



APICI

Strengthening agroecology stakeholders in Cambodia

The project in short

In Cambodia, agriculture employs 50% of the working population and accounts for 21% of GDP. Yet, food and nutrition security in the country is far from being a reality: Cambodia depends largely on imported agricultural products, which create competition for local produce, and malnutrition is persisting. 32% of children under the age of 5 have stunted growth, 10% suffer from emaciation and 24% are underweight.

In Siem Reap, the country's main tourism region, farmers are struggling to meet growing demand from consumers for safe, healthy products all year round. In this context, the Apici project focuses on three areas:

- > **training farmers in agroecology** and encouraging dissemination of techniques via a farmers' network;
- > **developing the quality of local products** and increasing production in local value chains through agroecology;
- > **promoting and strengthening social and professional organisations** in rural areas, in order to ensure long-term support services for farms.

Prospects

The project, conducted for the last **10 years** by GRET and Cambodian NGO CIRD, with support from the Hauts-de-Seine Departmental Council in France, enabled structuring of a producers' network and made it possible to implement a value chain for marketing of local quality products (see boxed text to the right).

The challenge now is to **ensure that producers' organisations can function autonomously**, in particular their capacity to deliver training to farmers on agroecological techniques, thanks to a network of pilot farmers. An innovative method to promote agroecology was initiated: **the production of video tutorials**, made by farmers and posted on social media (some videos have totalled 1 million views).

As consumers are increasingly aware of the importance of safe, quality food, the project also aims to **raise awareness among stakeholders in the value chain on food security** and to **link its agricultural activities with basic knowledge of nutrition**.

Project objectives

- Improve living conditions on family farms.
- Develop a quality local produce value chain.

Results achieved

- 2,300 beneficiary producers, including 75 % of women, spread among 54 villages.
- 35 vegetable and chicken producers' groups supported.
- 3 cooperatives created, bringing together 263 members.
- 1 producers' market set up.
- 420 family ponds constructed to enable irrigation in the dry season.
- 36 savings and credit groups created with a total capital of over one million USD.
- 72 video tutorials produced by farmers in order to disseminate their practices.

Monthly meeting of a savings group



Project actions

Developing agroecological techniques

- > Strengthening of farmers' agroecological capacities (rice growing, vegetable growing, livestock production, water resource management).
- > Support for producers to invest in agricultural inputs and equipment.

Improving nutrition

- > Raising farmers' awareness on the basics of nutrition and food diversification.
- > Organisation of awareness-raising days for consumers on healthy, diversified agroecological products.

Structuring a local quality produce value chain

- > Strengthening the capacities of vegetable growers' and livestock producers' groups for marketing and promotion of products.
- > Implementation of a participative guarantee system certifying the quality of agricultural products.
- > Organisation of an annual agricultural trade show.
- > Supporting investment for the Siem Reap producers' market.
- > Strengthening the capacities of management committees in savings groups and cooperatives, and support for their legalisation.
- > Training and support for agricultural cooperatives.



Weekly market selling healthy local produce in the city of Siem Reap

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Family farms develop a more sustainable, resilient and autonomous agricultural model via agroecology.
- Farmers share their know-how and experiences with peers through videos and social media.
- Producers and consumers are aware of health and nutrition issues and of food diversification.
- Consumers in Siem Reap have access to quality local produce marketed by producers' groups and certified by a participative quality guarantee system.
- New agricultural cooperatives' coordination, management and communication capacities are strengthened.
- Savings groups and cooperatives are legally recognised and autonomous.



Micro-irrigation and mulching in an agroecological farm to conserve water resources



Farmers make a video with a smartphone to share their agroecology knowledge



A family pond used for vegetable production in the dry season

Photos: © GRET

THE PROJECT'S FINANCIAL PARTNER:



CONTACT:

Sokharit TOUCH, Project Manager
 tel: + 855 012 434 395 / e-mail: touch.cambodia@gret.org
Justine SCHOLLE, Technical Adviser
 tel: + 855 092 419 121 / e-mail: scholle@gret.org

www.gret.org

Present in Cambodia since 1988, GRET is an international development NGO that has been working in the field and at political level to fight poverty and inequalities for more than 40 years.

Cambodia

GRET