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WOMEN-LED AGRICULTURE SERVICE TEAM (WLAS)



OXFAM

According to a 2015 World Bank's report on Gender in Cambodia's Agriculture, approximately 2.3 million families are farmers and 75% of them are women due to migration. In 2015 Oxfam and partners Rachana and Srer Khmer set up a local private service provider – a group of landless women equipped with agriculture techniques and skills in Pursat and Takeo province to provide local technical farming services to their community. WLAS provides diversity of technical services including rice production, vegetable cropping, animal husbandry and aquaculture. The teams have not only improved their livelihood and income but also help other small farmers to maximize their land for benefit.



2.3million
Families are farmers



75%
women

Since its inception in 2015, WLAS participated in reducing migration and improving livelihood for both service team members and their clients. Up to now, nine teams of 247 farmers (including 84% female) have evolved onto successful businesses. To date, there is a notable change:

207 informal female agriculture extension workers and many have set up several enterprises beyond agriculture

Rice yield increased up to **50%**




Photo: Sokhon Chhun/Srer Khmer

Sokhon in front of her chicken house. She just sold out 500 chickens and that is 61% of her income.

"I CHOSE TO STAY IN MY VILLAGE AND NOT MIGRATE TO OTHER PLACE, I AM NOW PART OF A TEAM THAT HELP OTHER FARMERS TO MAXIMIZE THEIR AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY TO INCREASE FAMILY INCOME. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT THROUGH THE PROJECT WE LEARN MANY THINGS AND WE HAVE BETTER PLAN FOR OUR FAMILY TOO," SAID SOKHON.

WLAS ADDRESSES



Labor shortage in agriculture



Alternative support to landless/small farmers

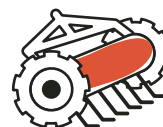


Absence of local female extension workers in agriculture



Women dignity of poor women farmers

NEXT STEPS



Equip WLAS with agriculture machineries (preferably women-friendly) to pioneer their services.



Support WLAS members in sustaining their livelihood and income during agriculture off-season through local enterprises and group businesses.



Expand the service of WLAS to include local mechanics as to help address the shortage and quality of such services for farmers.

Chan Sokhon, 35, is from ID poor II. She lives in Sarieng village, Pursat province. In 2014, before joining the WLAS project, the whole family (Sokhon, her husband, her two children—2, 6 years old) migrated to Kampong Speu province to guard a chicken farm of one rich family. After half year, they decided to come back to their hometown as they need to send their eldest son to school. At that time her husband alone decided to go back to work at the chicken farm for another three months but then came back as he wanted to stay together with his family.

During the work in Kampong Speu province they earn \$700 and another \$260 from other works in his hometown (fishing, raising a few chickens and washing bottle of drinking water for a local company.) They also did traditional farming but it was not even enough for household consumption.

In 2015 back in their home town in Pursat she joined WLAS and received several trainings and coaching on sustainable agriculture such as SRI, vegetable cropping, animal husbandry, and aquaculture.

Up to now she earns an average of \$2,450 per year, with 12% of the income contributed by WLAS and 61% is from chicken raising and the rest is from pig raising and cleaning bottles of drinking water for a local company. The income from the service team is not much but it was a good starting year for a WLAS member like Sokhon. WLAS gives her opportunity to learn other skills, exchange knowledge and support other farmers. Now Sokhon earns more, have time to look after her children and send them to school and help others.