

## FY 2022 SUCCESS STORY: SUPPORTING YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE



MEETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES  
IN PHNOM PENH

The population of Cambodia is predominantly young, rural, and relies on agriculture. Over 70% of the population in Cambodia is under the age of 35, including 40% between ages 18 to 34. Rates of rural to urban migration are highest among this group, leading to labor shortages in agricultural areas. Creating economic opportunities for rural youth and young adults is essential to the long-term prosperity of these communities.

In response to these challenges, the Royal Government of Cambodia has undertaken key initiatives to increase the participation of youth in the agricultural sector: the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS) committed to integrating agricultural education into secondary school curriculum in its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is working to establish a Faculty of Agricultural Education and Extension at the Royal University of Cambodia (RUA); the Center of Excellence on Sustainable Agricultural and Nutrition (CE SAIN) recently launched an Extension program at its network of Agricultural Technology Parks; and the National University of Battambang (NUBB) has started to provide Extension services through its Faculty of Agriculture and Food Processing.

Despite these commitments, the majority of Cambodian youth still do not have access to formal agriculture or nutrition training and instruction. Agricultural education, particularly nutrition education, has not been integrated into national secondary school curriculum; the Extension system remains a patchwork of public sectors and civil society providers; and many university faculty lack the training to translate research into practice.



**TEACHER TRAINING ON INTEGRATING AGRICULTURAL CONCEPTS INTO STEM CURRICULUM**

Through paired remote, F2F Cambodia has supported these initiatives by partnering U.S. and Cambodian experts to organize trainings and demonstrations. This has included working with public universities NUBB, RUA, and CE SAIN's network of Agricultural Technology Parks (ATPs) to strengthen their capacity to provide Extension services to agricultural groups in their communities. Paired remote volunteers have also supported secondary and vocational schools to establish teaching gardens to provide practicum experience for students.

Building on these assignments, the first cohort of in-person F2F volunteers successfully completed their assignments in Cambodia on May 9-22.



**TEACHER TRAINING ON EMPLOYING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL FOR AGRICULTURAL TOPICS**

The cohort was comprised of agricultural Extension specialists and faculty from the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.



**REVIEWING AGRICULTURAL LESSON PLANS WITH EXTENSION WORKERS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY PARKS**

They traveled together to Cambodia before splitting up to work with their assigned host-organizations. Their assignments covered a range of topics, including developing agricultural education programs for youth, incorporating plant and animal sciences into STEM curriculum, and nutrition education.





MEETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES IN PHNOM PENH

At the end of the trip, the cohort came back together to present on their experiences and recommendations to MAFF, the MOEYS, and USAID/Cambodia. The volunteers strategized with NUBB, RUA, and the Agricultural Technology Parks how to strengthen their partnerships with secondary and high schools, and work together to promote the transfer of agricultural knowledge from school classrooms to home farms. The U.S. 4-H program in the U.S. provides a valuable model for engaging youth as the leaders of innovation and adoption in the agricultural sector.

