

## Progress Report for Change Project

**Country Team:** CAMBODIA

**Project Title:** Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme in Takeo Province.

**Names of Change Agents in the team:** Prak Kosal, Um Lakhena, Roeung Sereydera

### 1. Introduction

CHILDREN COME INTO THE WORLD eager to learn. The first five years of life are a time of enormous growth of linguistic, conceptual, social, emotional, and motor competence. Right from birth a healthy child is an active participant in that growth, exploring the environment, learning to communicate, and, in relatively short order, beginning to construct ideas and theories about how things work in the surrounding world. The pace of learning, however, will depend on whether and to what extent the child's inclinations to learn encounter and engage supporting environments. There can be no question that the environment in which a child grows up has a powerful impact on how the child develops and what the child learns. Learning, moreover, is not a matter of simply assimilating a store of facts and skills. Children construct knowledge actively, integrating new concepts and ideas into their existing understandings. Educators have an opportunity and an obligation to facilitate this propensity to learn and to develop receptivity to learning that will prepare children for active engagement in the learning enterprise throughout their lives. Recent research on cognitive development also emphasizes the role a supportive context can play in strengthening and supporting learning in a particular domain. Indeed, techniques that provide a window into the developing brain allow us to see that stimulation from the environment changes the very physiology of the brain, interlocking nature and nurture. Research from a variety of theoretical perspectives suggests that a defining feature of a supportive environment is a responsible and responsive adult. Parents, teachers, and caregivers promote development when they create learning experiences that build on and extend the child's competence—experiences that are challenging, but within reach.

Eager to Learn: Educating Our Community Preschoolers is about the education of children ages 3 to 5. It focuses on programs provided outside the home, such as Preschool, Head Start, and Child Care Centres. As the twenty-first century begins, there can be little doubt that something approaching voluntary universal early childhood education, a feature of other wealthy industrialized nations, is also on the horizon here. Three major trends have focused public attention on children's education and care in the preschool years:

1. The unprecedented labour force participation of women with young children, which is creating a pressing demand for child care;
2. An emerging consensus among professionals and, to an ever greater extent, among parents that young children should be provided with educational experiences;
3. The accumulation of convincing evidence from research that young children are more capable learners than current practices reflect, and that good educational experiences in the preschool years can have a positive impact on school learning.

To come up with an integrated programme that would help address the cognitive, social-emotional (mental health), and physical development are complementary, mutually supportive areas of growth all requiring active attention, psychological development in the preschool years of children, and improved school readiness. Social skills and physical dexterity influence cognitive development, just as cognition plays a role in children's social understanding and motor competence. All are therefore related to early learning and later academic achievement and necessary domains of early childhood pedagogy. Responsive interpersonal relationships with teachers nurture young children's dispositions to learn and their emerging abilities. Social competence and school achievement are influenced by the quality of early teacher-child relationships, and by teachers' attentiveness to how the child approaches learning. Education opportunities are shaped long before children enter classrooms. The linguistic, cognitive and social skills they develop in early childhood are the real foundations for lifelong learning. Ill-health, malnutrition and a lack of stimulation undermine those foundations, limiting what children are able to achieve. The irreversible damage inflicted by hunger during the early years continues to erode human potential on a global scale. About 195 million children under 5 in developing countries – a third of the total number – suffer from stunting, or low height for their age, which is a sign of poor nutritional status. Many will have experienced chronic malnutrition in the first few years of life, a critical period for cognitive development. Apart from the human suffering involved, malnutrition places a heavy burden on education systems. Malnourished children tend not to reach their potential, physically or mentally. They are less likely to go to school, and once in school they register lower levels of learning achievement. Equal treatment in education for girls and boys is a human right, and it is also a means of unlocking gains in other areas. Education improves child and maternal health because it equips women to process information about nutrition and illness, and to make choices and take greater control over their lives.

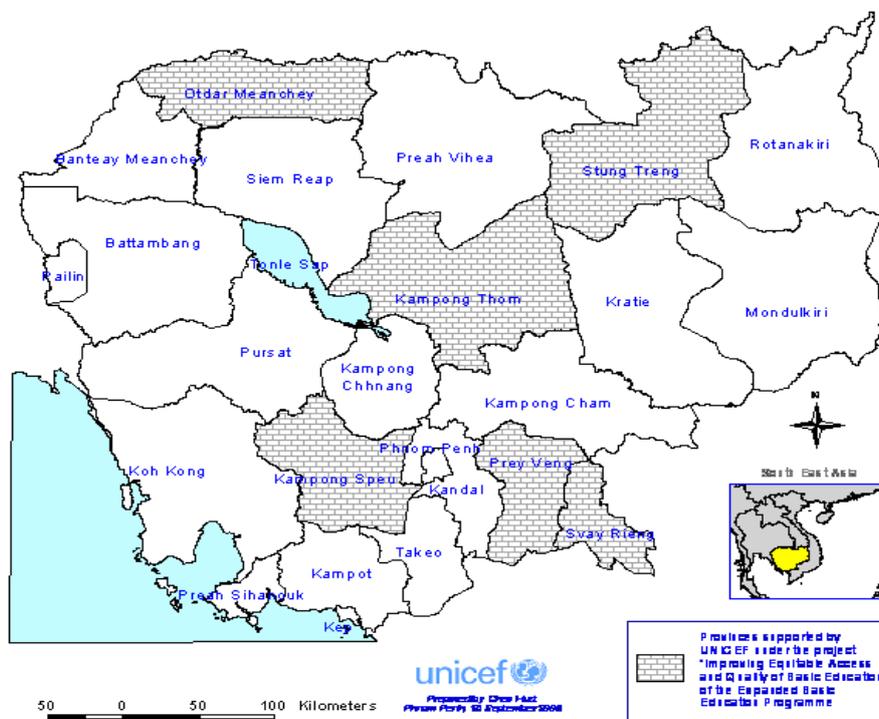
## **2. Frame of Reference**

*Some relevant facts about Cambodia:*

- Geographic area: 181,035 sq.kms,
- 23 provinces,
- 1 municipality,
- 194 district/khan/cities,
- 1.621 commune/sangkats,
- 14,073 villages.
- Population: 13.4 million; 51.5 % of them are women (19.5 % of the population live in urban areas, and the remaining 80.5 % are living in rural areas)
- Infant Mortality Rate declined from 66 to 45 per 1,000 births
- Mortality Rate of Children under 5 year declined from 83 to 54 per 1,000 births between 2005 - 2010.

## Early Childhood Education Context

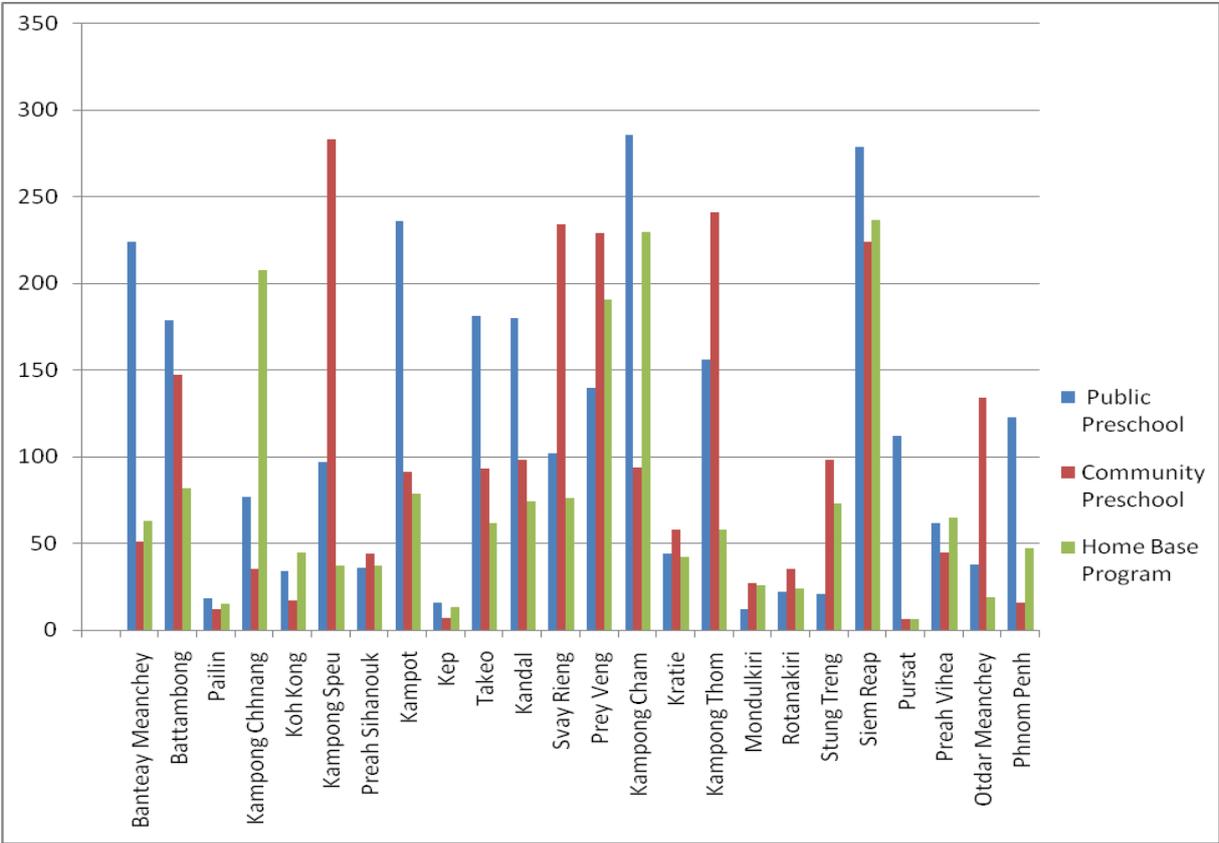
Early childhood programmes prepare children for school, mitigate the effects of household deprivation, hal the transfer of educational disadvantage from parents to children and strengthen prospects for economic growth. Yet early childhood policies in many developing countries continue to suffer from insufficient funding, fragmented planning and inequality. After the Liberation day (7th January 1979), Preschool Education was established by a technical working group of General Education and Preschool Education. In 1986, the above working group changed to Department of General Education and Preschool Education via Regulation No 62, 12 April 1986. In 2002, Early Childhood Education Department was established via regulation-sub-degree No 104, 14 October 2002. Currently, Early Childhood Education has been fully supported from the Royal Government of Cambodia, especially Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) leaders, and has been developed and implemented in the whole country.



The Education Law in article 16 have addressed that *"the state shall support early childhood care and development from the age of zero to before preschool, generally provide at childcare centres in community or at home. Preschool shall commence education prior to primary education for preparation to attend primary school. The ministry in charge of education and other relevant ministries and institutions shall determine the meanings of early childhood care and development"*. The vision of National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development have addressed that *"all children, from conception to aged under six, especially disadvantaged, vulnerable and poor children, shall be provided with care and development services, in line with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia"*.

Early Childhood Education is a sub component and a priority component in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) have set the target in year 2015 for children age 5 years is 75% and for children age 3 & 4 years is 35%. In this regard Home Based programme is one of basic education in Early Childhood Education is a fundamentals quality of children which will enrol to primary education and take a part of dropouts' reduction and repetitions reduction in primary school. In years 2010-2011, there are 146,071 children aged 5 years receiving education, which is 52.66 % of the total number of children of this age group, in which 49.8% are girls (ESP target is 50 %), an increase of 19,453 children. Home based programme is available in 172 out of 194 municipalities, districts and khans and in 696 out of 1,633 communes/sangkats. There are 49,811 parents or guardians, 9,932 mother group leaders, 1,809 core mothers and 74,817 children, 49.31 % of whom are girls, an increase of 8,588 persons, participating in these programs.

ECE Status in 2010-2011



*Home based programme context*

Home Based programme is provided to educate families who have children aged from 0 to under 6 years old and was initiated since 2000 at two community in Kampong Chhnang province. The priority areas are where there is lack of/no ECE services, a lot of children, dropout rate in primary school and disadvantaged areas. Home Based programme working mechanism has been established to provide technical and monitor the programme and involve relevant key sectors in the community. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS)

provide training and refreshers training on Home Based technical to core mothers and mother group leaders so that they cascade down to mothers/parents who are members. Mother/parents are their children teacher by using their available time and suitable areas. Main topics for educating their children such as daily life activities, periodic activities, special events, and especially to create lovely and safety environment for their children development.

Some example of Home based activities



HB program's training material is developed by Early Childhood Education Department, MoEYS and supported by development partners include Unicef, SCI, ESSSUAP-FTI.

Realizing the Cambodia attitude and issue of capacity of parents, especially lack of fathers to involve or responsible for children, We are the participants of batch 17, set up the project of Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme in Takeo Province to apply what we learn about CRC. Mr. Prak Kosal, Director of Early Childhood Education Department, Ms. Um Lakhena and Mr. Roeng Sereydara, Teacher Trainer of Phnom Penh RTTC, MoEYS.

### 3. Purpose

Our aim is to develop the capacity for the practitioners in home based programme on the importance of the 3P's in general and participation in particular through the article 12 and 18 in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The main purpose is to guaranty the young children's rights to play, learn and participate in learning environments at home and in the village. Our work for change is based on CRC, article 12 (Respect for the views of the child) and article 18 (Parental responsibilities; state assistance). We would like to highlight these lines; when adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account. This does not mean that children can now tell their parents what to do. This Convention encourages adults to listen to the opinions of children and involve them in decision-making -- not give children authority over adults. Article 12 does not interfere with parents' right and responsibility to express their views on matters affecting their children. Moreover, the Convention recognizes that the level of a child's participation in decisions must be appropriate to the child's level of maturity. Children's ability to form and express their opinions develops with age and most adults will naturally give the views of teenager's greater weight than those of a preschooler, whether in family, legal or administrative decisions. Article 18 (Parental responsibilities; state assistance): Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and should always

consider what is best for each child. Governments must respect the responsibility of parents for providing appropriate guidance to their children – the Convention does not take responsibility for children away from their parents and give more authority to governments. It places a responsibility on governments to provide support services to parents, especially if both parents work outside the home. The practitioners are the target group and when we start our project the target group is the core mothers, mother group leaders and mother's member, but after finishing our project the practitioners will include fathers. Practitioners will then be called core parents, parent's group leaders and parent's member.

**Target groups and stakeholders**

Our main focuses of this project are the home based programme practitioners in Pea Ream village, Pea Ream commune, Batty district, Takeo province. Together with our team, Early Childhood Education (ECE) will support and monitor the activities of participation and the training agenda. Stakeholders such as Provincial of Education, District of Education, Teachers, Health Center, Commune Committee for Women and Children, Village leaders will be included in our project.

**3. Methodology**

Based on our project plan, we the Cambodia team batch 17 have conducted these activities:



- Conducted a meeting dated 7 December 2012 at 2:30pm at Early Childhood Education Department, MoEYS between Change agents in batch 17 and Ms. Yos Or Arun and another 3 colleagues who are responsible for Home Based Programme under Early Childhood Education Department. The purpose of the meeting was to ask for support for project in general and to share what we have learned from Lund University and the International Programme on Child Rights, School and Classroom

Management. We presented our change project "*Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme*". After the meeting, they all agree to support our project. If our change projects succeed, they will raise it to national level. The meeting also discussed about the teaching material for core parents and lead parents and the material to conduct the orientation meeting with stakeholder.

- We have conducted a meeting dated 28 December 2012 with Ms. Sary Phally, chief of Early Childhood Education Office, Provincial Department of Education, Takeo province. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce our change project on Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme, and asking for support for our change project. During the meeting we discussed about the ECE status, especially the Home Based programmes background in Takeo province. We also informed the chief that Takeo is a province which we have selected to conduct the pilot project. If she will agree to let us do our project the PoE (Provincial office of Education) will support the project and that we hope it will bring a positive impact to the families who have young children in the community. After the meeting she did agreed to support our project on two important matters<sup>1</sup>. She will look for a village which have young children under 6 years old. 2. She will discuss with a key person who are responsible Early Childhood Education in District level and Commune level.
- During the training course on Early Childhood Development which was held from 13-18 February 2013 in Takeo province, this training provided for sub national core trainer from 12 provinces (136 persons, female 93). During this training, Prak Kosal had a separate meeting with Ms. Sary Phally, chief of Early Childhood Education Office, Provincial Department of Education, and Mr. Kim Mann, Vice Chief of District of Education office, Batty District, Takeo province. The meeting focused on our change project. Mr. Kim Mann said that he very much appreciated the change agents that selected Batty District for the pilot project and he will support us to conduct the project in *Pea Ream Village, Pea Ream Commune, Batty District, Takeo province*. Based on our project he will prepare a new Home Based structure and include *core parents, lead parents, and parents' member*.



- Conducted an orientation meeting dated 28 September 2013 with stakeholders; 1 person from Provincial of Education, 2 from District of Education, 1 School Principal, 1 from Health Center, 1 from the Commune Committee for Women and Children, 1 Village leader, 1 Core Parent, and 3 project team, amount 11 persons at the meeting room of the District of Education (DoE), Batty district. The meeting focused on the project change concept of the Integration of CRC in Home based Programme. The meeting included a presentation as below:

1. Presentation on CRC concept and experience from International Training Programme on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management in Lund University, especially school visits in Sweden.
2. The priority of Home Based Programme in the policy and Education Strategic Plan (ESP)
3. Presentations on the purpose of the project which will be develop the capacity for practitioners in Home Based Programme.

After the meeting all stakeholders were very appreciative with our project which will increase the numbers of fathers involved with Home Based Network and improve the living condition in the village.

- Conducted a workshop for practitioners on the new training manual from 26-27 October 2013 at Pea Ream village. The total of participants is 20 people include 15 practitioners, 2 DoE officers, 1 from the health centre and 3 project team. The workshop agenda included:

4. Introduced the workshop objectives
5. Presentation on Child Rights ( 3Ps concept: include provision, protection and participation)
6. Roles of core parents, parents leaders and parents members
7. Developing the concept of the child: all babies come into the world programmed and ready for learning. By the age of two or three, most will be showing all characteristics that make us human-walking, talking, thinking, socialising, showing emotions and solving problem. It is a remarkable achievement in such a short time. At no other time in life will they learn so quickly.
8. Caring for children: in caring for young children, care givers (parents, grandparents, siblings, and all the family members.) are performing a very important role. They hold the future of the communities in their hands.

9. Learning through play: through playing, children learn about themselves, learn about environment around, and everything surrounds them, when they play, they learn how to solve the problems, and learn how to live together in harmonious with others children, they increase their creations and develop their life skills.
10. Health and nutrition: all parents want their children to be healthy. Healthy children are happy and active; they do well at school, and reable to become an active part of their community. Keeping children healthy can be difficult for some families, however, especially in communities where drinking water is dirty, or sanitation is poor, or where people do not have good hygiene practices. Children can catch serious diseases in such conditions. Many die or become disabled. Most of these diseases are preventable, however, if families and communities take practical, low-cost actions. In this booklet we look at the main risks for babies and young children's health, their causes and how to prevent them. We also consider how to teach children practices that will keep them safe and healthy both now and in the future.
11. Going to school: starting school is an important step for every child. All boys and girls should start school at the age approved in their country.
12. Introduced the training for kids include notebooks, teaching and learning materials such as story books, posters and leaflets.

- **Follow up and monitoring:**

After provided orientation meeting with stakeholders and conducted a workshop for practitioners on the new training manual. We, the project team, have conducted the monitoring to the Pea Ream village as below:

13. On 23 November 2013, we have conducted the first of supporting monitoring. During the monitoring, we have used the monitoring tool which produced by Early Childhood Education Department, MoEYS. And also discussed with village leader about the core parent and parent leader activities, what the positive and negative impact of the project.
14. Based on the first monitoring, on 28 December 2013, conducted the second of supporting monitoring. This time, we have visit the families who are participated in the Home Based programme and also invite them to join in the short refresher meeting among the target group. Together we have reflected on the content of the workshop and recalled the concept of the workshop activities and supported with the story books, parental education leaflets and health break for children to all parent members.
15. Mentor's visit: On 23 January 2014. Lena Andersson, mentor for Cambodia CRC network conducted a monitoring with Cambodia CRC network include

team batch 17, team batch 12, and team bath 14. During the trip she had a short meeting with DoE officers who are responsible for early childhood education to make a short presentation about ECE status in Batty District include home based programme in Pea Ream village. And then the team visited the home based programme in Pea Reap village and observed the activities between children and parents, connection between core parents with parent leaders with parent members. Especially the attitude of and the relationship between parents and children.



## 5. Results

The interview between batch 17 and a father.

**Miss. Um Lakhena:** After training the CHC concept include 3Ps, in the name of parents what do you think of taking care for children?

**Mr.Chhea Sokea:** I'm very happy for this programme. In the previous time, I used to think that housework and taking care for children are women's task, but after the training I understand that fathers are very important in the families like mothers too. My wife has to work for garment factory at the day time so I have to look after children. The first time it was a bit difficult for me to take care for children and I did not have much free time to visit friends or go for a walk like before.



I realised my wife works hard to take a good care for children. Fathers can do a lots things like mothers, we can teach our children, play with them, telling the stories book for them and take care for them. It's better that both fathers share with mothers to take care for children in order our children healthy, happy and develop physical and emotional very well before they are going to school.

Based on the project plan which we agreed on the following goals:

**Outcome:** The practitioners will understand how a relationship between parents and young children based on participation will benefit a child's living and learning condition.

We have had the meeting between stakeholders including Early Childhood Education Department (MoEYS), Key persons who are in-charge of ECE in Provincial of Education, District of Education and Community and they have agreed to change the concept "core mother, group mother leader and mother member". Refer to gender concept, all the stakeholder very appreciate for our project change which will be pilot in *Pea Ream Village, Pea Ream Commune, Batty District, Takeo province*.

We also had conducted meetings between us and Mr. Chhon Cheang (batch 14) he is the key person who are responsible for Home Based programme in Early Childhood Education Department. He has agreed to help us to prepare the effectively training material for the orientation workshop with stakeholders, core parents, lead parents, and parent member.

## **Unexpected results or activities related to our project**

On 16 November 2012 at Early Childhood Education Department, during the meeting about ECD training course for sub national core trainer, we also took the opportunities to share the knowledge about the 3Ps because this meeting relates to the content of the training. If the training course integrate the 3Ps concept in the agenda, it will be better because the sub national core trainer will share to preschool teachers and core parents in their area.

On 26 November 2012 at World Bank office, Mr Prak Kosal shared the importance of CRC, the articles and the mentor's presentation to the key persons who are responsible for education in the World Bank and at UNICEF. He informed them on the effective training course management and course design, quality assurance and results based management, CRC international convention, and school study visit in Lund. They were happy to hear that his presentation met with the goals of their organization.

On 14-20 December 2012, Prak Kosal, participated in join monitoring with H.E Sam Sereyath, General Director of Education to Kampong Thom and Preah Vihear province. During these missions they visited all types of ECE services which includes Home Based programme in those area and learned about the real activities in disadvantages area.

On 11 December 2012, Prak Kosal, make a presentation on Early Childhood Education – Sub-sector Result Based Management in workshop at Siem Reap province which have difference participants include high level of MoEYS, Director of provincial department of education in 24 provinces, and development partners include (Sida/Sweden, UNICEF, World Bank, EU, UNESCO, Save the Children...). During the workshop, Prak Kosal presented why

we are implementing the sub-sector Result Based Management (RBM), What is it? and Progress toward having it in actions.

## **6. Discussion and Reflection**

Referring to the change project, we still have some activities left, but we have had received successes with the activities as mention above. The activities have become a success because we work by heart and commitment after the face to face learning at Lund University, we also cooperate in order to develop and achieve. All relevance people involved in the Child's Right implement are welcoming changes because we try to mainstream Child's Right understanding to them. The successful activities above are going on the right track but we, the change agents need to use effectively communication skills including formal and informal communication with all stakeholders to advocate and convince them to support our project plan.

We are thankful to the international training course on Child Right, Classroom and School Management supported host by Lund University and donated by Sida /Sweden. And we are sharing what we have learned from Lund University to our organization as below:

*Mr. Prak Kosal:* Based on the training course in Lund, makes me understand more about education status in difference countries especially about CRC implementation and classroom and school management in poverty areas. The systematically of education in Sweden is a useful model which needs to improve ECE services in Cambodia. Regarding the attitude change, I have committed to improve the family communication including interaction between my both daughters with parent base on 3Ps concept. And I have also improved the internal communication in Early Childhood Education Department and in line of the early childhood education on sub national level base on results base management concept. I expected that ECE services in Cambodia will be change from tradition track to RBM track.

*Miss. Lakhena and Mr. Dara:* We have learned from Lund he importance of "Change concept" and it is still in our hearts. When we have class at Regional Teacher Training Centre, we try to use the effective teaching method which advised by mentors and share CRC concept to students because all our students will become to the teacher in lower secondary school in different areas.

We believed that we have selected the right topic "*Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme*". The HB programme is a main service in Early Childhood Education in Cambodia and all 24 provinces have implemented it in their area.

## 7. Way Forward

On 20-23 December 2012 at Svay Rieng province, Early Childhood Education Department conducted an annual meeting, participated by all ECE key persons from 24 provinces. We made a presentation on CRC in school and classroom - from curriculum to practice.

Because of the good impact of the project on Integration of CRC in Home Based Programme, especially change concept (mother to parents). Early Childhood Education Department, MoEYS developed a new manual and guidelines which will be used in national wide:

- ✓ Guideline for home based programme
- ✓ Parental education manual



### **Way forward for sustainability for the change agents in Cambodia**

On 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2012, the Swedish Embassy invited us to join an alumni cocktail at 6 o'clock evening. There were many people who joined it. We shared our experiences to each other. All of had been trained at various skills include the sciences and social sciences in Sweden. We were served with some snacks and drinks. The Swedish Institute also told us about the scholarship in Sweden for the new academic in 2013. They explained us how to link the website of the scholarship in Sweden. It was a great time for us to get to know each other and get the important information.

On 21st of January 2013, we had a meeting with our mentor, Lena and all the CRC change agents in Cambodia. This was the first net work meeting of Change Agents of Cambodia. We were fifteen Change agents from five batches, 12th, 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th. First we got to know each other. Second, we explained about our different change projects purposes, and

achievements. And we also worked together to resolve the problem that we have met. Finally, we vote Ms Chin Yahan to be the board for the National Change Agent Net Work of Cambodia, and two boards of regions, Mr Seuy Vongsy is the board of Change Agents in Stung Treng and Mr Chhon Chheang is the board of Change Agents in Phnom Penh. We will hold a National meeting one or two times per year.

On 26 January 2014, Lena Andersson, Mentor of Cambodia CRC change agent conducted a meeting among batch 12, batch 14, batch 15, batch 16, batch 17, and batch 19. The agenda of the meeting include:

- Welcome remark and reflection by mentor
- Presentation by each member of the meeting
- Way forward: All Cambodia change agents agreed as below:
  - o Create CRC Cambodia Facebook
  - o Share CRC information or material
  - o Create CRC Library and Folder in Early Childhood Education Department.



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