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CAMBODIA

CASE STUDY

Parentless but Outstanding



Sophaneth sits with her grandmother at home before attending a national contest

The IBEC Project seeks to promote better educated youth with increased access to a quality and relevant basic education through an approach that emphasizes holistic programming, stakeholder-driven development, and improved educational relevance and management. To learn more, visit www.ibec.worlded.org

Telling Our Story

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Sak Sophaneth is a 14-year old school girl learning in Class 9 “C” of Sandann High School in Sambo District Kratie Province. She was selected as an IBEC scholarship student because she is a parentless child and a very good learner. Sophaneth’s parents have been divorced since she was three years old. She does not know where her father is and her mother works in a garment factory in Phnom Penh, so she does not see her very often. As a result, Sophaneth is living with her grandparents. Her grandfather is a retired teacher while her grandmother sells Khmer noodles. Both grandparents praised their granddaughter as industrious, diligent, and clever. After dinner each evening, Sophaneth pores over her school books and very much enjoys reading. Her teacher similarly says Sophaneth is one of her best students. Indeed, she was one of six outstanding students chosen in Kratie Province to attend a National Outstanding Student Contest at Preah Sihanoukville on 1 April 2014, a great honor for her family, her school, and her province. Mr. Neuk Kim Vy, the school director at Sandann HS, was so proud that Sophaneth was selected as one of those to go. He encouraged other students to contribute to the costs of Sophaneth’s travel to Preah Sihanoukville. Her classmates collected 271,000 riels to help her to make the journey.

For Sophaneth herself, she is very grateful to her grandparents for looking after her and also giving her such encouragement to study hard. She had no idea that she could have such an opportunity to join an important contest. She also wanted to thank USAID for the support that she has received over the years to support her education. If not for that support, she could not be doing what she is now.