

Multisectoral food and nutrition security in Cambodia - MUSEFO



Context

Despite the fact that Cambodia is a country that could theoretically be self-sufficient in food, and which is in fact a net exporter of rice, unbalanced or insufficient diets are still very widespread. The rural and mostly disadvantaged areas of Cambodia are particularly affected. Malnourishment and undernourishment can have serious consequences, especially for infants up to two years of age. The activities in Cambodia therefore focus on a holistic approach on food and nutrition security (MUSEFO). The various causes of malnourishment and undernourishment can only be addressed in a complete manner, which is why the MUSEFO project combines measures in the areas of

health and agriculture. These measures complement each other and offer great potential for improving food and nutrition security in Cambodia. The MUSEFO project is being implemented in two Cambodian provinces. Concerning the health sector, the project focuses on improving mother and infant health through training of health workers and midwives in health care centres. Concerning agriculture, the project promotes 'multipurpose farms' which allow households to independently produce their own diverse range of nutritious foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, staple crops and other food that can be sold on the local markets.

Activities in Cambodia

- We train health centre staff in rural areas with focussing on the importance of dietary and hygiene practices by mothers. Health workers receive professional development training to build their capacities in the areas of pre-natal and post-natal care and appropriate nutrition for pregnant women and young children.
- In order to ensure that the mothers will ultimately have the opportunity to provide varied and nutritious diets for their families, MUSEFO also promotes multipurpose farms for the production of a range of different types of fruit and vegetables as well as animal-based food products.

- The project places particular emphasis on fostering cooperation between the various institutions, from the municipal to the provincial and ministerial levels, so as to mainstream lessons learned and successful approaches within Cambodia's institutions.

Our objective

The project's aim is to ensure that food and nutrition insecure people in the Cambodian Kampong Thom und Kampot provinces, in particular women of childbearing age and young children under five years of age, have access to sufficient and healthy food at all times, including times of food crises.



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Region(s)

Kampot Province and Kampong Thom Province

Duration

6/2015 – 12/2019

Budget

EUR 4.8 million

Implementation partners

GFA, nat. NGO CEDAC (Cambodian Center for Study and Development Agriculture) and nat. NGO RACHA

Lead executing agency

Ministry of Health

Target group

25,000 women and 5,000 children under two years of age

Where we work



Example of our work

On the farm of the Chum family in the Kampong Thom province, in the center of the country, the heads of the household live with their daughter next to the grandparents. The family operates a multipurpose farm, where all family members help. Apart from rice, a number of other crops are cultivated, which can be sold on markets and meet the family's own nutritional requirements. These include various nutritious fruit and vegetable varieties such as chili, spinach, moringa, amaranth, banana, mango, but also animal-based food such as fish and eggs from their own farm.

The Chum family is one of the 200 so-called "model farmer" families selected by the MUSEFO project, because they have already had some knowledge and equipment for operating a multi-purpose farm. The idea of such model farmers is to test new techniques and cultivation methods for multi-purpose farms and to share their experiences with neighbors and friends. Each and every one of these model farmers meets regularly with agricultural advisors, who have been trained by the MUSEFO project and ten other farmers. At these meetings special topics are dealt with each time. By doing so, the project will reach up to 2,000 farmers until the end of the project.



Results

In 2016 a total of 200 key farmers grew 100,000 tomato plants and harvested 300 tonnes of tomatoes of which 70 percent were sold at the local market and 30 percent used by the families themselves. Key farmers grew also 6,000 Moringa trees and 200,000 eggplants, harvesting 400 tons of eggplants. The seedlings were provided by the MUSEFO project as well as rainwater harvest tanks so the farmers were able to irrigate the home gardens.

In addition, nutrition messages were sent to small scale farmers and women of child bearing age by SMS and radio to increase the awareness on nutritional topics.

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