

# STORIES FROM A CLIMATE CHANGE HERO

## Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Cambodia

As Boeng Prual commune chief, Mrs. Try Teang plays an important role in helping her community prepare for upcoming floods. She has helped up to 80% of her commune use early warning systems to feel empowered to respond.



Mrs. Teang tending to her chickens; assessing a water sensor. Photo credit: UNDP Cambodia/ Kelsea Clingeffer.

Mrs. Try Teang has been commune chief of Boeng Prual commune in Kampong Cham province for almost 15 years. While she largely takes care of administrative needs of the commune, she is also a valuable player in the development and roll out of disaster early warning systems in the area, including the [1294 Early Warning System](#) (known as 'EWS 1294'), implemented under a partnership between the [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) and [People in Need \(PIN\) Cambodia](#).

Boeng Prual is an agricultural commune that primarily grows rice and corn, as well as other crops and livestock. It has, like much of Cambodia, been affected by changing climate conditions.

Due to the location of Boeng Prual commune on the river, flooding is an important consideration each year, however increased variability in timing and duration is proving a challenge. "If it is a short flood, it is better for citizens in some ways, but it also leads to water shortages and makes it hard

in other ways. It can cause issues because there are types of insects that eat the crops - floods can't kill these insects if the flood is too short."

Ms. Teang learned about the EWS 1294 system – a phone-based warning system for flooding – during training in 2019. She decided that it was her responsibility to tell her commune members. "I think I have told about 80% of the commune [of approximately 7000 people]. First, I had a meeting with the head of the village, then they tell the people in their village. I also tell people whenever I have a community meeting."

As a result of her work, commune members have been able to reduce their own disaster risk. "They came to me to tell me it was such a good thing because they received a warning, sent by the provincial committee, before the flood arrived! It alerted them of the disaster and helped them to prepare." Ms Teang also sees significant advantages of the system in helping people adapt travel plans and to remain informed if they work far away from their village.

# 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.)

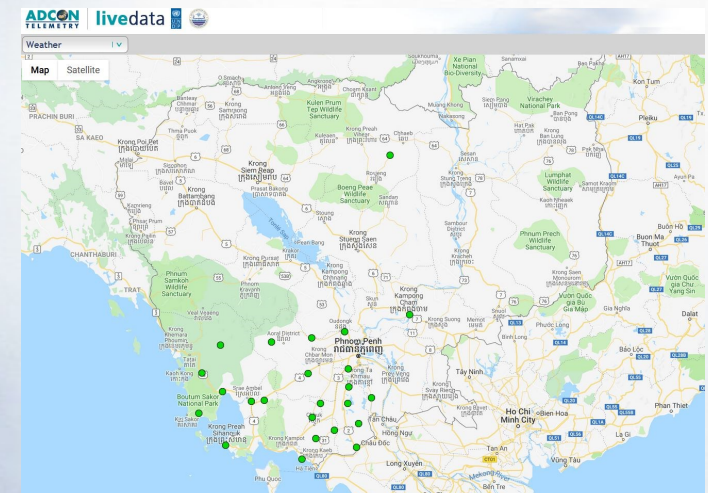
Cambodia's geographical exposure and the lack of adaptive capacity make it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. With over 80% of the population dependent on subsistence farming, rural populations are particularly exposed.

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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