

OVERVIEW

HISTORY & BACKGROUND

Banteay Srei registered as a local non-government organisation (NGO) with the Cambodian Ministry of Interior in June 2000 and passed to full local management on 1st July 2000. Banteay Srei evolved out of the Australian NGO, International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) that had been working in Cambodia since 1989.

There are currently thirteen staff employed by Banteay Srei. Seven work in Banteay Srei's Phnom Penh office and there are three each in the Battambang and Siem Reap offices. There is one Australian volunteer working full-time with the organization.

PROJECT LOCATION

Banteay Srei currently works with 27 communities in the provinces of Battambang and Siem Reap. In Battambang the communities are situated in the districts of Battambang, Svay Por and Bavel, and in Siem Reap in Angkor Thom, Kralanh and Pourk districts. The work has been developed and implemented by IWDA in direct partnership with the Provincial Department of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (PDWVA) in each province since 1993.

Activities were first implemented in Village type A and B's by IWDA from as early as 1993 and the number of participant villages has gradually increased since then. When BS took over the program, they were already working in 11 type A's and 12 type B's and has expanded this year into 4 type C villages.

The Villages are ranked according to the intensity of their involvement in projects. Thus, in Village type A participants are involved in the full range of activities. Participants in Village type B's are involved in the majority of activities but not all, Village type C's are situated close to the existing project areas, and have been identified as poor and requiring support for the new phase by BS. Participants will receive the full program of training and support with all the project's components, as appropriate, in order to develop activities and create management structures.

VISION, MISSION & PROGRAM GOALS

Vision

Cambodian women have capacity and confidence in social affairs, have good physical, and mental health and participate in the leadership of family, community and society.

Mission

To bring about positive change for the poor rural communities in Cambodia through addressing the economic and social status of the poorest women.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS & GOALS

Food Security and Income Generation

- To ensure food security and skills for income generation for women beneficiaries through development of permaculture home gardens, small irrigation systems and saving/credit schemes

Women's Rights and Health

- To improve women's reproductive health status and promote women's rights to freedom from domestic and other forms of violence through a gender awareness program involving the whole community, the local authorities and health service providers

Women's Leadership Building

- To increase women's capacities and self-confidence to participate in decision making and leadership activities within the community

Advocacy

- To advocate for women's rights and give voice to poor and vulnerable women in the wider community to ensure links between the rural communities and the national environment where policies are implemented

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS & IMPACTS

Component A: FOOD SECURITY & INCOME GENERATION

During year three (October 2002 – September 2003), BS continued work on Food Security and Income Generation (FS/IG) for poor women and their families. BS recognises that food and economic security is a precondition for future change, along with increased self-confidence and community organizing capabilities.

The FS/IG project can be subdivided into four components: Working with the poorest (Arun Res project), water supply & sanitation, permaculture gardens, savings and credit schemes and the cow bank project (including village vets training). Banteay Srei works with three Types of villages in this project.

The support given to the communities differs according to the intensity of project involvement; in Village A's Banteay Srei continues to maintain contact with the committees and VWG's to monitor their progress, identify gaps and to provide ongoing support and encouragement. Banteay Srei is expanding activities - providing more wells, permaculture tools and materials. Banteay Srei provides material inputs and training to increase the number of participants in activities related to food security, as well as to increase the confidence and capacity of the committees for self-management.

WORKING WITH THE POOREST PROJECT

The selection of new members

With assistance from Village Working Groups (VWGs) and Village Advisory Groups (VAGs), Banteay Srei (BS) selected 78 new beneficiaries (77 Women) in 27 villages across Battambang (BB) and Siem Reap (SR). The selected beneficiaries joined the Arun Res (literally Sun Rise) group having been identified as families living in significant poverty. Families chosen had poor housing if any at all, suffered from debilitating health conditions, lacked basic resources, sustained long periods of food shortage, had no secure employment and were heavily in debt. The beneficiaries received interest free loans that were used to raise chickens and pigs, grow and sell vegetables. Certain beneficiaries received emergency assistance in the form of food provisions, medical/hospital expenses, basic kitchenware and materials for household repairs).

Emergency assistance

The new selected and existing Arun Res members [total 308 (306 are women)] received emergency assistance from BS such as basic food, treatment, materials for household repair, assistance in buying land and delivering babies, school materials for children were also provided.

Arun Res members joined interested free loan

BS discussed the possibilities of initiating small business ventures with the Arun Res members. Whilst some have previous experience in small-scale income generation they lack the capital needed to invest, others have no experience at all. A total of 217 (215 women) new and existing members joined the interest free loan scheme this period, many successfully ran a profitable venture and noted an increase in their incomes. Factors such as disease, ill health and insufficient skill combined to hinder others.

BS followed up the Arun Res members by organising meetings for 331 (324 women) of the Arun Res Project members (all women). The aim of the meeting was to discuss the progress made to improve living conditions and factors that continue hinder income generation.

Integration of the poorest families into FS/IG activities

The Arun Res Project was designed in 2001 to support the poorest families and has operated in 27 villages. The "poorest" community members are separated into a different project from the "poor" - numerous studies illustrate that resources, especially in regard to credit programs are absorbed by the community members who have the capacity - ie. the middle and upper classes. By forming the Arun Res Project, Banteay Srei is ensuring that resources are specifically allocated and made accessible to the most needy in the village. Furthermore, the stigma often attached to social status groups creates unsurpassable barriers - leaving many of the poorest people feeling uncomfortable or not being invited to mix with those of higher economic status. This project offers the poorest women a more enabling environment in which to address their issues. Once improvements to the living standard and the situations of the poorest reach notable levels, Banteay Srei assists in mainstreaming them into the other program areas and encourages their participation in all of the projects.

Working With the Poorest

Ms Choeun Chon, 44 years old is separated from her husband has 4 children. Chon's husband left the family because he believed in what a fortune teller had told him - the teller said that his business failed because of his family. Chon was shocked by hearing this. Since her husband's departure all of the family responsibilities upon Chon. Chon is responsible not only for her 4 children but for her sick and elderly father. After her husband's departure Chon became very poor and herself and her son were forced to sell their labour. BS visited Chon in 2002 when staff were identifying beneficiaries for the Working With the Poorest project. Chon and her 4 children lived in a small house, owned very little and were living in poverty. Due to serious economic constraint, Chon's eldest son (14 years) could not attend school he too was forced to sell his labour in order to secure any income and indeed to feed the family.

Chon joined the WWP project and borrowed 100,000 Riel without interest and used the loan to buy vegetables from her village and sell at the market. Her business helps with extra income addition to selling labour. Since Chon join the project, the income Chon has now afford food security unlike before where the family would sometimes see long periods without any rice. Importantly all four of Chon's children are now able to attend school. Chon says, "With the interest free loan, my family can now survive, especially my father who had become seriously ill". She now voices a desire for her children to get a higher education - her illiteracy has compounded the difficulties she has been faced with. Chon now wishes to earn more money in order to buy a place at the market for her business.

WELLS & WATER SANITATION

Well construction

Water supply, both for household and garden use, remains a significant problem in BS target areas. This year BS provided materials to construct 46 wells in 27 villages. BS provided material resource (cement rings, cements, hoes and buckets) whilst the communities provided the labour. At least 5 families were responsible for digging and maintaining each well. Construction took approximately 10 days to complete, depending on water levels and ground composition.

Arsenic Testing in well water

To ensure the safety of the water, BS contracted Rural Community and Environment Development Organisation (RCEDO) to test the well water for Arsenic in both provinces. The results identified 2 wells in Sang Rang village, Bavel district, BB province as containing arsenic (0.01 mg/Lt). RCEDO suggested pumping the water out and cleaning the wells before use.

Training

BS staff also held an information session on well maintenance and water sanitation (use of water, water source, consequences of using unclean water, hygiene, diarrhoea and dengue fever) to 281 beneficiaries (238 women).

PERMACULTURE GARDENS

Selection of new members and distribution of home garden tools

The permaculture gardens are designed to increase vegetable consumption and generate income for poor families. This year BS continued to extend to a number of new beneficiaries. A total of 104 new members (all women) were selected by the permaculture committee in consultation with BS staff and received the necessary permaculture tools (2 water jars, 2 hoes, 2 buckets and variety of seeds). In addition they received a series of trainings on permaculture techniques from the committee with support from Banteay Srei staff.

Trainings

The permaculture committees play an important role in monitoring the members progress and in discussing any issues they may have. In addition some conduct training for the members, based on the training BS offers the committees. To better enable them to carry out these tasks, BS staff conducted a set of trainings. This year, BS provided complete courses for 60 permaculture committees in both provinces.

Training was also provided for 112 members of the permaculture scheme. Sessions included nutrition, home gardening and health, insect prevention and compost production, soil suitability, storing seeds and making natural pesticides. Interestingly this training was

attended not only by new members but also by those existing member who wanted to refresh their own knowledge.

Assessment of permaculture activities

It was noted by BS staff that certain Permaculture Garden members had begun to lose interests in their plot. BS contracted Centre d'Etude et de Development Agricole Cambogien (CEDAC) to conduct an evaluation to assess the reasons behind this. The assessment took place in July – August 2003 and lasted for three weeks.

SAVINGS/CREDIT SCHEME

On the suggestion of the Credit Committees BS did not provide additional credit funds to communities last year. Concerns were raised about the security of managing large sums of money. Despite this, the schemes were managed very well with support from BS and the Provincial Department of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (PDWVA) staff.

Training

The committee managed the project efficiently and professionally, keeping accurate and regular records. BS further supplemented their skills by providing training to 49 credit committee members (47 women) on record keeping and accounting.

COW BANK

Selection of new members and distribution of cows

During this period BS selected 46 new members (41 women) to join the cow bank project. Each member received one cow. Families selected do not own drought animals, though they may own crop-producing land, a member of the family must be available to look after the cow. Those households that are headed by women take preference, as do those in extreme poverty. Each beneficiary receives one cow and nurtures that cow until it bears calves; once calves have been produced they are returned to the bank for redistribution to another family. Those who receive a cow then in turn pair up with another member family once paired BS supplies the two with one plough. As a shared resource the plough undoubtedly improves the efficiency of members farming.

Training

Training on livestock raising was provided for 46 beneficiaries (41 women). Issues discussed included determining age, feeding and nurturing whilst focusing predominantly on caring, vaccination and identifying common causes for disease.

14 committee members (10 women) received further training on record keeping, monitoring and report writing.

Banteay Srei invited staff from the Animal Health Department to run a four-day training course with 17 Female Village Vets. The training was based on an individual assessment of the skills needed.

Component B: WOMENS RIGHTS & HEALTH

Values and attitudes based on sex discrimination can impair the progress of women, and jeopardize the strategies aimed to increase their well-being and strengthen their role in society. Banteay Srei has identified access to appropriate services and information on women's health, as having a major impact on women's lives. The freedom for women to make choices concerning childbearing and sexual behavior is also a prerequisite to development with a gender approach. In the same way, only raising the awareness of the whole community about the right of women to equality, and the confidence of women to act together and speak out, can trigger a reduction in all forms of violence against them.

The Women's Rights and Health Component has two projects: Community Action on Reproductive Health and Community Action on Violence Against Women.

In village Type A's BS only backed up the capacity of the CGCs and VGPs as BS phased out in April 2003. In village type B's and C's, BS continues to refresh village women's and men's knowledge on Reproductive Health (RH) and Violence Against Women (VAW), respond to some concerns about the side effects of the use of contraception and influence the knowledge and attitudes of the communities by using the drama performance and community meetings.

In SR, Banteay Srei still continues to run the Home Based HIV/AIDS Care in Pourk District. However, due to a lack of staff and strategic decision to narrow the focus of work, BS decided to hand over the Home based HIV/AIDS care to the Buddhist for Development (BFD) organisation.

COMMUNITY ACTION ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Community meetings

Community meeting on Reproductive Health

BS staff conducted half-day community meetings in sixteen village type B's and C's to raise awareness on reproductive health among married women [total 967 women] and men [total 517 men] in the villages. Whilst similar events were held the previous year, monitoring and evaluation highlighted that many still felt confusion over contraceptive side effects, and many remained unsure of how the disease is actually transmitted. In order to overcome confusion surrounding HIV/AIDS, each village held a meeting to focus on dispelling myths that surround the use of contraception and transmission of HIV/AIDS. BS invited Health Center staff to join the meeting which was used as an opportunity to refresh, restore and reiterate information about Cambodia's current AIDS/HIVs problem - its endemic

proportions, unforgiving nature and continuing growth. With no available cure, and with anti retro virals available only at a high cost, the message conveyed was prevention rather than cure. The Health Center staff also provided information about their referral system.

The outcomes of the workshop:

- Men were better practiced at fitting a condom and later viewed condoms as a means of both preventing disease and birth spacing
- Female participants received clarification from the health center staff regarding the side effects of using contraceptives.
- Women understood the nature of the side effects, learning that within three months their bodies should adapt and the effects no longer be felt.
- Health Center staff agreed to offer contraceptive (pills) free of charge to the poorest women.

Community meeting on Reproductive Health Rights

To ensure the communities were aware of the rights women possess to control and protect their own bodies, BS held community workshops for both women and men in 5 villages (type B's and C's). The topics included: the right to get information on RH, received services, choices, safety, confidentiality of counseling, voicing concerns about services provided and health care. A total of 87 women and 66 men attended the workshop.

The outcomes of the workshop:

- Male participants changed their perception of their wives as objects under their ownership – now realizing that their wives have the freedom to choose if and when they wish to have sexual intercourse.
- The male participants also learnt about the availability of male contraceptives on the market – previously they have thought that contraceptives were exclusive to women.
- The female participants were happy that men attended the community workshop on RH rights, as most men tend to dominate women in respect of reproductive health.
- Both males and females began to pay more attention to the implications of reproduction, the participants had previously paid little attention to the impacts ill health/abuse would have on an unborn child.
- Women were able to select their preferred method of contraception.

Meetings with health centre staff

BS staff conducted five meetings, each meeting was held for one day. The meetings focused on exchanging information between Health Center staff, CGCs and VGPs [total 76 (51 women)]. The previous year's activities were discussed in depth – including analysis of successes and downfalls. Issues relating directly to the reproductive health of village women were also discussed. Following the analysis participants identified potential solutions and went on to develop an action plan for this year (2003).

VGPs and Health center staff shared current RH statistics, this information confirmed that the majority of contraceptive users firstly take the contraceptive pill and secondly opt for the

depo injection. Evidence also suggested an increase in the number of women now using condoms as a method to control birth spacing. However, despite the increase, the number itself remains very low. Some women continue to misunderstand the nature of contraceptives and this accounts for many females reluctance to use them. Even those not scared to try sometimes were put off purely because they lacked the knowledge about what was fact and what was fiction. The VGPs approached the Health Center staff to question a number of these misunderstandings and receive clarification. Widespread misconceptions include the beliefs that:

- *'Using a condom can create/increases your risk of getting HIV/AIDS'*
- *'Using a condom can cause of cancer of the uterus and using IUD can cause surrounding fat on the uterus'*

The Health Center staff recommended that the VGPs discuss a few of these issues with the women prior to visiting the Health Center. They also expressed that where possible the process could be made more efficient if young children did not accompany mothers to the health center. This was merely a suggestion as the staff emphasized they appreciate this is not always possible. However the presence of children in the past has prevented mothers from concentrating fully on the information being given too them, it is important that the women understand the advice and explanations being offered. The Health Center staff also suggested VGPs should encourage women to have a health check each time they attend the center. Embarrassment often prevents women from having medical check ups simply because they feel too shy to allow doctors to examine their bodies. A further plan was devised between VGPs and Health Center staff to conduct a community workshop to continue dissemination efforts. BS staff noticed that the meetings between Health Center staff and VGPs have contributed to building a strong and amicable relationship between the parties; it has also helped provide VGPs with the confidence to approach Health Center Staff and has effectively doubled the size of their action force. The Health Center staff voluntarily participated in preparing the community workshop's agenda on RH.

Training

BS held a three-day workshop for 79 CGCs & VGPs [48 women] on gender and reproductive health, misunderstandings about using contraceptives, counselling skills, prevention and reducing spread of HIV/AIDS, reproductive health rights, abortion law and using Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials on RH.

After the training the participants reported it had clarified the misunderstandings of using contraceptives, increased their confidence in disseminating information about RH and better enabled them to send clear messages to village women and men. Following the training condoms were distributed free of charge by Banteay Srei, these condoms were then further distributed among the community by the VGPs. There are a number of young VGPs who participate in the BS scheme, they expressed an interest and plan to talk with the youth of the community about RH and RH rights. Not only will this provide the younger generation with a forum to express their concerns, views and questions without the fear of being ridiculed or ignored but it will also target a generation who ultimately have age and time to

instigate change. Furthermore, information disseminated to adults within communities often fails to filter as far down as the young. It is hoped that such discussions will circumvent the problem both presently and in the future.

Individual home visits to follow up the women using contraceptives

Weekly home visits were carried out by the Commune Gender Counselors (CGCs) and Village Gender Promoters (VGPs). During each visit issues both central and secondary to reproductive health were discussed. Although thematic, the discussions worked on a personal level, in that in dealing with each individual's case the topics would differ. Any issues discussed were expanded upon at later meetings, used to develop training and of course used to follow up progress with individuals who had decided to use the contraceptives. The CGCs and VGPs aimed to establish:

- Whether contraceptive users wanted specifically to use contraceptives to space child birth
- What type of contraceptive methods they used,
- How they accessed those contraceptives,
- Problems and difficulties they experienced in communicating/dealing with Health Center staff and
- Whether they experienced any side affects from using the drugs.

Several women wished to see the furtherance of encouraging men to use a condom, this desire stemmed from a number of reasons however often it was linked to the woman's dislike of contraceptive side effects – notably weight gain attributed to the contraceptive pill. Positively in both Battambang and Siem Reap women now feel confident enough to attend the health center without being accompanied by a village gender promoter. This in itself is a small but significant step forward. The Health Center staff acknowledged the important and vital role the VGPs have played in encouraging women to access their service.

Home Based care on HIV /AIDs

Since August 2002, BS has extended the Home based care project to seven new villages. In order to facilitate work in these new villages, BS organized meetings with community leaders to explain about BS as an organisation and to discuss the present HIV/AIDs situation. Discriminatory behaviour towards People Living with HIV/AIDs (PLHAs) is widespread and prejudicial views held by many, regardless of social or economic status. PLHAs are often forbidden to return to their home villages after diagnosis, female suffers are branded with condemning labels, some even find simple tasks difficult to undertake such as the buying of food or provisions. In an attempt to overcome this stigma BS trained the village chiefs on HIV symptoms, transmission and prevention and HIV law. It is hoped they will participate and support the project.

Peer education continues to play a central role in the dissemination of anti discriminatory information; villagers selected on the basis that they expressed interest also received the training. As peer educators their responsibility lies in the informal dissemination of information about HIV/AIDs, often an incredibly powerful tool in filtering messages.

Workshops were also conducted with Carers on the prevention, symptoms, transmission and care of HIV/AIDS victims. As well as providing basic material needs, BS Community Assistants visit the PLHAs in each village at least once a month to offer counselling and assistance. The assistants also help the Health Centre staff facilitate health checks and distribute medicine.

A meeting between PLHAs, Group leaders of HIV support groups and Health Center staff was organised by BS. The meeting was an opportunity for PLHAs to voice their complaints about the quality of services being offered to them. Clarification of the services provided by the Health Center was also sought and achieved.

With permission from the Head Monks of community temples, the PLHAs now have the chance to visit their temple every Holy day to pray and eat food. The purpose of this is to allow the PLHAs a chance to relieve their minds and share food with the monks. Nutritional food is organised by BS community assistants. It also allows them the opportunity to meet other diagnosed sufferers with whom they can discuss their concerns.

The HIV orphans in BS target villages received school supplies (school dresses, books, pens and shoes) they are also supplied with basic food, so they can continue their education.

Case study

Roeun Nary 39 years old, lives with her husband and 4 children (1 girl and 3 boys). Nary was invited to attend the community meeting on Reproductive Health organized by Banteay Srei. Nary said " I am interested in the discussion on reproductive health. After the community meeting, I discussed family planning with my husband. I have 4 children and we did not want to have more so I decided to go to the Commune Health Center where I could access the contraceptives. I used pills from the Health Center."

Since Nary used the contraceptive, she has stopped becoming pregnant and can now afford more time to earning income, looking after the children, reducing the money spent on treatment and even contribute her time to community work. Currently Nary is a member of cow bank committee that manage the cow bank project, provided by Banteay Srei. Nary noticed that her health has improved since she no longer gets pregnant each year. She was happy to see how active the VGPs who assisted her and other village women to discuss issues related to the reproductive health had been. She said she felt welcomed by the health center and that they good services. In the future, She and her husband do not want to have more children. Nary said " I still plan to work as a cow bank committee, so I can contribute to the social work. Now, I stop using pills but change to use condom that does not affect my health". Nary also said that the villagers in her communities gained awareness on the reproductive health and rights. Women and men were discussing on how many children they plan to have. The villagers also aware on the spreading of HIV/AIDS.

"I am so proud as I have participated to the community work that benefit to the women in the village. I want my children to get education better than me and my husband as I see education is very important."

[Andong Prinq village, Battambang district, Battambang province]

COMMUNITY ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Community awareness raising workshops

Community workshop on gender and decision-making

BS staff directed half-day community meetings in both type B and C villages to raise awareness about gender discrimination to village women (339 women) and men (229 men).

The aim of the meetings was for village women and men to gain a better understanding of gender roles, how vital both female & male are in a reproductive and productive context; and gender and decision-making. The female and male participants paid particular attention to the gender and decision-making: observing that, in the past, community meetings were overwhelmed by a majority of male participants and decision makers. However since BS began work in the community the majority no longer stands and women have begun to play a far greater role in decision-making. Many participants expressed surprise that household work was being perceived as a productive role.

Community workshop on trafficking issues and law related to VAW

Last year, BS conducted the community workshop on Domestic Violence (DV) issues in four village type C's. This year, BS organised the community workshop to give further information on rape and trafficking issues, including trafficking law and DV draft bill to 153 villagers (103 women). The participants raised the question concerning two incidents of rape in their village (a step father raped a step daughter and cousin raped a sister cousin). The law said the perpetrators must be brought to justice. The victims filed a complaint to district office but the solution was monetary compensation. Why was this the case? The response from the facilitator indicated that compensation is the normal solution offered. However this is not a situation that we can accept but weak enforcement of the law, corruption and lack of sufficient evidence make the crime of rape a very difficult one to punish. The facilitator encouraged the participants to inform others to jail perpetrators rather just taking compensation. During the workshop the contact address of the emergency assistance for victims was also provided.

BS observed that following the workshop, many women felt empowered to report to the local authorities and those who did not wish to go through the local authorities asked VGPs to assist them in filing a complaint to the provincial court. The local authorities are more willing to actively support the victims than they have been previously and most women said they were satisfied with the support in place.

Extension of village libraries

Based on the successful piloting of libraries in four villages last year, BS decided to extend the scheme to 22 further villages. Many school children have voiced an interest and continue to utilize the facilities.

Training

Training on law related to VAW and method of filling a complaint

Banteay Srei invited staff from Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) to conduct a three-day training course on basic human rights, methods for filling complaints and availability of assistance, whilst giving guidance on the laws surrounding marriage and trafficking. The decision was prompted by requests from both local authorities and CGCs/VGPs who expressed difficulty in assisting the victims with writing complaints and finding corroboratory evidence. They also expressed some uncertainty about the current

VAW laws and wished to clarify any misinterpretations. A total of 150 local authorities (45 women) attended the trainings.

Feedback received from this training has been positive, VGPs in Tmar Kol district, BB province were familiar with ADHOC prior to the course and mentioned that following its completion they even felt competent enough to assist one female victim from their region to file for divorce

Training on gender and decision making

BS also conducted a three-day workshop on gender issues and decision-making to 35 CGCs and VGPs (6 women). The workshop was focused on differences between gender and sex, gender roles, gender analysis, and gender needs. The participants paid particular attention to the gender analysis and gender needs. They also noticed changes of behaviour related gender roles.

District Task force meetings

District task force meetings are held three times annually. The aim of the meeting this year was to exchange information about VAW cases in the region and to discuss any related issues. This year like the previous year, BS arranged two meetings in each district (12 meetings in 6 districts where BS implements the project). As it coincided with the national election time the agenda for the meeting was about gathering information about women and politics i.e. the strength of local authority support for female candidates and to gauge widespread community and Local Authorities attitudes towards VAW.

Performance traditional dramas on VAW

BS identified actors in SR to use theatre as a tool to disseminate information about trafficking and HIV/AIDS. BS drafted the drama scripts. The Drama was performed in 4 BS target areas (2 villages in BB and 2 in SR) around Khmer New Year (mid April) when most people return to their villages to meet with families for the celebrations.

Before Khmer New Year BS organised a drama performance on VAW in BS project areas. Titled “ **The Wilting Flower** ”, the purpose of the drama was to focus on the causes and impacts of trafficking women as sex workers. Particular attention was paid to the correlation between sex work and the rapid spread of HIV/AIDs. Each Drama performance welcomed an audience of approximately 2000 people (total 9300) who all differed in age and sex the drama appeared to unite old, young, male and female. Very positively the performance was not exclusive to BS members, large numbers of villagers from the same commune turned up to watch the show.

A summary of performance impacts:

- The drama performances were successful and popular as indicated by the large audience numbers and beneficiary feedback.
- Staff observed that villagers found the drama made it easier to focus on the issues and draw discussions at the community workshop.

- Audiences enjoyed the performance and they said, " The performance reflected the real situation of VAW".
- In particular they mentioned that the scenario of domestic violence and the scene of the victim dying from HIV/AIDs were particularly powerful.
- The villagers expressed that the drama conveyed the idea that rights, and 'human rights' in particular, are not exclusively enjoyed by those who are rich, have higher status or possess control, but basic rights that should be enjoyed by everyone.

Assisting women victims from VAW

CGCs, VGPs and BS staff continue to work closely with local authorities to assist the victims of VAW. In most of the cases women victims to report to VGPs who talk with both the victims and the perpetrators. But in the case that these problems could not be resolved VGPs referred to the Village or Commune Chiefs. In the more serious cases VGPs, with assistance from BS, accompanied the victims to shelters (Cambodian Women Crisis Center operates the shelter in SR) or assisted the victims to file complaints at the provincial court.

CGCs and VGPs provided counselling to the female victims on issues of violence in order to help them decide which path/solution they wished to pursue. It took time until women were ready to decide if they wanted to file a complaint. Some women just filed a complaint at the village, commune or district level. With the process of filing a complaint, CGCs and VGPs assisted the victims to write a complaint, contact NGOs or local authorities and assisted them to get a witness.

Observations of the court procedures

BS supported 26 beneficiaries (13 women) to attended " divorce " cases in 2003. The purpose of this was to allow participants to gain a better understanding of case procedure; from obtaining evidence and witnessing to cross examination and sentencing. This practical experience aided the transfer from theory to reality and was met by a positive response from most participants.

COMPONENT C: WOMENS LEADERSHIP BUILDING

Lack of self-confidence and gaps in education impair women's participation in decision-making and leadership. The involvement of women in economic activities is not sufficient to guarantee their equality, and this needs to be accompanied by support aimed to enhance their confidence, leadership skills and involvement in community activities.

The Women's Leadership Building component is the key to ensuring the sustainability of all other project activities, and in particular it is integrated into the food security leadership committee structures. Women beneficiaries are encouraged to increase their own capacity and confidence to take action within their communities, and to support project activities. Women participating in committees and activity groups receive support and specific training to give them greater management and relevant leadership skills.

The Women's Leadership Building component has three main activities: BS assisted the village type A's to take over the management and ownership of the project from BS. In village type B's and C's BS provided ongoing support and training to Village Working Group (VWG) members for them to be able to manage the project. BS assisted village type B's to develop the hand over plan and will take over the management of the project by March 2005.

Trainings

BS provided two sets of training for the 25 VWGs (22 women) on community development concepts, communication, negotiation skills, power & influence and conflict resolution. BS staff followed up the skill training for the VWGs members through the weekly monitoring visits.

Request received from VWGs from Type A villages prompted BS to hold a one-day workshop on proposal writing. As an interactive example BS asked participants to write a proposal to BS for well construction within their communities.

Study Tour

Village B Beneficiaries [total 24 VWG members (14 women)] were invited to visit the villages where the development agency (Watnakpheap) had been phasing out in order to encourage the people to participate in the preparation of hand over plan, inspire them and allow them to visualize potential difficulties in the process. The lesson learns from the visit have been brought for discussing the preparation plan for the hand over for village type B's.

Handing Over BS project to the 11 communities (villages type A's)

Last year, BS assisted VWGs and Village Chiefs from eleven village type A's in BB and SR to developed a hand-over plan. There were nine steps for the process of handing over the management and ownership of the projects to the communities. During this year, the nine steps have been implemented. The steps that the VWGs and Village chief went through are set out below:

Workshop - reviewing the hand-over planning

In January 2003, Banteay Srei staff conducted two open forum discussions - one in each province. The two-day forums were for 78 VWG members (61 women) and village chiefs to discuss the process of project hand-over. The aims of the forum were to review previously developed hand-over plans and to discuss any concerns relating to these. The first day was exclusive to VWGs to allow groups to voice their concerns in a comfortable environment without being ridiculed, intimidated or ignored. The final day was open to village chiefs and their participation was to share their own experiences of the previous years field visit in Takeo province. The hand-over plan drafted at last year's meeting in 2002 was also reviewed and amended.

Community meetings - inform the plan of hand over the project to the communities

The hand-over plan has been informed to all villagers so that they could prepare themselves to take over the projects from BS. The VWGs collaborated with village chiefs carrying out

the meetings with all villagers. The agenda of the meeting was the hand-over plan, the role and responsibilities of the VWGs in managing the projects and finally, questions raised by the villagers.

Community meetings for conducting village level audit of projects inputs

Village level audits of project inputs and resources (credit funds, animals, wells and permaculture tools) were conducted by BS staff. Following the Audit a clear outline of responsibilities for maintenance of resources was developed in 11 villages (5 in Battambang and 6 in Siem Reap). The basic audit schedule breaks down as follows:

Day 1:

- Meeting with VWGs, project committees and VGPs to check the list of project resources of VWGs and compare it with the Banteay Srei records. After the completion of the audit of project resources, VWGs, committees, Commune volunteers, PDWVA, Banteay Srei signed papers to acknowledge the list of project resources.
- VWGs and Committees reviewed the project rules and village structure

Day 2:

- Meeting with project beneficiaries, village chiefs, VWGs and Committees, village development committee (VDC) and VGPs to inform them of the list of project resources.
- VWGs introduced the village structure to the participants and asked the participants to review the village structure but there was no change from the original.
- Asked the participants to review the project rules (cow bank, permaculture garden, credit). There were requests for changes to the project rules.
- After agreeing on the project rules and report of the project resources, the village chiefs signed the papers to acknowledge the project resources and project rules supervised by the VWGs.

VWGs and Commune Council meetings

Before phasing out from eleven village type A's, BS assisted the VWGs to build up the network so they can get support when no longer past of BS. BS staff organised two meetings with the Commune Councils, one before and one after phasing out.

Before phasing out, BS conducted one-day meetings (one in each commune) for 87 VWGs and Commune Councils to strengthen understanding of what the hand over actually means for communities. The meeting aimed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all groups involved and strengthen relationships and collaborative work between VWGs, village chiefs and commune councils. Following a brief history of BS involvement in the villages the meeting expanded to discuss current involvement, internal structures, multilateral responsibilities and future involvement. Village Working Groups were also given a chance to give a presentation outlaying their concerns in relation to the hand over of project management and ownership.

At the end of the meeting the Commune Councils and VWGs agreed on future cooperation such as:

- Meetings every 3 months with VWGs to discuss any issues raised by the villagers.
- Commune Councils will invite the VWGs to participate in preparing the annual commune development plan.
- Commune Council will assist VWGs with all issues on which VWGs seek help and help to ensure the maintaining of project resources

After BS phasing out from the villages, BS held another meetings with the Commune Councils and VWG. The aim of the meeting was to find out about any concern raised by the VWGs that needed support from the Commune Councils and to build the confidence of the VWGs to collaborate with outsiders.

Formal ceremony for hand over the management and ownership to communities

The formal hand-over took place in April. The events were held at village level (in 11 villages type A's) where most villagers were aware of the take formal over of the management and ownership of the projects from BS. Each event was conducted for half a day. A total of 1185 the participants (1027 women) joined the events. The participants included VWGs, Project Committees, District chiefs, Commune Councils, Village Development Committees, Village chiefs, villagers, teachers, students, PDWVA and NGOs representatives.

Monitoring visits to villages in the process of phasing out.

Although BS phased out from the eleven Type A villages, we still maintain informal visits bi-monthly if there are still any support needed by the communities, especially VWGs. To enable staff to conduct the monitoring effectively, BS invited Mr Meas Nee (BS Advisory Board) to conduct a workshop to facilitate the development of an effective questionnaire for gathering data. Specifically the questionnaire aimed to assess the difficulties faced by villages approximately 2 months after phase out. The workshop was conducted in May 2003 and was attended by all BS staff.

After developing the questionnaires, BS staff went to the field to incorporate theory into practice - gathering and analysing data from four different villages. A Total of 41 participants from BB (25 project members, 2 VGPs, 5 village chiefs, 1 project committee, 8 VWGs) and 41 (11 VWGs members, 11 project committee members, 6 village chiefs, 12 project members and 1 VGP) were selected for interview.

Developing hand over plan for village type B's

A second group of village type B's (12 villages) is in the process of preparing the hand-over plan like village type A's. BS conducted a four-day workshop in BS Phnom Penh Office for 50 participants.

The workshop aimed to:

- Expose participants to the experiences and lesson learned by village A beneficiaries who had gone through the process of hand over and to share lessons learnt from the study tour- Wattanakpheap's program.

- To allow participants to gain understanding of the concept of handing over management and ownership to the communities.
- To provide tangible strategies for the final hand over.

As the results of the workshop, the participants identified 8 steps:

- Additional training for VWGs, project committees and village chiefs (topics have been identified during the workshop)
- Meeting to inform the whole communities about the hand over plan
- First Auditing of the project resources
- Redrafting of project rules
- Study tour
- Review of hand over plan
- Meeting with Commune Councils
- Second auditing of the project resources
- Formal hand over ceremony

VWGs and Village chiefs discussed the details of each step. The participants decided to designate the formal ceremony date as the 8th of March 2005.

Case study

Mrs Doung Cham (47 years) lives with her husband and 6 children (5 sons and a daughter) in a village in SR province. Cham and her family earn income from farming and foraging in the forest. Cham joined BS credit schemes in 1998 and was elected onto the credit committee by the remaining members. Before Cham joined the project, her confidence in reading, writing and calculation was low. After joining the scheme she no longer worries about these things and indeed has become proficient in both bookkeeping and record keeping. Consequently, in 2000 Cham was elected by the project members to be a head of VWG.

In 2001, Cham was elected as the Village Development Committee (a government structure) and she played an important role in encouraging villagers to participate in the repairing of the road.

She was also responsible for creating good relationships with other organisations that came to work in her village (PADEK, PLAN and Health Department).

Importantly Cham's husband now assists with the domestic burden and allows Cham to travel to attend the meetings and workshops facilitated by BS. Cham attended CEDAC meeting and will become a key person in establishing the farmer network.

[Leang Dau village, Leang Dai commune, Siem Reap province]

Component D: ADVOCACY

Banteay Srei has implements its Advocacy component by establishing a pilot radio drama on VAW and joint activities with networks such as the 16 days of Activism Against Violence Against Women committee.

Radio drama on VAW

A Needs Assessment and Pre-KAP surveys

The VAW radio pilot project started in October 2002 with a needs assessment to collect information regarding rural community attitudes and knowledge of VAW issues. This acted as a baseline for impact assessment when post exposure to the radio project information was gathered and compared to the pre-exposure data. The needs assessment activity was conducted in November 2002 in four provinces – Kampot, Svay Rieng, Battambang and Siem Reap.

Formation of Working Group to develop radio Drama story outlines

BS formed a working group from eight NGOs – Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC), OXFAM Hong Kong, Gender and Development for Cambodia (GAD/C), FRIENDS, Khmer Youth and Social Development club (KYSD), Cambodian Women's Development Association (CWDA) and CAMBOKIDS to gather a group of VAW issues experts in Cambodia to brainstorm the issues to be covered by a radio drama based on the findings of the needs assessment. The group developed followed key messages and provided a general story outline. Successful outcomes of the working group, which met 7 times from December 2002 into January 2003, included thorough character profiles and basic overall story outline. The name for the drama translated from Khmer to English is " Clouds hiding the sun " - referring to the life with shadows and darkness but is also positive because clouds can move and expose the sunlight also.

Radio Drama and talk shows recording

BS contracted Cambodian Health Media Service (CHEMS), a department under the International NGO, Health Unlimited to develop and produce thirty 15-minute radio drama episodes. BS also contracted Women's Media Center (WMC) to develop 15 half-hour talk shows, as CHEMS was unable to undertake any further work due to commitments to other projects.

Thirty Radio Drama episodes were recorded by CHEMS. Twelve key center actors portrayed the main characters in the drama. A total of fifteen Talk shows were recorded by WMC.

The drama depicts the life of a rural Cambodian community whose village conceals domestic violence, rape, marital rape and trafficking. The plotline reaches beyond a mere representation of these crimes and discussion; for example, the legal procedure for rape, the essentials of support & encouragement and the risks & impact rape has upon its victims. More over, using alcohol, gambling and polygamy the drama illustrates what are perceived to be causal links of domestic violence in rural communities, as elicited during 2002 needs assessment.

BS conducted a pilot test focused on getting feedback on some of the more contentious scenes from the drafted storyline, for instance, how realistic it is for the a couple to divorce because of infidelity. We also took the opportunity when meeting with various NGOs to ask their opinion regarding the issues. The pre-recording pilot test was conducted in one of BS

program areas – Phuk Sat village, Kralanh district, Siem Reap province. According to BS provincial staff, the area has a reputation for high rates of domestic violence. A total of 15 community members participated (female, male, adults and youths) in a half-day session in which we also tested the name of the drama show and the reliability of the advertisement design.

Broadcasting radio drama and talk shows

BS contract WMC to broadcast the radio drama and talk shows. WMC radio covers approximately 12 provinces.

Impact Assessment

Impact Assessment activities were developed between June and August 2003. The Assessment consisted of Pre/Post Knowledge Attitude Practice (KAP) surveys for all Village Monitors (VM's); a Listeners' Survey for non-VM's; Impact Assessment Focused Group Discussion's (IA-FGD's) for VM's and female non-VM's. Information collected during monitoring also contributed to the assessment of the projects impact. The Listeners' Survey was distributed to VM's during the final Monthly Monitor meeting in early August and was collected during the IA-FGD in early September. The Post-KAP surveys were conducted at the same time as the IA-FGD in September. Please refer to appendix 1 for the summary of Impact assessment.

Post-production meetings with both partners, CHEMS and WMC, took place in August. Although these did not contribute to the Impact Assessment, they did provide an opportunity for reflection and review of the project's development and the partnership experiences.

Case study

"In my village one of the men who used to beat his wife reduced his violent behaviour after listening to the BS radio shows. His friend from Phnom Penh came to visit and took him out drinking and told him that if he wanted to be a real man, he would need to make his wife fear him. So the husband started to take up drinking and beating his wife. The battered wife came to see me about it about one month after it started. So, I went to see the husband one day when he was sober and explained to him – "where do you think the money for drinking alcohol comes from? When your friend stops paying for the drinks, where will you find the money for it? Before you were ok but now you have changed – how good a friend is this man anyway? Is he a good influence or bad one on your life?" I spoke to him about DV - but indirectly, not blaming or referring to his violence. The husband blamed the wife for his violence and I said even if it is her fault, although I am not saying it is or isn't, you should wait until you are sober to deal with the problem not use violence (I took the information I learned from the talkshow). He seemed to take it in and the next time he went out, he still got drunk but didn't use violence on his wife. Instead he used sweet words. I couldn't believe it, that he actually listened to me!"

[female VM, Kompong Thom]

Advocacy through the networking

Banteay Srei is involved in international and national events advocating for women's rights and also supports the participation of project beneficiaries and volunteers' participation. These include International Women's day activities in PP and in the two project provinces

and attending the various network meetings of local and international NGO's in PP and the provinces.

Celebration of International Women's Day

The celebration of International Women's Day was organised by the VWGs with support from village chiefs, Commune Councils and Banteay Srei staff in 11 villages (6 villages in SR and 5 villages in BB).

ISSUES ENCOUNTERED & LESSONS LEARNED

Food Security and Income Generation

In Pourk district, SR province (Prolet and Sambour village) had a problem with water supply during dry season (March). BS has provided both open well and hand pump wells to Prolet and Sambour village but the level was very low as there was no rain at all during that season. Only two out of 10 wells have some water and people had to wait for collecting water. A lot of children have skin disease.

Women's Rights and Health

The women who did use contraceptives suffered from a number of side effects and many documented pressure from their husbands to stop using the contraception because of these side effects. BS organised a meeting with community women and men about the use and side effect of the contraceptive. VGPs play a role to help the men and women to provide counselling on this issue.

CGCs and VGP still find difficulty in assisting victims to write complaints. Despite having received specific training from ADHOC on this issue they still need further support. In particular with gathering evidence and presenting the document. BS encourages CGCs and VGPs to get support from the village chiefs.

Obtaining corroboratory evidence continues to be a problem. In the VAW cases, most people refuse to act as a witness because of fears for their own safety. This is a hurdle which will be incredibly difficult to overcome – unless people witness, justice will not be achieved yet if people do witness they may well experience their own injustice, in the form of violence or threat – the situation is a vicious circle. BS will encourage communities to help with the cases where they can, as it is important to assist and support the victims. BS also will inform the communities through other meetings about the use of witness.

Confusion and discrepancy between the courts and local authorities has not aided the process. The Courts argued that the local authorities were corrupt in telling villagers that they should not file a complaint to the court unless they wished to incur some form of charge. In turn the local authority argues that the courts were corrupt. The tensions that exist between the two faculties have undoubtedly affected the progression of BS work on both reproductive health and VAW. Next year, BS plans to exercise the task force meeting to

challenge these issues and put it in their meeting agenda. By encouraging communities to observe the court procedure, BS hopes that the court will conduct a proper job.

The difficulty is thus that although we have witnessed an increase in awareness about the laws that do exist to protect victims, few want to file complaints and continue to distrust law enforcement authorities. Rather than file a complaint, they just opt for compensation. Through observation of the court's work, BS hopes that the communities will get an idea of the accuracy and justice of the court. BS also plans to organise an open forum for the communities on International Women's Day (8 March) and invite the legal institutions for a panel discussion.

Women's Leadership Building

Meetings with the Commune Council post project hand over were postponed due to interruptions caused by preparations for the National Election Campaign (the National Election was held on 27 of July 2003).

The questionnaires for the monitoring of phasing out villages that staff had been developed were not clear and some of them were repetitive and did not gather useful information. BS staff reviewed the questionnaires and modified them.

Advocacy

Due to Cambodia's national elections (27th July 2003) and the months of campaigning leading up to them, there seemed to be an increase in radio censorship and restrictions.

Following the unexpected changes to the broadcasting radio station, Kompong Speu and Kompong Thom were chosen for monitoring purposes because of assurances that reception of WMC FM 102 was good there. However, during the monitoring training in Kompong Thom in early April, it was discovered that reception of WMC FM 102 was difficult using the small radios provided by the project. The radios were too small and sensitive to weather, thus resulting in reception difficulties.

The option of re-broadcasting on National Radio was further explored and rejected. National Radio reaches all provinces in Cambodia on AM and FM air waves, but being Government owned, it reserves the right to edit all material as they see fit. Project staff believed that the proposed cuts to the recorded Talkshows were censorship and manipulation of information. Not wanting to separate the Drama and the Talk shows, it was decided that greater emphasis on Monthly Monitoring activities could be a viable solution.

Lack of access to non-politically aligned radio stations in Cambodia has proven to pose some difficulties in airing politically sensitive issues such as rape and trafficking. The only radio station offering non-censored broadcasting was FM 102 through the Women's Media Centre, which went successfully except for episode 14 of the Drama, which was not aired due to an error in programming.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT & MONITORING

STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING

Facilitated by Vicheasthan Bandosbondal Neakropkrong Kangea Aphivath (VBNK), BS conducted a five-day workshop attended by BS staff to develop a three-year strategic plan. The three-year strategic plan was developed from the base recommendations that emerged from the 2002 program evaluation. The BS Director used the strategic plan to produce a further program proposal. The program proposal has been sent out to several donors in and outside Cambodia. The plan for the next three years comprised four components:

- Component 1 - Food Security and Income Generation
- Component 2 - Community Organising and Women Leadership building
- Component 3 - Eliminating Violence Against Women
- Component 4 - Advocacy

Following the strategic plan BS held four workshops to review its internal structure, by-laws/policies, to develop a plan to build staff capacity and gender policies.

The first workshop – Reviewing the Organisational Structure

The workshop was conducted in July 2003 to review BS internal structure. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Meas Nee (BS Advisory Board), lasted for three days and was attended by all BS staff. A revision of BS's existing structure was needed in order to take stock of the recent and intended staff intake. Whilst staff quota stands at 13, BS is looking to take on 7 more recruits. The team leaders in BB and SR remain the same but two current staff have been promoted: The Admin/Finance Manager has been promoted to Program Coordinator and The Project Officer (Radio drama project which based in PP) promoted to Project Manager. A staff appraisal was conducted in September 2003 to allocate and appoint positions of responsibility within the organisation. October and November 2003 will see the recruitment of several of these staff including those to replace the now vacant positions of Admin/Finance and Project Officer. The appraisal was conducted by the BS advisory board members Ms Heng Seltik, Ms Margaret Slocomb and Mr Meas Nee. Please refer to appendix 2 for Reviewing the Organisational Structure.

Despite recognizing the importance of Reproductive Health education in Cambodia, BS has decided to discontinue specific work in this sector. A large number of NGOs and Governmental bodies now work in this area and whilst initially this was an advantage BS feels that their work can be more efficiently channeled into other areas. However, BS was contacted by Agricultural Development Denmark Asia (ADDA) and invited to join their project in SR and Prey Veng province. The plan for work with ADDA is still waiting for approval from the donor body DANIDA.

The second workshop – Reviewing BS by-laws and policies

The workshop was conducted in August 2003 to revise BS by-laws and policies. Both By-laws and policies were developed over the last three years and reviewing these policies was a necessary prerequisite to developing BS new 3-year strategic plan. The workshop was facilitated by the BS Director and provided staff with the opportunity to learn how to implement and ensure policies are reflected in every day work.

The third workshop – Staff development plan

The workshop was conducted in December 2002 to develop a tool to assess the relevant skills and knowledge required by each BS position. Both general and specific skills were identified and these have then been used to establish a schedule for staff training.

The fourth workshop – Developing Gender policy

The workshop was held in September 2003 to develop BS gender policies. Facilitated by MS Margaret Slocomb (BS Advisory Board) the workshop acted as a forum for collaborative decision reaching, the policies were collectively decided and all participants contributed to their development. The workshop expanded further to discuss the importance of integrating and mainstreaming such policy into everyday procedures and BS's work ethic. Please refer to appendix 3 for Banteay Srei gender policies.

MONITORING & REVIEW OF PROJECTS

Banteay Srei currently carries out a regular process of monitoring and review, with its staff and partners. This consists of:

- Field Trip conducted 3 times per year by the Director to the provinces to visit project sites, meet with VWG, local authorities and other project participants to discuss progress and any issues arising.
- Use the revised and amended Monitoring Tool to record the progress and effectiveness of projects.
- Monthly meetings held between VWG and beneficiaries in all village types A, B and C.
- BS provincial staff meetings with PDWVA, CVs and CGCs monthly to review and plan activities
- Provincial staff visited villages on a weekly basis.
- Use indicators set to gauge success of activities within projects.
- Reflection regarding learning and experiences to be incorporated into Staff Participatory Review and Planning meetings and program evaluations
- Internal reporting - Provincial staff forward monthly reports to BS PP office where staff will translate and transfer information into Quarterly and Annual Reports.
- Involve communities in the planning of phase out/hand over and in setting indicators for measuring the progress and success of the process.

FUTURE DIRECTION

BS developed a three year strategic plan (October 2003 – September 2006) that will continue to work in 27 villages across BB and SR where eleven villages have a minimal support through monthly monitoring visits and twelve villages plan to take over the management and ownership of the project from BS. Four villages type C's still receive ongoing support while a starting to discuss a hand over plan. BS uses a gender and development approach which is rights-based, empowerment oriented and which brings men into the gender equation by recognizing their essential responsibility in the empowerment of women and the securing of their rights. The components of the new program will be:

- Food Security and Income Generation
- Community Organizing and Women's Leadership
- Women's Rights and Eliminating Violence Against Women (EVAW)
- Advocacy

CONCLUSION

Banteay Srei has made considerable progress and achieved notable outcomes in this period. These include the development of staff capacity in project and management skills; maintaining current projects and expanding these into new areas (Radio drama on VAW); continuing to build close working relationships at grass roots and provincial government department levels and continuing to be a model for the empowerment of rural women.

This has been an exciting year: eleven communities (village type A's) took over the management and ownership of the projects from Banteay Srei and twelve communities (village type B's) developed a plan for the hand over (in March 2005). BS was proud of community women who showed confidence and commitment to participating in the development of their communities. Even though BS has already phased out in eleven villages it commits itself to further support these in a reactive manner.

The radio project has had a high impact on most rural villagers – people both enjoyed and learnt from the drama and talk show. Following a thorough impact assessment it became clear a high proportion of listeners favoured its re-broadcasting - we intend to do so in the forthcoming year.

Based on the program evaluation conducted in 2002, BS developed a three-year strategic plan. Following this plan, an internal review was held and changes were made to the organizational structure and policies. Importantly considerable time and effort was employed to develop an appropriate gender policy. It is hoped this will improve the implementation of the program.

In next the three years, Banteay Srei aims to accomplish further staff capacity development, particularly in project monitoring, data interpretation, report writing and advocacy. BS will also take on a number of new and approved perspectives. All of us at Banteay Srei are as committed as ever and enthusiastic about our future, as well as the positive impact we are able to facilitate for many of Cambodia's disadvantaged and isolated women. Not least, we carry on grateful to our donors, Advisory Board members and the many volunteers who make these transformations possible.

APPENDICES

1. VAW Radio Drama Impact assessment.
2. Reviewing the Organisational Structure
3. Banteay Srei gender policies
4. Financial statement
5. List of staff and volunteers
6. Map of project region
7. Audit report