



## School support committees act as a bridge between schools and communities

Thanks to their knowledge and increased activity, school committees support their schools and communities, improving communication between everyone involved.

Although she lives only 1 km away from her daughter's primary school, Sen Pech - a farmer from the Pu Hoam village in Mondul Kiri - is usually too busy with her daily chores to visit the school on a regular basis.

While in the past she might have had problems keeping up to date with school developments, ever since the Pu Hoam primary school support committee became active, she has been very well informed.

"I heard about the parents meeting today from the school support committee members," the woman, who belongs to the Phnong ethnic minority, explains.

"Sometimes I am very busy, so I cannot go to school but now the way the school spreads the message about meetings is it easier to stay informed. If there are updates, the school tells the support committee and then the committee focal person in the village spreads the information to the parents." Ev Sokhoeun, member of the Pu Hoam primary school committee and Vice Village Chief confirms that ever since the members participated in a training explaining the roles and responsibilities of the school support committees, which was organised by CARE, they began acting like a bridge between the school and the community.

"Now the communication between the parents and the school has improved because of the committee's activities," the man, who regularly pays home visits to parents, proclaims.

A very similar situation is playing out in the neighbouring Dak Dam primary school, according to its director, 35-year-old Son Mao.

"In the past the school support committee didn't really do anything. They just knew that they were part of the committee but they didn't know about their roles. After the training about their roles, they know what to do," the teacher-turned-director says.

"Now if there is any problem," he continues "I ask them to help. For example today the committee had to attend a meeting with the school authorities so I called them and asked them to try and contact others to inform them about the meeting."

Pjeoy Phaney Phnong, a female school support committee member concurs with Director Mao. She is adamant that thanks to monthly meetings with different stakeholders, the relationship and communication with the community and parents especially has changed dramatically.

"The relationship between the school, the school support committee and the community has changed, especially



© Nicolas Axelrod / Ruom / CARE

*"Sometimes I am very busy, so I cannot go to school but now the way the school spreads the message about meetings is it tells the support committee and then the committee focal person in the village spreads the information to the parents."*

now there are meetings. We are now sharing information between the school, the committee and the communities, say if the children are sick we inform the school and likewise if the children don't show up at school, we go and check in with their parents."

Similarly, according to her colleague Village Chief, Blong Seng, community members approach school support committee representatives to raise their grievances and worries regarding school and education.

"People from the community come to me to talk about the issues they have with the school," he says.

Luckily, the village chief of 14 years observes, the committee is now made up of different community members so they can communicate easily with their peers.

"In the past all the school support committee members were teachers," the man explains and adds "so it is really good that now we have community members as part of the committee."

**These activities are part of the *School Governance* project, which is supported by the Capacity Development Partnership Fund.**



ធនាគារអឺរ៉ុប



SWEDEN



មូលនិធិភាពជាដៃគូសម្រាប់អភិវឌ្ឍសមត្ថភាពវិស័យអប់រំ (CDPF)