



IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION FOR ALL

World Vision
Cambodia

Over the past decade, Cambodia has experienced a promising rise in the number of boys and girls enrolling and attending school, especially at the primary school level. High attendance rates, however, does not necessarily mean students are receiving a quality education. For many schools, classrooms are overcrowded and lack the resources, facilities and teaching competencies to develop students' reading, writing, numeracy and basic life skills.

Access to secondary level education remains a privilege for a select few, as many children start working alongside their parents after primary school in order to supplement their livelihood. The number of students enrolled at the lower secondary level decreased in the 2011-2012 school year.

Cambodia's struggles with an undereducated population are compounded by high rates of malnutrition. Many children prefer to stay at home rather than sit a whole day in class on an empty stomach. Malnutrition also inhibits learning by stunting cognitive and psychosocial development.

When children actively participate in the classroom, they are learning to become agents of change. Schools need the resources, time and capacity-building necessary to make it worthwhile in the eyes of families, communities and their children.

THE FACTS

- Pre-school enrollment: **121,306** (EMIS)
- Primary school enrollment: **2,142,464** (EMIS)
- Rate of primary school completion: **89.75%** (EMIS)
- Repetition rate at grade 1 and 2: **12%** and **7%** (EMIS)
- Lower secondary school enrollment: **541,147** (EMIS)
- Public expenditure on education: **2% of GDP** (UNDP)
- School life expectancy of children under 7: **9.8 years** (UNDP)
- Adult Literacy Rate, both male and female: **77.6** (UNDP)

- EMIS (2012)
- UNDP International Human Development Indicators Cambodia (2011)



WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE

World Vision promotes education for all children by ensuring boys and girls can achieve quality-learning in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), basic education & life skills, and complete primary education.

World Vision works with 426 schools and 375 school or youth-related clubs. These clubs promote life skills such as critical thinking, emotional management, communication, relationship building, and social responsibility.

Our Child Friendly School Policy aims to increase the number of teachers with the capacity to implement child-centered inclusive education.

ECCE, basic education and life skills initiatives promote the development of pre-primary school age children (4-5 years old) physically, mentally, socially, cognitively, emotionally, spiritually, and morally so they can learn to express their views and flourish at the primary school level.

To ensure children are free to attend and participate in school, World Vision empowers families to strive for economic independence and sustainability so that children through economic and agriculture interventions.

Through the Citizen and Voice Action initiative we are increasing dialogue between ordinary citizens and government authorities responsible for providing services to the public. World Vision empowers communities to influence the quality, efficiency and accountability of public services, and strengthen the relationship between citizens and the government.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO COULD



In front of a makeshift classroom in Tapang Village, Kampong Chhnang province, 30 students ages four to ten stand in line as a small girl plays the role of instructor. Her name is Phean Vongsa, aged 10, and she hopes one day to become a teacher.

Despite Vongsa's small frame she has impacted her village in big ways. Vongsa is in the top three of her fourth grade class but makes time to help fellow classmates. Her teacher, Rim Somaly, is impressed by her compassion. "She has never discriminated against other vulnerable children," Somaly says. "There is a child living with HIV and AIDS, but Vongsa plays with and helps her."

To educate children in her village, Vongsa started a reading club at her house. At first, she taught her cousins and siblings but soon other children joined in. Vongsa says, "Activities in my club are similar to what we do in school. The children stand in line as I lead them singing songs and reviewing math lessons. Then I teach them difficult words."

After her club's membership grew, Vongsa submitted a proposal to World Vision and her community for a teaching space in her family's yard. Today, Vongsa's informal classroom is a place where

once illiterate children can learn to grasp the power of the pen and paper.

Even the village chief has expressed his delight at Vongsa's impact. Before Vongsa started the club, he says, parents were suspicious of school and did not allow their children to go. But today, "when the parents meet me on the way, they always tell me about the change in their children."

Vongsa and her family thank World Vision for sponsoring her. Sophea says that before World Vision came to their village, her daughter "did not speak up or say a lot." But the idea of being supported by someone gave Vongsa confidence to lead other children.

Vongsa enjoys corresponding with her sponsor. "I am happy when I read her letters. I want to tell her that I share my knowledge to other people. I want children to say to their mothers that Vongsa taught me these new words. I wish my sponsor good health and success." ■