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Collaboration Heals Trauma



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"To destroy you is no loss; to preserve you is no gain." -Khmer Rouge slogan

The Khmer Rouge regime oversaw the murder of millions of Cambodians. Stories of loss and survival are common. Many who survived the Pol Pot regime live with memories of watching loved ones arrested, killed, or starved to death.

In response to the mental health issues experienced in all 85 of the communities in which World Renew Cambodia is working, we are collaborating with Cambodian psychologists from the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) to offer training in ways to help people who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental illnesses.

"I thought that this kind of trauma was a natural part of life," says Sao Thuen (54), who lost both her parents and saw many more starve during the Khmer Rouge era.

By offering trauma-healing workshops, World Renew is helping Cambodians learn to confront PTSD.

The initial workshops have been very successful, and many people shared their personal trauma for the first time. Most spoke about experiences of losing their families and homes. By addressing the trauma of this time period, Cambodians are learning to accept these actions as part of their past and confront their emotions.

"It was a very informative workshop. I did not know that so many people in Cambodia live with PTSD. I think it's very good that we can help people who are struggling with traumatic memories," says Joh Lily (32), chair of the development committee in her village.

"Many of those who have PTSD never speak out," Joh explains. "They isolate themselves, and hold it all inside." Since participating in her first

**Mrs. Joh Lily and
training participant
Mr. Kantout Prong**



workshop, Joh Lily has become a leader for trauma-healing workshops in her community.

World Renew empowers community leaders like Joh to recognize the symptoms of PTSD. They receive training to better serve their villages and those who struggle with PTSD and other mental health issues.



Sao Soth (61), the leader of the development committee in his village, is also familiar with the painful symptoms of PTSD. "In my village there are several people who have mental health problems," Sao says. "In trying to cope, some families turn to domestic abuse and alcoholism."

The Cambodian Ministry of Health estimates that 60% of those who survived the Khmer Rouge have mental health problems. Recent studies find that PTSD symptoms can also be passed from one generation to the next. This poses a major challenge in a country that has a shortage of psychologists and space to process trauma. However, with further training to bring awareness of PTSD symptoms, and by creating local support groups, World Renew can continue to help communities heal and build trust.

When asked if she could manage to forgive what happened to her during the war, Sao Thuen said, "Yes, I can forgive. But I want justice for victims of the Khmer Rouge: it will set a good example for the next generation of leaders in Cambodia."

A Priceless Contribution towards Transformation

Story of a Volunteer

Usually, we share stories about people we help; rarely do we shed light on those who make this work possible. These are the volunteers who are with us for just a short time, but their work is invaluable to helping our office run and helping maximum funding reach the people we serve.

When World Renew advertised for a long-term volunteer researcher, writer, and editor, help arrived in an unexpected form. Retired American editor Carol van Klompenburg saw the ad in her church bulletin and submitted her resume.

Collaborating by email from her home in Iowa, Carol spends about ten to 30 hours a month reviewing and editing various communications documents—newsletters, minutes, and reports.

These tasks, while not glamorous, help the staff immensely. With an office comprised mostly of field organizers, our staff is constantly on the road serving 85 communities throughout Cambodia. They can be out of the office 3 or 4 days a week. Administrative tasks often get pushed to the back burner or rushed to meet deadlines.

Having a volunteer assist us with the finite details of these communications means that our staff can spend more time serving the people and less time behind a desk. Helping out in Cambodia without leaving Iowa is certainly atypical volunteerism, but Carol finds that she enjoys many of the same benefits. "My world becomes bigger because I'm working on these documents," she says. "My world is enriched by being exposed to a different culture."

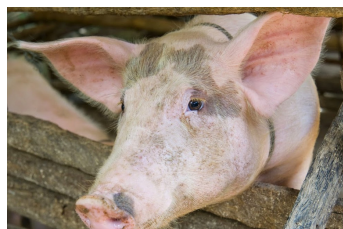


Prayer Items:

- Praise that the Cambodian parliament is now functioning, and there is evidence that the new government recognizes the need for reform in critical areas such as corruption and education.
- Prayers that the new organizational structure for government that has now been put in place will provide more accountability, improve decision making, and that the transition will be smooth.
- Praise that the trauma-healing training was well-received by participants and promises to bring meaningful improvements to the lives of our beneficiaries.
- Praise for rain in most of our target areas which has enabled our beneficiaries to plant their rice crops.
- Prayers for guidance as staff take on a very heavy workload in the next quarter, including
 - a joint evaluation of World Renew and World Missions programs in Cambodia.
 - a strategic planning process that culminates in a workshop in November.
 - implementation of a Multi-stakeholder Partnership Workshop to Improve Governance which will involve 125 participants from five communities in one district.
 - a review of 18 applications for new partnership and selection of up to three organizations to begin to work with World Renew Cambodia as research and development partners.



Giving Idea



A Pig. When you give a family an adult pig, they can benefit right away from having pork to eat or sell. The family can also earn

income from raising piglets for sale or build up their herd by raising more pigs to breed. Families learn to grow high-protein forage grass that helps the pigs grow well. **\$145**