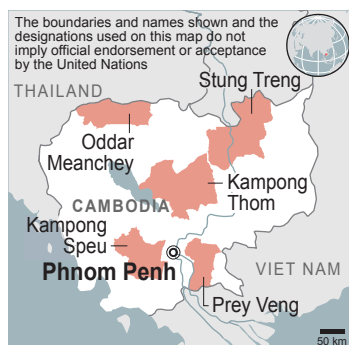


# Seth Koma: Survival and development of children in rural areas of Cambodia through village action plans



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



## Fast Facts

**Country:** Cambodia

**Duration:** March 2004 to March 2007

**Implementing UN Agencies:** UNICEF

**Other Implementing Partners:** Ministries of Women's Affairs and Social Affairs; Commune Councils; local NGOs

**Budget:** \$1,027,425

**Key Words:** Children; conflict-affected communities; health; sanitation; education; capacity building

## BACKGROUND

In 2003, Cambodia was suffering from the impact of a protracted conflict with large segments of the population living in extreme poverty and facing number of threats to their survival, livelihood and dignity. As a result, maternal, infant and under-five mortality rates were extremely high, malnutrition and disease among children was rampant, and the rate of HIV/AIDS was the highest in Asia. Moreover, while

literacy rates and enrollment in schools were increasing, a large percentage of the nation's population remained illiterate and without primary-level education. In order to change the state of human security in Cambodia, the needs of its children (52 percent of the population was under 18 years of age) had to be addressed.

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Seth Koma project, which means "Child Rights" in Khmer, sought to improve the health, nutrition and educational status of women and children in six provinces – Kampong Speu, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kampong Thom, Stung Treng and Oddar Meanchey – particularly among the poorest and the most

vulnerable households. This was achieved by strengthening Village Development Committees; improving access to health, nutrition, water and sanitation services; developing a viable adult-learning process; and providing children with greater access to education.

### BENEFICIARIES

The direct beneficiaries of the project were vulnerable communities and poor households. In addition, representatives from the local Government as well as Government institutions responsible for the promotion of children's rights also improved their capacities. As a result, communities benefited from higher

attendance at pre-schools, improved agricultural practices, increased income-generation opportunities, better construction of latrines, greater training on sanitation and hygiene, and growing awareness of domestic violence.