

A photograph of a person wearing a straw hat, bending over in a rice field, harvesting rice plants. The field is lush and green, and the person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The background shows a clear blue sky with some clouds.

CLIENT SELF-PERCEPTION SURVEY 2025

 **OIKO
CREDIT**
investing in people

 **1 FIRST
FINANCE**

Introduction

In June 2025, First Finance, Cambodia's leading specialized Microfinance Institution for affordable housing, partnered with Oikocredit for the third consecutive year to conduct the Client Self-Perception Programme. This comprehensive study aimed to capture the voices of 877 clients to evaluate the impact of First Finance's services on their lives over a 12-month period. Focusing on key pillars such as income, savings, living conditions, and overall wellbeing, the survey provides a statistically significant look at the institution's social performance across 14 branches in the Central, Northwestern, and Siem Reap regions.

The research comes at a critical time for Cambodia. According to the 2024 Cambodia Inter-censal Population Survey (CIPS), the nation continues to experience significant demographic shifts, including rapid urbanization and a growing number of female-headed households—a group that represents 96% of the respondents in this study. As the demand for stable, safe housing grows alongside Cambodia's economically active population, First Finance's role in providing specialized financial products like Home Improvement Loans (held by 84% of participants) becomes increasingly vital.

The findings of the 2025 survey reveal a strong positive correlation between First Finance's interventions and client progress. Notably, 73% of clients reported an increase in income, and 91% observed tangible improvements in their home's physical structure, such as upgraded roofing, walls, or flooring. Beyond financial metrics, the study highlights a profound social impact, with 95% of clients reporting an improved sense of safety and 93% noting an overall enhancement in their quality of life.

However, the report also identifies areas for strategic growth and resilience building. While 98% of clients have consistent access to water, many still face vulnerabilities related to health and unforeseen expenses, which are the primary drivers for savings withdrawals. By integrating these insights with national demographic trends, this report establishes a roadmap for First Finance to refine its product offerings, enhance client protection, and continue its mission of transforming Cambodian households through sustainable and ethical housing finance.



Social Impact Key Figures

Client by income source



81%

Informal Employment
(Non-evidenced salaried employee, self-employed, worker...)



19%

Other Forms of Formal Employment
(Civil servant, Police/Military, Evidenced salaried employee)

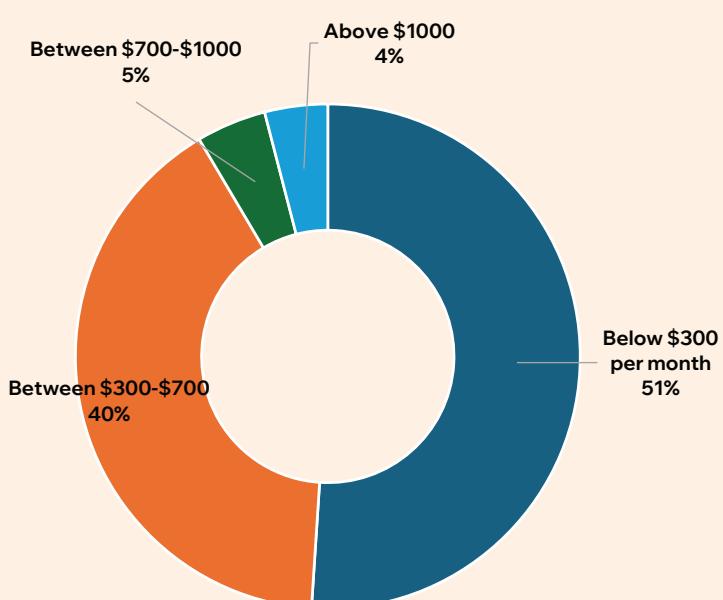
Client access to WASH*



51%

*Under the current Home Improvement Loan product, First Finance has meticulously recorded the portion of loans utilized by clients for hygiene or access to clean water in its core banking system.

Client by income level



Women clients



91%

First-time homeowner clients



74%

Client living in rural



91%

Client Self-Perception Survey Result

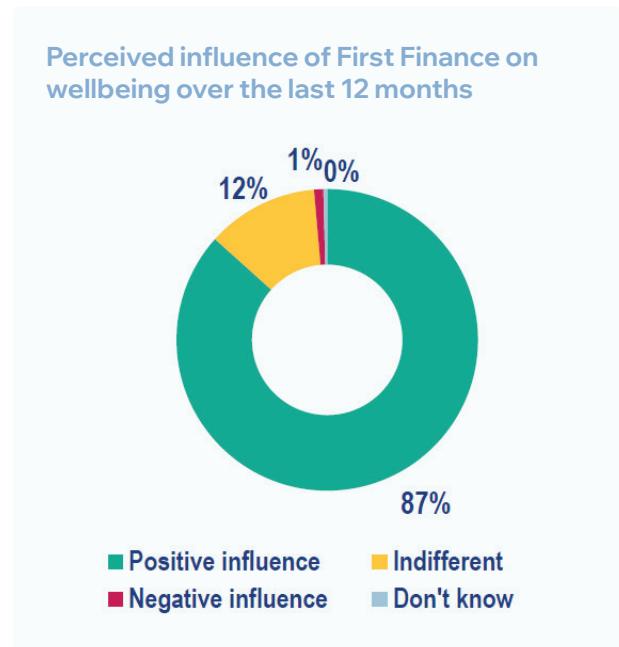
Customer Experience

757 respondents (87%) said that First Finance had a positive influence on their wellbeing over 12 months.

Among respondents who reported a positive influence from First Finance, the most common explanations were that First Finance “supported income increase” (43%), “improved living conditions (house, facilities, internet) (39%), “supported savings increase” (30%) and “improved health” (26%).

- The proportion of total respondents reporting that First Finance supported income increase was higher in the Srok Prey Kabbas (64%) and Srok Ponhea Lueu (54%) branches.
- Living condition improvements were more common for respondents in the branches of Siem Reap (52%), Srok Ponhea Lueu (43%), Srok Angk Snuol (43%), Srok Samkkei Munichay (42%) and Kampot (41%).
- More respondents reported that First Finance supported savings increase in Kampot (68%) and Siem Reap (56%). However, no respondents reported this positive influence in Srok Prey Kabbas.
- In terms of improving health, a higher proportion of respondents experienced this positive influence in Siem Reap (62%) and Kampot (49%).

Perceived influence of First Finance on wellbeing over the last 12 months



In terms of the improvements that respondents requested to First Finance, the majority requested “lower fees or interest” (72%).

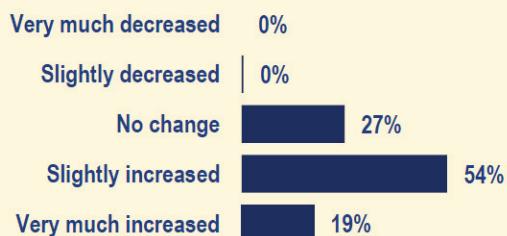
Other frequent requested improvements to First Finance’s products and services were for “Better product terms” (38%) and for “Better service support” (25%).

Quality-of-life impacts

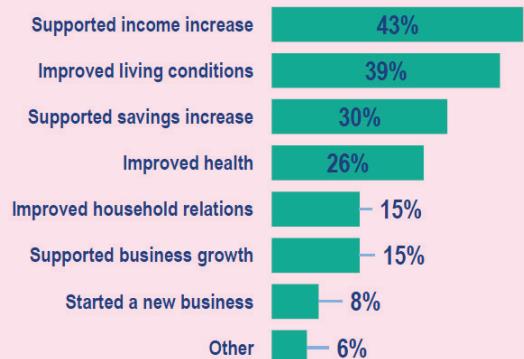
Aside from the more material aspects of wellbeing that can be positively attributed to First Finance, respondents were also asked how First Finance’s services have affected some of the more subjective aspects of their lived experiences. Results show that First Finance’s services also benefit clients by helping to foster more respect within their households, by improving their sense of safety and by enhancing their quality-of-life.

- 73% said First Finance helped to improve the level of respect they received in the household, whereas 27% reported “no change” in their level of respect received.
- 95% said their sense-of-safety had improved because of First Finance.
- 93% reported improvement in their quality-of-life because of First Finance.

How has the level of respect that respondents receive within the household changed because of First Finance? (n=877)



Reasons for respondents reporting a positive influence on their wellbeing due to First Finance (n=757)



Living condition improvements

91% of total respondents said they improved their house (roof, wall, floor materials) over 12 months. This was a much more common improvement compared to the other living condition improvements that were tested.

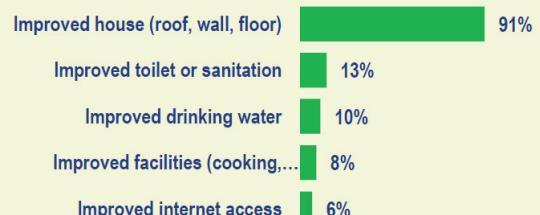
While respondents commonly made some improvement in their housing over 12 months, 78% of respondents said they would still like further resources to improve their home (in terms of roof, wall, floor materials).

More than 70% of respondents from every branch were interested in further resources to support their home improvement. This was particularly common for respondents in Srok Prey Kabbas (91%), Srok Angk Snuol (83%), Kong Pisei (83%) and Siem Reap (80%).

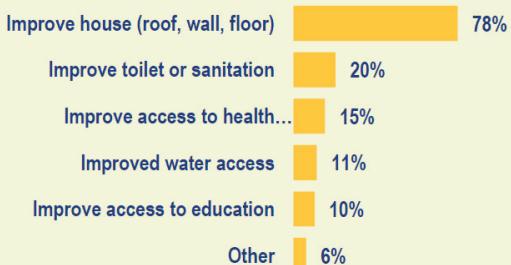
20% of respondents were interested in further resources to improve their toilet or sanitation. This demand was more common in Kampot (41%), Siem Reap (36%) and Srok Ponhea Lueu (33%).

- Resources towards improved access to health facilities were requested much more often by respondents in Battambang (34%) and Siem Reap (30%).
- A demand for resources towards improved water access was particularly common for respondents in Kampong Speu (23%), Siem Reap (20%) and Srok Ponhea Lueu (20%).

In what areas did First Finance respondents improve their living conditions over 12 months? (n=877)



What areas would First Finance clients like to improve with more access to resources? (n=877)



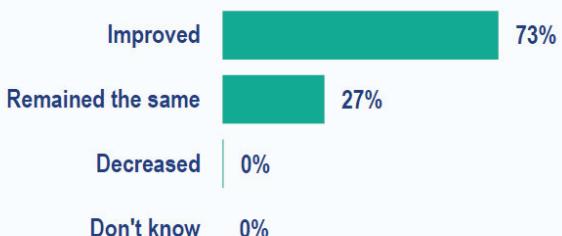
Income

The majority of 641 respondents (73%) said their income increased over 12 months.

For those who reported an increased income, this was most often attributed to an “increase in salary from an existing job” (64%).

In addition to reporting income increase, respondents generally reported having a sufficient income when it came to meeting their basic needs. 95% of respondents described their income as being either “enough” or “more than enough” for meeting their basic needs over 12 months.

Income change over 12 months (n=876)



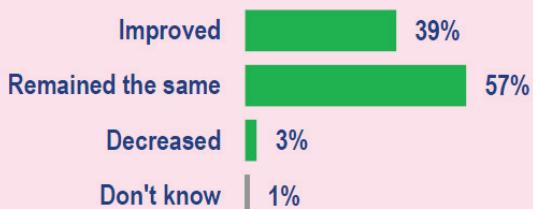
Health & coping strategies

The majority of 487 respondents (57%) said they remained the same in their household’s ability to cope with health needs and emergencies.

Among 30 respondents who decreased their ability to cope with health needs, this was most often explained as being due to a “health and medical facilities not being available” (80%). These reports commonly came from respondents in Kampot and Srok Bati.

Respondents most often indicated that “reliance on savings” was their preferred method (74%) for coping with an unexpected emergency.

Change in household abilities to cope with health needs and emergencies (n=862)



Education

616 respondents (69%) said they are taking care of children who are of education age.

Most often, respondents were taking care of 1 child (39%) or 2 children (24%).

Among relevant respondents taking care of school-aged children, 98% said their children were attending school regularly.



98%

Client who has children under age of 15 put their children in school regularly.

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