

LESSONS LEARNED

**INTRODUCTION**

There is a direct association between high incidence of landmine injuries/deaths, rural poverty, limited livelihood opportunities and inadequate land access. This reinforces the need to integrate mine action with livelihood enhancement. CARE through its integrated demining activity under Australia Cambodia Mine Action (ACIMA) project has addressed this issue and demonstrated that land contaminated by mines when cleared can be used for agricultural purposes and improved livelihood security for the poor and vulnerable households.



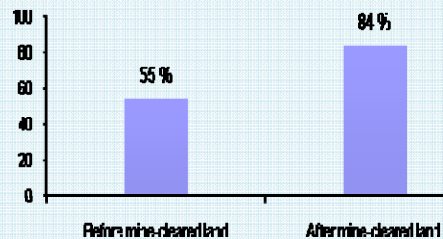
**OUTPUT AND OUTCOME**

CARE's integrated mine action strategy seeks to build community trust, cooperation, and a village-based collective response through participatory actions and approaches. CARE works closely with Commune Councils (CCs) as key implementing partners. Mine action priorities are identified in close collaboration with the communities and assessed by a sub-contracted demining agency through thorough technical surveys. These priorities are incorporated into the overall Provincial Mine Action Committee (PMAC) plans. Mine risk education is facilitated through community based volunteers

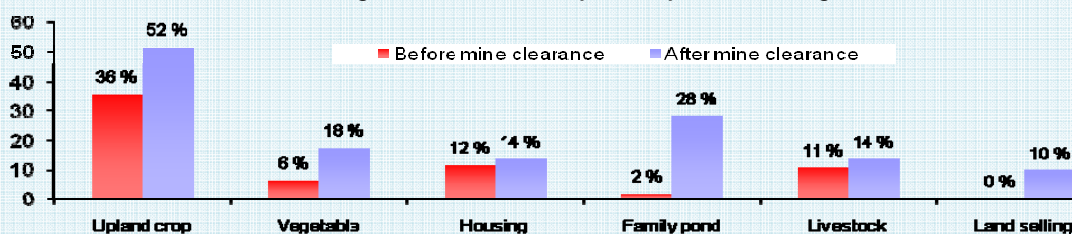
823,257 square meters of contaminated land were cleared for landmines by sub-contracted partner MAG. CARE's assessment indicates 70.6% for the cleared land is now being used for agricultural production, 12.7% for community purposes, 9.8% for housing and 6.8% for household ponds.



Due to the availability of demined land, an increase of 29% in the proportion of households utilizing land for livelihood purposes was observed.



Changes in the land use pattern post demining



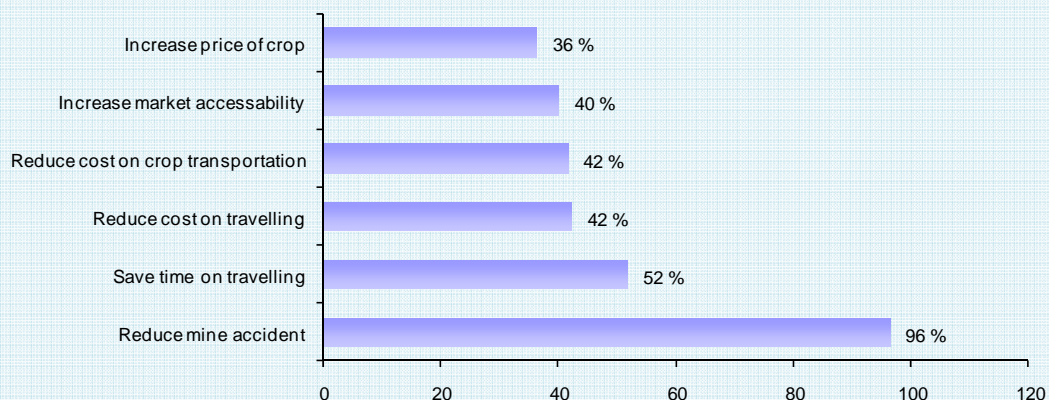
**Use of demined land:**

- On average 0.67 hectares of demined land per household was used for upland crop (including rice crop) cultivation up to a maximum of 3 times a year.
- Vegetables were also grown on an average 406 m<sup>2</sup> of demined land per households up to 3 times a year.
- Household ponds were constructed which benefited activities such as fish/frog raising, water for household use, water for drinking purpose, vegetable growing, and animal raising.



- **Mine Risk Education (MRE)** activities were carried out through IEC materials, Video shows, village based meetings and through schools.
- An increased proportion of men, women children and people with disabilities (PWDs) participated in MRE activities over the project implementing period.
- According to post training assessments, over 70% of MRE participants reported a high level of awareness whilst others reported moderate awareness.
- Community based mine risk reduction (CBMRR) volunteers were actively involved as facilitators during MRE campaigns for information dissemination.

**Perceived benefit by the community:** The community members feel safe while accessing demined roads which help in reducing the cost and time of transportation and increases access to markets and social services.





## Case study on Behaviour Change

Chan Kril, 49, was born in Tuk Meas district, Kampot province of Cambodia. His wife's name is Chan Sreyneang. He has total of seven family members, three of whom are females. Chan Kril, is illiterate, but his wife can read and write. During 2001, he worked as labourer who cut trees and harvested maize in another farmer's field. He and his family decided to live in the forest since they did not have land to construct a house.

As he and his family started living in the forest isolated from other community members, they did not receive any mine risk education or information related to landmines.



During 2008, Chan Kril along with his family went to the forest to bring back wood for the construction of his house. This resulted in a great tragedy as his eldest son lost both of his legs and two fingers in a mine explosion. With an intention to save his son, Chan Kril rushed towards him and unfortunately touched the detonator. Due to explosion the scattered pieces of the mine damaged his right eye.. His wife also received injuries to her hand. His second son and brother in law were also hurt in the incident.

After this accident, his family moved to reside in the nearby village. They received mine risk education organised by CARE which highlighted dangerous locations, secure places, and signs of danger.

His family was still going through hard times which forced him to work on mine suspected land once again. As they had received mine risk education his family members were now aware and could recognize the signs of danger. However changing the behaviour of vulnerable people required more than just understanding the problems.

To respond to Chan Kril's livelihood needs, village mine volunteers and the chief of the village helped him find a job for one of his family members.

His brother in law started earning 2,000 Baht per month to support his family's livelihood. CARE helped the family to carry out homestead activities such as frog raising, mushroom and vegetable growing. Currently, Chan Kril, raises frogs and he makes an income of KHR 12,000 per kilogram from selling them. Moreover, he has continuous supply of nutritious food for his family and he can now afford to send his children to school.

Chan Kril, has requested NGOs such as CARE to continue to support vulnerable households in his village with technical and material inputs to improve their livelihood. Chan Kril is very happy and thankful to CARE and AusAID for supporting him and his community to enjoy better lives free of the danger caused by land mines and UXO.



### Case study on : Use of demined land for livelihood activity

Noun Moeun, 50, was born in Kirivong district, Takeo province. She is the head of the household and lives with five family members, two of whom are females.

"I and my family migrated to live in Sam Lot district, Battambang province in 1981. At that time my husband used to work as soldier and he cleared the land for cultivation activities," she describes. In the year 1992, her husband died in a land mine accident. After his death, she struggled due to the lack of any income for her household. As a result she was forced to migrate to Kampong Cham province. She finally migrated to O Chheur Krom village, Stung Kach commune, Sala Krao district in Pailin province in 1998, relying on a mine suspected plot of land, 25 x 250 metres in size, for her livelihood. Her closest source of water was far from the house and she had to spend a great deal of her time walking on mine suspected land to fetch water for the household.



To earn a livelihood for her family she took the risk of cleaning her land – which may have been contaminated by land mines and UXO - to farm, digging the bamboo shoots in the forest and collecting cerumen ( the bat stool used as fertilizer) from the mountain cave.

During mid 2006, the ACIMA project selected her village as one of the target villages for project implementation. CARE staff supported local authorities and community members in selecting land mine suspected locations. As a result of the technical surveys and evaluations conducted by MAG, local authorities and the Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU) decided to select mine field of 77,200 square meters located in O Chheur Krom village to be cleared benefiting 18 poor households.

Noun Moeun's land was included in the selected area. Demining activities started during August 2006, and completed by April 2007. A total of 405 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti tank/vehicle mine and 64 UXO were found on Noun Moeun's land. At the same time, Noun Moeun's first son was selected to work as a staff member on the demining activities in the community. The demining groups were funded by AusAID through CARE's ACIMA project and each member received a salary between USD 90 to 140 per month.

After her land was completely cleared from land mines, Noun Moeun built a new house. With the support of CARE she used her land for frog raising, fish raising, a home garden (vegetable and mushroom growing), and dug a water pond and installed a pump for growing maize. Noun Moeun received a monthly income of approximately 15,000 Baht from maize, vegetable and other crops growing which helped in improving her livelihood.

Finally, she thanks CARE and Australian government, for helping her to improve her living conditions as well other community members' through land mine clearance and provision of livelihood opportunities.



### KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- CBMRR volunteers have played a key role in mine risk education and in developing community based networks for mine action. They have contributed significantly to the integration of mine action into development activities in their communities.
- Construction of irrigation system such as Canal rehabilitation requires extra caution as it is often implemented in mine suspected areas which can encourage the community to engage in high risk behaviour.
- The authorities, especially MAPU need to be involved in the implementation of mine action activities in target communities, to ensure a participatory approach to mine action planning, mine clearance processing, and land certification.
- It is important to ensure the highest safety standards are adhered to in carrying out these activities. A duty-of-care exists to inform all relevant project-related parties of the dangers involved.
- Special mechanisms should exist in the project to report any safety concerns and make appropriate adjustments in the mine clearance strategy.
- Mine activities are time consuming and involve high costs that can affect the implementation of other activities and hence required to be planned well in advance.