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អន្តរការៈ WWF-កម្ពុជា

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CHHUN ENGLY'S JOURNEY FROM ILLEGAL FISHING TO CHAMPIONING CONSERVATION IN PREK PRASOB SCALE-UP 2 PROJECT JULY 2025

“I USED TO TAKE FROM THE FOREST. NOW I PROTECT IT.”

In a quiet village nestled along the Mekong River in Kratie province, a young father is reshaping the future not just for his family, but for an entire community.

Chhun Engly, now 30, grew up in Liet village, Chroy Banteay commune. Like many in his area, he once relied on illegal fishing and forest clearing to survive. “Back then, I didn’t think much about the forest or wildlife,” Engly recalls. “I was just trying to make ends meet.”

Everything changed in 2019 when WWF-Cambodia introduced the SCALE-UP I project. Engly received 140 chicks and training in chicken farming – and with it, a chance to start over.

The journey wasn’t easy. The COVID-19 pandemic hit communities hard. When markets closed, Engly nearly gave up.

“I had no buyers, no income. I almost sold all of the chickens,” he says.



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But the greatest transformation wasn't economic, it was personal.

“This project didn't just give me chickens,” he says with a smile. “It gave me purpose.”

Engly is now a local changemaker mentoring others, organizing village meetings and proudly promoting sustainable practices. He dreams of growing his poultry business even further, with hopes of buying a delivery truck to supply supermarkets.

But when the SCALE-UP II project launched after the pandemic – funded by DGD through WWF-Belgium and implemented by WWF-Cambodia – his hope was renewed. The project provided hatching machines, solar panels, packaging tools and connections to larger markets. Slowly, but surely, Engly's small operation grew into a thriving business. In 2024, he sold over 8,000 chickens, earning US\$6,750 in personal profit. Meanwhile, the wider community earned more than US\$40,500 from other small chicken-raising businesses. Today, he serves as the community market chief, linking local producers to buyers in Phnom Penh, Kratie and Stung Treng.



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With support from WWF-Cambodia and local authorities, the village has changed. Livelihoods have become a tool for protecting biodiversity.

Former hunters and fishers are joining conservation efforts. Women and people with disabilities are now engaged in chicken raising, ecotourism, vegetable farming and savings groups.

“I used to take from the forest,” Engly says. “Now I protect it. And I teach others to protect it too.”

Engly's story shows that investing in people brings nature back into balance. Through the SCALE-UP II project, WWF-Cambodia isn't just protecting wildlife: we're nurturing local leaders who are rewriting the future of conservation, one chick at a time.



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