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PROJECT NEWSLETTER

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- 38,542 students received training on usage of water and sanitation facilities
- 28 of 30 teacher manuals for the Life Skills curriculum being piloted next year have been finalized for printing in July – August
- Subject clubs now total 62 across 24 schools

IBEC PARTNERS

IBEC is funded by the American people through the US Agency for International Development (USAID). IBEC is implemented by World Education in close collaboration with Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE) and in cooperation with the Ministry of Education Youth, and Sport (MoEYS).

Other local partners include: WCRD, BSDA, NEP and EDA. Other international partners are Equal Access and the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

Improved Basic Education in Cambodia (IBEC) Project

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IBEC Hosts National Workshop on Best Practices

National workshop and school visits organized by NEP

IBEC's second major national workshop organized by partner NGO Education Partnership (NEP) took place on 15 June 2011. This annual seminar is designed to share Best Practices and lessons learned based on the IBEC experience with other NGOs working in the education sector. The one-day event held at the Sunway Hotel in Phnom Penh was attended by staff from over 59 international and local NGOs. The Workshop this year was a tremendous success. NEP found that demand exceeded expectations with over 100 participants applying, whereas only 80 were originally planned for. The national workshop is funded by USAID through World education, which has an annual contract each year with NEP to assist with the seminar's organization, using the latter's national membership network.

This year's workshop covered presentations by World Ed and KAPE staff on a number of interesting experiences from this past year, including:

- Life Skills Programming
- Thin Client Lab Establishment and IT integration efforts
- The Establishment of Science Labs
- Drop out Prevention
- School Management Training
- Measures to Address National Teacher Shortages

The workshop was characterized by tremendous interest and a considerable amount of questioning and information

sharing. Two students from Peus II High School in Krouch Chma made a presentation on the development of a student newspaper using IT facilities. The confidence and experience of these two students at a National Workshop was good proof of the project's impacts on young people.

NGOs Visit IBEC Schools

Following the workshop, NEP organized a two-day field trip to IBEC schools in Siem Reap to see some of the best practices in action. On 22 June, staff members from 40 NGOs made a study visit to two schools - Samaky Lower Secondary School and

Hun Sen Komrou Primary School in Chikreng District. The Study Trip was designed to supplement the Best Practices Workshop by providing concrete examples of activities discussed during the workshop. The visitors observed such activities as the implementation of Thin Client labs, Science labs, life skill activities such as fish raising and vegetable growing, and the support of Children's Councils as well as Subject Classrooms. These visits prove to be quite instructive while determining possibilities for replication in other provinces and projects.



Increasing the Leverage of Project Impacts: NEP members visit a science lab in a project school

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Component I: Local NGO and Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability

The Component I team undertook a review of progress made at participating local NGOs with respect to the institutional development benchmarks that were consensually drafted at the start of this year. On average, partners achieved or completed about 62% of the benchmarks, with 30% still in progress, and 8% being delayed for various reasons. Financial reviews were also undertaken with each partner, the aim of which was to ensure proper accounting and full compliance with USAID regulations.

IBEC assisted Beacon Schools in developing plans on how to use specialized funds meant for upgrading libraries, organizing income-generation activities linked to life skills programming, and other activities. The Schools also reviewed their

Sustainability Planning efforts with IBEC staff. Components 1 and 3 have been quite successful in their collaboration on activities related to sustainability and general development at the Schools.

For the first time, IBEC staff were joined by Provincial Working Groups during semi-annual spot check visits at the project schools, followed by a review and then a process of crafting solutions to problems. These visits are designed to assess the implementation of interventions and proper financial management of project grant funds.

IBEC intensified its capacity building activities with Commune EFA Committees (CEFAC), bearing in mind that these local governing bodies are slated to provide

matching funds to schools by Year 4 of project implementation (2013). Training modules that will help prepare all target communes were produced this quarter.



Preparing for commune involvement: CEFAC members learn about development

Success Story Audio contest inspires Youth

Building on the success and active student participation in the first contest, Equal Access (EA) organized a second contest to challenge students to practice and improve their new skills, gained from EA training. The contest required students and mentors to work together as teams and learn how to assign roles and responsibilities among their team members. Student participation exceeded the expectations of Equal Access staff members and teacher mentors, who assumed that the young students would not be able to produce radio segments of high content and sound quality, having attended just one short training workshop on reporting skills. Miss Son Sopheap, a teacher mentor, expressed that the contest was very useful for young students because it not only made them feel proud of what they had accomplished but also increased their own knowledge and skills in facilitation, negotiation, and communication. Another teacher mentor, Ms. Pech Vanna, added that being a student reporter was important because it helped bring different perspectives to their learning in the school program, and that the students enjoyed interviewing teachers, schoolmates or people in the village." Horm Sreymech, a 15-year-old female contest winner at Hun Sen Peus II High School, said, "I enjoy interviewing very much because it helps me to increase my knowledge and my confidence. I really appreciated the opportunity to be a student reporter."

Educational Outreach through Radio and Other Media



Student reporters interview classmates in their community

IBEC partner Equal Access completed a huge array of activities in multimedia outreach this quarter. Students had access to the ninth and tenth radio programs of the year, the ninth and tenth audio exercises of the year, the third of four comic books, and numerous other activities at school level including listening-dialogue groups and student reporter activities. The EA team

reported over 4,000 attendances of meetings at the school level and a listener survey that demonstrated the popularity of the program, in so far as it gives young Cambodians a voice through which to express themselves in a very visible but constructive way. Eliminate the last sentence and add the following: 'As a result, Equal Access has greatly increased the penetration of media messages relating to life skills for the project, thereby enhancing sustainability'.

Visit IBEC on the Web for key project updates, information and resources!

www.ibec.worlded.org

IMPROVED BASIC EDUCATION IN CAMBODIA (IBEC) PROJECT

Component 2: More Equitable School Access

Stakeholder-Driven Discretionary School Grants

With the close of the school year during the quarter, IBEC moved its attention to training schools on maintaining and properly utilizing the facilities provided. At the completion of these training workshops, teachers in turn did echo training activities with their students involving 38,542 students. Here are certain salient activities achieved this quarter:

- Nearly all remaining infrastructure and water systems were completed early in the quarter.
- The Component completed the compilation of utilization rate statistics from all school libraries. The Component found that there were on average 2,097 instances of library usage *per school* during the year, a very encouraging finding given the amount of funds invested in promoting readership.
- IBEC facilitated health referrals for 52 children (17 girls), mostly in Kampong Cham and Siem Reap. These referrals have been found to help children stay in school and continue their studies.
- The Girls' Counseling Networks that were set up at the start of the year reported 2,741 instances of peer support. These networks comprise mainly girls from lower secondary and upper primary who give support to their peers to stay in school and help to follow up on periods of extended absence among more vulnerable children.

Case Study: Best development Practices Ensure Continuity in Human development



Chan makes a presentation in class

Khean Chan is a 19-year old Year 2 student enrolled at the PTTC in Kampong Cham Province. She has been receiving scholarship support from KAPE since she was in Grade 7. When she completed Grade 9, she used the opportunity of continuous human development support from USAID to get a PTTC scholarship to become a teacher and return to her commune of origin when she finished her studies this year. Chan realized how lucky she is to have had this opportunity. She is one of five children in her family. Most of her other siblings dropped out of school at Grade 6 because of poverty. But the KAPE scholarship at Grade 7 enabled her and her youngest sister to continue their studies. With the Ministry's reform initiative to allow entry into PTTs at Grade 9 plus the USAID scholarship, she was able to get a special chance to become a teacher which is a life dream for Chan.

Khean studies very hard and passed her Final Examination at the PTTC this year. She says she is very excited to go back to teach in her hometown in Tbong Khmom District. She says she will try hard to be a good teacher and a role model to the other students to value education. She is very grateful for this opportunity to become a teacher even though she comes from a poor family in a remote commune.

Success Story

A Female Teacher Makes a Big Impact



Ms. Pich Sokhom talks with the school director at her school about her efforts to help young girls



Sriemich (grade 8) back at school after talking to her teacher, Ms. Sokhom

Ms. Pich Sokhom is a remarkable teacher. She is 22 years old and works at Chayo Lower Secondary School in Kampong Cham. She has worked extensively with many young girls who have left school, often visiting them at home to give advice and counseling, based on what she learned with IBEC. A large number of these girls have since returned to school, like Chuon Sriemich who had gone to work in Phnom Penh. After Ms Sokhom met with the family and talked to Sriemich by phone, she decided to return to Kampong Cham to continue her studies.

Scholarships

IBEC continued to oversee the administration of scholarship benefits at primary and secondary school level as well as at the Provincial Teacher Training Colleges (PTTC) in three provinces. Statistics showed that about 7% of the secondary school level scholarship recipients dropped out, with no differential between boys and girls. IBEC completed tracer studies of dropouts which suggested that working at home was the primary cause for leaving school. All 72 recipients at the PTTC level passed the year successfully. The project will soon be negotiating with Provincial Offices of Education in Kampong Cham and Kratie about posting these students to IBEC schools that are lacking in teachers.

At a recent meeting of the Teacher Training Subsector Working Group, the MOEYS again commended IBEC for its efforts to work with the Teacher Training Department and Provincial Offices of Education to provide scholarship support to PTTC candidates from remote areas. USAID has now provided 241 PTTC scholarship since 2009, with a new intake of 120 more planned for next year. MOEYS requested other donors to support this sort of intervention in other provinces.

Component 3: Improved School Management & Community Engagement

IBEC provided assistance to Core Trainers who are recruited from among local Ministry staff to perform their designated task of undertaking school visits to follow up on how well school administrators were progressing in completing management tasks that were assigned during a workshop in February. The School Management and Leadership Training Course (SMLTC) is an initiative designed for implementation over two years, leading to the eventual certification of school managers and

administrators in target schools. Seventeen Core Trainers visited a total of 441 school administrators, collecting data that will inform certification decisions.

Progress has been made by School Support Committees on a number of school engagement criteria, demonstrated by the significant improvements from baseline values that were established last year. The Component also did a number of spot check

surveys on vulnerable families (i.e., those receiving scholarship support) to see how effective these outreach activities have been, finding that dropout had been effectively suppressed in some cases. Families reported spurred family income whilst children were able to practice the life skills that they had learned to help their families. In all, the project supported 329 vulnerable families whose children are receiving scholarship assistance from IBEC.

Component 4: Improved Educational Relevance

Access to Information Technology

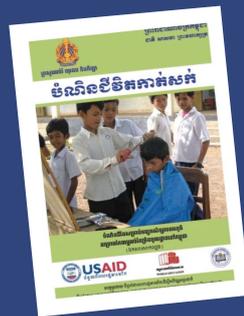
A climax event during the quarter was the organization of *Project Work Fairs*. There were three fairs this year, one in each province. These are special events in which student groups present the research that they have conducted using computer facilities. IBEC has successfully used the Project Method as one of the key strategies to promote the integration of IT skills with the teaching and learning process. Several other groups of students attended the NEP Conference to make presentations about their new School Newspapers

IBEC completed monitoring surveys on how management of and access to the IT labs impact student learning and attitudes toward school. 30% of students reported learning computer at least one hour per week while 69% reported learning computer two hours a week or more. 72% indicated that the availability of computers in their school had been a major influence on their decision to stay in school. These findings demonstrate computer lab implementation continues to be highly effective.

Classroom Impacts: Teachers move away from chalk and talk methodologies

Milestone Event

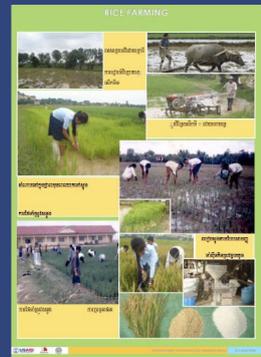
Nearing Completion of Life Skills Manuals



Working closely with counterparts from the Ministry, Component 4 personnel completed 28 of 30 teacher Manuals that are part of the Life Skills Curriculum to be piloted next year. This is one of the most important accomplishments of the IBEC Project. During the quarter, the component conducted several workshops with the Curriculum Development Department and Vocational Orientation Department to facilitate the standardization of these manuals. In addition, the MoEYS has agreed that all Life Skills Teacher Guides may be printed with Ministry logo. Not only does this indicate increasing ownership of the manuals,

but teachers and school directors will now feel more comfortable in using the booklets. In recent months, IBEC has received many inquiries from other organizations wanting to know more about the life skills program, indicating that these activities are building a national profile. Everything now seems ready for the flagship Life Skills Pilot to move forward in October

Project poster on Rice Cultivation



Teacher Education

Assessments done by IBEC staff showed that a large number of teachers are able to apply effective classroom management and learning and teaching strategies when they teach. A random sample assessment found that 90% of CFSS teachers, 95% of CFS teachers, and 74% of Community Teachers fared "Satisfactory" or better on the assessment. Of special note is the positive impact that Bilingual Classroom Assistants are having in the classroom. 808 of the 908 students in BCA-supported classrooms were promoted at the end of the quarter.