



CASE STUDY

A Life Transformed: A Journey from Slave to Self-sufficient

Provision of needed supports including vocational training and business coaching helped a survivor build a new life after being trafficked.



Dara looking out through a window after sharing his traumatizing life experience at a survivor network meeting. Photo © Bunthan Eang / CTIP

“On the boat, I never thought I could come back home. You could only see water wherever you look. They mistreated us. If you don’t work, you’ll get beaten up”, said Dara.

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

The content of this story is the sole responsibility of Winrock International and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Challenge

Dara*, a 26-year-old man from Takeo province, who was promised by his broker that he would have a secure and decent job in Thailand, was enslaved for seven years on a fishing boat on east Malaysian waters. He was unable to leave the boat, not allowed to take breaks, and did not get enough food or sleep. He was forced to work days and nights without salary or health care and he lost all contact with his family in Cambodia. *“It was so sad on the boat. And the work was very hard. We were forced to work days and nights without enough sleep”, said Dara.*

Intervention

Dara was rescued and safely returned to Cambodia in 2017 with support from the USAID Cambodia Countering Trafficking-in-Persons (CTIP) project implemented by Winrock International. Winrock’s partner, the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC), worked closely with the authorities and accompanied Dara to his home in Takeo province. Dara was provided with psycho-social support through counselling, vocational training, job placement, and business coaching so that he could regain confidence and rebuild his life. *“When I was rescued, I felt as if I was born again. I felt so relieved when I got back in Cambodia. I never expected I would be back in Cambodia again. I’m so happy to see my relatives again”, said Dara.*

Results

Dara is now living in Takeo province with his parents, wife and baby. He has secured a job in a factory in Phnom Penh, earning around 230 USD per month and his small business of pig-raising is growing. Dara’s emotional status and physical appearance have improved remarkably since his return. He is feeling better and is happy to have found a decent job in Cambodia in addition to his growing pig-raising business.

Since 2015, the USAID-funded CTIP project has assisted 49,493 vulnerable people including victims of human trafficking like Dara through provision of livelihood support and other essential services.

*Survivor’s real name has been changed.