



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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Fishing Communities in Cambodia Step Up Against Climate Change



Cambodia HARVEST

Fish processor Kry Sokly and her new, more efficient cooking stove.

Climate change is a global problem, but a recent study estimates Cambodia is at greater risk than many other countries. By 2025, the country could see an increase of 1 to 2 degrees Fahrenheit in average temperatures and 13 to 35 percent more rainfall during the wet season. Climate change is already increasing extreme weather events, such as rainy season flooding and dry season droughts, severely threatening the country's food security.

To help communities in Cambodia mitigate this situation, Feed the Future has introduced fish farmers and processors to new technologies and practices. The fishing industry not only drives the economy in Cambodia but also accounts for more than 80 percent of protein consumed in the Cambodian diet. Protection of, and innovation in, this sector is critical to ensuring food security.

Feed the Future works with 15 community fisheries on the Tonle Sap ("Great Lake"), where community members collaborate to protect and better manage fishery resources that provide essential food for 10,500 families in Cambodia.

In 2015, Feed the Future provided them with an educational campaign on global climate change and resource conservation. Pickup trucks equipped with portable cinemas reached 1,086 people with screenings of short films on the themes of climate change and fisheries conservation. Because of their remote locations, viewers previously had not been able to access this information from television or radio sources.

"The campaign was very useful," said Chim Choeun, chief of Steng Kambot Community Fishery in Kampong Thom province, where less rain and hotter temperatures are threatening fish populations. "We learned that planting more trees around the community fishery protects the habitats and also learned how to properly use farm chemicals so as not to harm fish."

With Feed the Future's help, fishing communities in Cambodia are replenishing and demarcating key habitats, including refuge ponds where fish breed and survive during the dry season. As droughts worsen, protecting fish habitats has become essential in maintaining wild fish populations and sustaining this vital food source. Feed the Future helps communities enhance breeding in fish refuge ponds by supporting the creation of artificial reefs using tree stumps.

"Responding to global climate change is a challenge," Chim explained. "But now, we're better prepared to deal with it. We are now better [at] protecting the fish stocks that people depend on for food."

In addition to innovative and environmentally-conscious fish farming, Feed the Future, in partnership with Conservation International, has designed a new stove that smokes fish 15 percent faster than conventional models while using 30 percent less wood. Typically, home-based fish processing is difficult work, and using wood-burning stoves to smoke freshwater fish for sale on the local market generates low profit margins and harms the environment. The new stove saves processors time and money, alleviates pressure on forestry resources, and reduces harmful smoke emissions. Perhaps most importantly, the stove produces a high-quality product that fetches better prices from buyers. The program developed the new design after consulting closely with its client processors to address issues such as size and price, ensuring the prototype reflected the needs of the end-users.

All 287 of the program's fish processors are using the new stove, including Kry Sokly, a young woman from Kampong Prak village, a collection of several dozen floating houses in Pursat. "I'm very happy with it," she said. "It's much easier to use than our old open-air stove, and the smoke doesn't get in the house and make us cough." Kry now spends less time gathering wood in the nearby forest and more time devoted to her family's other money-making activities. With Feed the Future-supported training and the new stove, Kry's business is generating 66 percent more income.