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A hopeful future for a graduated village A Story of Transformation

The heart of World Renew’s work is to support communities to be resilient and self-reliant. From the moment we begin to work in a new community, we begin our “exit strategy.” We plan to support the community to help strengthen their knowledge, skills, and resources in order to manage their development after we leave. When we reach that point, it is with great joy that we can organize a graduation ceremony for a village as a symbolic event to show they are ready to stand on their own. As one village “graduates,” we are able to work with a new community.

At the end of 2015, after nine years of working with Chork Porpol village through our local partner CFT, this community was one of several that proved they were ready to take the lead in their own community development.

Even though the ceremony took place during a very busy month of rice harvesting, 43 participants representing local government, NGO, and private sectors joined a graduation ceremony at the local pagoda in Kompong Speu province. For many, this was seen as a final opportunity to meet and say goodbye and thank-you to World Renew and CFT, who supported them over these years.

After a warm welcome, one local representative came forward to express his views on the changes that took place in his community. Before World Renew and CFT came, the villagers felt limited in their ideas due to their poor education, he said. They also lacked an understanding in how to save or manage their earnings.

The lessons they learned over the years were invaluable to the relationships in the community. First, learning how to share



resources together and to save through a common community fund known as the Savings and Loan Group, they discovered how to increase their benefits and work together on common goals. Additionally, they learned to trust in one another; and when any member had concerns, they spoke out and worked to find a solution. They also learned how to organize themselves to talk with the village chief and local authorities on the changes they wanted to make in their community.

Mrs. Yun Kimleng, 46, a community leader, said, “I did not expect that my community could have the fruitful results that I see today because we had many challenges to overcome and we were always scared and not comfortable to talk about our problems to anyone. But when we worked together to build our kindergarten, and we found we did not have enough construction materials, the community leaders found the money needed to contribute to supplies with savings generated from rice and cow banks.”

Choun Map, 45, another community leader, explained how they built a road in the community by themselves, raising the money

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Tweets by @worldrenew_cam

World Renew Cambodia
@worldrenew_cam
Thank you Jesus for the 20 years of working alongside the Cambodia people bit.ly/1JOJahx #pray #praymonday



18 Jan

World Renew Cambodia
@worldrenew_cam
Praise God for the growth in democracy, transparency, and accountability in Cambodia. #praymonday

21 Dec



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from their savings group, contributions from CFT, and labor contributions from villagers. They plan to build another road together in March 2016 as one of their first development projects after their graduation.

“These roads are really important for our businesses and farms,” Choun Map added. Over years of working together on projects, the community has increased in their confidence that development can occur when everyone works toward common goals.

Mrs. Kimleng is filled with hope as she says, “We are committed to taking care

of all the property that CFT left for us and to continue running the activities so as not to lose momentum in our development.”

World Renew Cambodia offers regular opportunities to serve alongside our communities and partners.

Contact us for more information:

globalvolunteer@worldrenew.net

Prayers for Cambodia

We give thanks for our work on constituency engagement and the opportunities it provides for transformation of both our visitors and our Cambodian participants. Praise God that

- we found meaningful placements for five students from Goshen College who are working in our communities and with our partners in the provinces over a six-week period. We pray that this arrangement will richly bless all involved.
- we were blessed by a visit from Pastor Paul Donison of St. Peter and St. Paul's Anglican Church, Ottawa, who, together with his wife, Monika, provided excellent training for our church partners and for our own staff and NGO partners.
- we had a productive visit from Mary Dykstra from our home office. Her visit helped to enhance our constituency engagement strategy and policy.
- we have begun to sign up participants for our special 20th-anniversary tour of Cambodia, which will take place in November.

We lift up the political situation in Cambodia. We pray for strength and freedom for the people. We pray that the leader of the opposition party, who was forced to flee Cambodia, can return and lead his party in an environment of safety and peace.

We pray for the 24 communities that have reached the “advanced” stage in our community organizing process and have become “graduated” communities. Thank God for the strong leadership in these communities. Thank God for the way the lives of the people in these communities have been transformed with improved health, higher incomes and savings, more diverse agriculture, and stronger governance. Pray that the leadership in these communities will continue to be strong. Pray that new behaviors and skills learned through World Renew and its partners will continue to enrich and improve these communities.

We give thanks for the new model we have developed for our church work. We rejoice that we have found a more sustainable way to work with our eight church partners. Pray that, going forward, the congregations will be able to continue to walk alongside the communities they are working in to bring both the love of Jesus and practical approaches to creating communities where health, justice, and livelihoods flourish.

