Save the Children Norway
Fighting for Children's Rights in Cambodia
1988-2010



Save the Children

Save the Children Norway

Our Vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our Mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

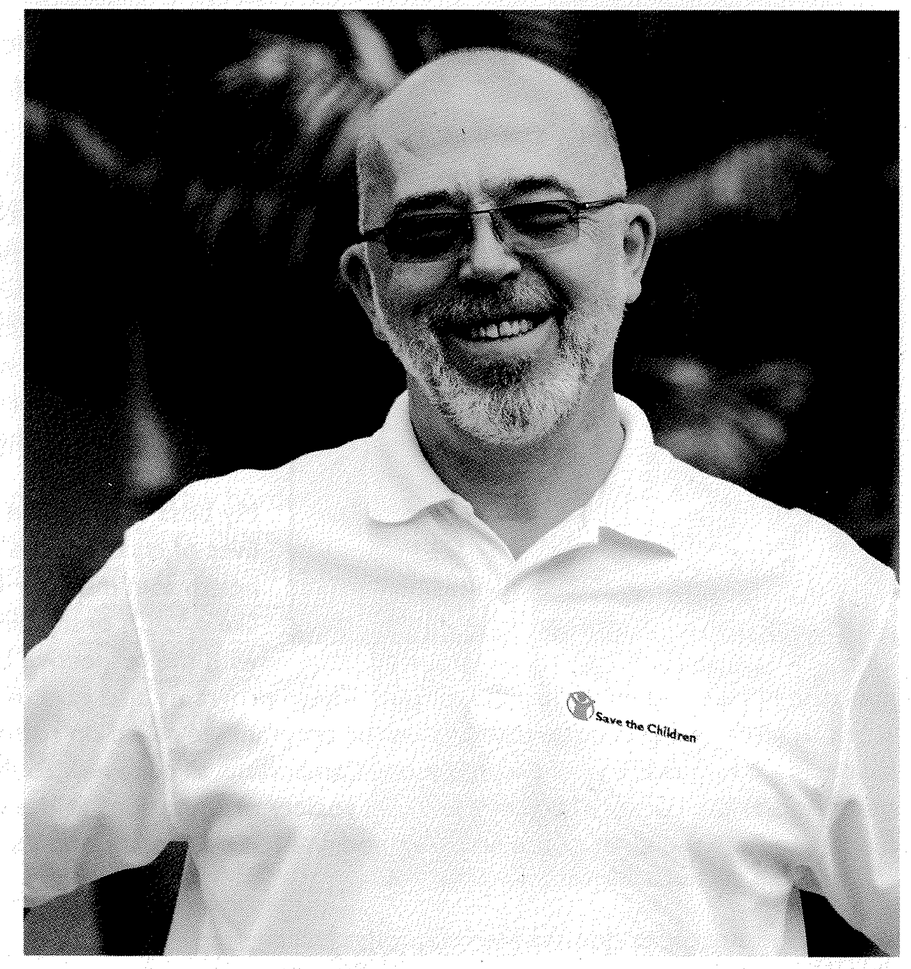
Our Strategic Intent

The overall strategic aim is to bring long lasting change in children's lives through empowering children and parents and strengthening systems and mechanisms in order to monitor and implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, provide access of relevant and quality education for all children, prevent and protect children from exploitation and abuse and provide care and support to children.

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The job is not done yet!



Save the Children Norway has been engaged in improving the situation for children in Cambodia since the fall of the Khmer Rouge Regime in 1979. Initially we supported refugees on the border to neighbouring Thailand. Since 1988 we have been operating from inside the kingdom.

Cambodia is continuously changing and the Royal Government of Cambodia together with its partners are addressing key issues that gradually makes this country a better place to live for children as well as for adults.

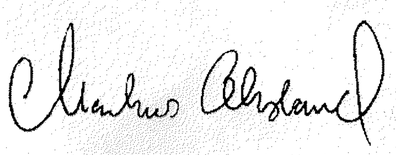
The capital Phnom Penh changes and grows from one year to the next – and it is hard to recognize and remember what it looked like back in 1988.

The changes are many! It is important to underline that the job is far from being completed. Access to education has improved enormously over the years – but issues linked to quality of education, teachers' living conditions and bilingual learning hamper our efforts.

The Child Rights situation is improving. More children survive and develop. More children are protected from abuse – and increasingly the adults realise that children do have a right to participate. However, we still have quite a distance to cover! The creation of a de facto Ombudsman for Children's Rights is still on our wish list. The establishment of participation mechanisms for children in relation to structures where decisions are made affecting their lives is progressing, but slowly.

On child protection we have made good progress on the local level, but see that there are still issues to be resolved before we have good coordination on the provincial and national level.

2010 will be the last year Save the Children Norway operates in Cambodia on its own. In early 2011 we will merge with Save the Children Australia – and there will only be one Save the Children presence in the country. The new Save the Children Cambodia will build on the strengths and expertise of Save the Children Norway and Save the Children Australia – and will be in an even better position to fight for children's rights.



Markus Aksland
Country Director



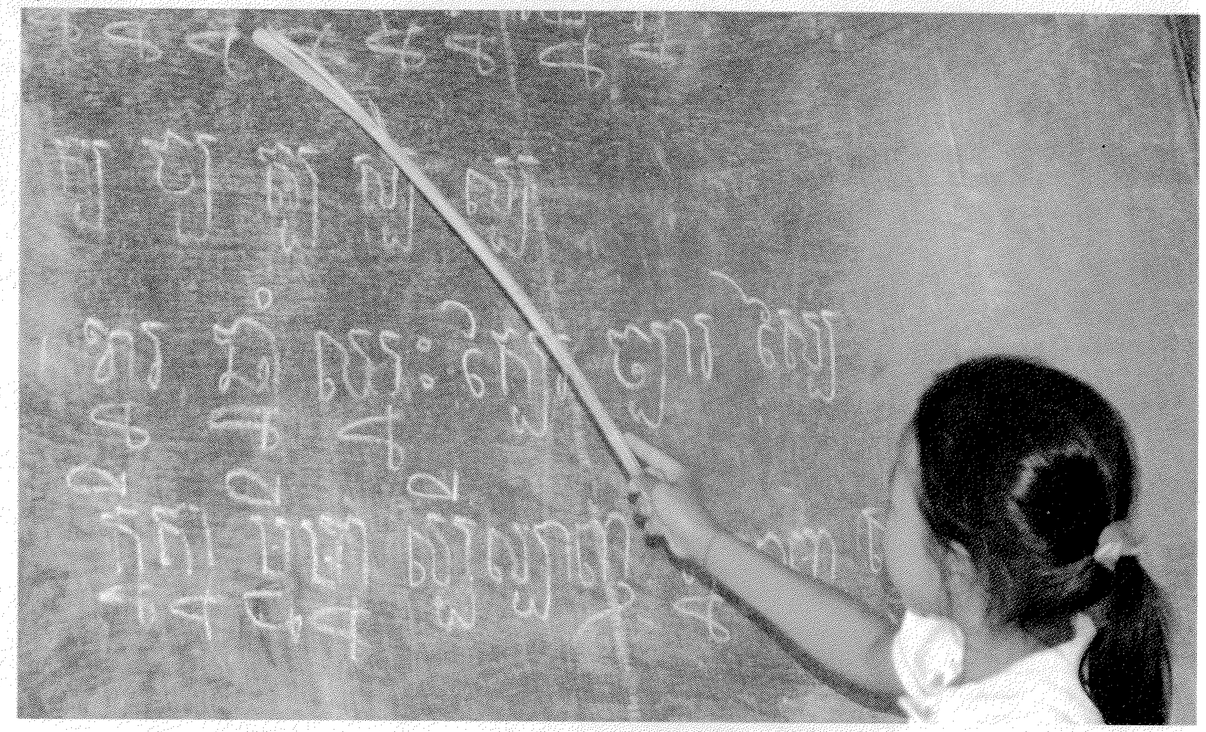
Our Achievements 2006-2009

Save the Children Norway has focused on four strategic objectives during 2006-2009, to fulfill the rights of children to education, protection against violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and protection against the impact of HIV and AIDS, and to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of children rights.

Save the Children Norway, together with fifteen partners in both government and the NGO community, have positively affected five million Cambodian lives with school construction, awareness raising initiatives, and policy reforms and improvements affecting children:

- Almost 720,000 children have gained access to basic education programs for the first time.
- Nearly 60,000 children have improved their school performance as a result of Save the Children Norway's early childhood education program.
- Some 8,400 children are now aware how to protect themselves from HIV and AIDS
- Over 5,400 children, at risk of inadequate care, or sexual and physical abuse, have received support from community based protection systems inspired and supported by Save the Children Norway.
- Over 1,370 children have learned about the legal rights of children.
- More than 600 children, affected by Typhoon Ketsana and a local fire received support from Save the Children Norway's emergency program.





Working to Fulfill Children's Right to Education

Most out-of-school children live with disadvantaged families, facing daily difficulties in livelihoods, domestic violence, and access to proper education. Many are orphans. Some have disabilities.

Save the Children Norway's education program is designed to help all children attend school and learn with quality, but with special attention to girls, children with disabilities, minorities, and children in remote areas.

First, we work with the community. We build the capacity of the local school support committee, promotes early childhood care and development programs (ECCD) to prepare young children to be successful in school, create local networks to identify out-of-school children, and conduct education campaigns to attract out of school children and their families, persuading them to make the investment to education.

Second, we build school capacity by adding school rooms, and grade levels, in remote areas. Communities often pitch in with fencing, ground work, and finishing, building local ownership of the results.

Most of all, we strive to improve the quality of education. We build the capacity of head teachers, teachers, and school technical committees. we produce teachers' manuals, learning materials and distributes new teaching materials equally among our target areas. Moving from traditional, "passive" teaching, applying child-centered learning and teaching skills, we have developed tests to assess students' individual needs. Where no teachers are available, we recruit local people with ability to act as teachers, and provide them with intensive training and experience.

Children are motivated to learn outside the classroom, teachers learn to encourage exploring ideas in schools, and communities become involved through project assignments. Students are coached to assess their own strengths and weaknesses, to monitor their own progress, and to help other students in "learning clubs". We encourage children to organize social events in their schools and in communities in order to give opportunities for them to work together and to make decisions. We help the school staff to organize libraries and resource centers, friendly school environments, and life skills programs, such as agriculture and raising animals.

Save the Children Norway and its partners have influenced educational policy makers and other NGOs working in education to modify existing policy, developing new approaches in the best interest of the child, applying them to the entire country. More than 100,000 children at age five or below now have access to ECCD, and more than 700,000 children are enrolled in primary school for the first time. More than 27,000 out-of-school children have improved access to schooling, and more than 8,000 disadvantaged children have completed primary school and went on to study in lower secondary schools. As result, the promotion rate in primary school from grade1 to 6 has increased from 82% to 93%, and the dropout rate has declined sharply.

Flexible Schedule Allows Children to Attend School

Ratha, 15 years old, was born to a poor family in remote Preah Vihear province, in the north of Cambodia. There was no school, no transportation, and people survived in poor living conditions. The closest school was three hours away in Preah Vihear town, over fifty kilometers of a bad road. Most children, including Ratha, did not have time available to go to school because they were busy in helping their parents in the rice fields.

In 2002, Save the Children Norway started an education project in Preah Vihear province. We built one small wooden school with three rooms for Ratha, and more than a hundred other children, to study. Save the Children Norway's staff works actively with the Provincial Education Office to encourage all villagers to send their children to school.

Now, her dream to go to school has come true. Ratha is working very hard both at school, studying grade 5, and at home, and said, "I am very happy that I have time to study, and to help my family".

One problem for the community was that the children must help their parents in the rice fields during planting and harvest seasons. This meant that students sometimes had to repeat classes they missed, and Save the Children Norway suggested to the MoEYS and school administrators to offer a flexible schedule so children could both help their families in the fields, and attend classes.

Save the Children Norway encouraged the Darn Primary school to form a study group, where students could work with each other to support their learning. Ratha, an outstanding student, became the leader. She enjoys helping other students after her class is finished, and if they don't understand a lesson, Ratha will ask the teacher the next day in class.

The study group formed the basis for a "Children's Council", giving students an opportunity to meet, discuss school issues, and learn to make agreements and plans on behalf of the student body, teaching leadership and negotiation skills vital for their futures.

In her future, Ratha wants to be a teacher. She said "being a teacher is a very hard job, but I really want to help children in my village. I want to see that they can work for a good salary like the people who live in town."

Developing Children's Confidence

Poor villagers in Pounlay village are raising their children to be healthier and more intelligent, using techniques that they learn from Save the Children Norway, and everyday materials around the house.

We implement an important program called "home based early childhood care and development" (HB-ECCD), in the Kampong Chhnang province. The HB-ECCD program educates parents and care givers how to care for, and stimulate the intellectual development of, children up to six years old, because few children have an opportunity to attend preschool. As a result of the program, children perform better when they attend primary school.

Minea, five year old girl, used to be silent and afraid of crowds. She did not talk and always played alone. She is the first daughter in the family with whom her mother practices HB-ECCD program, while her three sisters did not receive the same attention. Minea's mother, "Mom"(a common Cambodian first name), said "I am really happy to see the results of the program in my daughter."

Because the family now understands that it is important to stimulate the mental development of their children, but does not have extra money beyond their living expenses, Minea's mother uses what she has learned in HB-ECCD. She collects, with her daughter by her side, unused, available materials to make toys. "By using everyday materials, my daughter can become smarter," Mom said.

During her free time, Minea's mother teaches her how to divide colors, shapes, and sizes, while someday, she might ask Minea to sit next to her and help her to cut some vegetables, asking her why do they have to cut them, and what they might do with this one, or which shape or size should they cut that one.

Mothers have noticed that their children have become more confident and out-going since Save the Children Norway and its partners have come to the village with the HB-ECCD program. Minea is now very socially active, as her friends who have also gone through ECCD. She answers questions that people ask her, a difference from her earlier shyness, and can tell visitors how to stay clean or how to protect from diseases around the house. When she grows up, she wants to be a teacher, using her salary to buy food for her family.





Strengthening Education in Remote Areas

We are deep within the forest, an area of Cambodia where no other humanitarian organization operates. It is simply too hard to access the remote villages, which are hidden in the heart of the tropical forest. It has not been many years since the Khmer Rouge's violent and totalitarian rule controlled the Sre Ampou village. The guerillas terrorized the area for nearly 31 years, and during that time schooling was not allowed. School and education were forbidden, and there are very few adults in the area that can read, write, or do simple math.

Life in the forest village may look idyllic from the outside, but behind the friendly and smiling surface is a reality of sorrow and hard work. Many children suffer from diarrhea and fever, and some have died of malaria in the last few years. Raising food for the family is a constant challenge. "No one else is here, therefore Save the Children Norway is here", said Sarath, who leads Save the Children Norway's education program in Cambodia. The experienced former teacher reaches out to include those children that others give up on. "To me, school means everything for the life the children are going to live. Children in the forest have the same rights as any other children," he said.

Education as social and democratic issues

Some might argue that children in the forest have no need for school, and that it's damaging to introduce "civilization" to such an untouched society. Sarath argues against "protecting" indigenous peoples from education. "People in the forest are already in touch with society around them; when they sell their products, when they take their children to the doctor, or when they speak to the official government. If they don't have basic knowledge they often become victims of fraud, they don't know their rights, and they cannot take part in democratic decisions. Large corporations have recently become interested in the huge land areas which the indigenous population lives. How will the people here protect themselves and their culture if they are without knowledge?"

Lighting up the interest of students

Sarath loves to teach, and uses every opportunity to show children how to learn and think. Teaching the children mathematics, he sends them out to collect leaves and to measure each others' ears. Using simple tools, he explains the multiplication table. "The children need something they can use and relate to. There are no books written for these students; therefore we develop methods that are important to the children's everyday life. We cooperate with the village, with parents and

with the children themselves to assure teaching they have use for. And we succeed," said Sarath happily. "I enjoy school a lot!" beams Vannak, ten years old. He likes learning language best, but pays close attention to Sarath's math lesson using green leaves. "I look forward to it every day. Sometimes I have to work in farming, and can't go to school. That's sad!" Vannak doesn't dream of moving away from the forest and would like to be a farmer when he grows up, just like his father. But he wants to be educated.

Too old to start

Ra, 19, Vannak's elder sister said she was fourteen years old when the school arrived in the village, and too old to start. "If I don't learn to read, write and calculate, I will not understand the world around me. I cannot understand what is written, and cannot receive written messages. Nor do I know enough about hygiene, diseases and what we eat. Life without knowledge is hard," the teenager concludes, while her friends nod.

Save the Children Norway is planning to start intensive education to the teenagers who were too old to start school when it arrived in the village in 2005. "They are very motivated, and it should happen quickly", said Sarath happily.

Village's pride

In the neighboring village of Veal Bampung, we have built a school and educated leaders in cooperation with the villagers and local government. The community residents contributed materials and hard work to the construction of the school. It is not just a school that is being built, but a symbol of their confidence and identity. The young headmaster proudly shows the new school, which now has three classrooms. "The parents leave their children to the teachers, and ask us to make them good, wise and knowledgeable people", tells headmaster Chhin Botra. He leaves no doubt that he takes the responsibility seriously.

"Now I can die"

Long Savorn, a parent representative, said, "We are not afraid that the children will leave the village when they are educated. The pupils are active in shaping our school. They learn and enjo themselves. We are very grateful to Save the Children Norway for all their help and support", he said. "One of the first things the teachers taught the pupils is the right not to be beaten, not at school and not at home." Long Savorn smiled. "I have not been able to attend school myself. Now our children have a school, and I can die,"







Protecting Children From Social Dangers

One of Cambodia's most serious social issues is the need to protect children, vulnerable to domestic violence, and sexual and work exploitation.

Save the Children Norway, with our partners, works together in prevention programs at the community level. We raise awareness among community residents and commune council members of the concept of children's rights and the laws affecting them. We build the capacity of existing resources, such as commune council members, police, primary school and secondary school, head teachers, chiefs of commune health clinics, and village chiefs to recognize and identify the problems and the needs of children. We have worked to establish village safety net programs (VSNP) in 83 communes by organizing awareness building events and trainings among government officials involved with children's issues, from the village up to the provincial level. Defining actions to be taken by both adults and children in protecting children in their community is important to give them the tools to appropriately intervene into situations dangerous to children.

We teach children how to protect themselves from violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, with rape prevention tactics and how to recognize manipulations of criminals and predators. Many children involved in the VSNP volunteer to participate in the "Commune Child / Youth Network" to recognize social problems such as violence and drug use, and to report them to responsible adults. Overall, more than 5,400 children at high risk and children exposed to violence and sexual abuse or economic exploitation benefited under Save the Children Norway's Child Protection program. We have helped 690 children at high risk and children exposed to violence and sexual abuse and exploitation to access to quality education. Among of them, 276 children received life skills and vocational training. We also have referred 185 children to return to their families after a crisis, 59 children to other non-governmental organization for other services and helped 126 children to earn livelihood from business. We also provided basic livelihood and survival support to 730 children at high risk, and children exposed to violence, sexual abuse, and exploitation by mobilizing local resources.

From Gang Member to Businessman

Old Life

Socheat, 17, was born to a poor family in Battambang province. Disabled in a childhood illness from polio, friends and neighbors mocked him. In school, he skipped class, did not listen to his teacher, did not study, and finally dropped out. He hung out with his friends and fought with other young men. He says now, "At first, I did not want to be like that (fighting), but I hated people mocking my disability and poor family, so I decided to join a group of gangsters." He became the leader of the group because of his ferocity. The idle time and conflict led to him stealing from the community.

Belonging to a gang was very important to Socheat. He felt protected by his group, and respected by others. "When someone looked straight at me, my brothers will fight and knock them out." He enjoyed hanging out all night with his friends, saying, "I did not care about the future. I only enjoyed fighting with others". Socheat was seldom alone, always with his gang friends, choking off healthier relationships and activities.

New Life

Save the Children Norway's partner, Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC), works in cooperation with local authorities to help children in conflict with the law in Battambang province. We provide young people with legal representation advise them about their legal rights as a child and teach them to understand criminal law. Social workers work closely with children and youth, discussing problems, finding solutions together, and giving long term individual attention using vocational training, counseling.

Socheat is one of more than two hundred children in Battambang that we help. We contacted Socheat repeatedly to offer help in finding constructive opportunities, and to offer counseling, but he steadfastly refused. But after six months of building a relationship, he changed his mind and decided to accept assistance from us. "I did not want to participate at first. I thought they are not one of my relatives, or a neighbor, but they have still been very kind." Later on, Socheat became more open in sharing his problems with us.

Later, LAC sponsored Socheat to learn motor bike repair training near his home. He started a shop with equipment provided by LAC and his parents. He persuaded some of his friends to listen to what LAC and local authority presentation, and as a result, they have joined motor bike repairing classes just as Socheat did. He is independent now. His parents moved away to a distant town, but LAC's staff and local authorities still visit him at least once time a month. Socheat hopes to expand his business, and give jobs to other youth in trouble.





Village Safety Net Program Reduces Violence in Families

Pao, 15, lives with her large family on the edge of poverty in Cambodia's rural Kampong Thom province. Earning a few US dollars per day does not support the nine members in her family, and Pao's parents admit to a lot of loud conflict, and physical violence.

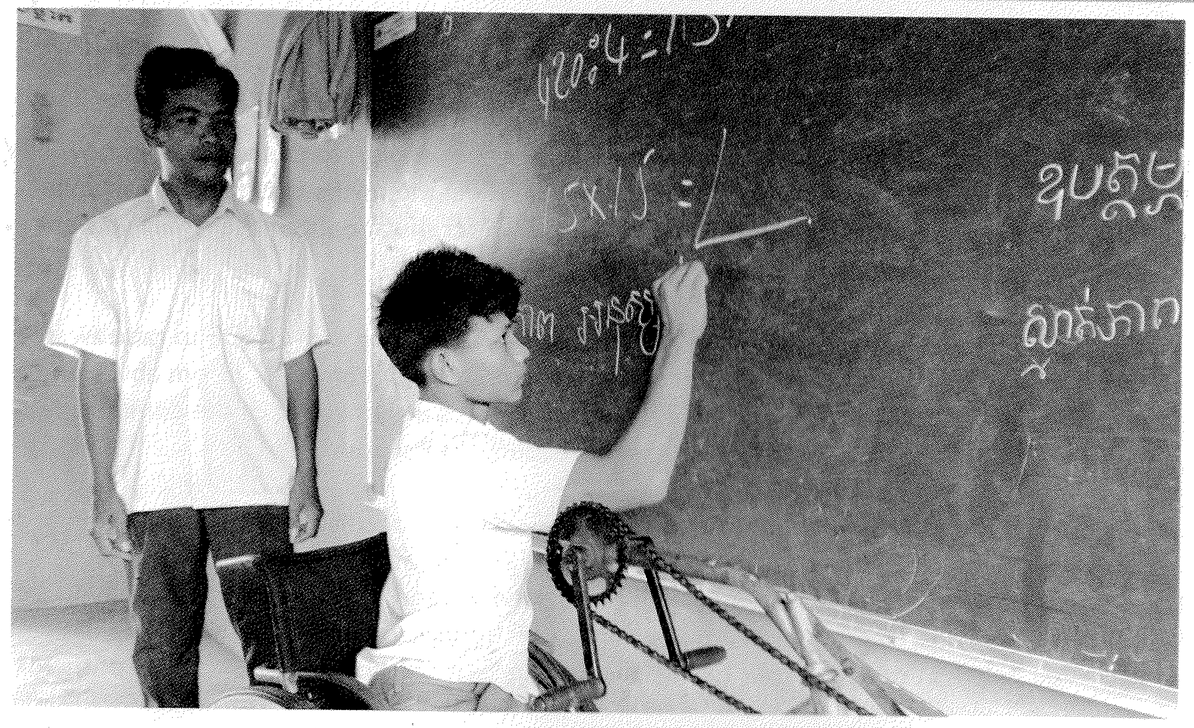
"I used to be so upset to see my mum and dad fight. When they fought, I tried to get between them. I could get hurt when it was at its worst." Pao said. A victim herself, she ended up in a hospital at ten years old, her father having beaten her with a wooden stick. Pao was often absent from school.

Parents raising children today grew up under the Pol Pot regime, and were victims or witnesses of continuous violence and assaults. Now responsible for raising their own children, they do not understand how emotionally damaging violence is within a family.

However, children must be, and feel, safe, both in their families and at school, Khat Ty Ekvisoth, Protection Program Manager of Save the Children Norway said. Village Safety Net Program (VSNP) is a part of the Save the Children Norway programs to protect people in their community from violence, sexual assaults, and exploitation. After one year introducing to Kampong Svay district, there has been a noticeable improvement, Ekvisoth said. If there is violence in the home, the police or village chief will go to their house to encourage them to change their behavior and avoid violence.

Through the VSNP, Pao has learned how harmful violence is for children, both physically and mentally. She is one of ten students at Nipech primary school actively working for reducing violence, sexual assaults and exploitation in her community. "I have told my parents this at home, and it works!" Pao said. As a result of Pao's involvement with the VSNP, her family lives in a more peaceful atmosphere with less alcohol, anger, and violence.

Pao thinks it is important to work both for the individual and society, saying, "I am much more optimistic today than I was just six months ago, have a better relationship with my parents, and am doing better in school." she adds, "The way to stop violence is to collaborate with grown-ups. Children need good adults; we cannot do this alone."





Working to Fulfill the Rights of Children with Disabilities to Social Inclusion

Children with disabilities face barriers within their homes, in their communities, and in their futures. Many can count on Save the Children Norway to work with existing local services to coordinate holistic support for children with disabilities and their families, presenting multiple resources to enrich their lives and their futures.

Save the Children Norway and its partners have increased community awareness regarding the needs and special problems for more than 2,400 community residents, including parents, caregivers, and commune committee members responsible for women and children. We train families, school staff, and communities to monitor and help children with disabilities in education and in their daily lives. From them, we select key resource people to provide additional services.

Save the Children Norway's program pays particular attention to young couples to build their knowledge on how to prevent disabilities, including pre-natal care to reduce avoidable birth defects.

Overall, more than 1,900 children with disabilities have benefited from Save the Children Norway's program to help children with disabilities. We helped more than 1,300 children with disabilities to access to program services, including health care, rehabilitative surgery, physiotherapy, and access to assistance devices. More than one thousand children with disabilities have gained access to formal education for the first time.

For their families and their futures, we also provide life skills, teaching basic agriculture to 282 children with disabilities, as well as counseling services. Entering adulthood and self-sufficiency, fifty seven children with disabilities have received financial credit to develop businesses to support themselves in dignity.

Working to Fulfill Children's Right to be Protected From HIV and AIDS

Orphan and vulnerable children living with, or affected by, HIV and AIDS are particularly vulnerable to ignorance, poverty, and discrimination. Save the Children Norway helps this group with several approaches.

Five hundred fifty orphans, and vulnerable children, have reliable access to health care through five specialized centers in commune and district health clinics. Where the individual need is great, some children receive home based care.

Nearly 300 children received school materials and uniforms from Save the Children Norway and its partners, giving them access to schooling. Most have been promoted to upper grades, demonstrating their success, once given a chance to attend school.

Twenty orphans, and families of vulnerable children, have achieved a stable income through a vocational training, credit, and starting a small business provided by Save the Children Norway.

We work hard to raise awareness about how to prevent HIV and AIDS transmission, give care, and reduce discrimination. Lowering the barriers to children from neighbors and communities allows them more opportunities and connections to achieve their potential. Save the Children Norway, together with its NGO partners, in close cooperation with the government, have educated 7,799 orphans and vulnerable children about lowering their risk to HIV during the last three years.

Overcoming Discrimination Against HIV and AIDS

Chanthy, aged 8, lost both his parents and his aunt and uncle to AIDS. Infected with HIV himself, he went to live with his grandmother, but fear in her village of the HIV disease meant that the family was avoided by their neighbors, and could not sell their products to support their needs. Chanthy became severely underweight and malnourished. "I did not have something to eat and had no medical treatment," he said. "I had heart burn, did not sleep well, and was discriminated against by my neighbors."

Life looked bleak, until they were introduced to Save the Children Norway's partner, Minority Organization Development of Economy (MODE). People from MODE helped Chanthy to receive the life-saving antiretroviral medications he needs. They explained how exercise and healthy diet could help him to stay well. They went into village to explain to their neighbors how HIV and AIDS is spread, to dispel the myths that caused fear unnecessarily, and reduce the discrimination that the family was encountering.

Save the Children Norway is working with MODE to raise awareness of orphans & vulnerable children (OVC) from abuse and discrimination in order to change mindset of the community and mobilize the resources to support OVC.

Now Chanthy is able to lead a normal, active life, regularly attending grade two in his school with new friends in his community. MODE provided vocational training for his family to grow mushrooms, which their grandmother sells, giving the family a reliable income and a more hopeful future for all of them.





Follow Up Progress in the Welfare of Children

For eighteen years, the Royal Government, working with the United Nations Committee on Children's Rights, has sought to fulfill the rights of all children in Cambodia. Two mechanisms have been established to monitor and report progress of children's situation for the Committee.

- Save the Children Norway performs an integral facilitating role in the NGO mechanism--a network to collect, compile, and report statistical data about children from the grass roots to national levels.
- Save the Children Norway participates with the government in writing an official statement regarding the progress of the rights of children in Cambodia.

Implementing Children's Rights in the Legal System

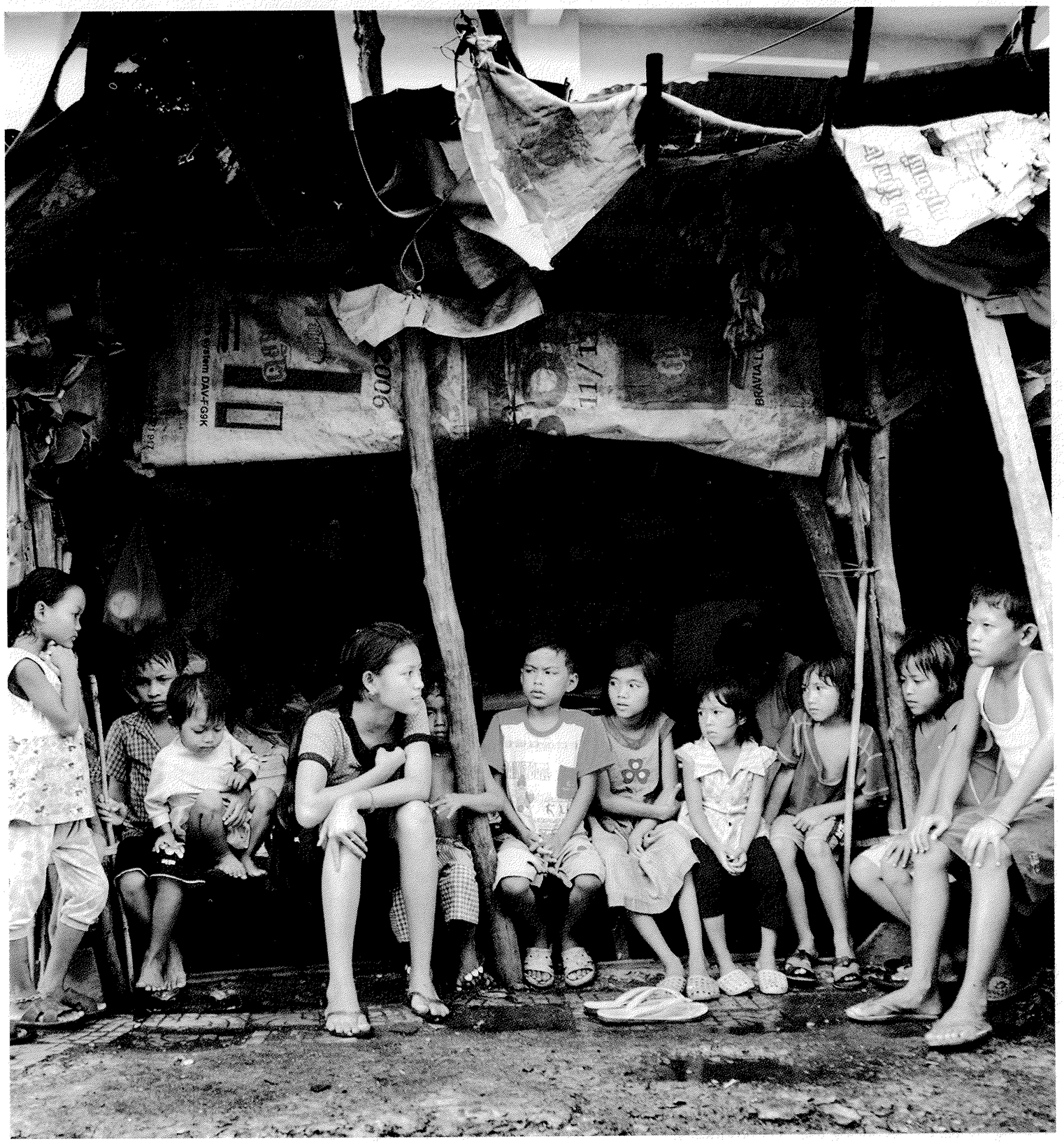
Together with our partners, we have worked behind the scenes to change a harmful law that, meant, in one case, two children who entered a neighbor's property and stole a single chicken could face five to ten years in prison--the same as an adult committing a serious robbery.

Local authorities are becoming more aware of their duty to protect children in their communities. Judicial police can now divert children who commit minor crimes, out of the formal justice system into alternative programs, avoiding criminalizing offenders, and giving them a chance to put their minor misdemeanors behind them. More than 150 cases of children in conflict with the law, and victims, have been dealt with, including investigations and court judgments. Forty of them were diverted out of the formal legal system; many went back to school and vocational training centers, re-entering their communities.

Raising Awareness of the Rights of Children

Save the Children Norway and partners have raised awareness of the rights of children among the general public, speaking to communities, professional groups, and local authorities.

According to an external assessment, more people than ever before in Cambodian culture and society know of, and accept the idea of, the rights of children, a major step towards achieving their rightful place.



A Young Leader in Children's Rights

The Banteay Sleuk slum, inside Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh, presents children with the most difficult environment imaginable to grow up in. Most children here in the slum have to work from very young age, first with their parents, for instance, collecting garbage. Children in this area are often sick, they have pinworms in their stomachs, diarrhea and fever, and suffer from nutritional deficits because of bad diets with little nourishment. Poverty and despair lead to much drug use, and violence against children.

Save the Children Norway began working in the slum seven years ago with its partner organization Cambodian Children Against Starvation and Violence Association (CCASVA). A focus for their activities was supporting education among the families living in the area, not an easy job considering the low priority placed on school compared with the demands of finding food for each day. Some parents still try to keep their children away, because they would rather have them work for the family's daily survival. After we started working in the slum, almost no children attended school; now, more than ninety percent of the children living in the slum receive some education.

> "The children in the slums do not in any way have their rights realized, especially when it comes to sharing their own opinions" Navy said

Navy, fifteen years old, has worked for three years as a child's representative, in the slums of Phnom Penh, since attending a workshop three years ago that got her interested in children's rights. She was elected by Save the Children Norway's partner organization CCASVA, which also arranged the workshop three years ago, as children representative in the slum. Navy knows a lot compared with those around her, and the children in the slums look up to her. "What I learned about children's rights was good! The children in the slums do not in any way have their rights realized,

especially when it comes to sharing their own opinions," Navy said. "Therefore it is important that children learn to disagree with their parents, even if it is not in line with our culture."

Now Navy has finished grade nine in public school, a valuable achievement in an environment that sees few girls complete schooling. Our social workers still provides counseling and support to the family, and other Organization will support her studies until she finishes university.

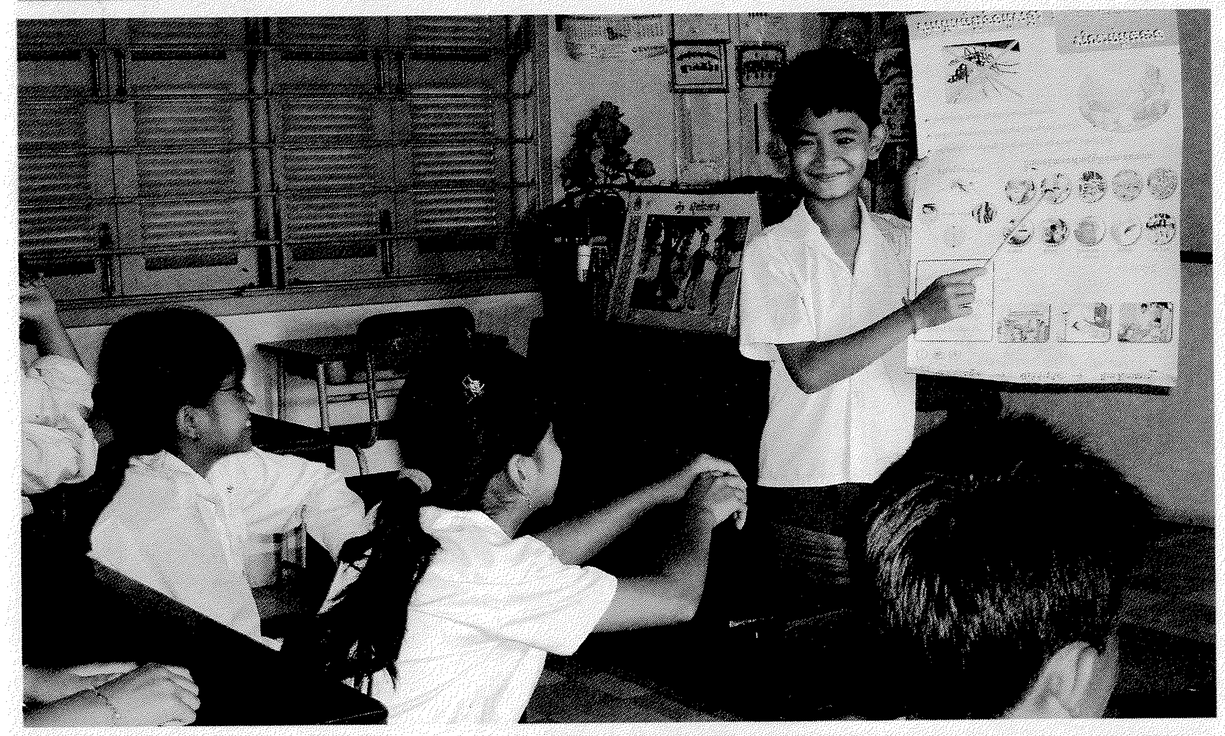
What do the grown-ups say about your work? "Some support me, others don't. Those who are against me are against the idea that children are to have rights at all. But it is good both for children and adults that children receive their rights. I think this will change for the better in the future," smiled Navy.

School is the most important issue for children, Navy concluded. She promotes schooling for all children, and talks to the families that will not allow their children to go to school. She provides children with reasons they can use when they talk to their parents, and helps them with the practical steps when entering school. "I have got many children into school", Navy smiles, and added: "Knowledge is important. If you have knowledge you can think about what you want and how to find a good way through life. Without education you only get tough, poorly paid jobs."

"And you, what do you dream of?" the interviewer asks. Navy fades away for a second. She dreams of becoming a doctor, just like many other children from the slums. She wants to help her friends in the slum when they get sick. But she is realistic, and knows the chances of realizing her dreams are very small. It won't be long before she'll have to take care of her family since they depend on her.

Social worker Phiroun looks over at her young co-worker and smiles, "She cares about others and is willing to do something for them. She is brave, and dares to speak up when others choose to stay quiet. We need more girls and boys like Navy.







Empowering Children

While building the awareness and capacity of adults to fight for children's rights, Save the Children Norway develops the potential of children to claim their rights as well.

We encourage and support children, both attending schools and not enrolled in school, to speak up appropriately to adults and local authorities to raise their concerns, share their opinions, and suggest ideas to improve their village. They become important monitors in their community for activity that harms children, and share information about violence, sexual abuse and exploitation that they have learned with their friends and other children in the village.

In schools, Save the Children Norway encourages children to stay in school and to do well. Students are encouraged to take on responsibility for the classroom and school environment, participate in child learning clubs to help each other, and to conduct school and community meetings to discuss, shape, and voice their opinions. They make presentations to the public about their achievements and understanding of support needed for vulnerable children, and what further is needed for them.

Outside of regular school classes, Save the Children Norway's student partners participate in collecting data to identify children who had not enrolled in schools and campaigns to help them attend school. They are encouraged and given support to organize public events at the district and provincial level, such as children's fairs and congresses.

Save the Children Norway supports groups led by children to actively participate in raising public awareness on child rights and influencing policy makers. These young people raise public awareness on children's rigths through newspapers written and produced by children, and the use of radio programs. We also provide them training on leadership, management, fund raising, and advocacy for children's rights, including monitoring the implementation of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, contributing ideas and comments to the government, and submitting a supplementary report to the UN.

A New Career

Chon Chory, 16, never dreamed of being a reporter. Coming from a poor family, living in a rural province, Chory did not know what the "news" was.

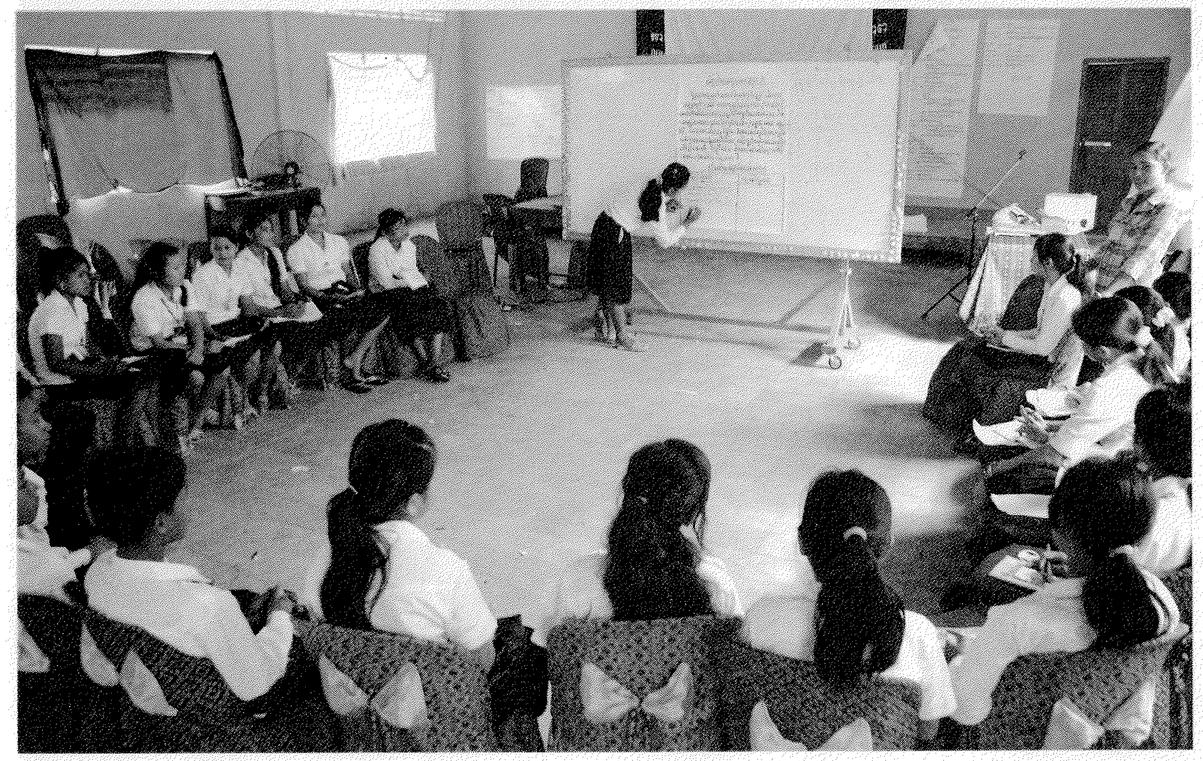
She's now a reporter for the "My News" newspaper for the Children's Committee, sponsored by Save the Children Norway. Chory likes her job a lot, finding training, support, and hope from her work on the Committee. Chory receives vocational training on writing stories for the news, learning to do interviews, and training in photography. With an eagerness to learn, Chory works very hard, observing others, and alert to what should she shouldn't do.

Save the Children Norway has created the conditions for this change in Chory's life, and that of many other Cambodian teenagers, with its cooperation in the Children's Committee Organization, to build the capacity of this child- and youth-led group. Save the Children Norway provides technical training in media for participants, and guidance to work effectively in society.

Chory is part of a team, now, saying, "My team not only supports me, but teaches me, and encourages me to study hard. I learn a lot; experience, knowledge, and the encouragement to do better in my life." Living with her sister in Phnom Penh, Chory gets a lot of praise from her family about her relationship with Save the Children Norway, and her opportunity to learn a career. Importantly, she continues her schooling, now studying in grade 10 at Buoeng Tra Bek high school.

"Working with the Children's Committee, I now clearly know what I want to be in the future," Chory said. Chory wants to be a reporter because she can educate and inform others; "I like working with children, and I would to teach them about their rights through "My News","she says with a confident smile.







Strengthening Community to Fulfill Children's Rights

To fulfill the rights all children, Save the Children Norway recognizes that local resources are the single most important tool to create sustainable progress in Cambodia in improving lives, and futures.

Save the Children Norway builds the capacity of local community bodies, such as school support committees and commune committees responsible for women and children, with trainings, publications, and counseling. To improve their education and to protect children from violence, sexual abuse and exploitation in their communities, Save the Children Norway provides expertise, training, and support to parents, teachers, head teachers, village leaders, police, and members of the local commune council. Graduates of Save the Children Norway's programs have clearer ideas about their work and responsibilities, and see themselves as part of a larger system to work together to identify, and solve, problems affecting children in access to education, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation.

Educational practitioners working in the field have increasingly become important resources in consultation designing and developing improved teaching materials and educational guidelines on the national level. Using their experience and activities, they have received additional funding for on-going projects from other donors, and recognition from government and civil society.

We also work in a larger scope to build the capacity of government and civil society organizations. Supporting the work needed to help individual children, there must be technical skills in program management, budgeting and finance, coordination, reporting to donors, fund raising, meetings, consultations, workshops, and training of their own staffs. As result of Save the Children Norway's consistent encouragement and support, local partners demonstrate ownership of results, and not reliance on external technical assistance.

A Determined Lady

Many children in Kampong Thom province, 168 kilometers northeast of Phnom Penh along Highway 6, live in families facing problems of alcoholism, gambling, and violence. These conditions lead to an environment of secondary issues, including domestic violence, poor living conditions, health problems, sexual abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking.

Tep Sopheap, a lady 37 years of age, has been a project manager for Save the Children Norway's partner for five years. Currently helping around one thousand children in all their programs, she has enabled many children to improve their difficult situations through education and social services.

Sopheap has dedicated herself to identifying and resolving the issues underlying each child's situation. "When they have a problem, I am the first person who they want to meet and talk to, even at night," she said. "I am happy because they trust me," she continued. "I succeed in helping around thirty children every year from domestic violence, rape, and being out of school, who now have better living conditions", said Sopheap. In order to build trust with children, she gets to know them and their problems, acting like a loving sister or aunt. Then, she works together with the children as partners in solving their problems.

Threating with death by a brothel's owner

She regularly meets and persuades local authorities to intervene in the situations where domestic violence, gambling, or rapes are tearing families apart. She persuades parents to allow their children to attend school. She urged an owner of a shop broadcasting sexual videos to stop, and encouraged the public to get involved. She was threatened with death by a brothel's owner, when she cared for girls released from brothels in 2002 by the Ministry of Social and Veterans' Affairs. "At the time, I read the law on human trafficking to them, and they became afraid and told me that they were sorry", said Sopheap.

Sopheap is a supportive leader and has earned the trust of partners and the local authorities. According to Ms. Khat Ty Ekvisoth, Child Protection program Manager of Save the Children Norway, "Sopheap's background is that of being a high school teacher. She provides on the job training to her subordinates, and delegates a





task that fits the ability of her subordinate with firm follow up. She is very able in coordinating and facilitating people in working in teams." Visoth went on: "In spite of being a lady, she goes everywhere on her motorcycle with her subordinate, sometime with only a single representative from the local authorities to meet people in the village." Visoth, continued that Sopheap's gift to others is her generosity. "She collects materials, and sometimes money from her own friends and relatives, to support vulnerable children in the project areas."

Increasing knowledge to understand new trends

Save the Children Norway builds her skills through constant training in management, leadership, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, reporting, and English. In addition, they recommend her organization to other donors. Sopheap has been one of the staff of Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights for ten years, one of Save the Children Norway artners that work to protect children from violence and sex abuse. The problems of children change from year to year, so Sopheap wants to increase her knowledge and capacity to understand new trends. "I want to improve my English because all documents relating to children's issues are written in English", she said.

Ambition to help all children

Spending seventy percent of her time in the field, and the rest in Phnom Penh for reporting, management issues and other administration works, "I never take annual leave", she says. Wisdom from her experience, and good communication skills, make Sopheap's work successful. "I have to study people and culture in the village. If they eat salt, I have to eat it, too. I need to be flexible with others," she said. Sopheap is not satisfied with her work because she can not help all the children who need help to live in peace, happiness, have good jobs, and not suffer violent treatment from their parents. "In order to help all children, I want to share my knowledge and experiences to others", she said. Sopheap loves children since her own childhood. "My mother was angry with me because I spent time looking after those children. I never gave up, as I believe that doing good receives good", she said.





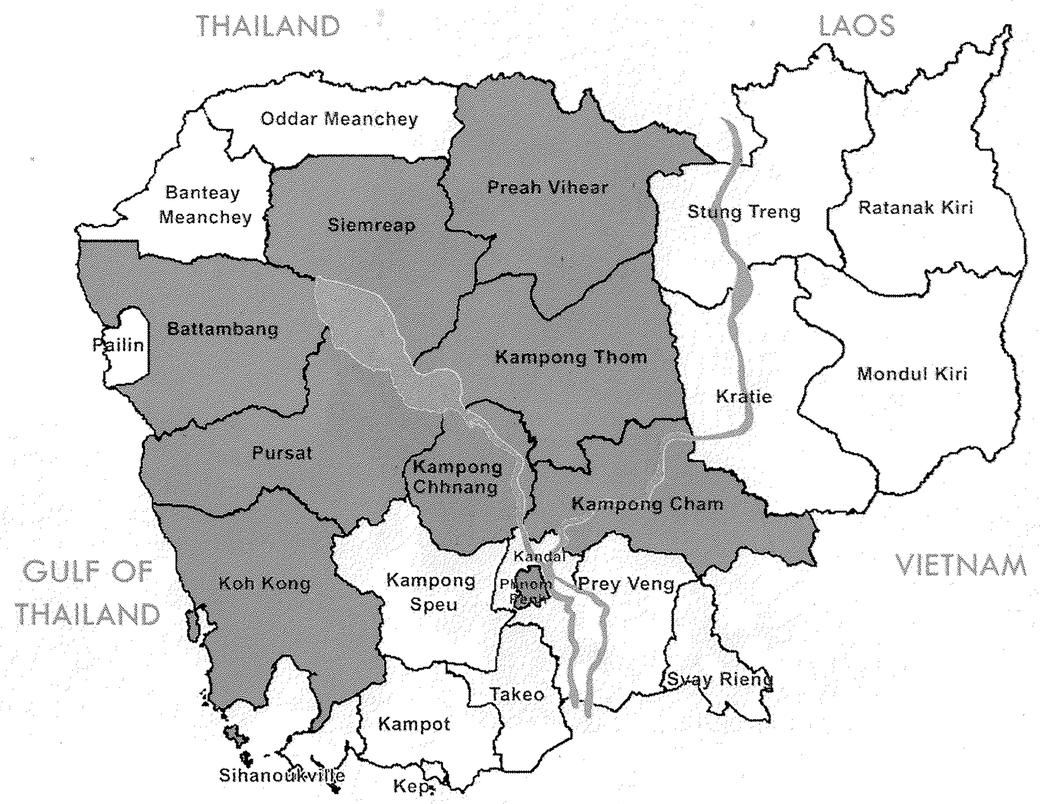
Fast Recovery From Disaster

Towards the end of 2009, the involvement of Save the Children Norway in relief work related to the Ketsana disaster marked an organizational shift towards a better balance of emergency work and long term effort.

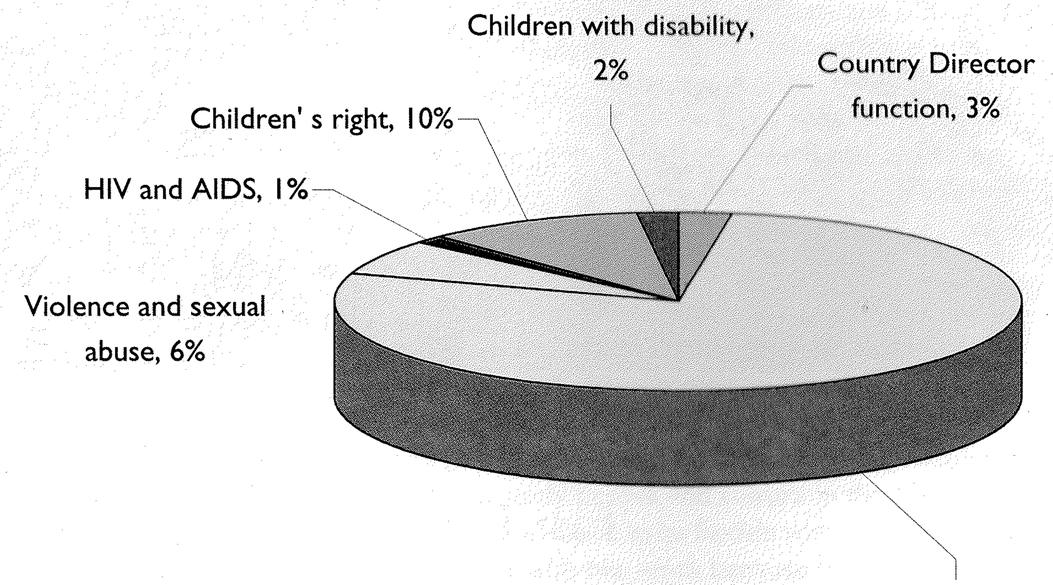
Emergency programs react immediately to help children, and their families, affected by hazards and disasters by providing non-food items, and seeds to rebuild livelihoods. To ensure that children go back to school after the disaster, repairing and rehabilitation of schools affected are major priorities. Schools require repairs of walls, roofs, floors, wells, and sanitation to be usable for education, provided by Save the Children Norway.

Save the Children Norway uses funds from many donors, including the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Commission Humanitarian Office, to help children and families affected by Ketsana.

Our Working Areas



Expenditure 2006-2009



Partners

. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS)
. Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sport of Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Siem Reap, Koh Kong and Preah Vihear. (POEs)
. Department of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (DOSVY)
. NGO Committee on the Rights of the Child (NGOCRC)
. Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC)
. Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights (CCPCR)
. Operation Enfants du Cambodge (OEC)
. Minority Organization Development of Economic (MODE)

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