Productive Assets for Food Security in Cambodia
A Beneficiary-owned approach.

An intervention developed in partnership with the World Food Program

Characteristics of the current project

Action Against Hunger currently implements a Food For Assets intervention in Preah Vihear province. It focuses mainly on two kinds of productive assets: family ponds and rice banks.

In 2016, the project has led to the improvement of living conditions, resilience and food security for 395 households from 11 villages over 3 communes in the district of Choam Ksan. We successfully supported the creation of 81 productive assets and distributed 39.66 metric tons of rice procured by the World Food Program.

In 2017, we extended to two additional districts and expect to support the construction of 2,200 productive assets.

In a virtuous circle of infrastructure and livelihood improvement, the beneficiaries themselves build the resilience of their communities.

A beneficiary walks by his family pond, which construction was supported by Action Against Hunger.

Productive Assets interventions

Today, about 18% of Cambodia's population is food insecure. Food insecurity can lead to extreme vulnerability as food insecure households might have to resort to harmful coping strategies in the absence of safety nets, such as selling productive assets. Food For Assets and Cash For Assets interventions rely on the idea of fighting against food insecurity simultaneously on the short and longer terms. Beneficiaries in target areas receive a conditional transfer of food or cash in exchange for the construction of productive assets, either at the household or community level. This type of intervention allows Action Against Hunger to provide an immediate answer to food shortage while putting the beneficiaries in the driver’s seat to contribute to their future resilience. Beneficiaries are supported throughout the work, as Action Against Hunger provides trainings and tools. We also build bridges between our beneficiaries and the local authorities to link the construction of productive assets with the Commune Investment Programs, making sure our interventions have a long-lasting impact.

Participants use tools provided by Action Against Hunger to build productive assets.
How does Action Against Hunger implement “For Assets” interventions?

One of the keys of labour-based interventions is flexibility, which allows Action Against Hunger to tailor our activities to the communities' needs. As long as the basic criteria of productiveness and usefulness, feasibility, security, and sustainability are met, any number of rehabilitation or construction activities can be implemented. We are thus able to bring appropriate and immediate response to households' and communities' issues. The variety of assets that can be integrated to our interventions also allows Action Against Hunger to be inclusive, and to adapt the type of asset to the labour power of the household or the community. Below are two examples of productive assets we currently support.

**Family Ponds**

Households in Choam Ksan district have shown a high demand for family ponds. This demand echoes the findings of a resilience-assessment conducted by Action Against Hunger in 2016, which highlighted the lack of water storage and negative impact of drought on livelihoods in the region. The ponds offer a sustainable response to this specific challenge, and allow families to develop home-gardening activities, which provide access to food between rice production cycles, and participate in diversifying the diet of beneficiaries. We provide tools, as well as training on management and maintenance to the families who wish to participate to the program. Action Against Hunger works hand-in-hand with the provincial departments of rural development and agriculture to monitor the process.

Rice procured by the World Food Program is delivered to participants who built a rice bank storage in Choam Ksan district, Preah Vihear province.

A participant in his home-garden, which is watered thanks to the family pond he built with support from Action Against Hunger.

**Rice Banks**

Rice banks are community assets allowing vulnerable households to borrow rice during food shortage periods, and return crops later with low interest rates. To support rice banks, Action Against Hunger train committees, selected by the villagers, on accounting, financial management, record keeping and leadership. As Action Against Hunger acts as a technical advisor to the committees, the entire process is beneficiary-led, from the choice of location to the design of rules and regulations, and the construction of warehouses. Rice procured by the World Food Program is distributed to villagers providing labour force and/or participating to training, and is provided to support the initial bank capital.

Contact us:
Jean Luc Lambert  
Country Director  
40AEO, Street 228, PO. Box 2261,  
Phnom Penh  
Tel: +855 (0) 95 705 026  
Email: cd.kh@acf-international.org

Visit us online:  
Website: www.actionagainsthunger.org  
Facebook: Action Against Hunger-Cambodia