



Development of sustainable wood energy to improve community livelihoods and reduce pressure on forest resources

CAMBODIA



# SUSTAINABLE FOREST RESOURCE USE IN THE CARDAMOM MOUNTAINS



Focus on 2 provinces, Pursat and Kampong Chhnang, representing 10% of Cambodia's territory. These areas, on the foothills of the Cardamom mountains have been particularly impacted by deforestation. In addition, the area has high poverty rates.

**26%**  
of Cambodia's forest cover has been lost since 2001.

**61%**  
of the country's gas emissions are due to deforestation and land use.

## CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

- Over the past 30 years, forest ecosystems have been degraded at an unprecedented rate. Wood from the natural forest supplies growing demand for both the country's households and industries for energy and timber. Illegal logging in natural forests and protected areas also contributes to deforestation and landscape degradation, without providing income or acceptable working conditions for local communities.
- The Cardamom Mountains are one of South-East Asia's largest remaining rainforests and is essential to the lives of millions of Cambodians. The «buffer zones» at the foot of the mountain range, found in the provinces of Kampong Chhnang and Pursat, play a key role in providing natural protection against forest degradation and climate risks.
- Communities in this region are leading the fight against deforestation through community forests and community protected areas. However, they often lack the finance and technical expertise to manage and maintain forests.
- Established in Cambodia since 1994, Geres supports the development of a sustainable, legal and profitable wood energy sector and the reduction of wood fuel consumption.

## BENEFICIARIES

- Almost 100 part-time, but regular, jobs created for community forest residents
- 12 community-based organisations (representing more than 6,500 people) supported in the sustainable management of forests and protected areas
- 7 charcoal producers trained and equipped to carry out sustainable charcoal production
- 4,500 households supplied with sustainable quality charcoal

## OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

3 complementary axes help improve local living conditions, preserve forests reduce greenhouse gases and increase resilience to climate change:

- Support to local communities for the restoration, management and sustainable development of 3,600 hectares of forest
- Development of a sustainable, traceable and legal charcoal value chain, working with local communities and charcoal producers. Khmer Green Charcoal (KGC), a social enterprise manages distribution and sales.
- Building the capacity of communities and government agencies on forestry and energy planning



## ACTION PLAN 2021-2023

- **Financing directly 12 community groups protect and/or manage forests representing 3,600 hectares**
  - Payments for community patrolling
  - Financing sustainable silviculture practices
  - Creation of community-based livelihood credit scheme
- **Planting of additional 25 hectares of forest in community forests and communities protected areas**
  - Planting of acacia trees for productive use (inc. woodfuels)
  - Planting of fruit trees for additional revenue generation
  - Planting of native species in eco-tourism sites
- **Capacity building of these local communities for planning, reforestation, protection and financing sustainable and legal forest management**
- **Building a sustainable fuel sector: deployment of a wood traceability application, structuring of distribution networks, marketing, etc.**

## EXPECTED IMPACTS

### Socio-economic impacts

- Improvement of the financial capacity of local communities through additional revenues (from tree-planting, from patrolling).
- Creation or preservation of 150 regular jobs in the sustainable forestry and sustainable woodfuel sector
- A pilot community led credit scheme to fund livelihood improvement projects

### Environmental impacts

- Reforestation of degraded forest areas and protection of community forests
- Awareness raised about climate change and the impact of charcoal and forestry on greenhouse emissions

### Institutional impacts

- Strengthening communities in planning and financing of sustainable forest management
- Integration of energy-climate and biomass-energy issues in the public policies of targeted municipalities

## RESULTS 2018-2021

**18 hectares** of forest cover restored

**3502 hectares** of forest preserved by the communities

**225 community members** trained in sustainable forest management and plantation best practices

Increase in revenue for **173 people** (9,300 US dollars generated)



## TECHNICAL PARTNERS

- Khmer Green Charcoal
- Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- Cambodian Ministry of the Environment
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- UNEP-DTU Partnership



### MORE INFO



[www.geres.eu](http://www.geres.eu)

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