

Community Profile Bati Project (CAM 171499)

Bati District is located in the Takeo Province of Cambodia. The climate is basically dry and humid as the land suffers from drought almost every year. The majority of the villagers are farmers but the climate conditions make it impossible for them to harvest their crops each year.

As a result, most of the people end up in heavy debts as they are forced to borrow from private money lenders who often exploit them by charging high interest rates.

World Vision started working in Champei commune in Bati District in 1997. The Champei Commune comprises seven villages: Doeum Daung, Makak, Trakiet, Pre, Moeung Prachen, Prey Mul and Chhoeung Luong. The project will benefit 8,500 people; 2,000 males, 2,500 females and 4,000 children.



**Bati
project
site**

Life of a typical family in the community

The majority of the people are illiterate, as they cannot afford the tuition fees. As a result, most children do not have the opportunity to receive education. The men usually work in the paddy fields as farmers while the women stay at home, caring for the children.

Poor sanitation has contributed to poor health among the children. There are no latrines in the village and the people obtain their drinking water from the dirty drains. Water-borne diseases are prevalent among the children in the community as a result.

Due to frustrations and pressures at work, the men turn to drinking as a source of escape and enjoyment. This has resulted in a rise in the social problems in the villages as the men often end up beating their wives in their drunken

A typical day in their rice fields



Most of the families are heavily in debt. They usually borrow money from private money-lenders at high interest rates to gamble or to buy rice when their crops fail during the year.

However, it is almost impossible for them to repay their debts in their lifetime! As a result, families often land up in the vicious cycle of poverty.

El Yeourn and her husband, San Chhourth, form a typical picture of a family in the



San Chhourth and his wife, El Yeourn and their six children in front of their house.

community. Due to her husband's irresponsibility towards the family, Mrs Yeourn has to support the children all by herself. She tries to earn money by doing some odd jobs but due to her illiteracy, she is often exploited by her employers.

Back at home, she would frequently receive beatings from her husband when he comes home drunk.

"I hope to come out from this nightmare of my life," she said.

World Vision aims to help families like Mrs Yeourn's through:

Education

The project aims to provide school subsidies in order to enhance the educational opportunities for the children. Talks will also be conducted for the parents to teach them the importance of

education for their children.

World Vision also hopes to improve the quality of education in the commune primary schools by conducting tuition classes for students who are slow-learners; and, providing training and better teaching aids for the teachers

Health and Sanitation

The project aims to improve the health conditions of the community by providing basic health care services, safe drinking water and sanitised facilities. This will be achieved in the following ways:

- * Provide training for the villagers to educate them on basic health care.
- * Select and train volunteers to assist as Primary Health Workers.
- * Construct 36 wells to provide safe drinking water.



The 1st newly-constructed latrine in the village

- * Improve the sanitation conditions by building latrines in the village.

Family Economic Development

- * Loan Scheme
Money will be loaned to the villagers at a minimal interest rate. The people are encouraged to make use of the money to operate some small businesses such as pigs and chickens rearing or setting up grocery shops. This is to enable the villagers to

obtain another source of income when their crops fail during the year.

- * Rice Bank Programme
This programme is an addition to the Loan Scheme. The bank will loan rice at a low



Through the Bati Project, the villagers organised a Rice Bank, which stores rice that they may borrow in times of need.

interest rate to people during the dry season. Once they successfully reap a harvest the following year, they will repay the bank with rice.

Social/Family Development

House visits will be conducted on a regular basis to specific broken families. The counsellors will help to provide support to the women who have been abused by their husbands. Talks will also be held on family togetherness.

Leadership Development

The project hopes to identify some potential leaders or core group members for training so that they will gain full ownership of their village and work towards sustainable development within the community.

Conclusion

The community is expected to be self-reliant by 2012. More importantly, we look forward to a transformed holistic community.

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