

# Kong Tei – Transforming Family and Community Through Empowerment

Kong Tei, 41, lives in Thnal Totueng village, Preah Dak commune, Banteay Srei district, Siem Reap province, with her two children. She is a core parent group member and representative in her commune. Her husband works as a Khmer traditional musician at Kulan Mountain Resort, while Kong Tei supports the family by growing vegetables and raising pigs. Despite their efforts, her family life was marked by frequent arguments and unhappiness. Her husband neither encouraged her participation in community activities nor helped with childcare and household tasks.

Since 2021, First Step Cambodia has been implementing the Promoting Protection Plus Initiative in six communes of Banteay Srei district, focusing on building the capacity of core parents to protect children and youth, especially survivors of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect. The project provides access to high-quality, gender-sensitive, and age-responsive support services.

Kong Tei joined the initiative as a core parent in Preah Dak commune and was soon elected representative of her 10-member group. She actively participated in comprehensive training sessions covering child rights and protection, violence against children, early and forced marriage, non-violent relationships, stress management, positive parenting, and facilitation skills. These were her first experiences with such in-depth training, which she found highly valuable.



Ms. Kong Tei, a representative of a Core Parent Group of Preah Dak commune  
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**“I am grateful for these training courses because they gave me knowledge I never had before. I am proud to have helped change my husband’s mindset—he is now more active and supportive. Our family is happier, and there is no violence anymore. I want to share this knowledge with my friends and other parents to protect children from abuse and exploitation. I am committed to making my community a safer place where domestic violence no longer exists.”**

Empowered by the knowledge and coaching from First Step Cambodia, Kong Tei began sharing what she learned with her husband during their free time, including evenings. She even invited him to attend a community awareness session on domestic violence organized by another NGO. Over time, her husband’s attitude and behavior changed significantly. He started encouraging her involvement in community meetings and training and took on more responsibility at home by caring for their children and helping with household chores.

Her journey illustrates how empowering parents with knowledge and skills can transform families and foster safer, healthier communities.

