

Case Study

STRATEGIC PROGRAM FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE (SPCR), CAMBODIA

Gender Hand Pump Water Well Contributes to Rural Economic Households



Introduction

As the earth continues to heat up, the severity of climate change impacts on global socio-economic development and environmental sustainability continue to intensify and amplify, prompting the need to seek urgent solutions. Research indicated this trend is projected to further increase by the end of this century which Southeast Asia continues (include Cambodia) to face increasing threats from climate change.

Climate variability and disasters have been causing to reduce access to clean water and sanitation for the vulnerable group. On the other, it causes to increase individual, family and social expenditures that overall affect the lives of the people (Cambodia Disaster Risk Profile -2014, NCDM).

Challenges

In fact, the two communes (Phnom Kong and Tani) of Angkor Chey district in Kampot province, Cambodia have been impacted from climate change (drought) which makes communities lack of accessing to clean water.

Usually the middle age women in these communities are taking care of kids and old parents at home and responsible for collecting water for their families while their husbands are away from home for other activities for income generation.

However due to lacking of water source and facility, it makes women consume much of their time to collect water from waterfall and ponds from far away and the water is not enough for communities. They need to wait in the queue to take water and the water is not clean as there are many villagers have a bath over there too. Due to this challenge, some of them need to buy water from business man which costs about 10,000 Riel (2.5US\$) per pot (200 liters).



“I also can pump water easily though I have one hand,” said a man living in Tani Commune, Kampot Province

Adaptation Measures/Results

Mainstreaming gender in climate change adaptation activities of clean water through building gender hand pump water wells within communities could help them to be safe for health and contributes to economic households as well as having more time for education, other income generation activities.

Since June 2019, these two communes received eight gender hand pump water wells in three different villages which serve 558 individual (302 women) while indirect beneficiaries 20,987 individual (10,737 women) with the technical support of the Provincial Department of Water Resources and Meteorology in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Women’s Affairs under the project of mainstreaming climate resilience into development planning which is funded by the Climate Investment Funds through the Asian Development Bank. Each well costs about 2,000 USD with the gender consideration including pumping hands materials, space and lighting (photo of gender pump water well). The design and construction of these water wells were applied with the participatory approach of concern persons.

“I used to spend about three hours per day walking from home to waterfall which is about three Kilometers and I carried two water bins on my both shoulders to home. It really made me so tired,” said Mean Saroeun, a woman lives at Pich Changva village of Phnom Kong commune in Angkor Chey district.

She added that since her community received this gender hand pump water well, she stops going to take water from waterfall. “I can save my time now as it is close to my house and I can go to pump water quickly-- I used this clean water for drinking; cloth washing particularly my kids can have a bath”.

One of villager lives in Prey Pdao village came to pump water said “I help to clean the space around the water well if there is any rubbish to keep sanitation for all”. A farmer Sok Kimsan told that he goes to pump water for 4 times per day for his 4 family members. “the water is clear and flows fast”, he impressed.

Another farmer, Yem Yat said “now I even have enough water for my cows to drink”. Also she shared her experience that “I am the only one in my house have to go to take water by using cow cart but the waterfall is so far and I am busy to take care of old father and three small kids so I need to buy water from business man”.

However after having this gender hand pump water wells, she stated that even when she is busy her 9-year old daughter also can pump water and not only her kid can do it, but also her old father who is 87 years old can pump water to have a bath over there. Neak Rin stated, “Currently I can save 7 hours per day from bringing water from the pond to home and the water is muddy. Not only saving time, but also can save some money from buying water”. As the water well locates within her house campus, she said “I keep it clean every day. I also put the light at the water well so some busy women still can come to take water at night. I also plan to grow some vegetable around my house as there is water available now”.

Since the water wells are available within the community, most women have enough time to send their children to school without helping to collecting water, and do other activities for more income generation and food security.

Sustainability of the Adaptation Measures

In order to operate the water wells sustainably which contributes to reduce the waterborne disease to keep these vulnerable group be healthy, the gender responsive water user committee was established with participation from all relevant persons within the community. The committee is empowered with inclusion of operation manual describing on the roles and responsibilities, water user’s fee perspective, maintenance and improvement, benefit sharing as well as conflict resolution. This committee was appointed by the commune chief and endorsed by district governor with gender balance. The declaration from the commune chief was issued with validation from the district governor.

The financial contribution 500 Riel (13 cents/USD) per each household has been collecting as a monthly basis. This amount will secure all operational costs such as gasoline and equipment for maintenance, sanitation and travel costs for the committee to monitor.

One of committee’s member said, “I go to each house to collect their contribution for water wells maintenance which is 500 Riel per month per household with my record. I keep this money in the locked box and also inform the committee the total amount collected. The future plan is to stamp on invoice for any family who came to pay so we have evident”. A village chief said the communities are highly appreciated and happy with these clean water wells. He called for contribution from villagers for sustainable maintenance”.