

STORIES FROM A CLIMATE CHANGE HERO

Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Cambodia

Women Champion Ms. Hok Laykeang is using her voice to make a difference in the community by advocating for women's rights and supporting installation of solar water pumps.



Ms. Laykeang demonstrating the new solar water pump, and speaking up for women in her community © Kelsea Clingeffer/UNDP Cambodia

When asked about her favourite part of being a Women Champion in Kampong Lor commune (part of Pursat province), Ms. Hok Laykeang is clear and confident: "I like that I now have freedom to speak. Previously I was too shy, now I can advocate for the community."

Since training as a Women Champion in the first iteration of a gender equality program under an [ActionAid Cambodia](#) and [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) partnership in 2017, Ms. Laykeang has truly found her voice. She describes how she uses her new power in everything from attending community meetings to advocate for women's rights and encouraging others to do the same, to inputting into local Community Investment Plans and Community Development Plans. "I also advise other women that if there is a violation, they should speak to authorities, not keep silent."

"When I think about what I was like before then after being trained as a Women Champion, I see that now I can speak about everything. Previously, I didn't dare talk to the commune chief but now I can demand for our rights as women!" In response to these

proactive approaches, Ms. Laykeang has seen a shift in those around her. "The community has taken on more responsibility for women's demands – they hear the women's voices, and they become more responsive."

Ms. Laykeang was influential in recent installation of a solar water pump, proposing the local school as an appropriate site. "It was my idea to request it to be here because I saw that there are many people around here who are poor. They can now collect water for free, and there is no other water around here - surface water is not available."

The solar water pump is one of six being installed across Kampot, Koh Kong and Kampot provinces by ActionAid Cambodia and UNDP in a bid to reduce climate-change related impacts in vulnerable communities.

The training of Women Champions and installation of solar water pumps support the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), in particular [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#), [SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation](#), and [SDG 13: Climate Action](#). The UNDP project is funded by the [GEF-Least Developed Countries Fund](#).

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.)

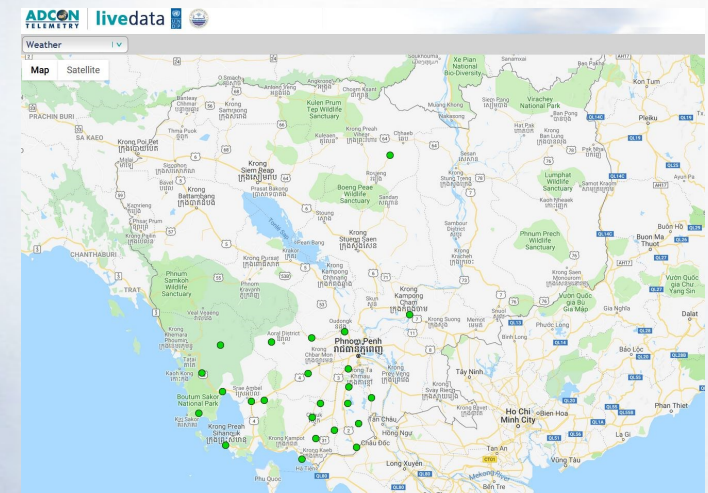
Cambodia's geographical exposure and the lack of adaptive capacity make it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. With over 80% of the population dependent on subsistence farming, rural populations are particularly exposed.

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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