



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

CAMBODIA

CASE STUDY

Srey Ra's Successful Struggle to Get an Education and Learn Useful Skills



Srey Ra and her mother in front of her house in Batheay District, Kampong Cham

The IBEC Project seeks to promote better educated youth with increased access to a quality and relevant basic education through an approach that emphasizes holistic programming, stakeholder-driven development, and improved educational relevance and management. To learn more, visit www.ibec.worlded.org

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Chet Srey Ra is a Grade 8 student studying at Sangkep Lower Secondary School in Batheay District with a scholarship from IBEC. She comes from a family of five including her parents and two sisters. She is the second child in her family and lives with her parents who are suffering from HIV. Both of them are dependent on medicine provided by Cheung Prey District Hospital. Srey Ra's father earns a living by buying and selling rats and snails that are collected by other villagers from the local rice fields. He keeps them until they are old enough and then sells them on the Vietnamese border. Srey Ra's mother's name is Dou Chandy. She earns a living by braiding hammocks from pieces of thick string. She can make one hammock in about two or three days and can sell each one for about \$5. She said that, "I take them to the market by myself but sometimes I can ask my neighbors to help sell them for me and some customers also come to buy them at my house."

Last year, the family was able to supplement their by receiving a pig from the *Schools Helping Families* program, that is a part of IBEC's life skills program. The assistance is part of the project's scholarship support activity for poor students. Srey Ra learned about raising pigs at school as part of her life skills courses and uses these skills to help her family raise the piglet that they received from the program. They did not get the pig to sell but to raise other pigs. Since last year, the family now owns 11 young pigs, which represents a considerable asset for the poor family. Srey Ra's Mother said, "I take care this pig very much, before I used to feed her three times a day, but now I have to do it four times, as she needs to breast-feed her babies."

Although Srey Ra comes from a very poor family, she spends a lot of time to participate in many school activities such as being a member of the Student Association, tutoring, and studying English with the monks in the pagoda in her village in the evening. Srey Ra always gets praise from her teachers, as she tries to study hard; recently, she got a commendation letter from her school because of her diligent study, "I received a commendation for studying Khmer Literature as I am good at it, but for Math and Chemistry I need some extra help," Srey Ra said. "I wish to finish Grade 12 and I want to continue to study at university. One of my teachers told me that if I finish university, I will be able to find a good job at a company or bank." Both her parents also want her to keep studying because she has determination, moreso than her other sisters. They believe that Srey Ra can succeed. Srey Ra's father thanked USAID for supporting his family because they have no land to farm since selling it to buy medication to treat their HIV but he hopes that if Srey Ra can finish school, the family can depend on her in the future.