

**Expansions of Employment Opportunities for Young Women
(EEOYW)**

Project Completion Report

1 March 2008 - 28 February 2009

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

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Executive Summary

EEOYW in its first year, 2007, planned to reach 180 literacy students and 375 vocational skill students in 25 villages of four provinces. 222 young women graduated from the literacy training programme and 148 attended and graduated from vocational skills training. As of November 2008, 185 young women had been able to earn income from direct and indirect learned skill applications (122 self-employed, 63 being employed). 13 young women lost their job after two months, January and February 2009 due to closing of garment factories in Phnom Penh. Other 16 young women have been self-employed after the same period (Reported as of 31 December: 106 are self-employed, and 92 being employed, total 198)

For second year 2008, the number of literacy and vocational skill students were respectively planned at 280 and 575 in the same four provinces. There are 323 young women have been learning literacy skills and of those 236 graduated (passed the exam). 105 of these graduates enrolled and attended vocational skills training as of December 2008. In the same period, 625 young women enrolled in vocational skill training. 519 of these graduated from short-term vocational skills courses. As an immediate effect, 370 vocational trainees especially those who graduated in chicken raising, pig rearing, and mushroom production have been able to start their business. Businesses of others remains to be seen in middle of 2009.

1. Overview

Farmer Livelihood Development (FLD) was created by localising the SCALE programme. SCALE was an International NGO created by Southeast Asian Outreach (SAO) which commenced operations as a fish-focused food security project in 1991. However it successfully expanded its operations and developed into a programme running several integrated rural development projects. Localising SCALE was always a long-term objective of SAO and it was registered as Farmer Livelihood Development with the Ministry of Interior as a Local NGO on 28th August 2002.

FLD envisages communities where people interact with integrity and empathy for the betterment and sustainability of their livelihood activities, and where people believe they are able to solve their own problems through justice and democracy. FLD's mission is to work with targeted communities on improving productivity, promoting and creating jobs and improving Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) practices for the betterment of food security and living conditions.

FLD presently has been implementing several projects, to achieve above mission, which are financed by various donors such as Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) Australia, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Asian Community Trust (ACT), Catholic Relief Service (CRS), and CARE International. Beyond, FLD established and has been operating the Community Job Creation Fund CJCF (micro-credit) in four provinces and the CJCF is being registered with the National Bank of Cambodia to become a licensed credit operator. In addition, a self-revenue generated project has been actively providing a cutting-edge business development services to diverse clients through out Cambodia. The services include, agricultural skills training, small business management, institutional capacity building, and consultancy services. Summary of the projects is provided as follows:

Village Savings and Loans Association (VS&LA)

The project is currently funded by CARE International and implementing in Prey Veng and Svay Rieng Provinces. The objective is to improve micro credit accessibility by mobilizing community savings in 60 villages of these two provinces so that poor farmers will be able to get loan for investing in income earning activities. It is expected that there will be 1500 farmers have participated in village savings as result of the project intervention which started from 1 August 2008 until 31 May 2009.

Civil Society Organizations and Pro-Poor Market Development

Similarly to approach adopted by FLD with financing of WCS in Preah Vihear, this project started in early March 2008 and with expected conclusion in 2011. The Catholic Relief Service funded project has been implementing in 8 communes of Kong Pisey and Borsedth districts, Kompong Speu province. With its three-year commitment, the project will build capacity of 32 community based organization including Village Revolving Fund on matter of institutional development, raising voice, natural resource management, and pro-poor market development.

Wildlife-Friendly Village Cooperative in Dangphlet and Tmatboey, Preah Vihear

Villagers in these villages are being assisted to get better prices for their rice and other farm products by forming Village Cooperatives. Since October 2007, FLD with the financial support of Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), has been assisting in setting up the Village Cooperatives and providing them with appropriate institutional capacity building and small business management training. The project is likely to expand to other villages in Preah Vihear after June 2008. Funding commitment for this initiative is three and half years.

Rural Community Livelihood Options Development

This is also a three-year project funded by Asian Community Trust (ACT) which commenced in April 2007 and will be completed in March 2010. The project promotes rural micro enterprise development in Kompong Speu, Kandal, and Preah Vihear provinces. It includes provision of micro financial services, an introduction to group savings and marketable agricultural skill training to selected women's groups. It is expected that at least 1080 households will benefit during the planned three-year periods.

Community Job Creation Fund

This scheme was initially funded by the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID) with USD45,000 in 2002 and later by CAF Australia and ACT in 2007 and 2008. The seed capital has been used to promote rural micro enterprises and small business development in Kandal and Kompong Speu provinces. Approximately 1217 clients from 56 self-help groups in 42 villages have used the fund. To date, the fund has increased to USD66,469.

Consultancy

FLD provides professional development training courses to increase the capacity of officials from government departments and staff from other NGOs, in a variety of subjects such as, Marketing, Small Business Awareness and Planning, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Training of Trainers, Biogas Production and Rice Fish Culture and other topics. FLD has also worked to deliver projects in partnership with World Vision International, Oxfam GB, CEDAC (Centre Etude et de Developement Agricole Cambodgien), UNDP and APHEDA. Recently, consultancy services on self-help group and micro credit study,

village partnership graduation evaluation, and livelihood analysis were delivered for UNDP and LWF.

Currently, FLD has 52 (22 female) full time staff including a full time Volunteer Service Abroad New Zealand (VSA) Small Business Development Advisor, a full time Administration Secretary and part-time intern. Project experiences indicate that staff members have extensive experience in the fields of agriculture, micro financial services management, integrated support to small enterprises development, wildlife conservation and land use plans, community formation and mobilizing, community training, networking and micro enterprise development. Staff education background ranges from technical certificate to post graduate degree.

2. Introduction

The Expansion of Employment Opportunities for Young Women (EEOYW) project has been implementing activities with financing from CAF Australia since February 2007. The project works in four provinces, Kandal, Kompong Speu, Siem Reap, and Preah Vihear and will be concluded in February 2010. The project components include literacy, vocational skills training, small business management training, and market linkage to improve the rural livelihood of disadvantaged young women whose age is between 13 and 27.

There are 9 project staff members who carry out the work directly with practical support from another 6 staff including a Small Business Development Advisor. The Project Managers role has been expanding to include managing diverse expertise, vocational skills, literacy, and market development which are provided by independent consultants/trainers. The project works in cooperation with the Department of Women's Affairs, Department of Agriculture, and relevant NGOs to deliver desirable outputs and create markets for the trained young women.

3. Objective of the Project

To contribute to achievement of the FLD's mission (*to work with targeted communities on improving productivity, promoting and creating jobs...*), the project was designed to increase livelihood options of the targeted young women so as to expand their opportunities for income generating activities. Related to this so far, the project provides literacy and vocational skills training to the young women on chicken-raising, pig-raising, mushroom growing, basket weaving, hairdressing, sewing, and cooking. It also provides scholarships for students at secondary or high school, certificate and advanced training courses or associate degree. The projects activities are successfully implemented in conformity with the project design and FLD's mission and it moreover stimulates integration into other FLD existing projects.

4. Project Achievements

Outputs as provided below are a mixture of actual and some are pending until February 2009. This report may not be able to articulate effect right away from the achieved outputs because it is too early to measure. The monitoring on it will take place in middle of 2009 when the outputs can produce outcomes.

Out put 1: Literacy Classes

Completion of Activities & Expected Outputs	Actual Achievements
1.1: Obtained statistic of illiterate people in 42 villages (25 existing villages and 25 new villages)	Selected 25 new villages and 25 existing villages to obtain statistic of illiterate people. List of illiterate people was developed.
1.2: Listed all interested illiterate young women for the literacy program in all 50 villages	352 illiterate young women interviewed and showed interest in literacy program.
1.3: Contracted with 14 literacy teachers and 6 inspectors for service delivery	12 literacy teachers and 4 literacy inspectors were contracted to deliver the service. A few teachers provided teaching to more than a class.
1.4: Started at least 14 new literacy classes (6 classes in the existing villages) with 280 students in 50 villages	16 literacy classes were created with the 323 young women initially enrolled.
1.5: Supported at least 280 literacy students	311 young women received learning materials support but among them 236 fully graduated or passed exam. The rest dropped out and or could not pass exam.
1.6: Graduated literacy students enrolled in the vocational skills training	236 young women graduated from literacy program. 105 graduated literacy students attended vocational skills training.

Out put 2: Vocational Skills Training

Completion of Activities & Expected Results	Actual Achievements
2.1: Needs assessment was made and baseline data was formulated	Market scanning was completed before providing the training to young women. Report was already submitted.
2.2: Made contracts with vocational skills trainers	7 trainers of long term skills were contracted for 7 vocational skill training courses, and 18 agricultural skill training courses were contracted to FLD BDS Unit.
2.3: 575 young women attended one of the three selected skills	519 students graduated vocational skills training in both long and short term. - 12 classes for chicken raising: 271 trainees - 4 classes for pig raising: 74 trainees - 2 classes for mushroom production: 25 trainees - 6 classes for sewing: 120 trainees - 1 class for make-up: 13 trainees - 1 class for basket weaving: 16 trainees
2.4: 575 young women received learning materials	519 students received learning materials.
2.5: Sponsored at least 20 young women for advanced training course (nurse course, hospitality, house-keeping training. Etc..)	20 young women were selected and received scholarship for secondary-high school and associate degree certificate and advanced vocational skill training.
2.6: At least 403 (70%) skills graduated young women applied their skills learned	370 skills graduated young women from chicken-raising, pig raising, and mushroom growing have applied their learned skill.

	Others remain to be seen in middle of 2009.
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Out put 3: Small Business Management Training

Completion of Activities & Expected Results	Actual Achievements
3.1: At least 403 young women who had graduated the skills training attended the small business management training	355 graduated the skills training attended the small business management training.
3.2: 403 young women received stipends for attending the training	355 graduated the skills training received stipends. And the rest of students will receive by next training
3.3: 328 (75%) of young women had planned or started their own business or work for others	370 students started their own business of chicken-raising, pig raising, and mushroom growing.
3.4: Around 303 skills graduated young women (also from previous training year) received \$ 25 average as capital loan	216 (112 young women in year 2) graduated skills students opened their own business with loan from FLD CJCF. A loan size is between \$ 50 up to \$ 100 per person.

Out put 4: Market Linkage

Completion of Activities & Expected Results	Actual Achievements
4.1: Formed at least 17 young women clubs/cooperatives in 50 villages	10 young women clubs were formed by learned skill
4.2: Organized a local (district or provincial level) trade fairs by which at least 30 booths were displayed and with around 500 visitors	A trade fair was organized with 25 booths in Siem Reap. Approximate 1000 visitors paid visit to the fair during three days. 16 young women participated in the fair.
4.3: Organized local exposure trip for 16 young women on relevant subjects;	18 young women were selected for local exposure trip on relevant subjects. Report of the trip has been submitted separately.
4.4: Organized international exposure trip for 12 young women to the selected neighboring countries on relevant subjects	12 young women were selected for international exposure trip to Saigon, Vietnam. Report of the exposure was developed and annexed to this report

5. Problems Encountered and Lessons Learned

Problems Encountered and Solutions

Problems Encountered	Solutions
Soaring price of food has extremely affected attendance of young women at all literacy classes provided, and provision of project stipend could not stop them from searching extra income for support to their families	A project team negotiates and motivates the young women who give up the class and their parents to allow the young women come back to literacy classes. Some of young women come back to study after intervention and facilitation by project team.
To get the right young women for attending vocational skills training, the project could not select from the originally planned new 17 villages.	Therefore, the project team decided to expand into other villages in the same commune to select the right young women for attending the vocational skills training.
Vocational skills training felt in the rice	The project team encouraged consultants/

production period and had made difficulties for young women to present all time during the course.	trainers to flexibly set the training schedule which allows regularity of attendance from young women.
The border dispute happened between Cambodia-Thailand close to Preah Vihear Temple since August 7, 2008 when this temple was officially World Heritage certified. The dispute continues to day. The dispute has consequently affected our project - there were many young women dropped out of literacy classes in Preah Vihear because some of them were worried about their security, and some of them moved to live with their husband at border's battle field which is close to Preah Vihear temple.	Worked with local authorities and literacy teachers and inspectors to explain and update literacy students on social order and stability and encourage them to continue their learning.

Lessons Learned

Implementation methodology:

- A day of fund transfer had pushed forward the vocational skills training to be provided in beginning and during the rice transplantation period. This consequently had caused to absenteeism of both literacy and vocational skills students. (-)
- Food price was rising along with fuel price in beginning and middle of the year but when the price of fuel has sharply fallen in late this year, the price of food remained as high. This has become contributing factors to increased absenteeism amongst young women students in order to search for extra income to reduce food shortage.
- Recruitment process of young women to enroll in literacy and vocational skills training remains to be improved. The right persons could result in good expected outputs. (+/-)
- The replacement of Project Manager and Project Assistant has somewhat delayed delivery process but now is working very positively to achieve expected outputs. (-/+)
- Small Business Development Advisor connect application of learned skill of young women to overseas market has been a positive move to strengthen young women business clubs/groups to ensure all trained will have a chance to apply their learned skill. A connection to local markets is underway. (+)

Impacts/Results:

Immediate impact or effect:

- Literacy program:
 - 236 young women who completely graduated from the literacy class have been able to read, write and simply calculate after learning for seven months.
- Vocational skills training:
 - 360 trained young women have started their income generating activity with chicken raising, pig raising, and mushroom production.
 - 120 young women graduated in year 2 have borrowed loan to kick off their business on average USD75 per loan.

Long term Impact:

- Since beginning of 2008 until so far, there were 30 garment factories had closed and laid off around 25000 workers. It is anticipated that there will be around 30 more factories will close in early 2009. Garment sector in Cambodia has been threatening by at least two factors, (i) a lift of quota of China by US and European Community in January 2009, and (ii) Vietnam has been WTO member in middle this year. This will put pressure on the trained young women who wish to be employed in that sector. Positively, more and more young women will return home and find way to seek income and when the project comes to assist.
- It is foreseen that literacy students who attended vocational skill training will be able to create value addition on their income generating activities with literacy and numeracy skills learned.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion:

As of February 2009, the project team had been able to accomplish **90.26%** of the planned 575 vocational skill trainees, and **88.08%** for business management trainees, and **90.76%** for literacy trainees. After an increase of budget, the loans granted by CAF had been able to lent to **112** young women in year 2. An increasing number of young women who wish to borrow funds for their enterprises has been recorded. The effect on other vocational skills, sewing, basket weaving, and make-up will remain to be seen from mid 2009 and to be provided by the internal monitoring and assessment report.

Recommendation:

Following are recommendations for next phase project proposal:

a. Literacy Teaching

From project experience, less literacy students who did not attend vocational skills training had used their literacy and numeracy skills at their income generating activity. A connection of the learned skills to their work is important to sustain the skills. However, the past two-year project had allowed a majority of younger women or girls (less than 18 years old) to attend this literacy teaching and did not expect them to work with that as they were below 18 years old (*assessment report November 08*).

A significant number of literacy students in year II dropped out for the following reasons:

- Maternity leave and birth delivery;
- Young women-headed households who were obliged to eke out a living for all family members;
- Moved their residence to other places or living with solider husband nearby the battle field;
- Had to looked after sibling when their mother delivered a new birth; and
- Could not get along with other classmates or slow learners.

The third phase project should be meticulous in identifying and selecting young women for the literacy learning. Selection of the right students will produce a good result. Criteria for selection and admission were derived by a discussion of all project staff members at their third quarter work review (November 2008) and they expected that these will help to reduce possible absenteeism and that the project could effectively achieve its planned milestones. An increase of monthly compensation fee to students from USD11 to USD15 will also help to keep their living cost covered with the current highly inflation (soaring of food price) so that they can manage fully their time to attend the class.

- Vulnerable young women whose age is in between 13 and 27 years old are eligible to enroll with literacy teaching;
- Pregnant young women will not be allowed to participate literacy class;
- Young women must agree to save their 30% of monthly stipend at young women group and this amount will be disbursed to them at a conclusion of teaching curriculum. If they have dropped off during a learning period, the calculated amount 30% will be returned to the project for support of new literacy students;
- Real support from parent to attend literacy class;
- Literacy students are not encouraged to bring their child/children to the class; and
- Young women students shall be voluntary and accept all above conditions.

b. Vocational Skills Training

The project should work from the demand drive. A study on market demand should be conducted at provincial town and Phnom Penh levels which clearly indicate a link to village demand level. Based on marketable produce identified, relevant skills shall be provided to a group of young women so that they can supply such product to fulfill the market demand. An assessment of raw material supply and its channel of distribution shall be included in the rapid market survey to ascertain the trained skill does work hand in hand with available raw material.

Once again, selection of the right young women to attend vocational skills training is vital to success of the project. Following selection and admission criteria have been developed by all project staff members and they expected that the trained young women will be able to apply their learned skill for making income.

For 3 to 6 month-vocational skills training:

- Vulnerable young women whose age is in between 18 and 27 years old;
- Pregnant young women will not be allowed to participate;
- Young women must agree to save their 30% of monthly stipend at young women group and this amount will be disbursed to them at a conclusion of training course. If they have dropped off during a learning period, the calculated amount 30% will be returned to the project for support to new students;
- Good grade-literacy students whose age is in between 18 and 27 years old are encourage to enroll with vocational skills training; and
- Young women students shall be voluntary and accept all above conditions.

For 5 days to 1 month-vocational skills training:

- Vulnerable young women whose age is in between 18 and 27 years old;
- Pregnant young women are allowed to participate but their pregnancy must not exceed 7 months;

- Young women must agree to save their 30% of monthly stipend at young women group and this amount will be disbursed to them at a conclusion of training course. If they have dropped off during a learning period, the calculated amount 30% will be returned to the project for support to new students;
- Good grade-literacy students whose age is in between 18 and 27 years old are encourage to enroll with vocational skills training;
- Young women will be grouped following their literacy levels; and
- Young women students shall be voluntary and accept all above conditions.

The project should recruit the best trainers for providing vocational skills training. Training of Trainer skills should be provided to selected trainers prior starting the training. This will enhance process of skill transfer as well as to maximize quality of absorption level of trainees.

c. Small Business Management Training

Skill application of the trained young women is tending to generate income with irregular and less reliable and the trained young women may not be full-time business people. GET Ahead for Women in Enterprises Development is still found relevant and potentially to create profitable and more reliable businesses in the community, that young women have ownership and have better access to market.

A provision of loan to the trained young women group will be an alternative source to finance their business as it is a lower cost of borrowing and it is so convenient for lending to individual group members. However, during the initial three-month interest free period, project should provide USD80 per month to FLD CJCF staff members to contribute to loan delivery costs.

d. Market Linkage

A training on group capacity (book keeping, savings, dealing with customers, business contract, market knowledge, etc.) should be provided to each young women group (group will be formed per skill to be provided) so that they can manage linkage to a complex and sophisticated market.

The project should assist in identifying market outlets in Phnom Penh or in other areas for distributing produce made by the trained young women group. With this regard, a main distribution outlet in Phnom Penh should be established and managed jointly by the project and young women group representatives. The proposed outlet will distribute further of produce to other market points in Phnom Penh or in other areas.

Promotional materials for products from young women groups should be developed to capture interest of prospective customers and create unique market for young women products

e. Technical Follow-up and Support

A special intervention should be provided to mushroom young women group, appliqués, food processing, and some of chicken raising women group members who were trained in 2007. A refresher training course on vocational skill and small business management should then be provided to those groups. It is expected that:

- All 20 trained young women in 2007 (appliqué, food processing, and mushroom growing had been provided refresher training on their skill and they received additional support to run their business;
- 37 sewing students who had been trained in 2007 should be strengthened their skill through group business activity;
- 8 hair beauty students in 2007 attended refresher training course through internship;
- 50 students from various skills in 2008 were provided refresher training course or coaching or internship to sharpen their learned skill.

7. List of Annexes

- Monitoring Sheet
- List of Vocational Skill Training Classes
- Report on Exposure Visit to Vietnam