

# STORIES FROM A CLIMATE CHANGE HERO

## Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Cambodia

Mr. Tek Samoeun is the Vice Chief of the Office of Agricultural Cooperative Promotion, a division of the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Kampong Speu. Passionate about his mission, he works to support the growth of a strong community of farmers by equipping them with relevant agricultural techniques and knowledge as they face mounting development challenges due to climate change.



One of the groups after undertaking the training in Kampong Speu; Mr. Samoeun facilitating a training session.  
Photo credit: LittleBIG Films

“I was perfectly suited for this job”: Mr. Tek Samoeun smiled as he took the time to reflect on his achievements. After obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree in Science in Agriculture, he passed a government exam and was assigned the position of Vice Chief of the Office of Agricultural Cooperative Promotion, a division of the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Kampong Speu.

Mr. Samoeun explained that knowledge and understanding of climate is passed down from one generation of farmers to another but is still limited. “Some farmers have been practicing their traditional methods and habits. Hence, they do not have a strategic preparedness plan to deal with natural disasters.”

Most farmers know that there are two seasons in Cambodia - dry and rainy seasons - but more information is needed to help them plan for the planting and harvesting of their crops. Both seasons bring with them their load of challenges for farmers, which can be reduced with accurate weather forecasting. Access to weather forecasts and climate information enables

people to make informed decisions in their daily lives to avoid negative impacts, however people must also be equipped to respond to this information.

“We have found that the understanding of weather forecasting information and knowledge of climate change plays a vital role in agricultural-based activities”, Mr. Samoeun says. As a result, his department has developed a programme which trains farmers in understanding weather forecasts and how to use this climate information to mitigate negative impacts and improve their livelihoods by developing strategic risk reduction plans. The training programme is supported by the United Nations Development Programme as part of a four-year project to [strengthen climate information and early warning systems in Cambodia](#).

To enable farmers not only to respond appropriately to climate but also thrive, Mr. Samoeun believes that as a technical expert, it is his duty to share his knowledge: “I am always looking forward to presenting innovative ideas and techniques to further strengthen the capacity of farmers.”

# Working together to build the country's forecasting capacities

## Project Brief

**Duration:** 2016-2020

**Project Budget:** USD \$4,910,285

**Implementing Partner:**

Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology

**Funding:** GEF-Least Developed Country Fund

**Location:** Cambodia, nation-wide

**Population to Benefit:** Over 15 million (est.)

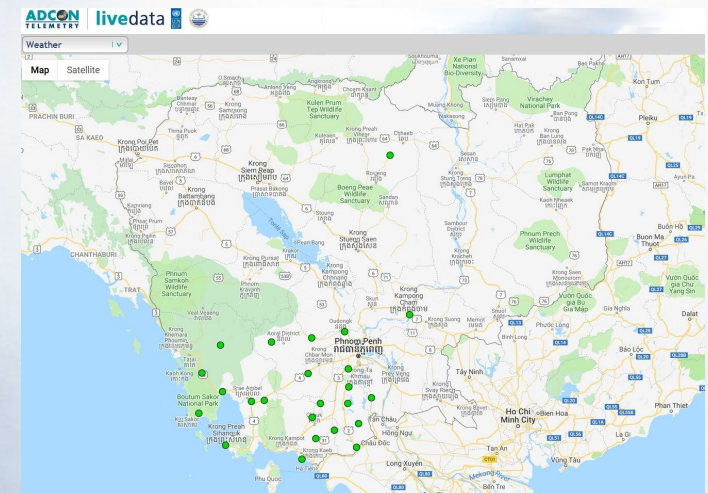
Cambodia's geographical exposure and the lack of adaptive capacity make it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. With over 80% of the population dependent on subsistence farming, rural populations are particularly exposed.

Floods in 2013 affected 1.7 million people, with an estimated loss of US\$ 356 million. In 2016, floods affected 2.5 million people. These events are precursors of the impacts of the changing climate. Climate information is essential to prepare farmers.

With support from UNDP and funding from the GEF-Least Developed Countries Fund, the project '[Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems](#)' is supporting the [Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology \(MoWRAM\)](#) to increase Cambodia's institutional capacity, to assimilate and forecast weather, hydrological and climate information, and to improve communities' access to reliable information and early warning systems.

Under the project, 24 automatic weather stations and 29 hydrological stations for surface and ground water have been installed across the country, integrating technology and placing communities at the heart of a people-centred early warning system.

Information from the stations will be key to generating early warning messages, both for planning and for disaster preparedness and emergency response.



**Globally, 45 countries are developing and strengthening early warning systems, with 189 new end-to-end early warning systems established in 26 countries. With UNDP support, nearly 21 million people have improved access to reliable climate information and early warning systems.**

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