

Field Note on Field Study on **Teacher Saving for Self Reliance group, Mr. Va Sarun's profile**

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Mr. Va Sarun, the school principal of Baphnom high school, Prey Veng province shared his experience of forming a Saving for Self-reliance group with teachers at this school . The purpose of forming this *teacher-based* saving group was to assist teachers who are involved in the saving group to borrow money for starting a small business, in addition to their teaching to improve their living conditions. Teacher Va Sarun briefly described the background and formation of the saving group in this high school.



The saving group in Baphnom high school was created while CEDAC organized a teacher forum there in the year 2005. During that time, CEDAC invited Young Farmer Association's representatives who have been bad students (some are gangsters) at Baphnom high school to give presentations and share their experience with the teachers. These students who were considered to be bad students in class before, have now formed a Saving for Self-reliance (SfR) group to help each other with saving money: an amount of 130 thousands riels in 2005. Now, they have all improved both their studies and their living situations. They loan to the group member with a low interest rate of 3 percent. After the presentation finished, the teacher at Baphnom admired the students and immediately after, teacher Va Sarun started to create a teacher-based, saving group at Baphnom high school.

However, the formation stage was not easy, Va Sarun said. He shared the difficulties of forming a group. "It was very difficult to form a teacher-based saving group at first because they do not yet, have confidence in each other" He added. Va Sarun tried his best to build trust among these teachers since the initial stage and has now achieved success. With the success of a saving group in Baphnom high school, the teachers in other schools have started to form a saving group and then a saving association. As a result, the saving association in Baphnom district now has 409 savers (teachers), including 49 women teachers with 532 shares and a saving amount of 5,320,000 riels or US \$1330 (each share worth 10,000 riel or \$ 2.5).

The Saving Association now is providing benefits to teachers in Baphnom district, especially bringing them confidence. Vasarun said. He is sure that his teacher in Baphom could soon change from being **a service receiver to a service provider**. Va Sarun envisions the creation of **a teacher-based bank** in Baphnom district.