

SAFE MIGRATION AND REDUCED TRAFFICKING



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CARE would like to thank the European Union and the Austrian Development Cooperation for their support of this work. Their funds have helped local volunteers and government authorities provide comprehensive support to people planning to migrate from rural areas and helped empower these people to make informed decisions.

CARE would also like to thank the National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT) for their collaboration in support of this project, including NCCT's provincial committees in Prey Veng and Kampong Cham.

CARE would like to acknowledge the important work of local partner Cambodian Women for Peace and Development in supporting this project's implementation.



SMART: SAFE MIGRATION & REDUCED TRAFFICKING

Funding from the European Union has helped CARE to increase legal migration and ensure community members have knowledge and support to migrate for work safely.

Many people within Cambodia migrate to find work both within the country and outside its borders. Motivation to migrate is often based on unrealistic expectations about salary and working conditions. Migrants who are uninformed of the risks and dangers they may confront face increased vulnerability to trafficking and less likelihood of financial achievement.

CARE worked in two of the most at-risk provinces for migration—Prey Veng and Kampong Cham. Working with local partner Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD), the *Safe Migration and Reduced Trafficking* (SMART) project empowered community members to make informed decisions about migrating for work and supported local authorities to provide appropriate advice and services. CARE has ensured that the concerns of migrating workers are brought to the attention of authorities, particularly in relation to illegal recruitment agents.

CARE’s activities have led to an increase in legal migration and specific actions from provincial authorities which have positively impacted the lives of vulnerable migrants.

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“ Transparency and access to accurate information are key in any open society for the promotion and protection of human rights. The European Union, as one of the main Cambodian development partners, is delighted to support the work implemented by civil society, local and international, including CARE Cambodia, in promoting and protecting vulnerable people from risks of human trafficking and exploitation. ”

H.E. Jean-François Cautain, EU Ambassador to Cambodia

PROJECT DETAILS

The SMART project aimed to **promote safe migration** in order to **reduce the incidence of human trafficking** in Cambodia. CARE and local partner CWPD achieved this by strengthening the capacities of civil society agencies and local authorities at commune, district and provincial levels to prevent unsafe migration and trafficking and empower at-risk groups to make informed decisions.



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Civil society and local authorities in selected provinces, districts and communes have greater capacity, improved consultation, and joint action to deliver safe migration messages to communities, and to respond to cases of trafficking.
- Community members (men and women) in selected provinces, districts and communes are empowered to make informed migration choices and to report cases of trafficking
- Increased awareness and adequate response on migration and trafficking issues through policy dialogue and public campaigns

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Facilitating safe migration awareness-raising in local communities and schools to enable informed decision-making and promote legal migration.
- Training teachers and volunteers to conduct awareness raising activities with community members and students.
- Training government and civil society actors to build knowledge on unsafe migration and trafficking and to improve their response.
- Supporting monthly provincial committee meetings under the National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT) to improve collaboration between government and civil society actors on unsafe migration and trafficking issues.
- Coordinating media broadcasts covering key safe migration messages, including collaboration with Women's Media Centre (WMC) for radio broadcasts with NCCT and Chab Dai to produce a televised roundtable discussion.
- Recognising Anti-Human Trafficking Day with special events to share safe migration messaging widely.
- Conducting policy dialogue activities with government and civil society actors to advocate for resolution of priority issues.

“ All people have a right to work anywhere they want with dignity. Workers should keep in mind CARE’s six key messages on Safe Migration. ”

H.E. Chou Bun Eng, Ministry of Interior

KEY FACTS & STATS

With the support of the EU, CARE and local partner CWPD have worked in 379 villages across 30 communes in the two provinces at Prey Veng and Kampong Cham.

- **54 volunteer focal points** received training on safe migration and how to share this information with others
- **192 teachers** from **28 schools** received training on safe migration and trafficking
- Over **33,500 community members** learned about safe migration at a total of **1591 awareness raising sessions**
- Over **17,000 students** received safe migration information
- **154 government and civil society representatives** received training on trafficking laws and safe migration.
- **Two provincial committees** were supported to improve their procedures

“ There is an increase in legal migration because of awareness-raising. People in the community who have information about safe migration can make informed decisions. Through training local authorities understand how to disseminate information about safe migration ... and have improved their response. ”

Deputy Provincial Governor of Prey Veng and Chair of the Provincial Committee of the National Committee for Counter Trafficking



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Over **50,000 men, women and children** were reached through awareness-raising activities
- **Legal migration and increased** and illegal migration has decreased in target communities
- More community members are **verifying the status of recruitment agencies** and **checking documents** with authorities
- The number of **legally registered** recruitment agencies has increased
- **21 illegal brokers** and **5 illegal recruitment agencies** have been stopped by authorities
- **415 people supported by provincial government** to regain documents or money owed from brokers or recruitment agencies

INFORMED CHOICES:

Awareness-raising has empowered community members to make informed decisions about when and how to migrate.

Without much knowledge on how to go about migrating for work, community members can face many risks and challenges.

If they lack information, people are often persuaded to use brokers who charge high fees and are not always legal. They do not consider what documentation they may need to take with them, such as identity documents to prove their age. Many do not analyse the costs of migrating against what they could earn, meaning their economic situation may not necessarily improve as a result of leaving their home and family.

CARE conducted awareness-raising sessions with community members to make them consider these questions before they choose to leave. They discuss key points such as being cautious of brokers or recruitment agents and not signing a contract unless they fully understand what it says—vital for protecting people from being exploited. Awareness sessions also outline where people can go for assistance, with village leaders being able to help check contracts and the free hotline helping to respond to cases where agents take advantage of migrants. The key recommendation made is to migrate legally, with session facilitators representing the importance of obtaining all the right documents before moving away to work.

In an effort to reduce underage illegal migration – including the number of young students leaving school to work in factories – CARE identified the value of extending this awareness-raising into schools.

20% of students in Cambodia will drop out of school before Grade 9* which means these students are more vulnerable to unsafe migration and trafficking such as labour exploitation. Educating students about safe migration provides a platform to encourage students to stay in school.

CASE STUDY: HARAK KANHCHUM SECONDARY SCHOOL



The School Director at Harak Kanhchum Secondary is an enthusiastic advocate for providing education on migration in schools.

“ I am so impressed with the safe migration school activity that we have now incorporated the sessions into the school program twice monthly. We will continue do so even after the SMART project finishes. I believe safe migration awareness-raising in schools will have long term benefits, helping to reduce dropout rates and increase legal and safe migration in communities. ”

CARE's six key migration messages:

- Don't trust a broker who promises to give you a job
- Seek advice from your local authority about the agent and the job offered
- Don't sign any paperwork if you can't read and understand the content
- Discuss and agree on wages before you go and get a copy of the contract
- Obtain a validated passport if going overseas
- If in trouble call the 1288 hotline



High school students were shown the video *I am Saray*, produced by the International Labour Organization (ILO). This tells the story of a 16 year old girl who migrates to Malaysia illegally to work as a domestic worker after a broker approaches her village. The story was linked to CARE's key messages to provoke discussion around these.

Incorporating this information into school learning proved effective in increasing students' understanding of what they should and should not do if they want to remain safe. After these sessions almost all students could identify the legal documents needed for migration and knew the number for calling the trafficking hotline.

Students each received a small reference card listing the key things to know about migrating. Sharing safe migration messages with young people also increased the reach of these within communities, as students discussed what they had learned with family members at home.

Village chiefs and focal points have reported that having equipped community members with this knowledge there has been an increase in community members verifying the status of recruitment agencies. In Prey Veng, there has been a decrease in illegal migration and data from Kampong Cham showed an increase in the number of people migrating through legal channels.

CASE STUDY: HEANG

Heang lives in Prey Veng province and her daughter learned of safe migration from an awareness-raising session at her school. Before this, Heang knew little about migration and its risks.

“ I have learned much from my daughter such as not to trust a broker, the dangers of migrating illegally and the importance of making sure you have the correct documents if you want to migrate. It is important to know this new information so that I can tell my neighbours and protect my children. I would like my daughter to finish school and to become a teacher; I understand to never send my daughter with a broker because of the dangers of forced labour and sexual exploitation. ”



ADEQUATE SUPPORT:

Improving the skills of local authorities and trained volunteers has provided community members with support to respond to problems when migrating.

Focal points at local level link community members with local and regional authorities—something that would be very challenging for individuals on their own.

CARE trained volunteers in the community to be focal points to provide accurate information to those who are thinking about leaving their village to find work. Many volunteer focal points, such as Saveun (pictured below) already served the community in other ways so are familiar faces in the villages in which they work. As a constant presence within the commune, people are easily able to approach her with problems or for help with the practicalities of migrating for work.

Having seen so many community members being cheated when they tried to migrate for work, Saveun is now able to help them by advising on steps to avoid this, such as helping to check contracts and reminding people not to sign these unless they understand what the documents say.

CASE STUDY: SAVEUN

Saveun is a volunteer focal point in her community for providing advice and support about safe migration. She speaks enthusiastically about how rewarding she finds this role.



“ Whenever I return to a village where I have done awareness-raising about safe migration, people recognise me and come to ask me for advice. I am really happy as I can see that the community are very excited that I have information that can help them.

One time there were 34 people who had been waiting for over a year for jobs they had been promised by a recruitment agency. I assisted them with coordinating all the evidence and organised a meeting with the village leader to file a complaint against the company. This helped them to successfully claim their money back ”

CARE has introduced simple tools such as the log book for focal points and village chiefs to document information for presenting to government. Where communities encounter problems with companies that they cannot resolve on their own, focal points such as Savouen (pictured opposite) bring these issues to the attention of local authorities who have the power to act against these.

These government representatives have received training from CARE to make sure they fully understand the law and are familiar with their responsibilities. Those CARE works with include commune chiefs, the Provincial Department of Women's Affairs, the Provincial Department of Anti-Human Trafficking, and provincial and district governors. Project monitoring showed that this led to a strong improvement in understanding and implementing anti-trafficking laws.

CASE STUDY: SAVOUEEN

As well as being a representative for the Commune Council for Women and Children, Savouen acts as a focal point within her community for migration. Her careful monitoring of a situation and links to support at provincial level had positive results for many people who would otherwise not have known who to turn to for help.

“ A recruitment company asked 25 people from AngKa Chear village to pre-pay USD\$195 each to obtain jobs in Thailand. They also had to submit items such as their birth certificates and ID cards before the company would process the necessary documentation. But when they needed these to vote in the Cambodian election, the workers struggled to have their documents returned to them.

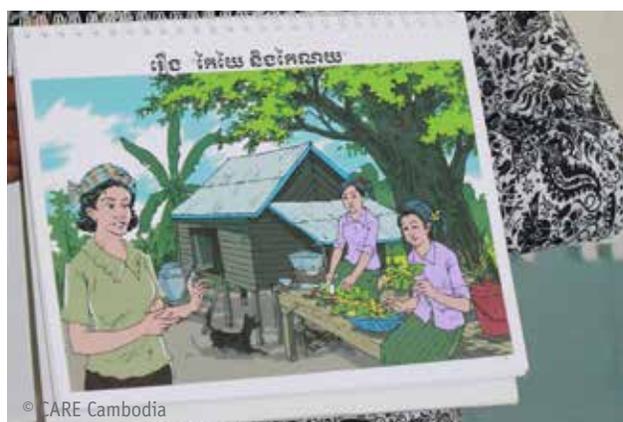
I recorded the details and brought this issue to the attention of the provincial coordinator, who then reported this to the Deputy District Governor. With government intervention at district level, the company was instructed to return all documents they were withholding from the villagers. In addition, 11 people who had not left for work were returned the money they had paid.

Everyone was very happy that there was someone like me who could intervene on their behalf, as if I had not known what to do they would have struggled to register to vote.



A key forum for addressing the issues faced by community members was the Provincial Committee in each province for the National Committee for Counter Trafficking (NCCT), which include commune focal points, district authorities and senior government representatives. CARE has supported monthly meetings for local priorities to be brought to the attention of provincial authorities. Mandatory monthly reporting for these meetings has improved overall record-keeping of migration in the commune, with log books gathering information on the number of potential migrants, who has migrated, and returned migrants. This has resulted in committees functioning more effectively and taking direct action to address the issues documented by focal points. Actions taken by the provincial NCCT

committee have included stopping illegal brokers from approaching vulnerable people in the community, intervening in complaints against recruitment agencies and even asking the police to stop trucks transporting migrants to the border for illegal work overseas.



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CARE's work to ensure authorities have the knowledge and processes in place to respond to issues has greatly improved the response provided when community members encounter challenges.

IMPROVED POLICIES:

Campaigns and advocacy at provincial and national level have brought key migration issues to the attention of policymakers.

A combination of mass media campaigns, high-profile events and policy dialogues ensure that the issues that most affect community members are informing policy decisions.

Mass media campaigns have brought migration issues to the attention of the public at national level through radio shows produced in collaboration with Women’s Media Centre and a televised round-table discussion. The radio show received nearly 250 calls, many of which highlighted the issue of migrants being deceived by brokers and recruitment agencies. As a result of the show’s popularity, a selection of the radio shows was also re-broadcast on provincial channels 10 times. CARE also helped to organise large events to celebrate Anti-Human Trafficking Day, which saw thousands of people join parades, watch dramas and hear speeches emphasising the importance of migrating safely.

This awareness-raising through mass media and events has complemented the provincial NCCT committees’ improved documentation of issues community members raise. With the problems of illegal recruitment agencies brought to the attention of key policy-makers, accurate record-keeping by provincial committees has been vital to present the facts and advocate for improved policies.



CASE STUDY: PREY VENG DEPUTY PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR



H.E. Tep Sam On is Deputy Governor of Prey Veng province and chairs the provincial NCCT committee. She has seen a change in how local authorities are taking action and explains how improved procedures have had an impact on her community.

“ Through CARE’s support there has been improved collaboration at committee meetings. This has allowed important issues to be raised and discussed at the provincial level and then advocated to national level.

In the last three years there has been a big increase in legal migration—before we mostly just saw illegal migration. This is because local authorities ... are acting more diligently to verify the legal status of recruitment agencies as well as monitoring brokers in the community.

There are now nine legally registered recruitment agencies in Prey Veng province. ”

CARE supported provincial committees to negotiate at national level for improved regulation of agencies. As a result the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training agreed that all recruitment agencies must be registered at the sub national level. The Ministry also provided support to shut down illegal recruitment agencies which had been exploiting workers.

With recruitment agencies now being required to register at provincial level, there has been an increase in the number of legal recruitment agencies, which is creating more access to legal migration and less reliance on illegal services. Increased focus on the issue of safe migration from national level has also impacted local responses; a key change seen by government representatives such as H.E. Tep Sam On (pictured opposite), has been local authorities assuming greater responsibility for monitoring recruitment agencies in the community.



Policy dialogue activities which brought together key government representatives and partner organisations resulted in increased awareness of community issues in relation to trafficking and unsafe migration. Following one such policy dialogue event CARE compiled a report on the increase in women being sent to China for marriage. This was submitted at provincial and national levels with key recommendations for action, such as providing training to provincial authorities on Sub Decree 183 on Marriage with Cambodian Nationals. Two major cases of trafficking to China have been addressed at the provincial court and are now at the national level.



Policy dialogue reports also ensured senior officials at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) were kept well informed on migration and trafficking issues affecting communities in Kampong Cham and Prey Veng. Increased focus from the MoI on promoting safe migration is vital for motivating judicial and police departments to make it a priority to enforce trafficking and migration laws.

Improved regulation at national level is increasing the options available to vulnerable migrants and making sure that their needs are recognised by those in power.



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