



The Challenges of 2011 - and Moving into 2012

Dear Friends,

As another year winds to a close, my sincere gratitude goes to you for all of your generous support. I continue to learn that fighting for women's human rights is done through small steps and it is a never-ending story.

2011 was a year of great challenges that kept our campaign teams busy up and down Cambodia.

Domestic Workers - Human Trafficking



Since 2008, approximately fifty thousand Cambodian women and girls have been sent to work as domestic workers in Malaysia. This year, 11 Cambodians have died in Malaysia – 9 of them were domestic workers. Our teams have taken several opportunities to travel to Malaysia to meet with the victims, talk with supporting NGOs, and to bring to light the circumstances surrounding the mysterious deaths of innocent women. We have heard their struggles. Sam Rainsy Party MPs are pushing for a review of all the mechanism of monitoring and investigation of employment agencies in order to better protect Cambodian migrant workers in all sectors. We are constantly reminded by fresh stories from domestic workers that abuse does not cease because of the current embargo of domestic workers to Malaysia. There are thousands of women and girls who are still abroad, and still at risk of human trafficking. Their battle, our battle, for their protection continues.

Land is Life

From the Boeung Kak Lake in Phnom Penh where an entire community has been filled with sand as a result of a 99-year, to rice fields turned into sugar cane plantations, our teams were on the front line with the villagers. We are talking about 1 million victims of land grabs.

Families watched as their possessions were destroyed and their homes flattened by bulldozers. Women were unjustly arrested for attempting to defend their houses, men were beaten to the brink of death.. And yet, the people still stand together.



This year, over one thousand villagers had the opportunity to learn about their rights to land from our Sam Rainsy Party teams, and to be trained in non-violent ways to defend their homes. Together they speak against corrupt authorities as they cry:

“Give us back our land. Give us back our life”.



Candidate Training

Along with training citizens about their rights to land, the Women’s Wing of the Sam Rainsy Party has been actively embarking in its training activities that will see SRP women candidates preparing themselves for the 2012 elections. Across the country first time candidates and those seeking re-election are being trained in public speaking, network building, and self-confidence building.

Training Women Leaders In Burma

While women throughout Cambodia are being trained in leadership roles within their communes, I have had the great privilege of being in Burma and to train the Women's Wing of the National League for Democracy.



It was a true honor to have been with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi twice in one year!

Politics for women is about building a movement and it has no borders. It is about having a voice to bring change for women, with women.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, we look to the new one with great hope. Together we can continue to make a difference.

Wishing you a Happy Holidays, and looking forward to partnering with you again in the New Year.