

STORIES FROM A CLIMATE CHANGE HERO

Strengthening Climate Information and Early Warning Systems in Cambodia

As one of ActionAid's Women Champions, Ms. Nov Siphon has played an important part in hearing the voice of women in her community and empowering them to take part in disaster risk reduction.



Ms. Siphon with other gender champions; taking part in training of new gender champions
Photo credit: UNDP Cambodia/ActionAid Cambodia

Ms. Nov Siphon is no stranger to being involved in her local community. Alongside her role as a local school director, Ms. Siphon is also head of an elderly association and member of the commune council (in charge of women's and children's affairs). More recently, she has also become a Women Champion for disaster risk reduction.

Ms. Siphon was originally trained as a Women Champion under an [ActionAid Cambodia](#) program aimed at enhancing gender equality in disaster risk reduction. Now, as part of a partnership between [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) and ActionAid, Ms. Siphon is helping invest into the next iteration of Women Champions.

As part of their role as Women Champion, each woman must establish and implement an action plan within their community. Ms. Siphon explained one of her activities: "Last year, there were issues in my community with the rice fields due to the drought. Many hectares were destroyed.

The women came together to advocate to our local authorities to dig a small canal – now this year the problem has been fixed because they did it! It worked."

Ms. Siphon expressed the joy she found in being able to contribute significantly within her village. As a result of her efforts, she has been able to work with local authorities to extend awareness-raising activities into 10 surrounding villages. Ms. Siphon described how prior to their work many of the villagers had very limited, if any, knowledge on gender – now they fundamentally understand the importance of acknowledging gender issues, particularly in disaster management.

As a local school director, Ms. Siphon has seen growth not only in her personal life but also professionally as a result of her training. "I think I was confident before but until I did the project, I only thought about the school. Now I think about how I can help other women in the community and how to engage with the sangkat level."

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.)

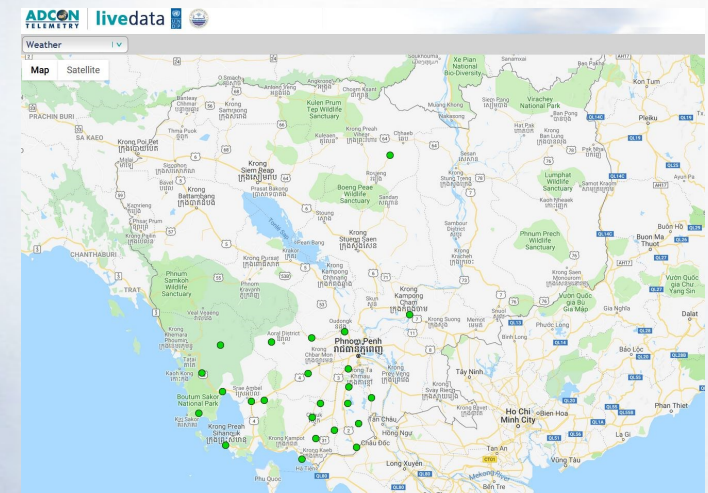
Cambodia's geographical exposure and the lack of adaptive capacity make it particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. With over 80% of the population dependent on subsistence farming, rural populations are particularly exposed.

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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