

A Story of Drunken Man

There was a 55 years old man that lived in Kandal village, Kandal province named Kosal (it is not a real name). The church in Kandal village applied Umoja approach since January 2011. Nowadays, it is in the first stage of Umoja. Most of Umoja group members are farmers. There were 95 families in Kandal village, about 18 families joined church.



Kosal is a widower. He was a heavy drunken man and gambler. That was why his marriage is broken. His wife left him around 7 years ago. He has two children (a son and a daughter). They all got married. He continued doing his bad habit. In 2010 a church was initiated in the village and close to his house. He joined the church service, but not regularly. His life was not changed. Seemed that he was not a real Christian. He just continues keeping his a way of life. Everyday he went out in the morning and back home in the evening. He sold many pieces of his land, leaving a pretty big

land behind his house. But, he did nothing at home and on his land. His standard of living had been going poor and poor.

In January 2011 Kandal village applied Umoja approach. There were 20 people (9 males) joined, from 14 families. Everyone (including Kosal) joined the learning process on the first stage of Umoja for one and a half month. Through this learning process, there were many Bible verses were read and studied. Bit by bit Kosal's life was changed. One of the verses that touched his heart was about "**Compassion**" from "**Matthew 9:35-38**". The God's word says about how Jesus saw and responded by His compassion to those who are harassed and helpless. Kosal looked at him-self. He was thrown away, no one cared or looked after him. But, there is a group of people see and care of him. That is the Umoja group members. He realized that there someone in the group having passion and caring on him. That is Jesus.



Started from that point Kosal is changed a lot. He looks like a new creation. He amazes everyone who knows who he was. He realizes that he walks in a stupid/foolish way in the past; it is time to move to the right and smart way. Kosal restarts his life with Jesus through the Umoja approach. People see his changes and really appreciate on him. Kosal is changed to be a creative person. He uses most of his time doing things at home. He uses resources he has to restore his standard of living. He does chicken raising, fish farming and his land becomes greenish with a number kind of crops. Kosal's life has been changing better and better. Now his standard of living is much better. He had a good relationship among Umoja group members, church members and others in his community. And it is really amazing thing. He is reconciled with his wife when she sees that he is changed. They live together again around three months ago.



These changes were not happened just to Kosal. There were other Umoja members who experienced similar things by different ways. They showed their good example together to their community. Kandal village did not start the second stage of Umoja with their community yet. But, the villagers now see their activities and they appreciate on Umoja group.

An important aspect that is the most appreciated by the people of Umoja approach is "**Unity**". Umoja empowers people in making change of their mind set, working together, and ability to help themselves by using their own resources. It is very important for Cambodian as Khmer Rough regime destroyed the unity (togetherness) of the community and became more individualistic.