



VHSG performs TB-DOT with Mr. Vat. Photo by Phao Sarath/CRS

## Expand Services to Remote Areas to Save Lives

### SUCCESS STORY

O' Manors is a village under the Beanteay Srey Health Center's catchment area, Banteay Srey District, Siem Reap Province. The village has a total population of 961 individuals (163 families). Most of the people are agricultural farmers who mainly grow rice and cassava. Tuberculosis is one of the main health issues people in this area have been facing.

Mr. Seng Vat, 59, is the father of twelve children, and has lived in the O' Manors Village since 2001. His family condition is very poor, which has not enabled him to support his children's education. Most of them quit their studies at the primary school level. The family income has relied on a small cassava farm and the salary that his wife earns from her work as a labourer.

In November 2021, Mr. Vat became seriously ill. He developed a chronic cough which had sputum with blood; moreover, he would sweat every night which went on for a half month before he decided to get a TB test. At that time, Mr. Vat could not eat, walk, and talk properly, and his wife and children were sad to see him in that condition. He lost 12kg and was at a serious risk of also losing his life.

In late November 2021, with support from the CRS TB project, the Banteay Srey Health Center (HC) staff together with the village health support group (VHSG) and CRS staff conducted TB community screenings in the O' Manors Village. It aimed at detecting TB cases and providing early treatment and care as well as raising awareness on TB. During that period, Mr. Vat was informed by VHSG to join as he was suspected of having TB. When he about the TB screening activity, he was keen to join; even though he could not walk properly, he tried his best to take part in the activity.

He was consulted by HC staff about his signs/symptoms, then his sputum was collected to examine at the HC. One day later, it was confirmed that he had TB. He then started the treatment process for 6 months. At the beginning of the treatment, the medicine's side effects made him feel extremely uneasy. He got chest pain, felt tired, and even developed a fever. However, he ultimately completed the 6 months treatment process in May 2022.

The CRS supported TB community screening activity expands TB services to remote villages, such as the place where Mr. Vat lives. The activity enabled him to test for TB, receive results for TB and the appropriate treatment, successfully. Since then, he has been happy, and his chronic coughing subsided. His wife and children are also excited to see the smile on his face. At the same time, he was able to work in order to help his wife with the family income. The activity was not only beneficial to Mr. Vat, but also other people living in the village. Up until June 2022, there were 5 CRS-supported community TB screening activities conducted in O' Manors village; with 29 people participating in the activity. Of those that participated, 17 people were suspected of having TB and had their sputum collected for a TB diagnosis - 3 patients were then confirmed to have TB.

Mr. Vat stated, "I was about to die; my family lost all hope. Fortunately, I was helped on time by health staff when they conducted TB screening activity in my village. I think those people saved my life. If I die, no one will take care of my family, also not only me who was saved but also other TB patients within my villages. It is truly thankful."



Mr. Vat works in his cassava farm after he get cure from TB disease. Photo by Mao Daneth/CRS