



សម្ព័ន្ធកម្ពុជាដើម្បីប្រយុទ្ធនឹងជំងឺមិនឆ្លង
 Cambodian NCD Alliance
 www.cambodianncdalliance.org

SUON SOPHEAP



Down a windy, narrow pathway, in a densely populated urban community on the fringes of Phnom Penh, a hive of activity takes place – children’s laughter, the sound of food bubbling away and neighbours nattering in the street.

Village 5 in Anlong Knang district is small area of land belonging to the local hospital. It has become home to 400 families, explains resident Suon Sopheap. Sopheap is a single mother to four children.

Sopheap is an enterprising woman. She used to work as a cook in popular restaurants. She always found work and had a stable income. But just over a year ago, her life changed when she was diagnosed with hypertension, diabetes and heart disease, following a sudden illness.

Sopheap was still coming to terms with her situation when the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Sopheap explained that since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic she often lies awake at night worrying about the family’s income.

It is hard for her; she doesn’t feel well enough to work now and is aware of the additional risks as someone living with multiple chronic conditions. Sopheap now saves the money her children give her so she can afford her medicines.

“Before, my life was good. I had plenty to eat and drink, I exercised and met with friends regularly, I slept well and was happy. After my diagnosis and the COVID-19 pandemic, I’ve had trouble sleeping, I exercise less, and cannot work so I stay home.”

“Before I became sick with heart disease and diabetes, I had wings to fly but now it is like my wings are broken”.

Luckily for Sopheap, MoPoTsyo is providing community-based support and access to medicines for people living with diabetes and hypertension in her community. This means that Sopheap can access affordable medicines. The number of people living with heart disease and diabetes in Cambodia is increasing at an alarming rate.

NCDs are now responsible for two out of three deaths. Sadly, for many Cambodians the supply of medicines is often unpredictable and expensive.

Travel restrictions and isolation were short-term COVID-19 measures in Cambodia and disruptions to health services were minimal.

Yet, this pandemic has revealed the specific vulnerabilities for people like Sopheap and stepping up action on NCDs will not only save lives but will strengthen resilience to COVID-19 and future pandemics.

Sopheap is looking forward to being more physically active and reconnecting with her friends when the risks from COVID-19 have reduced.

Through this project, the Cambodian NCD Alliance hopes to draw attention to the impacts of COVID-19 on people living with non-communicable diseases.



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