



## KEY NOTES

⊕ Community helps single mother rebuild her family shelter



⊕ Basic Skills in First Aid Can save Lives; it gives village widow dignity in her community

⊕ Peace building is Part of my job

Dear Readers,

CWS began a newsletter in Jan 2008 to try a different format for communicating the nature of our work its impact as well as a bit about the lives of the extraordinary staff who make the work possible and full.

From January through December of 2008, we aimed at one newsletter a month, and published 7. Beginning January 2009, CWS dropped back to a bi-monthly target and indeed published 4 issues between January and July of 2009. We hoped the newsletter might provoke deeper discussion and dialogue on the development issues facing Cambodia today at the grass roots level in un-served remote reintegration areas. At this time, we will reduce our time invested in the newsletter to target 4 issues a year. We welcome your comments and queries.

Sincere regards  
Josephine Barbour  
Country Representative on behalf of  
Chhouk Chantha , FMER and Program Staff.

## Rural Development model completes 2nd year and enters phase II

In 2005 Church World Service in Cambodia began to develop a uniquely Cambodian approach to village development taking into account, diminishing funds, donor fatigue, increasing economic opportunity in and near provincial towns and the decentralization process. Informing the new model:

- Time and money are short and the needs are great
- The GAP between the have and have not's is Growing not Lessening and the remote rural poor are further and further a field of the median
- There are rural communities who have been excluded from any of the development dollars coming into Cambodia
- Trauma effects people's ability to assimilate new ideas
- Nothing can or will change short of a catastrophic event or a binding relationship that can support and arouse the individual human nature to hope
- Human dignity is a great catalyst.

The CWS model is focused on people. The first person

who must be open to change is the CWS staff person. The CWS model is bound in relationships, of one team member to another, of the team to the community members, and of the community members one to another. The CWS model is grounded in a belief in a shared future. The stories in this newsletter are some examples of the catalysts of positive change. Change that has the potential to be sustainable.

## Community helps single mother rebuild her family shelter



Ms. Soem Choem, her son Soem Soy, daughter Soem Chaem in new wooden house in July 2009

In June a heavy storm hit Beng, a remote village in the CWS community based development catchments area. But relations are building as confidence grows between CWS staff and from villager to villager as was experienced by Ms Soem Choem after her 'cottage' collapsed in the monsoon rain.

Ms Soem Choem is deaf. Her mother died when she was barely a teenager. Her father married again and moved away, leaving Choem to fend for herself. As a young woman alone, isolated by her poverty and her deafness, she is vulnerable and at risk. At age 28, she raises her two children 14 and 8 years old, on her own. She is an unskilled landless laborer in a remote Cambodian village and so does what many poverty stricken along the border resort to: crosses over into Thailand to earn a dollar and a half a day working on a plantation or farm.

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Without vehicles, staff travel from the Kompong Thom Project office 71 kilometers away by motor bike. The trip is long and from the district center to Beng is another 2hr trip. “We Value People” is a core CWS value.

With CWS support, she is now raising chickens, and growing fruit trees as an investment in the future. Choem is a participant in the water and sanitation activities and so is certain to have a health benefit for herself and her children. But this story is simple and lovely and true. The villagers’ mobilized themselves to take up a collection to repair her house. When they fell short of the amount needed, they asked for a contribution from CWS as well, and set about to the labor of giving back a home to two children and a mother who are alone.

## Basic Skills in First Aid Can save Lives; it gives village widow dignity in her community

Church World Service works with holistic partner Cambodian NGOs to develop their capacity build their competence and reach remote border areas, at risk to reignited conflicts as well as vulnerabilities associated with active military presence. The program has many layers of capacity building, and dignity through empowerment. This year CWS has again implemented a Community Based Disaster Risks Management project funded in part by DIPECHO via Dan Church Aid and in part by ICCO. The project compliments the local institution development core of the Partnership Program and provides villagers yet another opportunity to take charge of their lives, an important factor in the decentralization process in Cambodia.

Mrs. Chan Yam, a single mother raising two sons and a daughter on her own in Tatoak commune, Samlout was elected by her fellow villagers as the Red Cross Volunteer for he village. She took a 4-day training course in First Aid and is now able to, and does treat minor injuries; she also has the knowledge now to refer other injuries to the Commune Health Center. The story that is most often retold however is the day a 52 year old neighbor fell unconscious. “I used the breathing method I was taught and in a few minutes she came to again. I couldn’t believe that I had saved a life.” Ms Yam is proud of the confidence she has gained from her community “as I know how to clean and bandage wounds in the correct way”. She expresses her pleasure in being recognized as a helping community member.



*Chan Yam giving a treatment to a girl in her village*

## Peace building is Part of my Job

On May 2009, two separate workshops in Local Capacity for Peace (LCP) for 29 villages in Svay Rieng province. The training was offered in order to strengthen the village chiefs and the Water / Sanitation User Group members in how they can facilitate decision making and problem solving to lessen the potential conflict in their villages and the delivery of their services to the villagers.

CWS knows that the influential people in the village are those who will determine the solidarity, understanding, sharing, and loving- kindness which are the social capital needed for sustainable development and earning a stable peace. Each relationship has the potential to transform. CWS began work with LCP in 2004. It is a concrete tool that people can understand and use for reframing their work.



*LCP training participants working as group at Trapeang Sla Pagoda on May 2009*

Mrs. Eang Sanon, from the WSUG in Thmei village shared “To tell you the truth, when I first for the invitation letter to attend Local Capacity for Peace training, I kept asking myself why do I have to study about peace building since my job is related to beneficiary selection. Now after 3 days of study and discussion I see that peace building is everyone’s work. What’s more I know how to choose people and not cause a conflict.”

Mr. Phy Chhorn village chief of Srama reflected “As a village leader, I have tried to solve problems based on my own understanding and sometimes I have made mistakes. For example, I force the parties to stop their conflict without looking at their needs. This LCP has helped me think more widely considering attitudes, and experiences that might have influenced the conflict”