



School support committee raises funds, improves school infrastructure and sets example for other women

Although 49-year-old Po Lei from Pu Hoam village has been a member of the school support committee only for one year, together with her colleagues she managed to achieve a great deal in the past twelve months.

The woman, who is a member of the Phnong ethnic minority, decided to become a member of the support committee for two reasons. First, she is passionate about education and second, she wanted to set an example for other women and girls in her community.

“I joined the support committee because I wanted to be a role model for other women in the village. I wanted to show them that we can do it too,” Lei, who is one of two women making up the eight-person support committee, says.

Ever since the committee became active, after learning about its role, she says the communication between the school and the community has improved dramatically and resulted in the committee actively participating in the school development plan.

CARE Cambodia has been supporting the Pu Hoam primary school through trainings, which elaborated on the roles of the school support committees. As part of these workshops, committee members were taught that they should engage in school development planning, fundraising and construction.

This is how the idea of fencing off the school came about, the woman asserts.

“We consulted the community and we all decided that we want to construct a fence around the school property,” she recounts.

After the decision was made, the support committee members went to their designated zones – the village is divided into eight zones, with each member responsible for one – to raise funds for the fence.

“I am really surprised how much money we were able to raise this time around, both from the community



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and NGOs,” she says proudly. “We raised 1 million riel (USD\$ 250) to buy poles so that we can put it around the school and have a garden.”

Lei’s determination and leadership illustrates how involving those from within the community in the governance of their local services can have a very positive impact on what communities can achieve.

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



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