

Enhancing entrepreneurship skills in Cambodian cooperatives

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Farmers taking part in the ILO's Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) training programme, November 2016.

There are over 800 formally registered agricultural cooperatives in Cambodia, with a total of more than 100,000 farmers as members. [The Cambodian Institute for Research and Rural Development \(CIRD\)](#) , a leading local organization in promoting value chains development of agro-products in Cambodia, is among the organizations supporting the development of agricultural cooperatives. CIRD provides assistance to a national federation of farmer cooperatives as well as 26 primary cooperatives with a total membership of 5,000 farmers located in 10 provinces across the country.

As a part of the CIRD's pepper value chain development project, funded by [Swiss Church Aid \(HEKS\)](#), [a two-day training on business development and management using ILO's Community-Based Enterprise Development \(C-BED\) training programme](#), was organized in November 2016. A total of 24 participants from pepper farmer cooperatives in Tbaung Khmum province participated in the training in order to enhance their entrepreneurship and management skills and capacities.

Mr. Vannak MAO, CIRD Programme Manager, highlighted that C-BED is an innovative methodology for peer-based social learning, and as it is inexpensive and easy to manage, it is appropriate for community-based entrepreneurs. With this methodology, the role of the facilitator is to support the logistics, facilitate the learning environment, and support the participants in accessing information and services.

“We like the methodology because it eases the job of the facilitator. We did not need to prepare much before the training and we did not talk much during the training. Our aim was to facilitate the participants' learning, help them to understand each session, and make them involved in the

discussions. It enhanced team work and collaboration, encouraged learning, and built time management skills” said the trainers of the CIRDP field team.

In course of the training, participants identified and prioritized the most potential business areas, and developed business action plans. These business plans will then be presented to the members of their cooperative for follow-up actions.

“These C-BED Aspiring Entrepreneurs and Business Planning tools are very useful for our project as it exactly fits our training plans for the cooperative leaders”, added by Mr. Vannak, CIRDP Program Manager. As a result, CIRDP is now looking to institutionalize the C-BED methodology for their training offer.

“We are happy with the result of the first training rolled out in Tbaung Khmum. We are planning to apply this tool within another project operating in Siem Reap province where we are partnering with GRET (a French institution) supporting the farmer producer groups to adopt C-BED to reinforce their business skills. This would start from building the collective business plan move to business operation management and expansion”, expressed Mr. Sereyvath PRAK, CIRDP Founder and Director.

To respond to requests from implementing partners, the ILO has expanded the training curriculum beyond the core programme of business management skills for start-up and improvement. Now it includes learning modules to strengthen marketplace financial literacy, migrant women and workers empowerment, access to social services and assistance, and organizational development.



ILO's Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) training programme, November 2016.

Tags: rural employment, training, capacity building, cooperatives, cooperative development, enterprises, informal economy

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