



# Narrative Report 2024

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COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT ORGANIZATION

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## INTRODUCTION

The Community Advancement Organization (CAO), a local partner of Mekong Plus, operates in Romdoul district, Svay Rieng province, Cambodia. Established with the mission to eliminate poverty and promote education, CAO prioritizes rural development, particularly focusing on women and children. This report provides an overview of the organization's activities, accomplishments, and the impact of its programs in 2024.

## Transformative Programs Driving Community Progress

1. **Health Promotion and Education Program:** CAO's education initiatives have transformed the lives of students and communities by emphasizing gender equality, literacy, and early childhood education.
  - Scholarships and Bicycle Support: This year, 244 students benefited from scholarships and bicycles, ensuring access to schools despite financial barriers.
  - Gender Equality Workshops: 289 students participated in workshops to foster understanding and practice of gender equity.
  - Village Library Program: 232 students accessed resources in village libraries, which have become hubs for learning and literacy.
  - Community Kindergartens: CAO supported 70 early childhood students, laying a solid foundation for lifelong learning.
  - CAO conducted eye screenings for 10,000 students aged 8-18 in 42 schools within Rumdoul district.
2. **Agricultural Extension Program:** This program addresses food security and sustainable farming practices to uplift rural households.
  - Crop and Livestock Support: 650 households engaged in rice and vegetable farming, while 760 households improved their livelihoods through animal raising.
  - Cow and Pig Bank: 112 households benefited from this innovative program, increasing access to livestock.
  - Environmental Efforts: Over 698 trees were planted as part of reforestation and environmental recovery initiatives, helping to restore degraded land and improve soil quality. The tree-planting efforts also aim to mitigate climate change impacts by increasing carbon sequestration. Additionally, 13 biogas units were installed, reducing dependency on traditional wood fuel and promoting clean, renewable energy for cooking and other household uses.
3. **Poor Household Development Income Program:** Supporting self-reliance through microfinance has been a hallmark of CAO's approach.
  - Micro-Loans: 443 households accessed interest-free micro-loans to start or expand income-generating activities.
  - Saving Groups: 131 families participated in saving groups, fostering a culture of self-help and financial independence.

## Key Events and Partnerships

- ❖ **Support from Donors:** Various donors have significantly contributed to CAO's programs. Notable contributions include:



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- Mekong Plus is the main donor, contributing more than 80% of CAO's spending. Their support has been instrumental in enabling CAO's core programs, such as providing scholarships, promoting gender equality workshops, and implementing sustainable agricultural initiatives, which have significantly uplifted the local community.
  - Madam Marianne's ongoing support for the education program.
  - Madam Nicole (Juniclaire Foundation) who supporting on Emergency Assistance for the Children of Romdoul.
  - Mr. Philippe's donation of bicycles, aiding students from poor families to continue their education.
  - Contributions from individuals like Mr. Antoine and Ms. Amelie, who supported students and households through financial and educational means.
- ❖ **Visitor Engagements:** Several donors and supporters, including Mr. Bernard, Ms. Loanna, Mr. Edouard CHESNOT and Madam Francoise, Mr. Theiry, Ms. Veronique visited CAO projects, experiencing firsthand the impact of their contributions.

## Impact

In 2024, CAO's efforts have reached thousands of beneficiaries across Romdoul district:

- Improved school attendance and performance among rural students.
- Increased agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability.
- Enhanced financial security for poor households through micro-loans and saving groups.
- Greater community awareness and action toward gender equality and education.

## Challenges and Future Plans

Despite remarkable progress, CAO faced challenges such as limited funding for expanding programs, insufficient resources for early childhood education, and sustaining long-term donor engagement.

Moving forward, CAO aims to:

- Strengthen partnerships to mobilize additional funding.
- Expand community kindergarten programs to reach more children.
- Enhance capacity-building initiatives for local leaders and teachers.
- Expand the project areas to two communes of Romeas Hek district.

## Conclusion

Through unwavering dedication, CAO has continued to transform the lives of vulnerable communities in Cambodia. The organization envisions a future where every child has access to quality education and every household achieves financial stability. CAO calls on stakeholders and donors to join hands in this journey toward sustainable development and lasting change. With the support of donors and local stakeholders, the organization is committed to scaling its impact in the coming years.