

# EDUCATION

## CAMBODIA



### Levelling the Playing Field

Disadvantaged Students Fight for their Education to Assure their Future

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## EDITORIAL

“EDUCATION IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET RID OF POVERTY”



Education has been playing a crucial role in developing as well as developed countries in helping to reduce poverty and boost the economy. Cambodia is trying to improve its education sector and provide education to its population in order to alleviate poverty and build up its economy. Although the country has made remarkable improvements—high enrolment rate in primary school and an increase in the number of both public and private schools—there still is a lot of work to be done to help disadvantaged students such as the poor, children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, girls and children who live in remote areas.

This month focuses on some of those disadvantaged children in an attempt to determine their access to education: children of families relocated to a remote site, children with intellectual disabilities, and children who are deaf, blind or have low vision. This overview was compiled through series of interviews in the field with parents and children, teachers, experts, government officials and staff of relevant NGOs.

This describes the situation of some of those disadvantaged children and whether they have access to education: children of families moved to a remote relocation site, children with intellectual disabilities, and children who are deaf, blind or have low vision. Compiled through series of interviews in the field with parents and children, teachers, experts, government officials and staff of relevant NGOs, the magazine also includes information on where parents may get information and help for their children.

The stories in the magazine describe children's living and learning conditions, highlighting the difficulties they face as it is important to bring this to the attention of the public through comments from

experts and professionals involved in the field. If Cambodia wants to provide education for all, there needs to be more resources for and more attention paid to disadvantaged groups of students.

Cambodia's education sector was developed during the 1950s and the 1960s, the glorious and prosperous era of Prince Norodom Sihanouk's regime. During that short period, the country saw many socioeconomic advances in education and many schools, universities and research laboratories built. In addition, teachers were getting salaries that enabled them to support their families. All this contributed to creating high-quality education.

However, the Khmer Rouge regime completely destroyed the formal education system between the 1975 and 1979. After the Pol Pot regime, the country started to rebuild its education system in the 1980s, with schooling opportunities progressively expanding.

Compiling the magazine involved a lot of challenges and difficulties. Some government officials and organizations were very helpful and provided support that made these stories possible. At times, there was no nationwide information or statistics available, which made it difficult to get an overview of a situation. And some organizations were so eager to protect the children they care for that they tended to distrust anyone wishing to know about them or their work, which complicated coverage.

This magazine is a modest attempt to draw attention to children whose schooling is jeopardized by providing accurate information in a balanced way meant to both inform and appeal to the reader. It is hoped that it can play a small part and serve as a bridge between readers and students, parents, teachers, government officials and NGOs in the education sector.



## EDUCATION CAMBODIA

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### ON THE COVER

Art Vanny, a special education teacher of Rabbit School in Phnom Penh, teach students with intellectual disabilities.

Below, illustrations are from the book “Child Friendly School Policy” published by the Ministry of Education to train teachers.





Students on their way to success,  
Pong Toek High School, Phnom Penh

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CAMBODIA

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# Stepping Up

As Cambodia aims to reach education for all by 2015, engaging disadvantaged youth is one of its greatest challenges.



By Mech Dara

Since the 1990s, Cambodia has stepped up its effort to improve its education sector and make education available to all students.

Laws were adopted and policies established, spelling out the government's belief that every child in the country has a right to education whether he is rich or poor, has a physical or intellectual disability, is of Khmer origin or belongs to a minority group, lives in a city or a remote area. As the government has stated many times, Cambodia aims to meet by 2015 the "Education for All goals" that UN-member countries adopted in 2000.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has been working with many organizations big and small to meet those goals and provide education to all school-age people in the country. However its efforts are hampered by the lack of budget

and resources of every sort.

According to the 2013 UN Development Program's Human Development Report "The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World," the Cambodian government only spent 2.6 percent of its gross domestic product on education between 2005 and 2010.

Moreover in its 2013 budget, the Cambodian government set aside only 9 percent of its budget for education: It allocated 1,119 billion riel, or \$279.9 million, to education out of a total budget of 12,095 billion riel, or \$3.02 billion.

And yet, the government's intention is clear and is even enshrined in Cambodia's 1993 Constitution.

Article 66 in Chapter VI states that "the State shall establish a comprehensive and unified system of education throughout the country, capable of guaranteeing the

principles of freedom of education and equal access to schooling, in order to offer each citizen the equal opportunity for the betterment of his/her living condition."

Moreover, Article 68 of the same chapter specifies that "the State shall ensure for all citizens free primary and secondary education at public schools and citizens shall receive schooling for at least nine years."

However the Ministry of Education's lack of funding to pay teachers living wages has rendered the concept of free education a goal rather than a reality. In its 2007 study "The Impact of Informal School Fees on Family Expenditure," the NGO Education Partnership reported that education costs for parents go up as children advance in school.

As a student goes from grade three to grades four through six, informal fees rise

50 percent, the report says. Then between grade six and grades seven to nine, fees jump 76 percent, which puts lower secondary school beyond the reach of many parents and children.

This leads a large number of students to drop out of school between grades six and nine, the report says. In addition, poverty forces many 12-to-15 year-old students to start working full time to help their families, the report adds.

The situation is such that, according to the World Bank, nearly half of the students had dropped out of primary school in 2009-2010 because they needed to work.

Still, in its Education Strategic Plan 2009-2013, the Ministry of Education reiterated that its "immediate objective is to ensure that all Cambodian children

and youth have equal opportunity to access quality education consistent with the Constitution and the Royal Government's commitment to the UN Child Rights Convention, regardless of social status, geography, ethnicity, religion, language, gender and physical form."

This also applies to students with physical and intellectual disabilities. In 2008, the Ministry of Education adopted the Policy on Education for Children with Disability aiming to "provide quality education, life skills or vocational training to children and youth with disabilities equitably and effectively, increase enrollment, promotion and survival rates in the schools."

The 2009 Law on the Protection and the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reiterated that all stu-

dents with disabilities have the right to enrollment in public and private educational establishments.

The Ministry of Education and NGOs have worked together to develop and implement training programs for teachers so they can identify and educate children with physical and intellectual disabilities. Those programs remain modest due to budget constraints and limited resources on the part of both the ministry and NGOs.

Efforts are being made by the Cambodian government and NGOs to make education accessible to students in disadvantaged situations. But, as shown in this magazine, Education for All has yet to happen.



# OUT OF THE DARK

For the first time in Cambodia, teachers are reaching out to special needs students and helping them fit into society



Mouy Ngim, left, is drawing during class at Rabbit School.

Mech Dara

By Mech Dara



Mech Dara

**“Poverty and intellectual disability go together,” said Dr. Jegannathan Bhoomikumar, program director of the Center for Child and Adolescent Mental Health.**

**T**ear Engsong is deeply concerned about his daughter Mouy Ngim’s condition and future. “It’s sometimes very difficult for me to communicate with her because she does not understand what I’m trying to say and I don’t understand what she needs. So at times she gets angry and keeps crying.”

“I’m worried about her future...I don’t know how long we will have to take care of her,” he said. His 13-year-old daughter does not even want to play with other children in their neighborhood, afraid they will hurt her, he said.

Mouy Ngim has Down syndrome, a genetic condition that causes delays in physical and intellectual development. With treatment and training, children like her often grow up able to work at jobs in their communities.

In any country, having a child with an intellectual disability would be difficult for parents. But in Cambodia, it is even harder since social and healthcare services are so limited and there are hardly any government organizations or NGOs where parents can get advice and support.

Still, Tear Engsong had persevered and eventually found a school for Mouy Ngim

in Phnom Penh. “The Rabbit School takes very good care of my daughter. They teach and train her how to behave. They teach her to dress herself, to go to the toilet, take a shower by herself...to respect other people,” he said. “Teachers at the school know how to deal with children with intellectual disabilities and those children are very happy there.”

Of course transport to and from the school is expensive for the family, and so is the cost of hospital care and medicine whenever she gets sick, Tear Engsong said. “It makes us get poorer and poorer,” he said. “It’s very hard for us to bring her up...We have to stay where we are and keep on looking after her. So we cannot travel long distance for work.”

For Kak Nika, finding the Rabbit School was also a blessing. Her 10 year-old son Koun Rathana suffers from autism, a neurological disorder that affects the way people interact with others.

“Before, I could not go to work because I had to look after him. But, since my child has started going to the school, it has reduced my burden. I have more free time to work and earn a living,” she said. Koun Rathana has learned so much at Rabbit



Teacher Srey Kalyan, left, discusses with Tear Engsong, the father of Mouy Ngim sitting to his right, during a parent consultation session at Rabbit School.

Kim Phalla

School, she said. “When I see my son dressing properly and eating and washing himself... I feel so happy.”

According to Kim Phalla, special education program manager for Rabbit School, there are about 160 students at the school.

Maybe 60 percent of them are autistic while the others have various conditions ranging from Down syndrome and cerebral palsy to hydrocephalus—enlargement of the head due to accumulation of liquid in the brain.

One of the school’s goals is to integrate those children into society, Kim Phalla said. This is why the program includes job training for students who are capable of working, she said.

But no matter how good Rabbit School may be for the students, it cannot replace parents, said Srey Kalyan who teaches at Rabbit School. “We want to meet parents to make a plan [for their children] and implement the plan...step by step.

“Parents need to understand their children’s problems,” she said. “Teachers cannot improve their condition that much without parents’ help.”

For Um Rathana whose 5-year-old Sa-

mol Samnang is autistic, being involved in her son’s education goes without saying. “I am very happy to work with the teachers and apply what they tell me,” she said. After only a few months at the school, her son is capable of communicating a little with her, which he could not do in the past, she added.

Although about a third of intellectual disability cases are due to a child’s genes and cannot be prevented at this point, most cases can be prevented, said Dr. Jegannathan Bhoomikumar, program director of the Center for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CCAMH) created in Takhmao City by the organization Caritas with support of the Ministry of Health.

“Poverty and intellectual disability go together,” he said. “If you are poor and you live in a rural area, you are vulnerable to nutritional problem...and your brain is vulnerable to brain infection.”

“The main cause of intellectual disability is nutrition...iron and iodine deficiency during pregnancy can lead to intellectual disabilities.” This is why healthcare programs for pregnant women in poor villages include distributing food supplements such as iron salt, Dr. Bho-

mikumar said.

“And then about 30 to 40 per cent of the cases are due to infection that has spread to the brain [of a child]...which can also be prevented,” he said. But this requires that parents can afford a medical staff able to identify and treat the infection in time.

People may confuse some physical conditions with intellectual disability, for instance believing that a person with epilepsy, which is a neurological disorder that can cause loss of consciousness or seizures, has an intellectual disability. Nearly half of the patients brought to CCAMH for treatment have epilepsy, Dr. Bhoomikumar said.

Cambodians have a complex belief system and, depending on their education level and the region of the country from which they come, may attribute intellectual disability to non-physical causes, he said. “Many of them consciously and unconsciously might think that it is due to karma [behavior in past lives affecting the present].”

Depending on the intellectual disability of a child, a family may have to support a child all his life. “It’s a big burden for a family,” and especially for the

mother who may spend all her time caring for the child, Dr. Bhoomikumar said. “It is one of the reasons why the husband leaves the wife and takes another wife....It is a double tragedy for the wife who has a child with intellectual disability.”

“The government has to invest in children and pregnant women’s healthcare for the future,” Dr. Bhoomikumar said. “If you have 100 people with intellectual disabilities, that’s a lot for the nation because they cannot produce.” Identifying a child’s condition early may make it possible to intervene so that a child can attend school, get training and eventually get a job and produce for society, he said.

All parents interviewed said they wished their children could attend public schools in their neighborhoods.

“All children have the right to education even if they are disabled,” said Nhean Saroeun who heads the Special Education Department at the Ministry of Education. “We still have limited human resources and material...to teach students with intellectual disability.”

In spite of this, he said, “On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I would like to call on parents of children [with intellectual disabilities] nationwide to send them to study even if they have low, medium or serious disabilities. We are open for them.”

At the present time, this is not always possible: Tear Engsong said that when he tried to enroll his daughter at the public school near his home, he was told that she would not be able to study there.

Still, Nhean Saroeun said, people with intellectual disabilities should not be kept isolated. “The ministry tries very hard to work with partner NGOs to help them,” he added.

There are very few organizations to help people with intellectual disabilities. According to Seang Chamnap, project manager at the organization Hagar, there are less than 10 organizations working with the intellectually disabled out of about 2,000 NGOs in Cambodia.

This year, Hagar has been providing support for 114 young people, he said. “We put them in public schools... because we want to raise people’s awareness in the community so they know that [students with intellectual disabilities] can learn like other students,” he said. “We also want to make students with intellectual disabilities understand about society and make society accept them.”

Hagar has launched for its students a vocational training program ranging from basic office work to cooking and gardening with support from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social

Affairs. “We have trained them for the market but the market does not provide them opportunities to show their abilities,” Seang Chamnap said.

The biggest challenge for people with intellectual disabilities is discrimination, he said.

Employers may hesitate hiring them, concerned of their customers’ reaction, and in some cases may pay them less for equal work.

Unlike blind people or landmine victims who have formed groups to raise

public awareness and request government support, “People with the intellectual disabilities cannot be their own voices because they cannot talk,” Dr. Bhoomikumar said.

“They cannot form associations or groups like blind or deaf people do: Only parents and NGOs can be their voice,” he said.

**More information:**

**Rabbit School: 089283 285**

**HAGAR: 098 210 242**

**CCAMH: 023 300 534**



A student, above, is making handicraft during a class at Rabbit School as a part of vocational training program. Below, students’ handicraft are gathered after class.

**PROFILE**



Teacher Art Vanny during class at Rabbit School.

Mech Dara

# A Very Special Job

*By Mech Dara*

Art Vanny came to teach children with intellectual disabilities for very personal reasons.

Growing up, she had a cousin with intellectual disability. And then her own child was affected.

“I wanted to learn and understand how to educate children with intellectual disabilities,” Art Vanny said. “I wanted to know how to help after having seen their difficulties at my own home.”

Over the last four years, the 46-year-old woman has been teaching at Rabbit School, an institution in Phnom Penh that specializes in the care of students with intellectual disabilities.

Managing of a class of 30 students takes a lot of time and patience, Art Vanny said. “We spend about 20 minutes teaching them the numbers or Khmer language, and then we separate them into three groups because they have different degrees of intellectual disability. We take 10-minute breaks and bring them to the toilet. Then we give them some snacks,” she said.

Art Vanny’s biggest challenge is controlling her mischievous young pupils, she said. Since some of them have severe au-

tism—a neurological disorder that affects the way people interact with others—it can be difficult to manage the class, she said. “They do not stay very long in one place. They run up and down the classroom so it’s hard for me to teach them.”

And yet she does, teaching them to count, to paint, to identify plants and animals. The students also do some physical exercises and even dance. They also learn to respect others and wait their turn in a lineup, Art Vanny said.

“With children with serious intellectual disabilities, it takes a lot of time for them to learn and understand how to take care of themselves and communicate with their families...We teach them about behavior management such as toileting, dressing, feeding, positioning and basic physiotherapy,” she said.

In the case of students with low intellectual disability, Art Vanny said, “We have seen many children get better after we have taught them. We send them to... classes with other students in public schools [part of the week]. It’s easy for us to develop their potential.”

“What makes me very happy is to see my students make progress,” she said.

“When they can speak and count and they can participate in the group...it inspires me to keep on teaching.”

Some parents don’t understand that their children have serious intellectual disabilities and expect them to get better quickly, Art Vanny said. Others were not aware that their children had a disability and, especially in the countryside, had a hard time getting help when they started to figure out their children needed specialized teaching, she said.

“In order to help children with intellectual disabilities, it requires that teachers, parents and the community work together,” Art Vanny said. “Teachers are playing a very important role in school but parents have a key role at home. We try to explain to parents how to look after their children.”

“All children with intellectual disabilities have the right to human dignity, the right to live and the right to be taken care of like other children,” she said. But without support, she said, “It affects their children’s right: They don’t have the right to walk, to see or to participate in society.”

“All they end up knowing is the inside of their houses,” Art Vanny added.

# Young and Relocated

*The Impact of Eviction on Children's Education*





Mech Dara

Meas Chea, is determined to keep 10-year-old son in school no matter the hardship for herself.



Mech Dara

Meas Chea's children and grandchildren are getting ready to have their meager meal.

By Mech Dara

On any given day, Meas Chea walks the roads and dirt paths of Odong Mountain, collecting any discarded plastic bottles or tin cans she can find.

Wearing dirty black pants and a long blue, faded t-shirt on a recent afternoon, she was dragging a large plastic bag heavy with her day's collection: There was going to be enough money to feed her two children and three grandchildren that night.

The 56-year-old widow is always accompanied by her daughter. Pov Chanty was in grade two when her mother decided to take her out of school in 2011 so she could work with her. Now, the 11-year-old makes the rounds in her tattered clothes, her hair bleached by the sun.

Meas Chea, however, insists that her 10-year-old son Pov Ratana attends school. "My dream is to have my son finish high school and get a good job. I don't want to see him uneducated like me,"

The family was not always that poor.

When they lived in the Dey Krahom community in Phnom Penh, Meas Chea was renting a small wooden house and supported the family as a street vendor and occasional beggar.

That life came to an end in January 2009 when the last 150 families in the community were evicted by 200 policemen and 600 workers equipped with bulldozers and fire trucks.

For many children and teenagers of the 100 families who were relocated at the site now called the Tangthiev community in Kandal province, this move put an end to their education.

With their parents unable to earn a living as they had done in the city, a great number of them dropped out of school to work and help support their families.

According to community leader Va Saveourn, there are 56 children of primary school age among the families living at that relocation site in Ponhea Leu district's Phnom Bat commune.



Mech Dara

Pov Chanty explains that she dropped out of school to help support her family.

However only 27 of them registered at the local primary school at the start of school year 2012-2013. "And eight students out of the 27 from the Tangthiev community have not come to school since November," said Som Sokear, deputy director of Areikassap Primary School.

Since the families moved to the area, their children had done well at school, he said. "If the students from the relocation site had the opportunity to study, they would get good marks, sometimes better than the regular children," he noted.

This may be due to the fact that, like Meas Chea's son Pov Ratana, students from the Tangthiev community tend to go to school with a mission, feeling that they carry the hopes of their families on their shoulders. "I'm studying very hard," Pov Ratana said.

His goal is to go to university and then return to the community to teach English and support his family. On school holidays, Pov Ratana works at Odong Mountain. With the money he earns, he said, "I can buy a book or a pen, and keep some

for my mother to buy food for us."

While there still were children from the Tangthiev community attending primary school in May 2013, only one student, a young woman, was going to secondary school.

"Every day, I worry that I will not be able to get food for my children and grandchildren," said Meas Chea.

In its 2011 study "Socio Economic Impact of Forced Eviction at the household level in Phnom Penh," the Housing Rights Task Force noted that evictions and relocations deeply affect students. The report revealed that the percentage of students repeating a school year is double the national rate in relocated communities, and that the drop-out rate in those communi-

ties is 10 percent compared to 8.3 percent nationwide.

Ever since they were relocated away from Phnom Penh, people of the Tangthiev community have been struggling to survive and, with their families moved to an area with few opportunities to earn a living, young people have not had the luxury of studying. As Va Saveourn explained, many parents are forced to leave for weeks on end to work in Phnom Penh or other provinces either taking their children with them or leaving their teenagers in charge of their siblings.

In a 2012 report, the NGO Sahnmakum Teang Tnaut, which researches and works with relocated communities, wrote that most families at Tangthiev where basic facilities and services are still lacking have fallen into debts and pawned whatever they owned for money.

Many children and teenagers are now working full time to help their families pull through. The lack of formal education may handicap Tangthiev community's young residents for the rest of their lives.

In its 2012 report “State of Migration: An overview of forced displacement in Cambodia,” the Jesuit Refugee Service wrote: “A large proportion of young people are economically active, especially young people under the age of 15 years...Cambodia’s poor and very poor youth cannot afford to be unemployed so will accept work for low pay with poor conditions and little or no social or safety protection on short-term or informal contracts.

Young people in these positions are particularly vulnerable to workplace injuries, exploitations and abuses.”

As time goes by, the Tangthiev families are concerned that their children will not be able to pull out of this circle of poverty.

“Every day, I worry that I will not be able to get food for my children and grandchildren,” Meas Chea said. “They are young and they need food to eat. But I can only make less than \$1 per day... So we can only have rice and sometimes we don’t.”

While all her hopes rest with her son, she worries for her daughter that she pulled out of school so she could work with her. “I don’t know what kind of future my daughter will have: Maybe she will be a beggar all her life,” she said.

Even the son of community leader Va Saveourn had, to his father’s grief, to drop out school to help his family.

“I would like appeal to any and all NGOs to give us support so that all those children can go back to school,” he said. “They are young, full of potential, and they are at an age to study and learn.”



Children from the relocation site Tangkhiev. Above left, two boys go about their tasks at home. Above left, Pov Ratana at school. Right, Chan Teary, third grade teacher, Areikassap Primary School.

FEATURE

# Indigenous Groundbreakers



Ty Samphors Vicheka

Ky Sinh, a minority group student in Kratie province.

By Ty Samphors Vicheka

Education is the main key to eliminate poverty. However, people who live in remote area, especially indigenous people, are still facing many challenges in term of getting the knowledge.

Lacking of schools, teachers, poor infrastructure, family conditions and personal perception are the main reasons that students drop school in remote areas.

The sound of laughing and smiling was turning louder and louder from a wooden house surrounding by many kind of trees to show a simple environment how villagers live their lives in the province.

Wearing long jean with pink shirt and sitting in the middle of the house accompanied by her family and friends, Ky Sinh, 22, is from indigenous family in Kratie province. She was just back from Phnom Penh to visit her family. Sinh is one girl in this village who pursue her studies in Phnom Penh.

With a smiling face, Sinh, a freshman of Khemarak University majoring in International relations, expressed her feeling that “I am very excited to have a chance to study, she added, it was not that easy for me to get out of the village to study in Phnom Penh.” There are not so many young people in her village having a chance to attend the school. Most of them quit school in secondary school.

Sinh also pointed out that people in her family and also her neighbor think girl

should not learn much as man because it is useless when they cannot find a job and they still do farming or become a wife in the future. . She said “everyone in my village keeps saying the same thing about this and it also makes me feel disappointed and discourages me sometimes.”

Though Sinh faces many challenges, she still tries the best to overcome and change those old perceptions.

Ka Mathul, a vice rector of Khemarak University, says that there are 25 indigenous students in his school now; they are facing some problems when moving to continue their studies at university. “To help those people, we have directly communicate to the commune chiefs to take care those marginalized people. We have provided scholarships to them if they are willing to study” he explains.

Yim Chung, Director of Ethnic minority development department of Ministry of Rural Development states that the ministry is improving education system for them by selecting indigenous people to be trained to become teachers. Secondly is include indigenous culture in the education system and opens study centers where most indigenous people are .

Leaving her province to continue her study, Sinh expresses that she has gotten new experiences in her life. She said “I have changed gradually; I know how to adapt and how to communicate with pe-

ople. I have visited some places where I have never done before at my provinces. I feel like I am as a frog in the cage when leaving the village”.

According to the report from Indigenous People NGO Network about The Rights of Indigenous People in Cambodia, the populations of indigenous people are about 1.34% of total population of Cambodia is 13.5 million. However, the numbers of those who can access to education are very limited.

Khiev Vo, school director of Mean Chey, said Thmey commune 90% are indigenous people and the number of indigenous people who can come to study are less than non-indigenous people.

He said most people in Thmey commune are indigenous and are faming, so they cannot afford to send their children to school. And, school is also far from their house and along the way to school is surrounded by thick forest, so it is not really safe for girls. Therefore, some parents do not allow their children to come to study.

Ky Sin wants to be a lawyer as this career will help her people understand more about child rights, land rights, women participation in village and communes. She said “what I get from my study I will use it to make my community change too”.

# Against All Odds

## Deaf Students Pursue Education with Determination



Mech Dara

Mom Socheat during class at Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey High School.

By Mech Dara

Every afternoon, Mom Socheat, a deaf teenager who came to Phnom Penh from Takeo province to get better access to education, sits with his deaf friend at the back of the class in Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey High School in Sen Sok district, staring at the whiteboard and trying to figure out what the teacher is explaining.

Since 2006, the 16-year-old student has been studying in the morning at a special school for the deaf set up in Phnom Penh by the organization Krousar Thmey. The rest of the day, he attends a regular class at Hun Sen Phnom Penh Thmey High School, which is not always easy since the school, unlike some other public schools, does not have a sign-language interpreter due to budget constraints.

But teachers and other students do their best to communicate with Mom Socheat. "There is no discrimination towards me," he said. "Teachers and students are friendly and helpful. Some students help me...they draw pictures or write to explain when I do not understand."

Vath Vattanak is one of those friendly students. "Mom Socheat is just a human being and he wants to learn and have fun

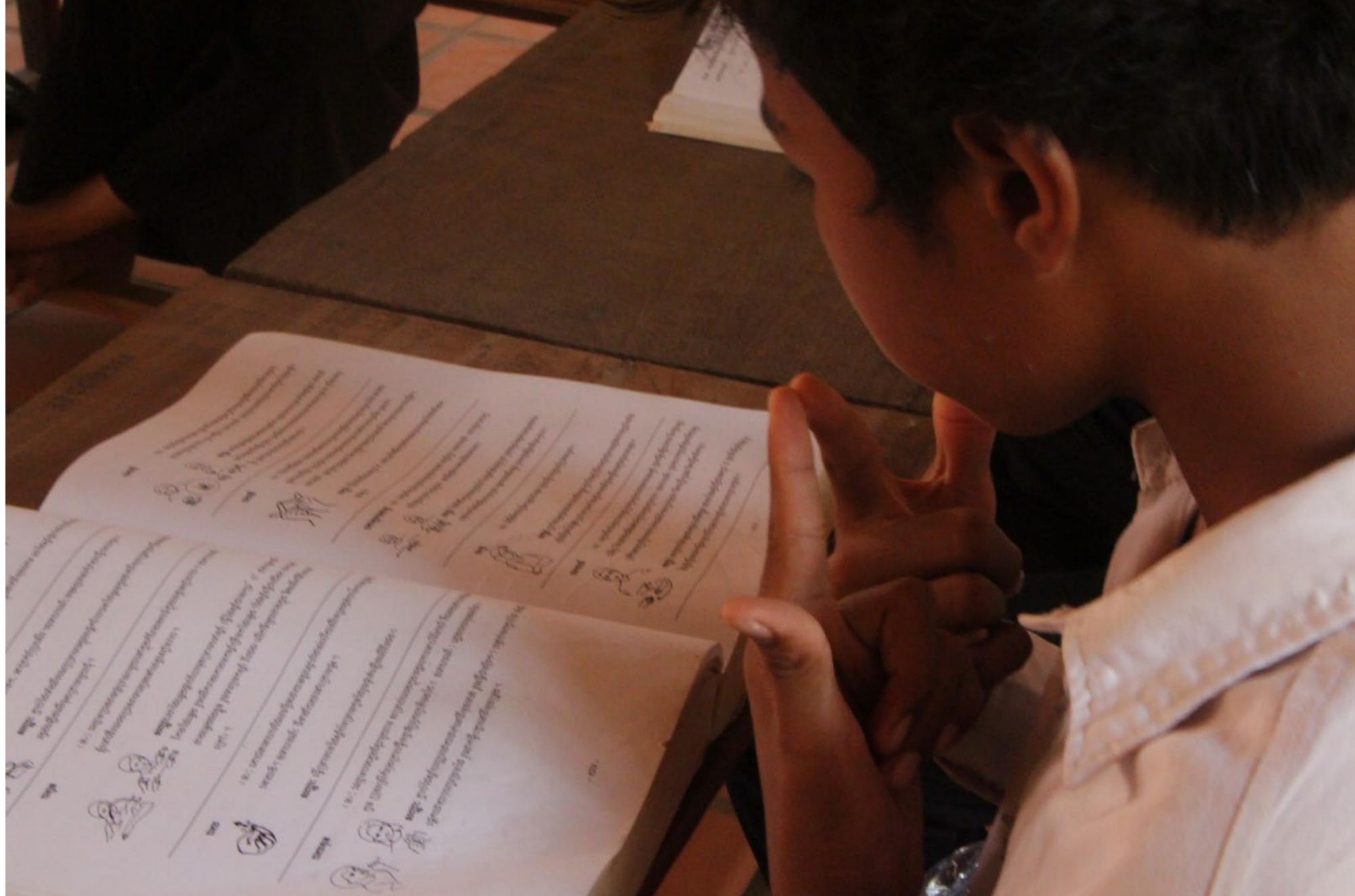
like us," he said. "I have learned a lot of sign language from him....When he has any difficulty, he shows by gestures or writes me a note.

At the KrousarThmey school, Mom Socheat has also learned to figure out what people are saying by watching their lips when they speak, a skill that is proving quite useful. "I read lips thoroughly...It helps me understand teachers and other students and communicate with them," he said.

Still, without an interpreter during class, Mom Socheat believes that he can only get 60 or 70 percent of a lesson. "It's hard for them to catch up with other students and the school curriculum," said Khmer teacher Lay Chandyna. "When we explain something, deaf students do not understand us...And I cannot understand their sign language so I don't know whether they understood the lesson or not."

All those stumbling blocks are nothing new for Mom Socheat.

"When I was young I used my own-signs to communicate with my family, friends and other people. I used my hands to show them I wanted to go home or I



Mech Dara

A deaf student practices sign language while reading.

wanted to go somewhere," he explained through a sign-language interpreter from the Krousar Thmey School. "It was very difficult to be in touch with regular people because they did not understand me.

"I tried to communicate by drawing pictures to show what I wanted to do, drawing my home for them when I wanted to go home and so on," Mom Socheat said.

"One of the worst parts of being deaf is isolation," said Charles Dittmeier, project director for the Deaf Development Program (DDP), which is funded by the organization Maryknoll and the Finnish Association of the Deaf. "All over the country they live isolated. They may live at home but they cannot talk to their parents, brothers and sisters...They have never talked to a human being in their lives, so there is much isolation."

Unlike people with hearing, deaf people don't have the chance of learning at home during their childhood or in regular primary school afterwards. "Eighty percent of education comes through hearing, which means that deaf people miss 80 percent of the education," Dittmeier said. "So it looks as if deaf people were stupid. They are intelligent like you and me but their knowledge is limited because they could not learn all things that you learn when you grow up. So there is discrimination against them because they look dumb.... We know many deaf people whose own relatives think they have mental problems instead of just being deaf." This is why one of DDP's activities consists of creating support groups to help deaf people become part of their own society, he said.

About half the cases of deafness are

due to parents' genes, but the other half can be avoided, being caused to accidents or diseases such as whooping cough, scarlet fever or meningitis that can be treated, Dittmeier said. This is why parents need to learn about deafness and have their children checked by competent doctors in case deafness can be avoided or reduced, he said.

Until 1996, Cambodia was one of the rare countries in the world not to have a sign language for its deaf people, Dittmeier said. Although the French had helped develop a sign language in Laos and Vietnam during Indochina, they had not done so in Cambodia. And no sign language for Khmer was developed after independence in 1953, he said.

It is only due to the Deaf Development Program and KrousarThmey that sign lan-

guage was developed in the country in the late 1990s.

But even today, much remains to be done to fully develop a sign language in Khmer, said PhonKosal, assistant teacher at KrousarThmey. "It is hard for us to teach deaf students because some school subjects are not yet covered by sign language," he said.

Krousar Thmey, which has developed school programs for deaf and visually impaired students, assists the Ministry of Education to integrate those students into the public school system. Students spend half a day in specialized classes set up by Krousar Thmey and the other half in regular classes. There currently are such programs in 10 provinces in the country, said Hang Kimchorn, program coordinator for the deaf at Krousar Thmey.

Although there is no truly reliable data on the subject, indications are that there are around 50,000 deaf people in the country, he said. Most deaf children tend to come from poor families in rural areas, he added. Around 650 students were in the Krousar Thmey school program during school year 2012-2013.

According to Nhean Saroeun who heads the Ministry of Education's Special Education Office, there currently are 115 teachers in the public school system who have been trained to teach deaf students. "We have encouraged teachers by providing a short training so they can identify a student's disability and teach deaf students in some provinces," he said.

"The ministry has plans to train more primary and secondary school teachers in the provinces...so they can understand students with impaired hearing and help them." There is a great need for more teachers with specialized training: During school year 2012-2013, there were 8,448 students with impaired hearing enrolled in regular primary schools, he said. "We encouraged parents [of deaf students] to send their children to school so they can get an education," Nhean Saroeun said.

Both the Deaf Development Program and Krousar Thmey offer vocational training to help deaf students get a trade so they can earn a living. In addition four deaf students were at university in 2012-2013.

Ask what advice he would give parents of deaf children, Hang Kimchorn said he would tell them to learn sign language to they can interact with their deaf children and educate them as they do their other children. And when they send their deaf child at a regular school, they should check with the teachers to make sure they pay attention to their child, he said.

As all people interviewed said, the goal is to give deaf people and education and skills so that they can support themselves with a job and have normal lives in their communities whether they specialize in sewing or computer science.



Mech Dara  
Photos above and left, students at the Krousar Thmey School attend special classes for deaf students.

For information regarding deaf children or adults, contact:

-Deaf Development Program:  
7A, Street 101, Phnom Penh  
Tel: 023-987-931 or 017-993-321  
E-mail: [info@ddp-cambodia.org](mailto:info@ddp-cambodia.org)  
Website : <http://dde-cambodia.org>

-Krousar Thmey:  
4 Street 257 - Tuk Laak I  
Toul Kauk - Phnom Penh  
Tel: (855) 023 880 503  
E-mail: [communication@krousar-thmey.org](mailto:communication@krousar-thmey.org)  
Website : [www.krousar-thmey.org](http://www.krousar-thmey.org)

# Cambodia Challenges to Run Pre-school



Photos above and left, students at the Wat Koh pre-school attend their classes in Phnom Penh.

Chan Muyhong



Chan Muyhong

Students learn during their class at the Wat Koh pre-school.

By Chan Muyhong

After more than 40 years after decades of inside war, Cambodia is still struggling to fix what has been lost in the past. One of the many reasons that make Cambodia a nation so lack behind other nations in South East Asia is that her education system has not yet been advanced.

By 2015, this Kingdom of Wonder determines to make education accessible to every boys and girls throughout the country. Whether or not Cambodia will reach this goal is still questionable.

According to the website of Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, not more than three years ago that Cambodia formulated its guideline to the establishment of pre-school in every elementary school. The full program of pre-school has just approved and put into implement last year.

The overall budget is about starting from 2009 keep increasing from 49,000 million riels in 2009 to about 78,001.3 million riels in 2013. The budget plan include facility development, program development and teacher salary.

According to the website from the ministry of Education, there are plan to increase more students to join pre-school from 15% in 2012 to 30% by 213. The website also mention that in the 2013 - 2014, more than 70% of teachers in pre-school will receive training regarding child development and receive a certificate for that training.

Mr. Rong Chhun in 2012 said that government must improve early childhood education because

schooling at a kindergarten level is vital in order for children to develop academically in later life.

Lina Ty whose son is studying first grade in one public school of Ta Khmao Province says she did not send her kid to pre-school because there is not any pre-school in her area. "I do not know about public pre-school. I did send my kid to a private English language pre-school when he was 5. If there was one public pre-school available near here, I would send my kid there.

When asked if she knows about the advantages of pre-school for her kid, Lina Ty mentions that she has no idea about it at all. "Children should be sent to school when they are six years old" that is all she know.

Comparing to Vietnam and Thailand, Cambodia has a lot more to do to achieve this goal.

The important of Pre-school is that "Kids will be able to catch up faster when they enter elementary school. Here, kids learn moral, drawing, math, letters, singing, and exercise. These skill allows them to think, imagine and learn by playing", said the director and also teacher of Wat Koh Pre-school, Chengchan Darapich.

Having been a pre-school teacher since 1981, she adds that the education that kids get at pre-school is a strong stepping stone for them in future and that kids age from 3-5 years old should not miss pre-school at all.

"The teacher will teach according to their age.

In this school we follow the study curriculum set by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. It is the national curriculum of which every pre-school in the country have to follow the same program." she said. "We are not just teacher, we also take a role as nanny. You know that kids at that age need a lot of attention and care. It's quite a challenge for us."

In return, pre-school teachers receive salary in the amount that they deserve to be paid more. Currently, salary of pre-school teacher is about 18\$ only.

Rong Chhun, the direction of teacher association said that "the government could improve early childhood education by updating the curriculum and paying teachers a better salary."

More than ...percent of the population are under age 30. By year.... The estimate of young baby born will top up to ..... and that indicate an increase demand for pre-school.

More and more people are aware of the advantages of having their kid enter pre-school and private pre school now is take over public pre-school in both curriculum and learning environment. And private pre-school is becoming a popular choice for well-off parents who wish to a good education for their kids.

By 2015, Cambodia will enter to compete with other nations in the job market. If the situation doesn't improve, Cambodia will still be a nation whose development is as fast as a turtle.

# Staying Focused

Blind and Low Vision Students Pursue an Quality Education and a Better Life

By Mech Dara

Most students can afford to stop paying attention for a few moments in class. If they start thinking of something else instead of listening to the teacher, they can usually catch up by glancing at what the teacher is writing on the board.

But Ann Sophorn and other blind or low vision students don't have that luxury. For them, it's essential to listen carefully so that they can not only remember but also comprehend everything the teacher explains.

"We have to use our imagination and our memory to understand the lessons and to deal with problems in our lives," the 20-year-old student said.

And problems in their lives tend to multiply. Just getting to school is a challenge, said Raun Songhak, a 19-year-old student who, like Ann Sophorn, has low vision. "It's very difficult for us to travel in any town or city because of the busy traffic," he said.

In a country in which traffic lights—when there are any—are often seen by motorcyclists and car drivers as suggestions rather than traffic control, making his way to school is a major project for a blind or low-vision student.

Both Raun Songhak and Ann Sophorn first attended regular primary schools that were not equipped for blind or low-vision

students. "I did not learn much," Raun Songhak said.

They later were able to attend a school set up by the organization Krousar Thmey for blind and low-vision people. "My life completely changed when I was admitted at the school," Raun Songhak said. "I've had the chance to learn and communicate with blind, low vision as well as ordinary people. And we can learn like other people do." The program involves students spending half their time at the Krousar Thmey school and the other half at a public school with regular students.

In this program done in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, students are supplied with some school manuals in braille and can follow lessons without relying only on their memory.

Braille consists of writing a text in small dots set in relief that blind and low-vision people read by touching them. "It was difficult to learn braille because there are so many symbols to remember and it requires a good memory," Ann Sophorn said. "It took me about a year to learn to use braille." Braille for Khmer language was developed in the mid-1990s by Krousar Thmey when the organization opened the country's first school for the blind in Phnom Penh, said Neang Phalla, program coordinator for the blind at Krousar Thmey.



Before the organization launched its program to educate blind and low-vision students, she said, "Visually impaired children could not get access to education. They were just left behind, staying at home or being beggars. Cambodians in the past thought that these disabled children had done something bad in past lives and were this way because of what they call karma [the present affected by one's behavior in past lives]." So they would not try to help blind or low-vision children develop like others, she said.

But this attitude is changing due to awareness campaigns, Neang Phalla said. During school year 2012-2013, there were 373 students in the Krousar Thmey school program plus 55 others in public-school special classes, where they are well received by regular students, she said.

More and more parents want their

blind or low-vision children to have an education. In 2012-2013, there were 8,068 blind and low-vision students at public primary schools, said Nhean Saroeun who heads the Special Education Department at the Ministry of Education.

"Our ministry is working hard to help blind and low vision students get education like ordinary students," he said. "We have provided some training for provincial teacher departments and teacher officials at district levels so they can teach other teachers in the different communes," he said. "They learn simple ways to help them."

According to Dr. Do Seiha, vice chairman of the National Program for Eye Health at Ministry of Health, the cause for blindness or low vision in Cambodia range from anything from cataract, cornea scar, glaucoma, fungus infection to



Above: Blind and low vision students play traditional Cambodian instruments at the Cambodia Japanese Cooperation Center. Below: A low vision student uses a magnifying glass to read a book during class at Krousar Thmey in Phnom Penh.

eye injury.

“A pregnant woman should get vaccinated against rubella [also known as German measles] to protect her child from blindness,” he said. Rubella may cause blindness in an unborn child.

Also, Dr. Do Seiha said, “When the child is born with measles, he could get a cornea scar that may make him blind.” People with a rash, cough or any other disease should try to stay away from a pregnant woman so her baby will not be affected, he said.

Blindness can be due to inadequate nutrition, but most cases brought to hospital are due to cataract that can be treated with surgery and injuries due to children playing with knives or other sharp objects or throwing things at each other, he said.

Although there are no accurate data, the Association of the Blind in Cambodia estimated in the mid-2000s that about 1.1 percent of the population was visually impaired, which would mean around 155,000 people today.

Going to school takes hard work on the part of the blind and low vision students, said Pheap Sophak who has been teaching at Krousar Thmey for three years. “We still have limited resources so it is difficult for them to learn some subjects such as math and physics,” he said. “Teachers need to explain phenomena and formula, and then they can give them exercises to practice...Students need to hold or touch the equipment then it's easy for them to understand.”

The fact that few school manuals and reference books are available in braille complicates matters, said Neang Phalla. When they go to university or a vocational school, blind and low vision students have to do without, she said. There are numerous documents in braille on the internet but in English, not in Khmer. So those who are not as fluent in English have limited access to material, Neang Phalla said. Krousar Thmey has set up a braille printing workshop and tries to produce as many books and school manuals as possible.

Over the years, blind and low vision graduates from Krousar Thmey have studied at university and obtained their diplomas, ready to enter the marketplace. One success story is Sean Viboth who now is on staff at the Press and Quick Reaction Unit of the Council of Ministers.

Getting there took some hard work on his part. After graduating from the Royal University of Phnom Penh with a degree in literature, Sean Viboth made an appeal to Prime Minister Hun Sen on television in 2011, asking him to intercede so he

could study at the Royal School of Administration, Cambodia's public service school. The prime minister took action and Sean Viboth studied and graduated from the school in 2012.

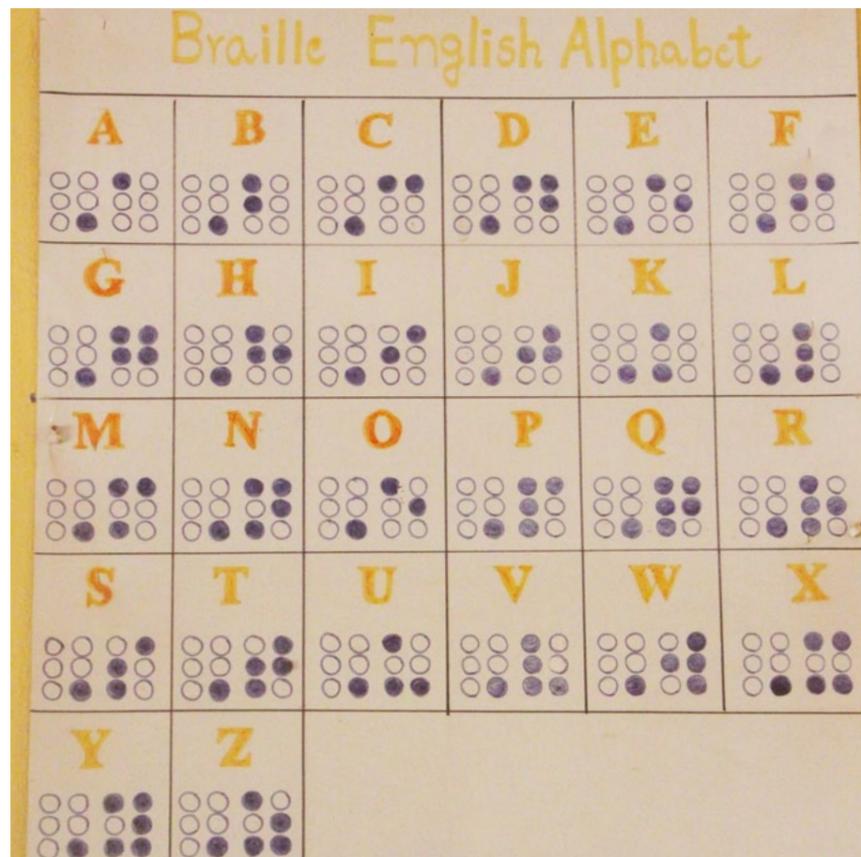
Buon Mao, director of the Association of the Blind in Cambodia, says that people's social perceptions regarding disabled people are slowly changing due to the efforts of a few organizations and some media campaigns. However in the countryside where those campaigns do not reach, discrimination endures.

But no matter what, he said, “Disabled people should not give up hope. They have to work very hard to get skills and vocational training. Then society will respect and value them since they will have the ability to perform work.”

Raun Songhak, who is still studying at Krousar Thmey, agreed. “We have to try as hard as we can to overcome barriers and to reach our dream,” he said.

For more information:

Krousar Thmey: (855) 023 880 503  
ABC: 017 911 417



Above: a student writes in braille. Below, the English alphabet in braille.

Mech Dara

## INTERVIEW



Yen Sokha, deputy of Non-Formal Education at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. By Mech Dara

### What are advantages for providing non-formal education?

According to UNESCO, there were about 2 million illiterate people in Cambodia. Non-formal education is playing an important role to help develop human resources contributing to quality education in order to achieve EFA goal [Education For All]. It has provided opportunities to citizens at all ages not fortunate enough to access to formal education. This allows them to receive lifelong education and to educate students who have dropped out from school

### How many programs that NFE has provided to help them?

We have provided many programs such as functional literacy, post-literacy, re-entry, equivalency or complementary education or income generation through community learning center, life quality improvement through mobile learning van, and have libraries and reading rooms for them.

Functional literacy programs aim to enable learners such as children, youth, civil servants, armed forces, worker, employee and all adult with no access to education to read, write and count and give them skills to assist them in their daily lives and activities.

People in rural villages have opportunity to learn job skills programs and other vocational training such as computer, English language, sewing, cooking, hair dressing, beautician, weaving, traditional silk, rice planting techniques, vegetable planting, animal, fish raising, electricity, air conditioners, mobile phone and refrigera-

tor preparing, automotive mechanic, art of drawing pictures, carpenter and furniture skill, sculpture and carving, blacksmith skill, traditional music and dancing skill.

We employ teachers or skilled people who live in their community to teach them. We have also provided them some materials and equipment so that they can practice. After they have completed the course they take that lesson to earn money to help them to improve their living conditions.

For a re-entry program, we brought back students who skipped their classes or had dropout from schools to return to school and we taught them during school break in August and September to enable re-start their classes. The teacher selected the main subjects to teach them and then they tested them to see whether they could move to the next grade. Children who pass could go to the next grade.

A CLC [Community Learning Center] is to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improve of the quality of life.

### What are the challenges for the NFE?

We have faced many problems such as limited teachers, equipment, dissemination of education programs and parents and community have little understanding about the value of education.

Because of poverty and limited knowledge some parent and community do not value education enough to not send their children to school. It is hard for us to help them to bring their children back school. Other parents have to find

job in other locations so they have taken their children with them and it is hard for us to track them. Some teacher blame poor students, and it can make them to stop attending school

Some families want their children to stop studying and find jobs because they do have money to support them attending school. For children enrolled in school in late age, they also find it hard to pursue their study because they feel embarrassed when they could not catch up with other student and they are older than other students in their class. It can make them to stop studying.

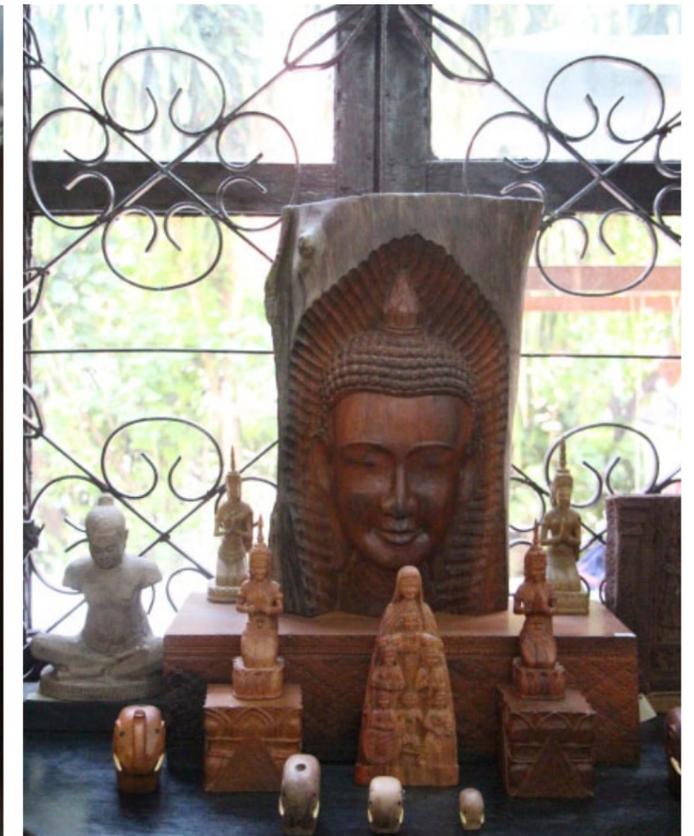
We have limited financial resources for some community when their community does not have teachers and trainers. We have to employ them from other communities. It costs a lot of money for them because they need to pay for their transportation and we do not have enough salary to provide for teachers. In addition, our government does not have money to lend the community to start up small business so it is hard for them.

In addition we still have limited information disseminates about programs.

### What is your recommendation?

Communities, parents and government need to work together to reduce illiteracy in Cambodia. We know it is hard for the poor family to send their children to school but if they have willingness and with support and encouragement from the community and government, their children can stay in school.

# To Live, Learn And Work with Hope



Mech Dara  
People with disabilities are making handicraft at Watthan Artisans Shop situated inside Wat Than pagoda, towards the south of Phnom Penh as a part of vocational training program and employment and thier handicraft are displayed including including fine wood carving, producing top-quality fashion and home accessories from locally-woven silk, cotton, up-cycled materials and re-claimed hardwoods.

Mech Dara

At top, Prak Thit, 32, carves hardwood to make an elephant. Above, hand-carved hardwoods are displayed. Left Pok Kosal, 28, shapes hardwood to make a Naga.

# Taking a Break

Students celebrate Khmer New Year at school before leaving for the holiday.



Mech Dara  
Above, young students dance at Chhvang Primary School in Kandal province's Chhvang commune. Below left, a young girl tries to hit the clay pot to release some sweets. Left, a boy laughs while playing games. Bottom right, students share food that they prepared at home.

# Start With the Teachers

With Rong Chhun, president of the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association

There is high dropout rate in secondary school because of poverty, high education fees, unemployment and corruption in Cambodia's education sector. Further, some parents and community have little understanding about the importance of education.

Some parents are poor so they have to withdraw their children from school to work to support the family. They think it is better for their children to find work than stay at school. They do not have the money needed for education fees such as extra class costs, costs of documents, school material, transportation and other expenses.

Some parents and community do not understand the value of education. They feel hopeless when they see their children or other children who have finished schools but cannot find jobs.. Some parents see very little benefit for keeping their children in school. They see the price that they pay for their children to go school is not equal to their education outcome.

We see teachers selling document, forcing student to study extra classes, and some student sometime pay bribe to their teachers to get better mark. All this has negative impact on the quality of our education sector. When quality of education get poor, it makes people having poor morality, poor critical thinking and it impact the economic and social development of the country.

There are many big factors contributing to poor quality in Cambodia education sector such as low salary of teachers, limited ability and knowledge of students, absence of students, lack of attention by students, corruption, low value on education by community, poor commitment of some teachers.

We see the government and the ministry do not pay enough attention to teachers. They do not provide enough salary for teacher so teachers need to have part time work to get some money to support their family. They do not provide significant school material or training for teachers.

A lot of elements are required to keep children from dropping out from school including teachers, students, parents, Ministry and the government working

together to help children pursue their education.

Parents and community are playing an important role to keep children at school. They need to participate actively and encourage children to pursue their study and need to understand the importance of education.

Teachers need to work with parents

and community in order to help keep student stay in school and actively transfer their knowledge to students.

The ministry and government need to provide enough salary and enough school material for teachers so they have enough money support their family and have enough school material for their students.



Mech Dara  
Above, students at a primary school in Kompong Speu province. Below, students play before class at Hun Neang Boeng Trabek Khangkoeut primary school in Phnom Penh.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

tochdara1988@gmail.com

Letters for the publication should be no longer than 1000 words The letter must include a phone number for verification.

FOOD CROP

In countries like Niger and Mauritania, the cultivation of land has changed little in the past several centuries. Additionally, these countries mono-modal rainfall pattern brings **precipitation** for only three months during the year. **As a result**, food production doesn't nearly meet demand. Several agencies and organizations have **intensified** their efforts to increase the productivity of land in these countries. They have introduced new methods of **fertilization** and soil management. With **ample** sunlight for **photosynthesis** and modern **irrigation** techniques, sustainable farming techniques should allow farmers to boost **aggregate** production in order to meet demand. Still, crop revitalization faces an unexpected **adversary**: institutional incompetence. Where crop specialists have convinced individual farmers to **abandon** old farming techniques in place of new, they cannot really **obtain** the governmental cooperation they need. The biggest **hurdles** are political corruption, incompetence, and the absence of a marketing **infrastructure**.

DISASTER

Natural challenges humans in many way, through disease, weather, and **famine**. For those living along the coast, one unusual **phenomenon** capable of catastrophic **destruction** is the tsunami (pronounce "tsoo-NAH-mee"). A tsunami is a series of waves **generated** in a body of water by an impulsive disturbance. Earthquakes, **landslides**, volcanic eruptions, explosions, and even the **impact** of meteorites can generate tsunami. Starting at sea, a tsunami slowly **approaches** land, growing in height and losing energy through bottom friction and turbulence. Still, just like any other water waves, tsunamis **unleash** tremendous energy as they **plunge** onto the shore. They have great **erosion** potential, stripping beaches of sand, undermining trees, and flooding hundreds of meters inland. They can easily **crush** cars, homes, vegetation, and anything they collide with. To minimize the devastation of a tsunami, scientists are constantly trying to anticipate them more accurately and more quickly. Because many factors come together to produce a life-threatening tsunami, foreseeing them is not easy. Despite this, researchers in meteorology persevere in studying and predicting tsunami behavior.

- precipitation (n)** ទឹកភ្លៀង ការធ្លាក់ភ្លៀង
- as a result (conj)** ជាលទ្ធផល ជាហេតុបណ្តាលឲ្យ
- intensified (v)** ធ្វើឲ្យរឹតតែខ្លាំងឡើង
- fertilization (n)** ការដាក់ដី
- ample (adj)** គ្រប់គ្រាន់
- photosynthesis (n)** ការធ្វើរស្មីសំយោគ
- irrigation (n)** ការបញ្ចូលទឹក ការបង្ហូរទឹក ចូលក្នុងស្រែ
- aggregate (adj)** សរុបទាំងអស់
- adversary (n)** សត្រូវ សត្រូវមិត្ត គូប្រឆាំង
- abandon (v)** បោះបង់ចោល
- obtain (v)** ទទួលបាន
- hurdles (n)** ឧបសគ្គ
- infrastructure (n)** ហេដ្ឋារចនាសម្ពន្ធ
- famine (n)** ការអត់បាយ ទុរិក្ស
- phenomenon (n)** បាតុភូត
- destruction (n)** ការបំផ្លិចបំផ្លាញ ការខូចខាត
- generated (v)** បង្កើត ធ្វើឲ្យមាន
- landslides (n)** ការបាក់ដី
- impact (n)** ផលប៉ះពាល់ (អវិជ្ជមាន)
- approaches (v)** ខិតប្រយុទ្ធនៅជិត
- unleash (v)** បញ្ចេញ ចេញ
- plunge (v)** ហូរចាក់ បោះពួយទៅ
- erosion (n)** ចម្រោះ
- crush (v)** បុកកំទេច ធ្វើឲ្យខ្ទេច

READING TIPS

- A. Comprehending important information and facts that are stated in a passage
- B. Locating a specific piece of information in the passage quickly
- C. Using examples and descriptions to find information
- D. Understanding the distinction between main ideas and supporting details
- E. Using transitional expressions to locate details such as examples, time, reasons, or result
- F. Recognizing incorrect information as well as information not mentioned in the text
- G. Identifying paraphrases that do or do not correctly summarize information from the text
- H. Understanding the meaning of the high-lighted words correctly
- I. Using the context to understand the high-lighted word clearly.

IDIOMS

- ADD FUEL TO THE FIRE**—To make a bad situation worse; to do or say something that causes more trouble, make someone angrier: Bobby was already angry with his sister, and when she forgot to pick him up, that really added fuel to the fire.
- TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF**—To go through a change: Mouy Hong was very badly behaved in school at first. But after a few weeks he has turned over a new leaf.
- TO TURN A DEAF EAR TO SOMETHING**—To refuse to listen to or pay attention to something: The workers protested and asked for high payment but the government turned a deaf ear to their request.
- TO TURN SOMETHING UPSIDE DOWN**—To change a situation or space with little warning: The police turned the student's flat upside down looking for drugs.
- BURN THE MIDNIGHT OIL**—to stay up very late at night studying or working. Stave has a big test tomorrow morning, so she plans to burn the midnight oil tonight.
- BE LIVING ON A SHOESTRING**—To have very little money to live on: Dara is living on a shoestring and he cannot afford to buy school material and uniform.
- TIGHTEN ONE'S BELT**—To economize greatly: Vion has to tighten his belt so he can have enough money to foot the bill for his university.

- I. GRAMMAR
- 1. In 1793, Charles Newbold designed a cast iron plow that \_\_\_\_\_ than the wooden plow then in use.
  - A. was more efficient
  - B. was of more efficient
  - C. had more efficiency
  - D. it was more efficient
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ think of metallurgy as a modern field of science, but it is actually one of the oldest.
  - A. Although many people
  - B. Many people who
  - C. In spite of many people
  - D. Many people
- 3. A cloud is a dense mass of \_\_\_\_\_ water vapor or ice particles.
  - A. or
  - B. whether
  - C. both
  - D. either
- 4. Snare drums produce a sharp, rattling sound \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. as striking
  - B. when are struck
  - C. struck
  - D. when struck
- 5. New words are constantly being invented \_\_\_\_\_ new objects and concepts.
  - A. to describe
  - B. a description of
  - C. they describe
  - D. describe
- 6. Dust storms most often occur in areas where the ground has little vegetation to protect \_\_\_\_\_ of the wind.
  - A. from the effects
  - B. it the effects
  - C. it from the effects
  - D. the effects from it
- 7. Not only \_\_\_\_\_ the most populous city in the United States in 1890, but it had also become the most congested.
  - A. was New York City
  - B. that New York City was
  - C. New York City was
  - D. has New York City
- 8. Although drama is a form of literature, \_\_\_\_\_ from the other types in the way it is presented.
  - A. it differs
  - B. is different
  - C. despite the difference
  - D. but it is different
- 9. Good pencil erasers are soft enough not \_\_\_\_\_ paper but hard enough so that they crumble gradually when used.
  - A. by damaging
  - B. so that they damage
  - C. to damage
  - D. damaging
- 10. Candles \_\_\_\_\_ from beeswax burn with a very clean flame.
  - A. are made
  - B. making
  - C. which make
  - D. made
- II. VOCABULARY
- 1. The \_\_\_\_\_ rain caused the river to overflow its banks.
  - A. abstract
  - B. indigenous
  - C. hollow
  - D. incessant
- 2. With its \_\_\_\_\_ engine, the care performed better than we had hoped.
  - A. marginalized
  - B. rigorous
  - C. modified
  - D. garner
- 3. A heavy object will \_\_\_\_\_ other objects toward it by its gravity.
  - A. drain
  - B. draw
  - C. exploit
  - D. colloquial
- 4. Over the sounds of the storm, she could not hear the \_\_\_\_\_ sound of footsteps outside her bedroom door.
  - A. acclaimed
  - B. condemned
  - C. eternal
  - D. fainter
- 5. Through his \_\_\_\_\_, the billionaire will be remembered for many centuries.
  - A. binary
  - B. ordeal
  - C. taboo
  - D. legacy
- 6. Several individuals from \_\_\_\_\_ group of society protested in front of the government office today.
  - A. encrypted
  - B. incessant
  - C. marginalized
  - D. inalienable
- 7. Providing an excellent view of the landscape up to 120 miles in all directions, the mountain \_\_\_\_\_ over the surrounding countryside.
  - A. deviates
  - B. lies
  - C. portrays
  - D. towers
- 8. Some career choices are better suited for individuals with good problem-solving skills and \_\_\_\_\_ minds.
  - A. analytical
  - B. beneficial
  - C. dependent
  - D. epic
- 9. The politician \_\_\_\_\_ many crimes and dishonest acts before the people finally voted him out.
  - A. discounted
  - B. assessed
  - C. manipulated
  - D. perpetrated
- 10. She wrote under a \_\_\_\_\_ because women were not believed to be capable of producing worthy literature at the time.
  - A. precision
  - B. conspiracy
  - C. colleague
  - D. pseudonym

WISHWORDS

- "True friends stab you in the front."
- "A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world."
- "Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."
- "When I was young, I thought that money was the most important thing in life; now that I am old I know that it is."
- "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."
- "Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead."
- Oscar Wilde, Irish writer and poet (October 16, 1854-November 30, 1900)**
- "Friendship... is not something you learn in school. But if you haven't learned the meaning of friendship, you really haven't learned anything."
- "I know where I'm going and I know the truth, and I don't have to be what you want me to be. I'm free to be what I want."
- "I hated every minute of training, but I said, Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion."
- "Only a man who knows what it is like to be defeated can reach down to the bottom of his soul and come up with the extra ounce of power it takes to win when the match is even."
- "The man who has no imagination has no wings."
- Muhammad Ali, retired boxing champion, (January 17, 1942-present)**

WEB SCHOLARSHIP

- <http://www.turkiyeburslari.gov.tr/index.php/en/turkiye-burslari/burs-programlari>
- <http://moeys.gov.kh/en/scholarships.html>
- <http://www.scholars4dev.com/>
- <http://www.scholarshipforcambodia.com/jfunu-scholarship/>
- <http://admissions.ntu.edu.sg/graduate/scholarships/Pages/ASEANScholarship.aspx>
- <http://www.adb.org/site/careers/japan-scholarship-program/main>
- <http://www.scholarshipforcambodia.com/institute-of-gerontology-bursaries-for-2012/>
- [http://cambodia.usembassy.gov/fulbright\\_announcement.html](http://cambodia.usembassy.gov/fulbright_announcement.html)
- [http://www.australiaawardscambodia.org/http://cambodia.usembassy.gov/fulbright\\_announcement.html](http://www.australiaawardscambodia.org/http://cambodia.usembassy.gov/fulbright_announcement.html)
- <http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/scholarships/asean/cambodia/>

ANSWERS. I. 1) A, 2) D, 3) D, 4) D, 5) A, 6) C, 7) A, 8) A, 9) C, 10) D. II. 1) D, 2) C, 3) B, 4) D, 5) D, 6) C, 7) D, 8) C, 9) D, 10) B

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