

## Innovative & Sustainable development work



*ICC is not only serving Cambodians and local communities in order for them to escape poverty, but is also working towards improving their quality of life. Conventions and laws in Cambodia form the framework for bringing quality to people's lives through rights and justice. But this is not enough. Cambodians themselves need to contribute too by applying core values and norms, which will shape culture in Cambodia. Some of the values ICC likes to see included in the Cambodia culture are love, care and togetherness. In some of ICC's target communities villagers are now practicing this within their village and to neighbouring villages.*

One example is a community church leader, who for some years has learned from ICC-VIDP (Village Integrated Development Project) about how to bring changes to his community by direct engagement, collaboration with other villagers, and by utilising local resources. Now he is motivated and encouraged to share about his experience from his own village to another village. He has experienced that his church and its members can engage in developing their own community, and not just wait for others to do it for them. Much can be done by villagers themselves, when they join together. Furthermore, his experience is that not all development work needs to be based on funding from outside, but if local resources are utilised and optimised, these can be used to improve the community. Besides that, this church leader has also seen that development work is not dependant on religion, but that Buddhists, Christians and villagers with other faiths can bring positive changes to their whole community by working together. He says: "I will always bear in mind how to share my knowledge with others, and in return I learn more myself".

Hence, he decided to approach a neighbouring village, where he shared about his learning and experience. It took months before he started to see any progress in the new village. They really wanted to learn from this church leader, but they needed to understand well how to help themselves and how to identify and benefit from their local resources. There is still a long way to go for the new village, but the church leader continues to visit and share with them. One day he was very encouraged, because a young man from this neighbouring village came to consult with him, about how to involve himself in developing his village. After discussion and reflection with the church leader, the young man decided to use his knowledge and abilities to start an English class for youth in his village. His aim is not only to teach English to youth, but also to enable youth to understand the importance of togetherness, love and caring for each other. His hope is, that youth themselves will see how they can contribute positively to their community based on a common vision and unity.

It is an ICC priority to cooperate directly with target groups, in order to make ICC's development work long term sustainable under local ownership and leadership. Furthermore, ICC wants to see that initiatives and approaches designed and tested by ICC, are being shared and duplicated in some way or another to new areas of Cambodia, without depending on external human and financial resources.