

PROJECT UPDATE

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE NEXT GENERATION
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PROJECT



Qualitative research

FROM BRIAN COOK
PHOTO: CHARIYA KORN

Hello/ជំរាបសួរ (Chom Reap Sour) from the research team of the *Next Generation Agricultural Extension Project: Social relations for practice change*. This quarter sees a shift in our data collection to qualitative methods and understanding all the social and material relations of farms, households and villages. The image above is Research Project Officer Pherom Song mapping farm relations in Battambang Province. Research team members have also facilitated training in participatory methods to begin Activity 4&5 data collection. Finally, we welcome Panhaleak Chay, who will be joining the Next-Gen team at PRD as a Senior Researcher.

Project Overview

FROM CAITLIN FINLAYSON

This project aims to produce an innovative model of agricultural extension founded on expanding enabling social relations, which will complement and/or replace existing models of extension based on the provision of technology, capital and information.

Duration: January 2021 to December 2026

Target Areas: Cambodia

Budget: AUD\$4.5million

Project Leader: Associate Professor Brian Cook, The University of Melbourne

What are the relations of a good farm?

FROM VAN TOUCH AND PHEROM SONG

PHOTOS: PHEROM SONG AND CHARIYA KORN

Activity 3A aims to develop a relational understanding of 'the farm' by considering the land and farm itself as an active participant and actant.

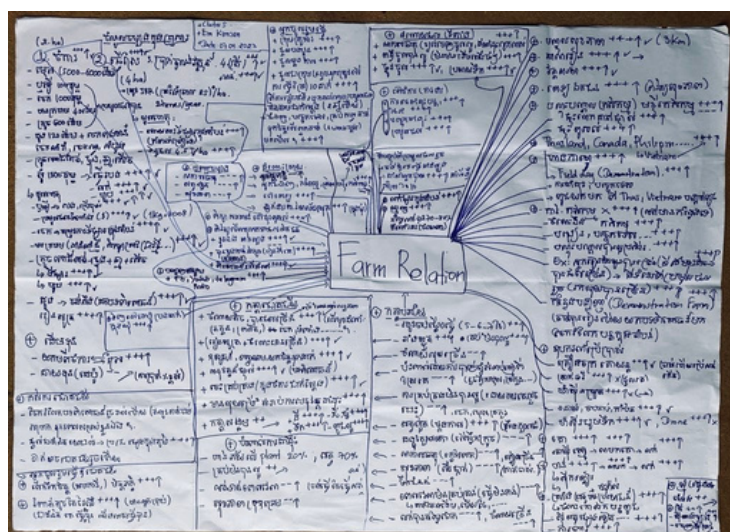
In September, our research team completed household semi-structured interviews with 52 representative households selected from the six household typologies - drawn from the Activity 2 Household Census.

The fundamental components and relations that constitute the farm are diverse and wide ranging as the map from an interview with 67 year old Kimsan Em, a farmer in Sangkae district, Battambang shows (bottom left). The activity demonstrates the interconnectedness of things, both social and material, relating to the farm.

Preliminary results find that a 'good farm' is characterised by the following attributes and relations: favourable weather conditions, sufficient capital resources, fertile soil, extensive farming experience, the ability to take good care of the farm, high-quality farm inputs, reliable farm machinery service providers, farm input suppliers, free support from household members and relatives, enough labour, well-developed transport infrastructure, resource and advisory support programmes by the public and private sectors, pagoda, silo, village leader, farm group initiatives, a health care centre, a market to sell agricultural produce at a good price, and diverse household income sources.

These findings will feed into the co-design process of Activity 6.

Listen to an interview with Associate Professor Brian Cook to learn more about Activity 3A.





Activities 4&5 Training

FROM CAITLIN FINLAYSON

PHOTOS: CAITLIN FINLAYSON

Professor Katharine McKinnon and Associate Professor Andrew McGregor were both in Battambang in October to facilitate training with the PRD team on qualitative and participatory methods for Activities 4&5. They were supported by Dr Van Touch, Dr Nicholas Harrigan and Dr Caitlin Finlayson.

The training began with an Introduction to Participatory Methods, a one-day course delivered as part of the social research methods programme within the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Processing at the National University of Battambang.



Following this, our team spent 3-days with Professor Katharine McKinnon learning to facilitate *Wellbeing & Livelihood in Community Economy Workshops* (Activity 4). In the top image we see the women's group discussing what wellbeing means in their lives and how well the current economy is meeting those wellbeing criteria. In the middle image Research Project Officers Saroeut and Lita share their group livelihood flow chart, which outlines the network of relations that apply to a key economic activity.

Activity 5 training encompassed 3-days learning about the purpose and data collection methods for this activity. Activity 5 will collect data on the contemporary and historic social and material relations that influence success - where success is approached holistically in terms of overall household wellbeing. This requires a deep dive into a relatively small group of households to generate rich understandings of why some households are doing well.



Associate Professor Andrew McGregor (bottom image) trained the team in the qualitative methods which will be used - farm life histories, farmer field walks and photo-response.

Welcome Panhaleak Chay

FROM VAN TOUCH

PHOTO: PHANHALEAK CHAY

Mrs. Panhaleak Chay joined the PRD team in October as a Senior Project Researcher. She holds a Master Degree in Rural Development Management from Khon Kaen University in Thailand and has experience leading and supervising project teams, as well as designing and implementing complex projects.

Added as a highly organised and positive-attitude person who has a solid understanding of issues encountered, she is keen to advance her career pathway in agricultural extension, research and development.

Leak is already in the field with the our Research Project Officers, and In-Country Project Manager Dr Van Touch assisting with the data collection for Activities 3B, 4 &5.

We look forward to working together.



Project Partners



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Resources

Check out the latest articles, blogs and research outputs which are shaping the project

Community development in Cambodian villages

Meas Nees explores the work of Krom Akphiwat Phum, a Khmer organisation who, in the 1990s, worked on successful community development projects in 21 villages in Battambang Province.

[Read more](#)

South-south migration

This study finds that the decision to migrate to Thailand from North-West Cambodia is influenced by poor house quality, education levels, small landholding size, and the number of initial migrants in a household.

[Read more](#)

