

# Commune Chief's Leadership Drives Child Protection Progress in Peak Snaeng

Since October 2021, Mr. Sok Sie, the 63-year-old commune chief of Peak Snaeng in Angkor Thom district, Siem Reap province, has played a key role in supporting First Step Cambodia's Protection Plus project. With over a decade of experience, he is committed to improving the lives of his community. When First Step Cambodia introduced the project and its vision to establish Child and Youth Clubs (CAYs), Core Parent Groups (CPs), and Commune Social Workers (CSWs), Mr. Sok Sie immediately offered his support.

He helped mobilize and recruit CAY, CP, and CSW members, ensuring the process met project standards. He also facilitated their participation in quarterly commune meetings, where they shared the impact of their initiatives, such as workshops to reduce violence against children, prevent early and forced marriage, and promote gender equality and positive parenting.

In the first quarter, representatives from these groups presented their achievements, which Mr. Sok Sie found impressive and inspiring. He observed a reduction in violence against children in schools and communities, and noticed parents were adopting more positive parenting practices and valuing education. He was especially pleased to see community members volunteering as CSWs, dedicated to building their skills to prevent and respond to violence against children.



Mr. Sok Sie, Peak Snaeng Commune Chief,  
Angkor Thom District  
Photo by: FSC © 2022

**“As commune chief, I cannot do this alone. We must work together to prevent violence and protect our children. Raising awareness about child rights and positive parenting helps families thrive. I will continue supporting CAYs, CPs, and CSWs to lead workshops and strengthen our community. I thank First Step Cambodia for their support and hope for more training to empower our teams and committees.”**

Motivated by these rapid and meaningful changes, Mr. Sok Sie convened a commune committee meeting and successfully proposed financial support for CAY, CP, and CSW representatives-20,000 Riels (about USD 5) per month per member-to encourage their continued engagement and enable their participation in future meetings. This incentive, effective from January 2023, demonstrates his recognition of their vital role in child protection.

Mr. Sok Sie's leadership has inspired three other commune chiefs in Angkor Thom district, Chub Ta Trav, Svay Chek, and Leang Dai, to allocate commune budgets to support CAY, CP, and CSW members in their areas as well. His actions exemplify how committed local leadership, in partnership with organizations like First Step Cambodia, can drive sustainable, community-led progress in child protection.

