



គម្រោងកែលម្អសន្តិសុខស្បៀងសម្រាប់ស្ត្រី និងគ្រួសារក្រីក្រនៅខេត្តមណ្ឌលគិរី
IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY FOR WOMEN AND RURAL POOR IN MONDULKIRI PROVINCE (IFWP-MP)

Case study: Women Group – Or Bun Village, Or Bun Commune, Koh Ngiok District, Mondul Kiri Province

The Women Group in Or Bun Village was created on the 23rd of January 2010. It then gathered 13 participants and 400 000 riel of savings. Today, the group counts 20 very motivated women and has saved about 4 000 000 riel (1000\$) so far.

The members have been able to put money aside due to the increase of income generated by their farming activity. Successfully applying both SRI and Vegetables Gardening, these farmers have sold their products on a local scale allowing them to sometimes bring from 25 to 50\$ at once to their saving account. Seven members are also planning on raising chicken and pig according to CEDACs’ ecological techniques (ECR and Pig Raising). These agricultural innovations are very important to the women of the group: concerned about their health, they no longer trust the products sold on the market for they believe them to be grown with lots of pesticides involved. Thus they prefer to organize their own vegetable production to control the amount of inputs and save money thanks to natural fertilizers and pesticides. The member also seem to deal with commercial issues for the market prices are decided by men; therefore the women of the group expect to be soon able to have more control over the prices of their production with the help of producer groups.

The saving activity comes first on the group priorities for it allows its member to contracts loans in order to develop their farming activity. Indeed, the farmers usually borrow money to buy seed or fuel, but also chicken and piglets, concentrating on what can improve their activity. The loans are sometimes used to buy daily products or provide food during shortage, like during the dry season. It also permits them to get some funds for special occasions such as engagement or wedding parties, which are very important to them. Is it the case of Mrs. Moun Sam An, the leader of the group, who is growing corn on her field which allows her to put money aside for the upcoming wedding of her son.

As a leader, she is responsible for the application of internal regulation which punishes cases of non-participation in meetings or in late payment: 500 riel for absentees and 1000 riel per month for late payback. Those rules are essential to the sustainability of the group; luckily for the leader, members have had a good attendance rate so far. In addition to that, the women of the group have agreed to a special policy: money shall be provided to buy rice in rainy season and seed or chicken during dry season. With an interest rate of 3% for members and 5% for non-members on loans, the saving activity also provides a substantial income to each one.

Globally, the women group has brought improvement on financial and food security side to its participants but also on a more personal scale. Indeed, members are proud to tell that since joining the group they have gained more respect as women. Their husbands seem to respect them more and take their opinion into account when taking decisions for the family. Moreover, the group is recognized by local authorities in the persons of the village and commune chiefs who have congratulate them for their achievements and listen carefully to them during community level forums. Altogether, the members feel like they’ve gained more abilities to express themselves and more understanding about their role and power in the community.

The Or Bun women group is one amongst many that the IFWP-MP (*Improving Food Security for Women and rural Poor in Mondul Kiri Province*) project has helped creating in 31 villages of Mondul Kiri Province since its inception in October 2009. The activities implemented have already reached 2385 families (including 537 direct beneficiaries) with a final expected result of 2700 beneficiaries by the end of the project in December 2011. Financed by the UE, the project has recently led an exposure visit for 52 key farmers to show them Village-based Farmers Organisations (VFO), for these associations are soon to be created in the villages of both target district, Koh Ngiek and Pechr Chenda.

The members of Or Bun women group insist upon the role that CEDAC has played in the development of their farming activity and sincerely wish that the project will be carried on. The farmers are particularly eager to learn about agricultural innovations for they know it is the key to a sustainable improvement of their livelihoods.



1. Or Bun Women Group Members (the men at the back represent their wives who are busy in the rice field)