

PINEEH PINOOH

The power of people against poverty



EDITION

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OXFAM



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EDITORIAL

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Oxfam, I would like to extend our best wishes to you and your family for 2019 and our warmest thanks for reading the first issue of Pineeh Pinooh and sharing with us encouraging and constructive feedback!

2019 marks the 40th anniversary of the end of the murderous Khmer Rouge regime that led to a tragic death toll, permanent wounds and deep trauma affecting millions of people in Cambodia. It also marks for Oxfam 40 years since its first humanitarian intervention in the country along with other international development agencies.

In 1979, Oxfam launched an appeal for £100,000 initially, that reached £3 million in three months “to feed Kampuchea.” Blue Peter, a popular British children’s television program, broadcast the fundraising campaign to its millions of young viewers.



RAY GREEN

The whole of Youlgreave, Derbyshire, turned out for a Cambodian charity sale yesterday

Cash pours in for Cambodia

by JUDITH JUDD



Reading a newspaper clipping about the campaign, I was so touched by a four-year-old girl who gave up her favorite plush toy, contributing the money from the sale to help feed hungry Cambodian children like me. Strangers so young who opened their hearts to us! I was one of those children that she never knew but wanted to help. My mother had to slave in the rice fields. My grandmother was feeding me a broth made with red ants instead of milk. When I started to work for Oxfam, I browsed through photos and film archives of those days to understand where I came from. I came across amazing pictures and footage that gave me mixed feelings as a Cambodian who grew up through that time. Cambodia has come a long way but she still has a long journey ahead to get to where she deserves.

When I spoke with many Oxfam colleagues, Cambodians and expats alike, who worked to support the country's development from 1979 through the mid-80s, I was struck

by a statement that rings so true today: Trust must be earned by all development stakeholders. Poverty is complex. True partnership and determination are required to eradicate poverty.

I hope 2019 will be a year of improved mutual understanding and meaningful partnership among all actors in the interest of Cambodia's next generations.

Finally, we love to hear from you! Please send us your comments or opinion pieces to PineehPinooh.Cambodia@oxfam.org and the most inspiring ones will be published under our section Perspectives! I hope you enjoy reading Pineeh Pinooh!

Best wishes and happy new year!
Solinn

RAINBOW LOVE





YOKO MEAN & YOKO ZANA

Even though Zana lived in Cambodia and Mean lived in the USA, the two would chat regularly on Facebook. Mean came to Cambodia to surprise Zana and they started dating immediately. Zana's mother was not really happy with their relationship for the first two years so it was a struggle. However, love survived and they continued to date despite the distance and other obstacles. Yoko Mean works at the airport and Zana is studying in order to find a good job in the USA where the couple lives at the moment. Zana was so excited to get engaged and married!



SING SOPHANA & PHENG SAHN

Sophana and Sahn met through Facebook and got to know each other better via Messenger. After two years they finally decided to meet; the rest is, as they say, history! Sophana is a fashion designer and Sahn, a transman, is a human rights activist, rainbow clothes salesman as well as a social worker for the local council. They love traveling and spending time together.



MADAM HUOR & JACKIE LEE

Jackie and Madam Huor met each other through social media and their love story is truly global. Jackie was working in a bakery in the USA and Madam Huor joined him after they got married in February 2017. They had two ceremonies, a cultural wedding in Cambodia and another officiation in the USA. The photo shows the happy couple at their cultural wedding. They were so excited to have their parents, siblings, neighbors and friends on both sides join their wedding party.

Love crosses boundaries as well as genders. Here is the story of some transgender couples that CamASEAN, one of Oxfam's partners, has documented. Over 100 of couples opened their homes for a photo exhibition to create more awareness and reduce stigma.



SUN LAON & TIANG SOKHEANG

Sun Laon and Taing Sokheang—both in their 50s—have been living together for 31 years in Stung Village in Tboung Khmom Province. They sell sweets, driving a bicycle around the village to increase sales. The first time Sokheang met Sun Laon, she did not trust him and wouldn't allow him to visit her. However, Laon's strongest virtue was patience and slowly but surely he won her trust.



YERN THY & NAVY

Yern Thy is 58 years old and Navy is 62. They have been living together as a couple for 26 years. Thy is a motor taxi driver and Navy sells clothes. Navy used to work in front of the company facility that Thy works for and that is how they met. Together they have raised three children from Navy's previous relationship.



CHHIM SYMOM & CHUNN MON

Symom was a taxi driver when he fell head over heels in love with Chunn Mon. Thirty-seven years together saw them working as construction workers, factory workers, farmers and tuk-tuk drivers. At the moment they run their own grocery shop in Takeo Province. Symom and Chunn Mon have raised two children; one is the birth daughter of Chunn from a previous relationship and the other is their adopted son.

*"A BIG thank you to all couples
who were proud to have their photos taken
and share their stories so openly."*

©All photos by CamASEAN



OUR STORIES

CLEAN ENERGY: THE FUTURE

Oxfam in Cambodia was a proud sponsor of the very first Clean Energy Week, organized by Energy Lab from 1-8 November 2018 with an objective to raise awareness of the renewable energy possibilities in the Kingdom by engaging young people and bringing together key players.

"We, as ambassadors, want students to be conscious of the basic need for clean energy in Cambodia, and worldwide. We want students to know the importance of understanding clean energy. I am sure that they somehow hear about it at school, yet not many show interest in the topic. Perhaps they think it is not as important as other fields.", said Ms Srey Pov Ying, leading a team of 12 ambassadors reaching out to Universities.

OVER 1,250 PEOPLE ATTENDING 26 CLEAN ENERGY EVENTS!

The week was designed to maximize the engagement of a variety of actors to engage and promote clean energy in Cambodia for sustainable development, economic productivity and innovation. From a high level conference center on the future of energy entitled "Inspire Asean" where many of the top players in the renewable energy sector in Southeast Asia gathered in Phnom Penh to events across universities engaging over 600 students to raise public awareness of the need for clean energy in the near future, the first clean energy week in Cambodia was an inspiring melting-pot of events that attracted lots of interest.

Other public engagement events were organized such as site visits and open days so that people could see existing initiatives in Cambodia around biogas, solar power and even a sustainable charcoal factory!

The closing event of the Clean Energy Week took place at The Factory Phnom Penh where participants massively called out for a second edition. An enthusiast concluded: "This week really created a momentum! It was great! I am sure next year event will be even more powerful and impactful!"



Ms. Ol demonstrating her EcoSun portable solar pump at open day for participants during Clean Energy Week.
©Bridget McIntosh

IMPROVING RIGHTS TO LAND

Over one hundred participants from our sub-national provincial teams, including the Provincial Governor, police and armed forces officials, local NGOs and local communities came together in a workshop on “Improving Rights to Land and Natural Resources and Law Enforcement” in late November in Preah Vihear province.

The workshop was organized by the Cambodia Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), Development and Partnership in Action (DPA), Building Community Voices (BCV) and Oxfam. The objective was to improve knowledge on land governance, increase collaboration between the authorities and communities in land conflict situations and provide a space for affected communities to raise their concerns over land conflict and seek a better way of working.

LAND IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSET OF THE POOR. IT SERVES AS THEIR KEY MEANS OF MEETING THEIR FOOD AND INCOME NEEDS.

H.E. Sou Serey, Deputy Governor of Preah Vihear Province, said: “In Cambodia, there are laws and regulations supporting the rights to land and natural resources of local communities. While people enjoy their rights to land and natural resources, they must follow the rule of law.”

Speakers from the provincial court, specialized departments and lawyers shared information about the land dispute resolution mechanisms that have been slated for implementation at all levels and encouraged all disputing parties to register their complaints with the authorities so that the next steps can be effectively identified.

Seven existing cases relating to land and natural resources conflicts were reported by community representatives during the



*Villagers shared about disputed cases during the workshop.
©Asisah Man/Oxfam*

workshop and brought to the attention of the authorities for their intervention to reach a fair and just resolution. Even though none of those cases were settled during the workshop, it was a great move for all stakeholders to move on to the next actions based on their respective role, duties and authority.

POVERTY, INCOME & SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

What measures can the government of Cambodia take to ensure that the most vulnerable Cambodians don't relapse into poverty? That question and other similar ones were examined during a panel discussion on Cambodia's governance and accountability at the Forum of Exchanges event held on November 26th in Phnom Penh.

For the last two decades Cambodia experienced an exceptional GDP growth. According to the World Bank, the high growth rate did not benefit all Cambodians equally, and today 4.5 million people still remain quite poor and could easily fall back into poverty if an economic shock occurs. This is particularly true of informal workers who are not covered by national health and social security insurance.

FORUM OF EXCHANGES RAISES ISSUES

The panel focused on the problem of rising inequalities in Cambodia despite stable high rates of economic growth and stressed the need for the Cambodian government to establish stronger and more comprehensive safety nets to protect workers, particularly

in the informal sector. Ms Solinn Lim, Oxfam country director, facilitated the panel discussion. Four development and good governance professionals in Cambodia were invited to share their expertise on the topic. The panelists also discussed how governmental systems that manage public finances and provide social services, such as health insurance and education, have considerably improved over recent years in Cambodia but still lack some significant elements to perform optimally. Speakers identified corruption, low accountability and the lack of civil servant skills as some of the main causes for the unsatisfactory and limited delivery of social services to workers and citizens.

The event was funded by the Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid and was part of the visit and dialogue schedule of Belgian Ambassador, H.E. Philippe Kridelka, with the members of Cambodia's Joint Strategic Framework (JFS).



Panel discussion on inequalities issue in Cambodia. ©Oxfam

SUPPORTING WOMEN FARMERS BUILDING THEIR CONFIDENCE

Oxfam's flagship program, Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investment in South East Asia Phase 2 (GRAISEA, 2018–2021) is supporting women in acquiring skills and building up their confidence to realize their potential as leaders.

“I can't read Khmer very well, but I'll do my best.” We often hear comments like that from women we meet in rural areas, even if they have responsibilities in their community. They are capable, motivated and quick to learn. But their self-confidence is often clouded by society and sometimes their own entourage that reminds them that they have not completed formal education or even primary school.

OBSTACLES AND NEEDS

The amount of time each woman devotes to household and family care is a key factor affecting their ability to give full attention to their community work. But overwhelmingly, they have voiced the feeling that their low level of education and lack of specific soft skills are preventing them from fulfilling

their potential of doing much more. They asked for support to learn skills that most people in cities take for granted: how to use a computer, how to take meeting minutes, how to make a presentation.

With funding support from the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, the Dutch company Sano Rice and Swedish company Axfood, along with Oxfam and its local partner, Development and Partnership in Action, will identify and select 35 current women leaders and women farmers who want to discover their leadership potential in order to provide them with capacity-building and support.

By the end of the program, we hope to contribute to a new generation of women leaders who drive their community towards prosperity with confidence and hope in the future.

Khat Sokhim, treasurer of Ronakse Preah Khan Aphiwat Agricultural Cooperative in Sangkum Thmey district, presents and explains accurately to a group of a dozen women the do's and don'ts of growing organic rice. ©Oxfam





Sokeayouk Bun (in the middle) and his team during the debate. ©TI

YOUTH DEBATES ON FISCAL GOVERNANCE

Should citizens be entitled to make their voice heard in the national budget drafting? Should the government increase tax on income? Should the government increase tax exemption on foreign investment? These questions and other topics related to fiscal governance were debated by 32 youth groups in November and December 2018.

The debates were organized by Transparency International Cambodia in partnership with Oxfam to give a space for young people to build their capacity, challenge and learn from each other on various topics related to fiscal governance.

Sokeayouk Bun, senior student at the Royal University of Law and Economics, one of the contestants, said “This was my first time and I was not familiar with topics related to fiscal governance at all. The debate itself helped me to do more research, talk to more people, ask more questions, and challenge my team members to prepare ourselves to confront other teams.”

FINANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

As citizens, we have a duty not only to understand but also to make sure that the national budget really serves the interests of the people. The debate of young people on the issues is really a good start. Executive Director of Transparency International, Preap Kol said that the national budget is crucial for the development of the nation, the well-being of its citizens and national development priorities.

Oxfam has been implementing the Finance for Development project since January 2016, in which Transparency International Cambodia is one of our partners. The purpose of the program is to contribute to improving the quantity and quality of the fiscal system in Cambodia that benefits citizens, particularly young people, women, girls and vulnerable people.

“Going through all the preparation process built my confidence and effective approach. I learned that I always have to prepare to back up and defend what I say. To achieve that, I need to read a lot,” Sokeayouk concluded. “I hope to see more space like this for youth.

WHEN WOMEN ARE LEFT OUT

Sophoan is a domestic worker and mother of three children. She recently gave birth to a healthy third child but her hard life made her very vulnerable when facing what should have been a joyful time.

Sophoan is the main income earner in her family. Her husband works as a motobike cleaner in a small family owned garage but he can only contribute \$50 per month. Domestic work is physically demanding. Towards the end of her pregnancy Sophoan was in unbearable pain, causing potential harm to her baby. She stopped working at 8 months as advised by her mother. But with no income she was unable to pay for essential food, housing or medical costs. Sophoan decided to move in with her mother, also a domestic worker, and depend on her mother's support.

Aware that Sophoan was unable to work and had no savings, her mother borrowed money from her employer to pay for Sophoan's birth costs at a hospital in Phnom Penh. Shortly before the delivery her mother got injured at work and was unable to work for a few months while recovering. After Sophoan delivered her baby, she had to care for her injured mother and newborn baby, while paying back the loan. With these demands Sophoan felt pressure to go back to work prematurely, not knowing how or who would care for her newborn child and her mother. But the longer she was unemployed, the deeper the entire family fell into poverty.

STORIES LIKE SOPHOAN'S HAPPEN EVERY DAY IN CAMBODIA

According to ILO, 77% of female informal workers find themselves highly vulnerable at a time when they should be taking care of their newborn babies and enjoying a unique time in their lives.

These stories highlight a growing gap between the rich and poor in Cambodia, and unfortunately this gap is undermining the many efforts to fight poverty. Cambodia is not a unique case. Across the world inequality has been rising, especially in developed countries.

The Cambodian government has taken important steps towards providing healthcare to more people via the introduction of the Health Equity Card (HEC) and the National Social Security Fund (NSSF). These two systems are important steps towards expanding healthcare coverage, but more can be done. More investment is needed to increase coverage and improve the quality of the services.

Sophoan and her baby
©Oxfam



PERSPECTIVES

Cambodia's latest development scene



H.E. GEORGE EDGAR

EU Ambassador to Cambodia

In 2019, we will continue to work closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia and with civil society partners toward the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Cambodia. The SDGs are the framework for everything we do in Cambodia. We are keen to make sure that Cambodia's record in implementing the Sustainable Development Goal is as good as it has been in implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

One of the things in a broader context which is very important for this year is making sure that all of us take seriously the challenges, the threats, the crisis of climate change and reflect that seriousness in the way we respond to those challenges. At a global level we have to greatly increase our level of ambition.

The EU supports a big program on education reform, focused on pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education. The EU Delegation will also continue to support the Ministry of Economy and Finance on the Public Financial Management Reform program to ensure continued improvement in domestic revenue collection and spending that effectively serves the needs of the people.

The EU is currently in the process of launching a new phase of its involvement in support of the fisheries sector - both aquaculture, where there is big potential in Cambodia, and capture fisheries. It is important to make sure that fisheries contribute effectively to people's livelihoods and nutrition in Cambodia. But it is also important to focus on conservation of the resource to make sure it is not over-used or damaged by development around the rivers and the lake.

We are always learning lessons on how to work better, in our work directly with the government and through civil society.

I wish Pineeh Pinooh's readers all happiness, success, and prosperity for 2019.



H.E. ING KANTHAPHAVI

Minister, Ministry of Women's Affairs

"In 2019, we will continue to focus on the development of female human resources and to ensure that women are economically empowered."

Under its new mandate, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) will continue to focus on human resources development specifically aiming at women's leadership skills in the political, social and economic areas to respond to national and regional issues.

In response to globalization, MoWA will emphasize building the capacity of our people, especially women, to be more competitive and innovative in the job market as well as to increase their ability to adapt to changes and learn to become successful entrepreneurs and workers, thus ensuring the continued economic growth of Cambodia. Also, we will continue aiming at increasing the economic empowerment of women in order to help reduce their vulnerability and make them equal partners with men in society. To implement this, we have been coordinating with relevant ministries to disseminate information to women related to the labor law, among others, to protect their rights and initiate income-generating activities, thus improving the livelihood of rural women, providing them with vocational skills in agricultural and non-agricultural businesses and informing them about the market needs for their production or their businesses.

To promote the well-being of women and girls, we are joining the line ministries to implement the Royal Government of Cambodia's new policy on social protection with the theme "No One Left Behind," ensuring that women, pregnant women, elderly women, girls and vulnerable groups will reap benefits from our strong national economic development.

To reduce violence against women and girls, MoWA in cooperation with the line ministries, is backing implementation of National Action Plan 2019–2023 on preventing all forms of violence against women and girls as well as the promotion of social morality and the values of women and Khmer families. We will pay closer attention to social and civic education—aiming at a positive change in the society mindset: no discrimination against women, more responsible alcohol consumption and putting an end to drug trafficking. We will expand the current program related to "Positive Education for Children" and will collaborate with families for implementation. In the area of domestic violence, we will continue to promote the culture of dialogue in the family for conflict resolution and to expand the "Good Man" campaign. As for the behavior of youth in utilizing modern technology, we will work on raising awareness among young people about accountability for one's actions and using technology in a more responsible way for education, information and knowledge.



OM SAVATH

Executive Director Fisheries Action Coalition Team

Established in 2000, FACT is a coalition of NGOs working on fisheries and environmental issues around Tonle Sap Lake, the Mekong River and Cambodia's marine regions along its coastline. It conducts advocacy initiatives regarding fisheries issues and monitors policy reforms.

In 2019, FACT will implement the final segment of its 5-year practical plan (2015–2019). Its objectives for this year include a strong determination to achieve all aspects of this ambitious strategic plan:

1. Strengthening community-based organizations (CBOs) through the conducting of workshops and training sessions and, especially, urging the national experts to accept the qualifications of CBOs.
2. Building more networks with civil society entities and NGO partners working in the fisheries sector (currently 45 NGOs).
3. Focusing on their conservation outreach where FACT is implementing activities on 84 locations with relevant partners such as the EU or IUCN.
4. Strengthening good governance in the fisheries sector to encourage people to be more responsible for their fishing.
5. Publishing case studies of fisheries and the impact of climate change on them, as well as climate-change mitigation, to share experience.
6. Empowering local communities, enhancing their standard of living, through the provision of training sessions, vocational orientation in such areas as building ecotourism sites or introducing means to ensure longer storage of fisheries products. The objective is to help the local people reduce their dependency on fisheries activities alone.
7. Improving the quality of fisheries products by complying with recognized standards. The local communities will be helped when their products meet such standards, and their income will increase accordingly.
8. Focusing on gender equality, engage in discussion on the fair, sustainable social development focus inherent in our projects.
9. Improving the coalition internally by strengthening staff capacity, creating a management board for the team members, as well as increasing and strengthening the financial monitoring and evaluating team to ensure transparency and loyalty.

"Our new practical plans will mainly focus on good governance and livelihood, fish processing and the value chain."



SOR SAN

Young Entrepreneur

"I encourage all people with disabilities to stand up, proud of yourself as disabled person and overcome all the obstacle in life. You have to encourage and value yourself before you ask for help from others."

Sitting near a table full of colorful traditional Khmer scarves, bags and hair bands handmade from cotton and silk at her home in Koh Dach, Ms Sor San said with smile that these are the type of products she helps women in marginalized and informal groups to sell to make some additional income.

Looking back at her experience, San reflected: "Despite my disability, I completed a bachelor's degree in information technology at the International University of Phnom Penh. While in my free time I join charity events and help marginalized individuals and people who are discriminated against—such as persons with disabilities, former entertainment workers, LGBTQs and poor women—to increase their income, my full-time job is at the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation as an officer at the Disability Action Council Secretariat General.

"I am happy with my life partner who uses a wheelchair but has the same passion as me to overcome disabilities," she added.

San said she went through an amazing 2018 and her resolution for 2019 is to expand her business by adding to the varieties of her handmade products and to continue promoting the livelihood of the poor, especially marginalized groups, through selling their products at national fairs and village events. "I will try to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Commerce so it will provide an opportunity for people with disabilities to have a booth at national fairs. And finally, I would like to buy a small car to deliver goods to customers. At the moment, I get around on my three-wheel motorbike."

Please don't give up while you haven't yet started. You may walk one step slower than others but one day you will reach the destination like them too. I hope friends with disabilities who have read this "Pineeh Pinooh" will join the force to go forward and not give up. A person with disability has one life and a person without disability also has one life.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARCH
2019**

TRAINING

Emergency response training
for Oxfam and partners

**APRIL
2019**

LEARNING EVENT

Local women leaders
learning event

**MAY
2019**

EVENT

Celebrate Pride Day

NEWSROOM

EXPLORING CAMBODIAN VOICES

Exploring Cambodian Voices is an in-depth contextual analysis for voice programming in Cambodia. It includes the voices of many diverse groups including people with disabilities, LGBTQI, women facing exploitation, abuse and violence, persons facing discrimination and vulnerability due to age, indigenous peoples and ethnic minority groups.

https://cambodia.oxfam.org/policy_paper/exploring-cambodian-voices



Over two hundred informal workers came together to discuss the issue of **unpaid work as caregivers** and the impact it has on the economic empowerment of those providing it and equal access to the labor market for women.

<https://cambodia.oxfam.org/event/forum-practical-paths-reduce-gender-inequality>



Why is it essential to have a **proper business plan**? Check out a 6-minute video here to learn more about the impact of getting loan without a proper upstream plan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WShRX-BGSiQJ>



WINDOW ON THE WORLD

TIMOR-LESTE

In Timor-Leste, Oxfam is utilizing a community-led approach, in partnership with 20 civil society organizations, to contribute to equitable and resilient livelihood development for small-scale female and male agricultural producers.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In Dominican Republic, Oxfam is promoting the rights of the most vulnerable men and women, preparing them to cope with crisis situations and to receive high-quality humanitarian aid.

TANZANIA

In Tanzania, Oxfam is working to empower women politically, economically and socially to be transformative leaders and change agents within their households and communities.

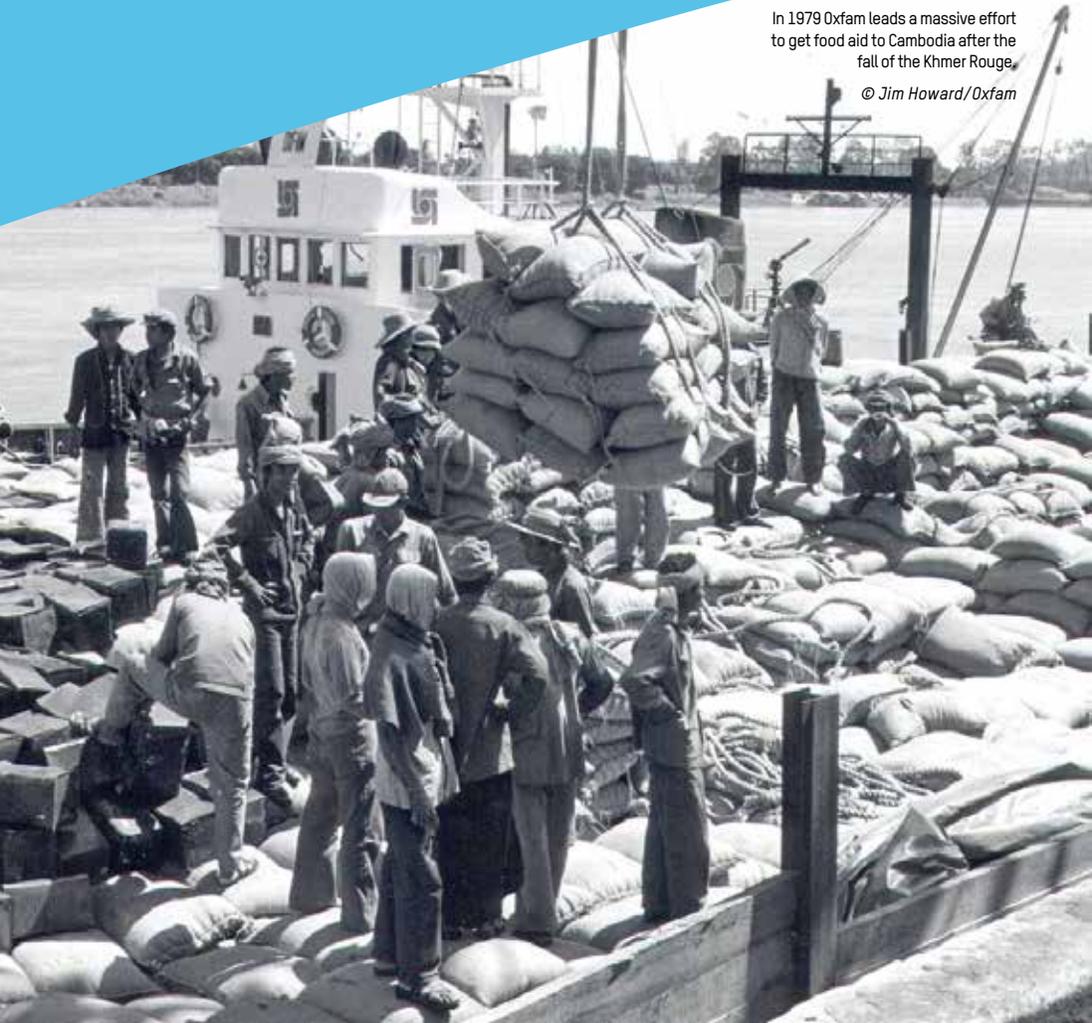
GET TO KNOW US

Oxfam has been supporting Cambodia's development since 1979, making it the first INGO operating inside Cambodia during the controversial post-Khmer Rouge genocide period. Oxfam in Cambodia works in a wide range of programs advocating for women Economic Empowerment, Livelihoods for vulnerable groups, Natural Resource

Governance, Climate Change Resilience and Sustainable Energy, Financial Inclusion, Social Protection and Decent works, Sustainable and Climate Resilient Agriculture, Disaster Preparedness and Humanitarian Relief, Civic Engagement and Financing for Development.

In 1979 Oxfam leads a massive effort to get food aid to Cambodia after the fall of the Khmer Rouge.

© Jim Howard/Oxfam



THANK YOU PARTNERS!

We appreciate the long-standing support and relationship we have with our partners. Thank you for being the primary change agents of Oxfam's endeavours to reduce poverty and empower communities. We have come a long way on the road to harnessing peace and ensuring social justice. We are extremely grateful for the continued cooperation and collaboration we have had over the years and we hope to continue this journey for years to come.





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