

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

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OXFAM



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A WORD FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR



Greetings!

As we present the third issue of the Impact Spotlight, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride. This edition celebrates the unsung heroes – the journalists – whose tireless efforts have contributed immensely to shaping public discourse and informing policy decisions in Cambodia.

Too often, the true impact of journalism is overlooked. These dedicated individuals are not merely messengers, but catalysts for change. Through their investigative work and insightful reporting, they have shed light on critical issues, amplified the voices of the marginalized, and held the powerful accountable.

It is with great pleasure that we recognize the contributions of six remarkable award-winning journalists who have played a pivotal role in promoting universal social protection in Cambodia.

This issue also delves into other important themes that are central to our mission at Oxfam. We explore the often-overlooked value of the care economy, amplifying the crucial role of caregivers and domestic workers. As we commemorate International Labor Day, we reaffirm our commitment to advocating for decent work for all.

Moreover, we are proud to showcase the achievements of innovative enterprises that are driving social and environmental sustainability. Our new partnership with the Irish Government to combat climate change further underscores our collaborative efforts to address the pressing challenges facing our world.

Diversity and inclusion remain at the core of our work. In this edition, we celebrate the power of inclusive approaches that promote representation and belonging, empowering individuals and communities to thrive. Finally, we take a moment to reflect on our own journey, highlighting how Oxfam strives to uphold the highest standards of safeguarding and sustainability in our community development initiatives.

I invite you to dive into this captivating issue of the Impact Spotlight, where you will discover the inspiring stories and remarkable achievements that are transforming lives and communities in Cambodia. Together, let us continue to amplify the voices and experiences of those we serve, and work towards a more just, equitable, and sustainable future.

Sophoan Phean

National Director, Oxfam in Cambodia

SOCIAL SECURITY BEST REPORTERS AWARDS BOOST SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN CAMBODIA'S SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM

Text by: Sopharith Sin | Photo: Kimheang Tuon



Group photo of six “NSSF Best Reporter Awards” winners with H.E. Dr. Sophannarith Heng, Deputy Director of the National Social Security Fund (center), Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director (green dress), representatives from Oxfam & partner organizations.

Imagine a society where mothers need to get back to work a few days after delivering their newborns; children need to drop out of school and work to support their parents; persons with disabilities beg on the streets because there aren't job opportunities for them; and elderly persons need to work to their very last breath because there isn't a pension fund available.

That was exactly Cambodia not long ago. and many are still struggling with these hardships every day. It is why a system of support, inclusive social protections in particular, is vital to achieving gender equity and poverty reduction efforts in Cambodia.

Cambodia announced its plan on becoming an upper middle-income economy by 2030, and high-income country by 2050. This is an ambitious plan. The World Bank defines upper middle-income economies as those with a Gross National income (GNI) per capita between \$4,466 and \$13,845. To achieve these ambitious goals by 2030 and 2050 respectively, we need significant investment and political commitment to address poverty and improve decent jobs.

The Royal Government of Cambodia, through the General Secretariat of the National Social Protection Council (GS-NSPC) and the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), has introduced the expansion of coverage and benefits of the social security fund to cover workers in both the formal and informal economies.

This coverage expansion includes: the issuance of health equity cards to workers in the entertainment industry; maternity allowance for NSSF members who are pregnant women and their newborn under two years of age, including a voluntary contributory healthcare scheme for the dependents of NSSF members. In addition, the 7th Mandate Government has rolled out the first phase of the “Pentagonal Strategy” as its policy flagship for 2023-2028. This strategy considers strengthening social protection systems as one of the main pillars to ensure the realization of the Cambodia Vision 2050. This demonstrates Cambodia's continued commitment to building resilience, gender responsiveness and inclusiveness in its social protection system.

The media community is the main actor and continues to play an important role as feedback loop between governments and their constituents. Journalists and the media community help promote and raise awareness of government policies to the Cambodian public. They also serve as a feedback mechanism where the Cambodian public can raise their challenges and communicate with the government and their elected representatives, regarding the implementation of those policies. This demonstrates the continued important role of the media community and journalists in safeguarding social accountability in Cambodia.

To support the implementation of these social protection policies and to ensure better access to information concerning decent work, health and social security benefits among workers in Cambodia's apparel industry, Oxfam and NSSF jointly initiated the NSSF Best Reporter Awards.

This initiative aims to expand the scope of access to information and strengthen the knowledge of people

and workers in the apparel industry on the social security system through social and traditional media. It also aims to enhance media coverage among journalists on social security and workers in the apparel industry. Most importantly, it is designed to strengthen cooperation between NSSF and civil society organizations with journalists and the media community.

The awards were announced to the public from 21 March 2024 to 31 May 2024. Candidates from 19 different media outlets competed for this award with their in-depth pieces on social security, knowledge and challenges of workers on access to NSSF benefits and services.

The awards ceremony was hosted on 29 June 2024 to celebrate six outstanding awardees of the “NSSF Best Reporter Awards”. The first place was awarded to a reporter from Women Media’s Centre, followed by a second place to a reporter from PNN TV, the third place to a reporter from Apsara Media Services (AMS), the fourth place to a reporter from VAYO Radio, and the fifth and sixth place to reporters from ThmeyThmey.

Speaking at the welcoming remarks, Oxfam National Director, Ms. Sophoan Phean, said, “The media community is vital in shaping the discourse on social protection, uncovering inequities, giving voice to the vulnerable, holding policymakers accountable, and empowering the public to advocate for inclusive, equitable social protection. As watchdogs, storytellers, policy analysts and catalysts for change, their work builds an informed citizenry empowered to demand the social protections needed for all to thrive, central to creating a more just and equitable world [...] The continued engagement of journalists and the media community in promoting social protection policy, benefits and entitlements, and addressing the challenges of using NSSF cards help improve better access to social security benefits that are inclusive and gender-responsive among Cambodia’s apparel workers.”

Speaking at the opening remarks, the Deputy Director of the National Social Security Fund, H.E. Dr. Sophannarith Heng, said, “The Royal Government of Cambodia is committed to universal social security for all where

members can access healthcare and injury benefits, and pension benefits throughout their lifecycle. All are critical to achieving economic wellbeing and universal health coverage for all Cambodian people. Journalists and the media community are important actors in reporting and disseminating social security policies and benefits to workers and the Cambodian public.”

The initiative is built on the longstanding partnership between Oxfam and NSSF, and media organizations. In 2023, Oxfam collaborated with NSSF, ThmeyThmey online news, and the Club of Cambodian Journalists to provide training on the social security system in Cambodia to 65 members of the national journalists from 55 different media organizations and news outlets. The training received positive feedback from participants and stakeholders. In addition, Oxfam and NSSF also received many requests from journalists and trainees to continue providing such training to members of journalists, so that they can receive policy updates and strengthen their knowledge and skills in reporting on the social security system in Cambodia.

SIX OUTSTANDING AWARDEES OF THE “NSSF BEST REPORTER AWARDS”



1. Ms. Vatte Vay, Women Media’s Centre



2. Mr. Samnang Mao, PNN TV



3. Ms. Kimmarita Long, Apsara Media Services



4. Mr. Sophort Chhoem, VAYO Radio



5. Ms. Sreyleak Nhek, ThmeyThmey



6. Ms. Sakun Po, ThmeyThmey

VALUE CAREGIVERS AND DOMESTIC WORKERS

Text by: Visal Tan & Chakrya Chan

Ms. Sreymom Yong, a domestic worker in Phnom Penh for over 5 years, advocates for better conditions for domestic workers. She believes that the NSSF card offers more benefits than private insurance, including healthcare, employment injury coverage, and pension benefits. Sreymom convinced her employer to register and pay her NSSF contributory fee. She is one of around 240,000 domestic workers in Cambodia (ILO 2018) who play a significant role in household income and poverty reduction efforts.

Like other women in the informal economy, domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to the risks of income insecurity and health issues, discrimination, unsafe and insecure working conditions, often low and volatile incomes. If they stay home with their employer for 24 hours, they face abuse, have no time to rest, lack proper nutrition, and health problems. Those who stay outside their own rented room have problems commuting at night, long distances in the rain, and instability in income and mental health, including physically unhealthy due to discrimination, insecurity and instability of working conditions, low income and limited freedom of association.

Domestic employment is of equal value to other types of labours and therefore deserves equal access rights to the social protection system and services,

freedom of association, so that they too can enjoy the same benefits as other workers in Cambodia, without leaving them behind.

Oxfam and our partners urge the Royal Government of Cambodia to ratify the ILO Convention 189 on domestic workers' rights to decent work and take necessary steps to support national implementation if the RGC is to realise Cambodia's Sustainable Development Goals and its ambition to become an upper middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050.

On June 16, 2024, Oxfam and the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) organized International Domestic Workers' Day on "Value Caregivers and Domestic Workers" in Phnom Penh to commemorate the rights of domestic workers and their situation and challenges, while sharing information and experiences on social protection policies and practices. This forum was an opportunity to formulate suggestions for further measures and policy interventions by government ministries and lawmakers.

There were approximately 270 participants including street vendors, representatives of household employers, members of transport workers, representatives from the government of Cambodia and development partners.



// I hope that all domestic workers will receive the same support and recognition as others. //

- Ms. Sreymom Yong

During her remarks, Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director, emphasized the vital role of domestic workers in the economy and society. She highlighted their contribution to employment, family income, and social development, and the importance of providing domestic workers with fair working conditions and full protection.

Mr. Pov Von, President of IDEA, shared the organization's efforts since 2005 to improve labor conditions for domestic workers. IDEA is currently leading the Cambodian Domestic Workers Network, comprising 20 groups, to initiate appropriate dialogues with relevant government agencies and household employers for greater recognition of their rights and access to social protection and decent living conditions.



Distinguished guests, organizers, and participant gathered for a group photo during the international domestic workers's day on "value caregivers and domestic workers."

TOWARDS DECENT WORK FOR ALL : HAPPY INTERNATIONAL LABOUR'S DAY

Text by: Sopharith Sin

May 1st marks the 138th anniversary of International Labour's Day (locally known as May Day), a widely celebrated event in Cambodia and around the world.

The inception of International Labour Day can be traced back to the late 19th-century labour movement in the United States. May 1st was selected as the significant date to honour a nationwide strike of many brave people advocating for an eight-hour workday, which began on May 1st in 1886.

Oxfam, along with our 40 partner organizations, has come together to celebrate International Labour Day with the theme *"Strengthening Decent Work for All."* This reflects our ongoing commitment to promoting and safeguarding the rights and economic well-being of workers, who are the major force behind economic growth and Cambodia development.

The campaign will span a full week and involve workers, employers, local authorities, and stakeholders at both national and sub-national levels in Cambodia. Our aim is to raise awareness and emphasise the importance of improving decent work conditions across all sectors, particularly focusing on securing social security benefits and representation rights.

While working conditions for Cambodia's apparel workers have gradually improved, those in the agri-food sector and street vending are still exposed to humid weather and poor working conditions. One particular concern is the limited access to social protection benefits and coverage.

Mr. Thorn Ath, President of Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC), said, "Cambodia cannot achieve Sustainable Development Goals nor the Pentagon Strategy without strengthening decent work and economic wellbeing

of workers. We need better access to social protection benefits, rights to representation, and other important aspects, including maternity and pregnancy protection for women workers."

We have submitted petitions on behalf of workers from all sectors to the National Assembly, the government, and the cabinet of the Prime Minister sharing their concerns and advocating for appropriate policy interventions. Our campaign at the local level will also continue.

Oxfam has long prioritized Decent Work and Inclusive Social Protection Systems as key elements in our efforts to reduce poverty, promote gender justice, and sustainable economic growth.

We have been working with partner organizations to implement various projects including Improving Social Protection and Labour Rights for women workers in ASEAN's Agri-Food Sector, a new 5-year project supported

by the Belgium Government; Inclusive National Social Protection Initiatives that Respond to the Needs of Apparel Industry Employees" (INSPIRE), a three-year project funded by the Laudes Foundation; Improving Synergies between Social Protection and Public Finance Management (SP&PFM) and Fostering an Inclusive and Shock-Responsive Social Protection System in Cambodia (FIRST), both funded by the European Commission; and Improved Access to Labor Protection Mechanisms and Gender Equality for Female Workers in the Apparel Sector in Cambodia, funded by GIZ and FABRIC Cambodia.

Oxfam and our partner organizations are committed to collaborating with the Royal Government of Cambodia through the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT), National Social Protection Council (NSPC), National Social Security Fund (NSSF), the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and other government ministries to bolster decent work and inclusive social protection systems in the country.



// NSSF should consider including an annual health check for NSSF cardholder to enhance earlier diagnosis. //

- Ms. Soya Tieng, garment worker from Kampong Speu province during the International Labour's Day.

CELEBRATING ENTERPRISE SUCCESS AND SCALING IMPACT

Text by: San Sar | Photo: Upward Innovators



The presentation of certificates of completion to businesses that successfully completed the Impact Innovators Program.

The Impact Innovators Program, a dynamic collaboration between Oxfam and Upward Innovators, has successfully concluded its recent cycle. This initiative is designed to support and scale high-potential impact-driven enterprises. The program focuses on delivering comprehensive support across key areas, including business model refinement, digital transformation, impact measurement, and investment readiness.

We are thrilled to recognize the achievements of our latest graduates: MeetDoctor and Jalat Logistics. These enterprises have not only advanced in their respective fields but have also made significant social and environmental impacts.

MeetDoctor, the digital health enterprise is addressing the critical shortage of healthcare services in remote areas of Cambodia by leveraging mobile technology. With our support, MeetDoctor can expand its reach, significantly increasing healthcare access in underserved areas, and grow both platform users and revenue.

Jalat Logistics, the logistics enterprise has made remarkable strides in reducing its carbon footprint and enhancing operational efficiency by implementing a mobile warehouse system. Our investment readiness support has positioned Jalat Logistics to secure a \$250,000 investment, showcasing their growth potential and commitment to sustainability.

Dr. Buntongyi Nit, Founder of MeetDoctor, said, "The Impact Innovators Program was a catalyst for MeetDoctor. It not only guided us through our immediate challenges but also equipped us with the strategies

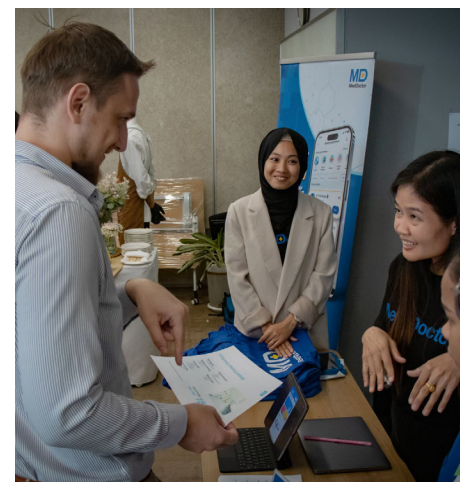
and connections to scale our impact sustainably."

Similarly, Mr. Sethey Sou, CEO of Jalat Logistics, said, "Participating in the Impact Innovators Program transformed our approach to sustainable logistics. We are now not just a logistics company; we are a key player in the green economy, thanks to the program provided."

The success of the Impact Innovators Program highlights the importance of tailored support and adapted training to meet the diverse needs of impact-driven enterprises.



Dr. Buntongyi Nit, Co-Founder and CEO of Meet Doctor, one of the program's successful graduates, delivered a compelling business pitch.



During the graduation ceremony, attendees took the opportunity to visit the booths of graduated businesses from the program.

CONNECTING CAMBODIAN LOCAL PRODUCERS TO MARKETS: A GAME-CHANGING COLLABORATION

Text by: San Sar | Photo: OVOP



Local producers, traders, and government officials gathered at the Local Producers and Buyers Matching Forum and Exhibition held at Big C Supermarket in Poipet, Banteay Meanchey.

Cambodian SMEs have faced significant market access challenges due to a lack of timely market information and limited networking and partnership opportunities. Improving access to market data and fostering stronger business networks are essential for enhancing their competitiveness and market reach.

In response, the One Village One Product (OVOP) National Committee and Oxfam have collaborated to implement the “Market Access for Local Producers and M/SMEs” project. This initiative includes a Producer-Buyer Matching Forum and Exhibition activities in selected cities and provinces, with support from local authorities and supermarkets like BigC and Makro. The project aims to create market opportunities for local producers and M/SMEs to meet potential buyers and engage in discussions on supply and demand conditions. Additionally, participants can connect with local authorities, institutions, NGOs, financial institutions, and youth groups for technical support and resources to further develop their businesses. The forum is organized alongside an exhibition where producers and M/SMEs can showcase and sell their products.

So far, we have already conducted the Forum and Exhibition in two provinces with positive results. About 255 participants, including producers, traders, and relevant authorities, attended these events. Both producers and buyers shared information, negotiated resale agreements, and sold approximately \$19,500 worth of products during the forum, with promises of future purchases.

In addition, each local authority helped facilitate discussions on market access challenges. Local authorities committed to supporting producers by providing updated buyer information and facilitating an information hub on product needs, demand, and production capacity. The government also pledged to support the campaign by purchasing more local products.

H.E. Dr. Noy Shoung, Vice-Chairman of the OVOP National Committee, stated, “By creating a meaningful network interconnection mechanism from suppliers to consumers, we can solve problems with relevant institutions, promote business opportunities, and contribute to Cambodia’s economic development and improve local communities’ livelihood.”

Oxfam is pleased to partner with OVOP to connect local producers and buyers. This collaboration reflects Oxfam’s dedication to enhancing market access, revenue, and sustainable development for Cambodian producers and SMEs. By working together, they aim to establish a successful platform for market access and poverty reduction in Cambodia.

This important project, initiated by OVOP and Oxfam in 2022, aims to support and strengthen market access for local producers. Over the past two years, 17 forums and exhibitions have been held, benefiting approximately 3,000 producers and buyers. This year, we plan to hold the forum in Phnom Penh, and other four provinces including Kampong Thom, Siem Reap, Koh Kong, and Banteay Meanchey.



Cambodian local producers showcased their products at Big C Supermarket.

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND EMBASSY OF IRELAND DISCUSS ACTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE

Text by: Seán Farrel | Photo: Kimheang Tuon



Ms. Deirdre Ní Fhallúin, the Ambassador of Ireland to Cambodia and H.E. Sophalleth Eang, Minister of the Ministry of Environment.

Cambodia, ranked among the world's most climate-vulnerable nations, faces significant challenges in dealing with climate change impacts. As a least developed country with an agrarian economy, Cambodia's vulnerability to climate change stems primarily from its geographical location, heavy dependence on the agriculture sector, and limited adaptive capacity. This limited capacity encompasses constraints such as scarce financial resources, inadequate technical capabilities, and a shortage of human resources dedicated to climate adaptation efforts.

Working to combat climate change requires substantial financial support and strong collaboration and commitment from relevant stakeholders. The Ministry of Environment plays a crucial role in facilitating the formulation and mobilization of resources for climate adaptation and mitigation efforts in Cambodia. On May 21, 2024, under the Climate Resilience for All (CREFA) project, coordinated by Oxfam and funded by the Embassy of Ireland, official meetings and discussions

were made possible between H.E. Sophalleth Eang, Minister of the Ministry of Environment, and the Ambassador of Ireland to Cambodia, Ms. Deirdre Ní Fhallúin. These interactions centered around collaborative actions to address the challenges posed by climate change in Cambodia, emphasizing the importance of strategic coordination and cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and international partners like Ireland.

The discussion focussed on the ambitious plans for both Ireland and Cambodia to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and addressing the impact of climate change on Cambodia posing serious challenges to economic development and rural livelihoods. Ambassador Ní Fhallúin outlined Ireland's current support for the Oxfam led "Climate Resilience for All" programme, which provides funding of €800,000 in 2024 to address climate change vulnerabilities and enhance mitigation and adaptation strategies in Cambodia.

One of the most profound impacts of this programme is its emphasis

on community involvement and education. By providing training and resources, the programme ensures that local communities are equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to adapt to changing climatic conditions. This grassroots approach fosters resilience from within, creating a sustainable model for climate adaptation. Ireland's support for Cambodia is a powerful example of international cooperation and shared responsibility in addressing global climate change challenges.



The discussion between Ms. Deirdre Ní Fhallúin, the Ambassador of Ireland to Cambodia and H.E. Sophalleth Eang, Minister of the Ministry of Environment.

Minister Sophalleth Eang welcomed Ireland's increasing focus in Cambodia. He highlighted his Ministry's Strategy on Environment 2023 – 2028 aiming to ensure sustainability, promote a green economy and respond to climate change. He said "The Ministry of Environment recognises that environmental issues have no borders and require global cooperation. We welcome all development partners who intend to join in the implementation of our Climate Strategy. I express my appreciation for the work that Ireland is doing in Cambodia and look forward to further cooperation."



H.E. Sophalleth Eang, Minister of the Ministry of Environment.

Ambassador Ní Fhallúin said "Support for climate programmes is a key part of Ireland's strategy on international development. As part of our growing engagement in Cambodia, we are delighted to be increasing our funding for climate programmes. We know that climate change affects everyone, but not equally. The poorest people face the worst impacts. Ireland believes in supporting the most vulnerable people to meet the challenges posed by climate change and we are delighted to be funding this programme with Oxfam as part of our commitment to climate, to Cambodia and to those most affected."



Ms. Deirdre Ní Fhallúin, the Ambassador of Ireland to Cambodia.

Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director confirmed the CREFA's programme alignment with both Cambodian and Irish priorities and thanked the Minister and the Ambassador for their support for the programme. Through this programme Oxfam are working to address climate change in some of the poorest regions in Cambodia. The collaboration with Ireland, with the Ministry for the Environment, with our local partners, and private sector entities underscores the importance of working together on climate action and delivering sustainable development in Cambodia.



Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director.

CELEBRATE “THE POWER OF INCLUSION” TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN CAMBODIA

Text by: Sokha Srey | Photo: Kimheang Tuon

Voice is a grant facility program that supports marginalized groups in accessing resources, services, and political participation. Launched by Oxfam in Cambodia in November 2016, the program operated for eight years in Cambodia and ten other countries. Our commitment to empowering marginalized groups remains strong, even after the program’s conclusion in April 2024. We have empowered civil society organizations and representatives of five marginalized groups to advocate for their rights and amplify their voices.

In Cambodia, we have worked with 54 local partners and reached approximately 68,968 individuals from marginalized groups, including people with disabilities, LGBTQI individuals, youth & elderly people, indigenous communities, and women facing exploitation, violence or abuse.

Voice Cambodia has empowered five rightsholder groups in Cambodia by promoting inclusive access to resources, services, and political participation. This has led to increased capacity, confidence, and a stronger foundation for these groups. They are encouraged to speak up, advocate their rights, and participate in decision-making processes. Peer-to-peer support and solidarity have grown within communities, amplifying voices and creating a bigger impact when individuals unite. The project has also increased visibility, recognition, and acceptance for marginalized groups. Influencing efforts, such as engaging with leaders and using media, have driven positive change, as seen in the appointment of representatives from the Cambodian Aging Network (CAN) to develop the National Aging Policy Action Plan. These results align with the principles of inclusivity and leaving no one behind.

Oxfam and our partner Live & Learn Cambodia organized “The Power of Inclusion” festival on April 5, 2024 in



Distinguished guests, and participant gathered for a group photo during The Power of Inclusion festival in Phnom Penh, celebrating eight years of the Voice project’s impact.

Phnom Penh to celebrate eight years of impactful collaboration with grantee partners. The event showcased projects from 26 Voice grantee partners, highlighting the journey towards inclusion for marginalized communities.

Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director, expressed Oxfam’s commitment to promoting inclusivity and diversity. “We empower the community we work with to fully participate in different levels and platforms starting from community development up to policy dialogue and discussion, in line with the principle of “Leave no one behind and Inclusiveness,” Sophoan said.

Mr. Socheath Sou, Executive Director of Live & Learn Cambodia, emphasized the importance of providing marginalized individuals with a platform to voice their concerns and address their needs. The organization facilitates meaningful dialogue between grantee partners, rightsholder groups, and authorities to build strong networks and develop necessary capacities for future actions.

The program is an initiative of and financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands. It is executed by a consortium between Oxfam and Hivos across 10 countries in Southeast Asia, East and West Africa.



Ms. Sophoan Phean, Oxfam National Director delivered her speech during the “Power of Inclusion” festival.



A fashion show highlighting key messages of a rightsholder group.

HEAR OUR RIGHTSHOLDER GROUPS



I am the first female blind massage therapist in Cambodia. I experienced many barriers growing up as a blind girl, and I continued to face obstacles as a blind woman. My dream is for all of us to have opportunity for employment, social engagement, and communication. I want everyone to value and recognize our abilities more than our disabilities.

Ms. That Nika, Founder of Nika Massage



Before and after coming out, I observe almost a 100% difference in my life. Living as who I am gives me peace and hope.

Mr. Thida Kuy, Co-Founder of LovelsDiversity, LGBTQI Community



During the public dialogue forum, I was introduced to and guided on how to apply for ID-poor card, and the local authority helped me obtain it. With the ID-poor card, I received a monthly allowance and have access to free health care when I am sick. My children can attend supplementary education for free. I request that the local authority continue issuing this ID-poor cards to people who are HIV positive like me.

**Ms. Chanthan Em,
Member of People Living with HIV in Ratanakiri Province**



It would have been difficult for me and my children to earn a living during this Covid pandemic if we hadn't received cash transfer support. I am incredibly grateful to OPA and the organization that has supported me so far. I am so happy to be a member of OPA.

Ms. Lao Sru, Member of the Older People Association (OPA)



Thankfully for not discriminating against indigenous people, please end any form of violence against indigenous women and girls.

Ms. Thip Yav, Indigenous Representative of "Our Turn" Project, Women Peace Maker

FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: OXFAM AND PARTNERS STRENGTHEN SAFEGUARDING PRACTICES IN CAMBODIA

Text by: Sereyroth Phang & Natacha Anne Kim | Photo: Sopharith Sin



Oxfam conducted a child safeguarding training to the management and staff members of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Unions (C.CAWDU)

Safeguarding is an organizational responsibility that goes beyond individual actions, especially in humanitarian and development work where staff often hold power over vulnerable communities. Oxfam prioritizes mainstreaming safeguarding with partnered organizations, enhancing their capacities, knowledge, and policies.

Through the INSPIRE project supported by the Laudes Foundation, Oxfam collaborated with 4 partners— the Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC), Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union (C.CAWDU), Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL), and the Cambodian Alliance of Trade Unions (CATU)—to deliver a series of training courses on Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) and Child Safeguarding to their respective employees.

PSEAH is crucial in humanitarian and development contexts to address and prevent sexual misconduct. Since mid-2022, Oxfam has worked closely

with INSPIRE’s project partners to provide transformative PSEAH training to almost all their employees. The sessions were designed to actively engage participants, encouraging them to reflect on current practices, share their existing knowledge and discuss different opinions. The participatory nature of the training helped staff internalize the importance of safeguarding, promoting a culture of safety and respect in their organizations.

Child Safeguarding, another vital component of the training, involves protocols to protect children from abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence. Given children’s particular physical, mental and emotional vulnerabilities, abuse can severely impact their development and emotional health. Oxfam’s training emphasized not only immediate safety but also the long-term well-being and development potential of children. The provision of continuous and regular training to partner organizations ensured that child safeguarding remains a top priority, reinforcing the

importance of protecting children from harm and creating safe spaces that foster healthy growth and development for children.

Through these training series, partner staff gained a nuanced understanding of safeguarding, recognizing both the impact of misconduct and the necessary preventive steps. Interactive discussions and case studies provided avenues for participants to have difficult but insightful conversations on sensitive topics and to review their own behaviors and attitudes, particularly the available resources and handling practices of their organisation should there be any incidents.

Speaking at the training, Deputy President of CLC Ms. Chenda Heng emphasized the need for training, resources, and policies to be in place. Chenda said, “CLC is committed to improve safeguarding practices and handling. This reflects our commitment to ensure the safety of our staff members and the workers we are working with. We thank Oxfam for the

partnership and support. Nevertheless, there is more work to be done and we kindly ask for continued assistance, through the INSPIRE project, from Oxfam and the Laudes Foundation.”

Following these training initiatives, three of the INSPIRE project’s partners developed and adopted their own PSEAH and Child Safeguarding policies for the first time, showcasing their commitment to combating all forms of abuse and fostering a culture of safety. This also resulted in their enhanced ability to secure more grants and project opportunities.

The same commitment is also shared by the President of C.CAWDU. In his remarks at the concluding session for C.CAWDU on PSEAH and child safeguarding, Mr. Athit Kong acknowledged the limitations of organisational resources and experiences in preventing and handling sexual misconduct and child abuse incidents and committed to improve these areas. Mr. Athit Kong said, “PSEAH and child safeguarding are very new concepts for C.CAWDU and unions in Cambodia. We have worked with Oxfam to draft a comprehensive policy, after several training sessions, on PSEAH and Child Safeguarding. We are ready to seek approval from the Board in January 2024.”

Investing in safeguarding training is not merely a policy requirement; it is a commitment to ensuring everyone feels safe and valued. This was demonstrated by all the actors involved in the INSPIRE project: the Laudes Foundation through its financial support and attention to safeguarding, Oxfam through its engagement, coordination and technical support in providing safeguarding trainings, the project’s partners through their leadership, and their employees through active participation and exchange of ideas during training.

In Cambodia, unions and NGOs struggle to implement effective safeguarding practices due to limited resources, inadequate training, and lack of awareness. The post-conflict society’s



Ms. Chenda Heng, Deputy President of CLC, emphasized the need for training, resources, and policies to be in place.



Ms. Natacha Kim, Oxfam’s Safeguarding Focal Point, facilitated the training.

historical context exacerbates these challenges, as many staff members come from backgrounds marked by abuse, violence and limited formal education. Safeguarding, a new concept in Cambodia’s development sector, is often neglected in project planning and budgeting, even by donors. This underscores the urgent need for capacity building, increased funding, and enhanced awareness to protect vulnerable communities and workers.

Upholding safeguarding is our shared responsibility, to ensure that the communities we serve, through our work and operations, are safe from harm and can trust us. We urge donors, funding partners and like-minded organizations to consider integrating safeguarding as a requirement into the core actions of their projects or programs. This shared commitment cannot be realized without the allocation of resources and technical support.

CAMBODIA'S CSOs CO-FOUNDED SP4ALL TO PROMOTE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION.

Text by: Sopharith Sin, Visal Tan & Chakyra Chan | Photo: Oxfam



Social Protection for All (SP4All) annual planning at Kampot province.

Social protection in Cambodia encompasses various programmes aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability, including health insurance, cash transfers, and educational support for all. Despite progress, challenges persist such as limited funding, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and uneven coverage, particularly in rural areas and among households with financial difficulties. Enhancing gender transformative social protection systems is crucial for sustainable development and social equity in the Kingdom. This requires continued advocacy, social and policy dialogue, and stronger representation from rights holders.

Social Protection for All (SP4ALL) was co-founded in June 2022 with 14 member organizations. Ms. Ramy Chan, Director of Youth Resources Development Program, was elected as Chairperson. and the President of Cambodian Food and Service Workers' Federation, Ms. Tep Phalin Ou, was elected as Deputy-Chairperson. Oxfam is entrusted with the responsibility as the Secretariat for a two-year term.

SP4ALL is inspired to be a CSO-led coalition which actively engaged in the sector of social protection aimed at representing the needs of rights-holders, voicing their demands in

policy development, and promoting synergies and collective action for a stronger and inclusive social protection for all.

SP4ALL, founded two years ago, is now growing in size and public recognition. The coalition is growing from 14 member organisations in 2022 to 20 member organisations in 2024, representing constituents from all sectors, such as persons living with disabilities, indigenous communities, apparel industry and informal sector workers, small-scale farmers, and elderly population groups.

The coalition has also participated in regional and national policy dialogues such as the regional and national workshop between NSSF, local leaders and workers' representatives across Cambodia's five economic corridors. Moreover, the coalition has advocated for gender-transformative social protection systems in Cambodia inputs and recommendations to the National Social Protection Council (NSPC), National Social Security Fund (NSSF), and other stakeholders on the draft policy, strategic plan, and social protection national framework. These initiates the importance of continued dialogue between Cambodia's CSOs and social protection regulators and operators to strengthen inclusiveness

and accessibility to social protection benefits for all.

Speaking at the closing of the Annual National Forum between NSSF, Local Leaders and Workers' Representatives in 2023, Ms. Ramy Chan, Chairperson of SP4ALL, said that, "Social dialogue is essential to strengthening gender transformative social protection in Cambodia. The gathering reflected this value. The opportunity to share concerns among local leaders and workers' representatives with NSPC, NSSF, Ministry of Health, and other stakeholders will strengthen the feedback loop between state institutions and their Constituents. We will submit your concerns and requests to the government for appropriate policy intervention."

The leadership of the coalition has also joined capacity-building training and learning visits to a number of countries in the region to learn best practices and insights on how social protection has evolved over the years. Those learning visits included a learning visit to explore Indonesia's social protection systems funded by the Laudes Foundation and an exchange visit to Laos funded by Belgium's government.



Ms. Ramy Chan, Chairperson of SP4ALL, during her closing remarks in the Annual National Forum between NSSF with Local Leaders and Workers' Representatives.



SP4ALL learning visit to Indonesia.



Annual national forum on 'Toward inclusive, gender responsive and universal social protection in Cambodia' in Phnom Penh.

The coalition has been supported by two initiatives: Inclusive National Social Protection Initiatives that Respond to the Needs of Apparel Industry Employees (INSPIRE) funded by the Laudes Foundation. and the Improved Social Protection and Labour Rights for Women Workers in ASEAN's Agri-food Sector (DGD Programme), funded by Belgium's government.

EMPOWERING CAMBODIA'S COMMUNITY FISHERIES THROUGH SUSTAINABLE FINANCING

Text by: Soknak Por | Photo: Eam Dyna/FAO



Distinguished guests, and participant gathered for a group photo during Sustainable Financing Training for CFIs and FiA.

FiA, Oxfam, and community leaders gathered for group photo during joint monitoring at Serey Monkul Trapaing Chres, Ratanakiri province.

A crucial challenge has emerged for community fisheries in Cambodia is securing sustainable financing. Oxfam, in collaboration with the Fisheries Administration (FiA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), stepped up to address this pressing issue.

Over the course of a three-and-a-half-day training workshop, 36 representatives from community fisheries (CFi) in Ratanakiri, Kratie, and Stung Treng provinces, along with fisheries officials and FAO experts, came together to explore the concept and significance of sustainable financing.

“Community fisheries are the heart and soul of sustainable fisheries management,” said Dr. Sopha Lieng, Director of the Community Fisheries Development Department at FiA. “By addressing the challenging issue of sustainable financing they face, we pave the way for empowered communities, thriving ecosystems, and a more equitable and resilient future.”

Through interactive sessions and field visits to successful CFi initiatives supported by the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF), the participants gained invaluable insights. They not only learned about various financing sources but also had the opportunity to develop tailored sustainable financing plans for their own communities.

One CFi, Serey Mongkul Trapaing Chres, was identified as a pilot site to implement sustainable financing strategies. This community's success will serve as a shining example, inspiring others to follow suit. Charity box is one of strategies.

Since March 2024 when the box was created, this community could mobilize 500,000 Riels (\$125) that have been used to support conservation activities such as patrolling, flooded forest plantation and developing its community ecotourism site to attract visitors and awareness raising.

Oxfam, FiA, and FAO are committed to providing support and mentorship to ensure the effective implementation of the sustainable financing plans. Furthermore, the lessons learned from this transformative workshop will be documented and shared with other communities, NGOs, development partners, and the Fisheries Administration, amplifying the impact across the sector.

As part of joint monitoring and collaboration between Oxfam and FiA, on June 28, 2024, Oxfam and 3SPN hosted a joint project monitoring visit by senior Fisheries Administration officials in Ratanakiri, Cambodia. The team observed fishery conservation areas, community-based ecotourism, and climate-smart aquaculture under the Community Based Fisheries Management Project funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund.

The officials emphasized the importance of co-management and community participation in sustainable fisheries stewardship. They praised the initiative's potential to develop community-based ecotourism as a source of sustainable financing for fisheries conservation. This collaborative effort demonstrates a strong commitment to protecting aquatic resources and ecosystems in the Sesan and Srepok rivers, empowering local fishing communities as the custodians of their natural wealth.



Awareness campaign and releasing fingerlings in Serey Monkul Trapaing Chres CFi, Ratanakiri province.



Tree nursery preparation for flooded forest plantation/restoration in Boeung Chres Consevation Area, Ratanakiri province.

We appreciate the long-standing support and relationship we have with our partners and donors. Thank you for being the primary change agents of Oxfam's endeavours to reduce poverty and empower communities. We have come a long way on the road to harnessing peace and ensuring social justice. We are extremely grateful for the continued support, cooperation and collaboration we have had over the years and we hope to continue this journey for years to come.



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Oxfam has supported Cambodia's development for more than four decades. We continue with a strong commitment to Cambodians, especially women, youth and other marginalized groups facing inequality, discrimination, exploitation, abuse, and violence. Our goal is to empower the people of Cambodia enabling them to exercise their rights and actively contribute to building a resilient society that is free from poverty and injustice.

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