



## Dak Dam community in Mondul Kiri province gets serious about education

School support committee spreads awareness about the value of education in a village predominantly inhabited by members of the Phnong ethnic minority, changing perceptions about the importance of school among parents and students alike.

Village Chief, Sen Tiev has lived in the Dak Dam village in Mondul Kiri province all his life and says that but for few exceptions, most of its inhabitants belong to the Phnong ethnic minority.

"I have lived here all my life and I can confirm that there are 60 Phnong households in this village," the 51 year-old man says.

"The way people live has changed, which makes it harder for people to earn a living now," he explains somewhat concerned.

"This is why I sent all six of my children to school to be educated and have knowledge like other people," he says and adds "I see that having knowledge is beneficial, because then my children can get a job as a teacher or as a translator for non-governmental organisations."

But Sen Tiev wants the same future he envisioned for his children for all the youth from his village. And that is why he was pleased to learn during one of the workshops organised by CARE that as a school support committee member – he has held that position for 2 years now – he should spread awareness about the value of education and should try and keep as many children in school as possible.

"I only learnt about the school support committee roles after I received the training. In the past, the support committee wasn't active as we didn't know what were our obligations and duties," the man recounts.

As soon as he learnt about his responsibilities, together with fellow school support committee members, he started educating parents about the value of education and what it could mean for the future of their children.

He would do this by going around, door to door and during monthly meetings that the support committee now holds with the community.



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*"Previously parents didn't send children to school or the students didn't attend school regularly. But now parents, students and the community as a whole have a better understanding of the importance of education so parents send their children to school and children don't skip it."*

"Sometimes students stop attending school because they need to help their parents at home or in the field," he explains.

Ever since the committee became fulfilling its mandate however, Tiev proclaims, most parents changed their attitude towards education.

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