmental Impact Assessments and DRR
- 3B. Natural Resource Management and DRR
4. Gender and DRR



However, more than simply creating a strategy, the project went a step further and began implementing communications and advocacy in close coordination with the JAG members. This included, for example:

- ❖ The production and dissemination of four 60-second radio and television public service announcements to raise community awareness of disaster preparedness. These were broadcast around 1,000 times on popular channels, reaching hundreds of thousands of people;
- ❖ Production and dissemination of posters and handheld flipcharts for VDMGs and partner NGOs to use in community awareness campaigns;

- ❖ An accompanying Facebook page for local NGOs to access and download the radio and TV slots and various information and education materials;
- ❖ Creation of a knowledge resource within the Humanitarian Response Forum website, collecting all recent and relevant DRR reports and documentation in one place;

Finally, in December 2015, with DIPECHO IX support JAG held a stakeholder dialogue involving senior DRR practitioners and decision-makers from across Cambodian civil society, development partners and Government institutions. The aim was to bring stakeholders together to discuss ways forward for mainstreaming DRR in all sectors, especially in the light of the passing of Cambodia’s Disaster Management Law in July 2015.



**ក្រុមធ្វើសកម្មភាពរួម**  
**កាត់បន្ថយហានិភ័យ**  
**គ្រោះមហន្តរាយ**  
 រៀបចំជាស្រេចមុនគ្រោះមហន្តរាយ

*A logo developed during the project to help firmly position the JAG with stakeholders in Cambodia.*

## LINKS

[www.facebook.com/reapchamunmahantarai](http://www.facebook.com/reapchamunmahantarai)

[www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/cambodia/disaster-risk-reduction-drr](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/operations/cambodia/disaster-risk-reduction-drr)

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## Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection

This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

*Access to clean water is a key recommendation in one of the policy position papers developed by JAG in 2015. (Conor Wall for DCA/CA)*



# BUILDING DISASTER RESILIENT COMMUNITIES II: PROJECT AREAS 2014-15

