

# Saran's Success: Solar Irrigation Brings Reliable Water to Cambodian Farmers

Last updated: 21.03.2025



In Battambang province, a collaboration between the Nurture Project and EGE Cambodia-Energy Transition is harnessing the power of the sun to provide reliable irrigation to smallholder farmers. The "Nurture Water-Inclusive Solar Irrigation Solution" was piloted in Peam Village, Kdol Taken Commune, Bavel district. This initiative established a community committee and installed a 60 HP solar pumping station, directly benefiting approximately 160 smallholder farming households, totaling 1,023 individuals (including 303 women and 465 young people). Farmers, now assured of a consistent water supply, are not only maximizing their existing land but also expanding their cultivation areas.

"Since using the solar water pump, I've expanded my cultivation land from 5 to 8 hectares, and I plan to expand even further next year. With reliable water, I can confidently cultivate my farthest fields."

*Ry Saran, a 43 yearsold farmer in Peam village, Kdol Taken commune, Bovel district, Battambang province.*



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For the first rice production season, 125 families registered to use the solar-powered water supply, covering 240 hectares of land. A sustainable fee structure was implemented, with farmers agreeing to pay \$75 USD/ha for the first season and \$38 USD/ha for the second. Farmers experienced immediate savings, reducing their water pumping costs by 40% compared to the average incurred when using diesel pumps from streams.

**Saran highlights the numerous benefits of the solar water pumping system she has experienced:**

"It reduces labor, eliminates noise, boosts rice yields, and is incredibly convenient for both men and women. Since I participated in the project, my rice yield has increased. Last year, I got only 3.5 tons per hectare, but this year, I got up to 4 tons per hectare. For a total area of 8 hectares, the total harvest is 32 tons. I keep 1 ton for food and 2 tons for seed. I sold 29 tons of rice"



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Beyond increased productivity, the project fosters responsible water governance by establishing water management committees, implementing pumping schedules, and creating water usage maps, ensuring equitable distribution and sustainable practices.

Recognizing the success and demand from smallholder farmers and local authorities, the Nurture Project and EGE are committed to expanding the solar irrigation model in Battambang. This expansion will build upon the proven benefits, further contributing to climate-resilient agriculture, food security, and sustainable development in the region.



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