Since 2016, the Feed the Future Cambodia Rice Field Fisheries II project has supported 12,300 households in 134 community fish refuges (CFRs) to improve their food and nutrition security and to reduce poverty by applying good practices to conserve and increase fish stocks and improve nutrition. In 2018, the amount of fish caught has increased by 30%, 104,478 people have consumed more fish at home and the proportion of children under five eating small fish has increased by 50%.
One challenge faced by many caregivers in rural Cambodia is making sure their children get enough nutritious food. One in three children under the age of five in Cambodia are stunted (shorter than they should be for their age). Missing out on nutritious food at a young age can have long-term impacts on physical and cognitive development, and can increase the risk of poor health as an adult. Acute malnutrition, stunting and micronutrient deficiencies have been estimated to cost Cambodia up to US$266 million annually, or 1.7% of GDP.

Since 2016, the Feed the Future Cambodia Rice Field Fisheries II project (RFF II) has worked to address multiple causes of malnutrition in a joined-up way. Fish is one of the best sources of nutrients like iron, zinc, calcium and vitamin A which are essential for the healthy growth and development of babies. Good practices for wild fish conservation and management have been promoted in 134 fish refuges, contributing to more highly nutritious wild fish available to be caught in the surrounding areas for 12,300 households. In addition caregivers have been supported to adopt better sanitation, hygiene and feeding practices to maximize nutrition, especially for babies and young children.

Monitoring by WorldFish scientists shows that people supported by the project are applying good practices to improve nutrition. In one year, the amount of fish caught has increased by 30%, and the proportion of children under five eating highly nutritious small fish has increased by 50%. 104,478 people consuming more fish at home following behavior change interventions associated with enhanced rice field fish productivity (USAID RFF-2 FY 2017 and 2018 Report, 2018). Families also sell what they don’t eat, and can invest the income they make in their children’s education. By 2021, over 296,000 people will have benefitted from the project’s integrated approach to improving food security and nutrition.

**Level of Maturity and Sphere of influence**

- **Level of Maturity: Stage 1**
- Contributions in sphere of influence:
  - 1.3.2 - Increased livelihood opportunities
  - 2.1.2 - Increased access to diverse nutrient-rich foods

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**Projects**

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Keywords

- food security
- nutrition security
- small fish

Countries

- Cambodia
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