

## Visit to Cambodia Family Support 31 Oct – 3 Nov 2018

Helen and I spent 4 days with Dr Samnang visiting Cambodia Family Support (CFS) operations in Kamrieng and Rattanak Mondul districts of Battambang Province, as well as the Salakarau district of Pailin Province.

For those rusty on the geography of this area of North-West Cambodia the map below will refresh:



CFS has been active for 10 years now. CFS first started working in 2008 in Rattanak Mondul district and then then spread to Kamrieng (the 2 western-most districts of Battambang Province (total 14 districts)). At the beginning of 2017, with generous funding of a US private foundation and the support of our CFS-USA board, operations commenced in Pailin Province. Activities in Pailin include the standard village-based activities of poverty alleviation, water and sanitation, housing and income generation. CFS also established the Pailin Family Center (PFC) in Pailin City, which serves as a 'crisis center' for the referral of family emergencies, including victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse, medical emergencies, deserted children etc. Currently CFS is only working in Salakrau, the nearest of Pailin's 2 districts.

CFS staffing now totals 14 persons (including the program director Dr Samnang). Field activities follow a well-trying approach:

- initial evaluation of a village to assess need for assistance
- formation of a communal representational body, the 'Village Self-Help Group' (SHG)
- collaborative approach by CFS, community leaders and the SHG to address needs.

Interventions focus on:

- identifying the most vulnerable (physically disabled/mine injured individuals, widows with children, child-only families etc.)
- basic housing construction/repair

- improving access to water
- improving sanitation & hygiene
- income generation initiatives, e.g. market garden, raising cow, pig, chicken, duck or fish, road-side stall
- school attendance for children -- those not attending are investigated to ensure that they are able to attend (this may include providing school uniforms, transport, in some situations building a small school/literacy centre).

We met with the the Pailin deputy governor and the Provincial head of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA). We discussed the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was suggested by the Minister of Women’s Affairs whom we met during our visit to Phnom Penh in November 2017 (below).



Dr Samnang will proceed with this initiative, facilitated by his excellent relationship with the Government authorities in Pailin and Battambang.

Dr Samnang has collected a mass of demographic data on the populations in CFS serves. This provides an excellent tool to measure program impact.

A tiny slice of this data:

Location	Pop.	Total No. Villages	Villages Covered by CFS	Families assisted by CFS	Children	% School Attendance	% Houses with Toilet	Land Mine Disabled
Pailin	39,422	49	14	265	13,633	60%	65%	682
Rattanak Mondul	41,759	38	30	464	16,477	70%	63%	462
Kamrieng	53,788	51	36	609	24,946	54%	53%	587
<b>TOTAL</b>	134,969	138	<b>88</b>	1,338	55,056			1,731*

It is sobering to reflect on the fact that almost 2.2% of the adult population in these three locations are disabled as a result of land-mine injuries. This group is a particular target for CFS.

**PART OF CFS' MIX OF ACTIVITIES IN PHOTO**



A road-side barbershop with initial funding support from CFS



Market Garden established with seed-funding and assistance with irrigation from CFS. Two large families were generating income from this initiative.



Collecting the produce (cucumbers) for direct sale to market



A village Self-Help Group discussing issues with Dr Samnang



Dr Samnang addressing school children.  
The teachers have asked if CFS could assist in repairs to the roof, which was leaking in the wet season



Inserting numbered ear-tags into cows. This allows for accurate monitoring the expanding herd, location and ownership.



The ever present land-mine victims. This man helps care for 2 grandchildren. Their parents have crossed the border into the Thailand to find work.





Abject poverty is reflected in the housing



'Rotary' logos are common site on water jugs, duck and chicken farms, new houses, wells and a myriad of other initiatives, present in many villages across the districts. That is 80% of all villages in Rattanak Mondul district, 70% of all villages in Kamrieng District and 28% in Salakrau District of Pailin.



. . . and finally, although not a CFS endeavour we thought that the guy who managed this huge load on the road to Pailin, with such a small motorcycle, deserved a mention.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent and Helen Keane  
Directors CFS, CFSA, CFSUSA  
Rotary Club of Perth

11 November 2018