FLD in Action

Review 2011

Message from Executive Director

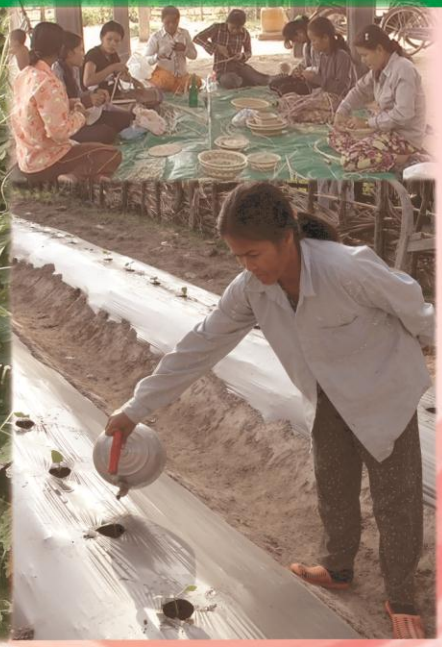
Significant progress has been made in increasing the standards of all FLD's operations and projects. This creates an environment at a community level that allows local achievements to take root and become sustainable. A good example is our involvement in establishing and capacity building 87 village savings and loan groups in Prey Veng and Svay Rieng in partnership with CARE. The groups were handed over to those communities in early 2011.

FLD's strategy is to work with international and local partners to create a beneficial synergy both during implementation and within the community. In 2011 new projects were added through our partners the FINTRAC/HARVEST programme and local NGO, KHANA, in a food security, nutrition, and micro finance project.

This expands FLD's services to Pursat, Battambang, and to a lesser extent, Pailin and Kompong Cham Provinces. FLD is now very active in 9 provinces and less so in another two (Pailin and Kompong Cham): in all, over 400 villages and 20,000 households.

All these positive moves, and the projects outlined in this review, would not be possible without our partners and donors. Their support, understanding and advice means that we can give Cambodia's disadvantaged farmers and their families real support.

Sok Somith
Executive Director



FLD Staffs

FLD is managed by a highly qualified team of 10 managers who constitute the Management Committee. During the year, staff numbers rose to 104 (41 per cent of whom are female). The members of the various project and programme teams reviewed their achievements in December and set themselves new guidelines and milestones for 2012. A precise strategy has been laid out to emphasize FLD's Livelihood Development Program in five key areas: agriculture techniques, agriculture cooperatives, natural resources management, local good governance, and vocational skills training. At the same time, FLD will promote its social enterprise oriented programmes, KFP, SKIL, and Tunkaksekor, to become fully independent operations.

SKIL Program

SKIL (Support, Knowledge & Inspiration for Life)

SKIL aims to improve the quality of life in agricultural communities with commercial training services for poor farmers and rural business people to respond to market demands and promote employability. This includes marginalised young women.

SKIL has moved to a separate office building from FLD. This is to gain greater access to client information; build stronger ties with existing clients, and develop new training services to meet growing market demand. In 2011, SKIL provided agricultural training – mainly pig rearing and chicken raising techniques – to **1,943** trainees (1,152 female) and small business management to **1,714** trainees (1,254 female) throughout Cambodia. These services generated total revenue of **US$133,129** to cover annual costs. Part of this was invested in upgrading its facilities: computers, printer, and work stations to improve working conditions and productivity.

Promotional materials were developed and distributed to create and develop new markets in Phnom Penh and rural Cambodia, with 233 NGOs emailed, and another 37 visited, to promote SKIL's services. Around 2,100 students had read SKIL's promotional leaflet. **1,227** farmers (677 female) in FLD's target provinces bought membership to access farmer information services, earning US$312.25. In addition, 36 prospective institutional clients and 11 universities in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Koh Kong were introduced to SKIL's services.

SKIL also launched a pig insurance scheme for farmers in Kompong Speu and Siem Reap. To encourage membership, seven pig insurance agents were recruited in Kompong Speu and three in Siem Reap.

Tunkaksekor Program

Promotes job creation in rural communities by providing better access to micro-finance services that secure and sustain incomes for a better living by:

(I) Promoting savings and lending activities in rural communities
(ii) building the micro financial capacity of community VSLA's
(iii) affordable, convenient and accessible micro loans to farmers.

The Tunkaksekor program has been implemented in **86** villages in eight provinces. The Village Savings and Loan Group (VSLG) concept has worked well, strengthening the capacity of **106** groups of **2,360** members (1,800 female). Of them, 741(684 female) borrowed from the program. All members were given regular advice about using loans to invest in income earning activities.

Program staff were trained in small business management and financial education to mentor group members. Credit software was developed and installed in four branch offices, including Phnom Penh, for up-to-date loan progress. Similarly, software for VSLGs has been developed for use in 2012. The program improved and printed a thousand savings passbooks for commercial distribution to members. This year the program reached breakeven point at **60.36%** and by expanding outreach support services this is expected to be 100% by September 2012.

Khmer Farmer Products (KFP) Program

KFP is a social enterprise that aims to become a profitable business to sustain livelihoods in FLD's targeted communities. It trades on behalf of farmers and handicraft producer groups and food processors – all originally trained by FLD – who receive KFP assistance that:

I. increases the quality of products made by rural producer groups
ii. provides collective marketing support to those groups
iii. places and promotes products in appropriate markets and outlets.

To meet new challenges, KFP re-emphasized its social enterprise concept both to staff and in its 2012-2014 strategic planning. **3,500** promotional leaflets were printed and distributed to aid market development. KFP also used appropriate media, commercial TV and radio, and participated in local and international trade fairs to promote farmers' products, and created its own website.

KFP's total 2011 revenue of US **$22,896** met 83% of its operating costs, excluding management and shop rental. Management and shop rental costs have been subsidized by the Young Women Entrepreneur Development project. KFP plans to cover all its operating costs, including shop rental, by February 2013.

Livelihood Development Program

So that poor rural households (farmers, women and children) can consistently secure their family's income and food supply. The focus is on:

(i) food security initiatives
(ii) income generating activities
(iii) raising farmers' 'voice' to gain better support services for farming techniques and product marketing
(iv) climate change adaptation to sustain livelihood activities.

Young Women Entrepreneur Development (YWED) Project

In 2011 the YWED project worked in 127 villages of six provinces: Kampong Speu, Kandal, Preah Vihear, Siem Reap, Battambang and Oddar Meanchey. Up to 28 February 2012 its main achievements included:

- 25 existing young women business groups were strengthened in business management;
- 25 new business groups formed by 297 young women;
- 333 young women trained in five skills – chicken raising, pig raising, fish culture, traditional dressmaking, and fashion dressmaking;
- 75 business group representatives trained in practical business management;

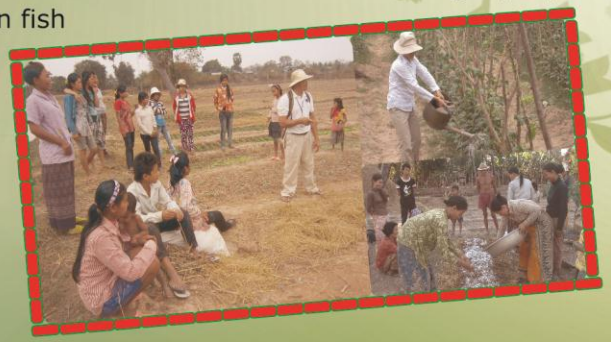
- 6 poor young women received scholarships for associate degree study at recognized Cambodian institutions;
- 25 new commune-based shops were established to display and sell products made by YWED-trained young women;
- As in previous years, financial and technical support was provided to KFP to develop markets for products made by YWED graduates; and
- 12 local exposure visits were organized for 135 selected young women trainees to learn from successful local businesses.

SAFPHAM Project

The Sustainable Action to Fight Poverty, Hunger and Malnutrition project (SAPHAM) is an EU funded project – March 2010, ending February 2014. Its focus is on 71 villages in Preah Vihear and Oddar Meanchey. SAPHAM's 2011 achievements included a wide range of technical training courses:

- 7 fish culture courses for 283 farmers;
- 4 on mushroom growing – 162 farmers;
- 5 on vegetable production – 133 farmers;
- 10 system of rice intensification (SRI) – 481farmers;
- 10 chicken raising – 869 farmers;
- 6 pig raising – 260 farmers;
- 6 integrated pest management (IPM) courses – 200 farmers;
- 4 post-harvest management courses – 161 farmers;
- 1 goat raising course conducted for 6 youths;
- 2 youth groups formed by 28 young people.

- All the above trainee farmers have applied their skills,
- Three fish hatcheries were built and renovated after eight people received training in fish reproduction and culture.
- Refresher courses for 42 people to become Village Animal Health Workers.
- Five sites have been assessed for renovation and construction of small scale irrigation systems.



. In cooperation with provincial health departments, district health operational staff, and relevant NGOs, 12 ante-natal care training courses were provided. Subjects included: use of vitamin A, good nutrition, the role and responsibility of VHSGs, malaria, ante- and post-natal care, identifying dangerous signs before and after delivery, breast feeding and diet. These courses involved 226 direct beneficiaries (162 female).

Young Women in Business(YWIB) Project

The three-year Young Women in Business (YWIB) project, funded by the EU, began its activities in Koh Kong Province in February 2011, in partnership with CARE Cambodia. The project's first year ended on 31 January 2012 and produced remarkable results:

- 123 Community monitoring and support groups (CMS) were created. 89 CMS groups were made fully aware of the project, understood the beneficiary selection criteria, and learned how to monitor training quality;

- 748 young women were trained in four different skills: pig and chicken raising, and dried shrimp and fruit (banana chip) processing;
- 36 young women's Self Help Groups (SHG) were formed in 35 villages;
- Leaders from 31 SHGs were trained in three key topics: operation and leadership (61); business management (62); financial management (62);

- Collective marketing activities were developed for two 2 SHGs – dried shrimp and banana chip products; and
- 50,000 banana chip packages were developed and printed.
- An exposure visit was organized for 29 SHG leaders to learn about savings and loans, and community business shops in Tram Kak, TaKeo Province.

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Kuoy Entrepreneur Development Project

The second phase of this ILO funded project ran between April and September 2011. Extending the project in the same Preah Vihear target villages strengthened the vocational and business management skills of the 90 entrepreneur trainees from the first phase. In addition, six groups established their own commune-based shops, and market linkage to their products was developed.

Farmer Opportunity Project

The two-year project runs from November 2010 to Oct 2012 and works with 27,139 households in 242 villages in Kampong Speu, Preah Vihear, Udar Meanchey, Siem Reap, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng. All the project's components are implemented in Kompong Speu and Preah Vihear: strengthening their Village Market Networks; organizing Commune Forums; improving access to Farmer Information Services. The latter has been implemented in all six provinces. By the end of 2011 the full project had achieved:

Strengthening Village Market Network capacity:

- Four meetings to select four main agricultural products in Preah Vihear and Kompong Speu – attended by 104 farmers (36 female);
- Five exposure visits organized for 98 farmers (28 female) to learn from local Micro Finance Institutions;
- Seven training courses for 876 farmers (430 female) on land law, forestry law, traffic law, commune administration law, domestic violence law; and
- Seven forums attended by 251 farmers (126 female) on consumer issues: price and services of agricultural products – to gain better returns for farmers when selling their produce.

Commune Forums:

- 89 forums at commune levels were organized and attended by 4,690 farmers (2,578 female); and
- 6 field meetings were held, attended by 177 local government officials and farmers (81 female), as a follow-up on a series of organized forums to address real situation and problems raised by farmers.

Farmer Information Services:

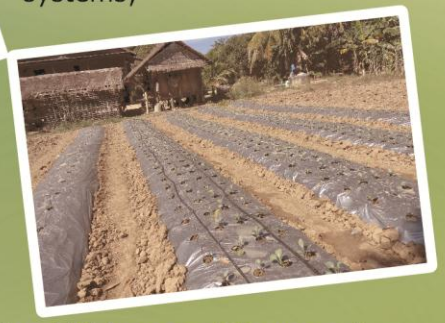
- 1,227 individual farmers (677 female) had registered with the phone-in Farmer Information Service; and
- 20 O-kes Kassekar rural information and talkback programmes were broadcast from Radio VOD in Phnom Penh and over a three station network covering Siem Reap, Udar Meanchey and Preah Vihear.

Food Security and Nutrition Initiative Project

The project is funded by USAID and implemented by FINTRAC and subcontractors including FLD for 18 months – October 2011-March 2013 – working in eight villages in Thmor Koul and Bavel Districts (Battambang Province), and four villages in Phnom Kravanh District (Pursat Province). Main achievements to date include:

- 44 groups formed by 264 farmers for agricultural skills training;
- 51training courses on home vegetable gardening;
- On 594 occasions technical assistance was provided to 264 farmers;

- 98 developed nursery (raised bed) seedling systems;
- 69 planted crops;
- 57 used mulch as ground cover;
- 52 used net trellises as crop support systems;
- 10 developed their own drip irrigation systems;



- Six training courses on nutrition for 105 farmers (72 women).

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