Career Planning Programme Cambodia (CPPC)

Preparing high school students for further education and training for their future careers
The Situation

Cambodia remains one of Asia’s poorest countries and has been lagging behind its neighbors, performing poorly on all three indicators on the Human Development Index (health, education, and income) with its ranking at 143 (UNESCO, 2014).

At the completion of secondary-level education, students usually experience the point where they are ill-informed of which direction to take at the crossroads of choosing academic major at higher education or seeking employment through vocational training, etc. Especially those from the rural areas, the most common career traits the majority could think of during one of our surveys were teaching, nursing and police officer as these are the jobs they know of or are more visible in their daily lives.

This setback is mainly due to the fact that there is no preparatory programme or career sessions in the learning curriculum; the students have no access to information about the job market or counselling for their career path nor do they receive any support from the government due to lack of financial resources. As a result, they usually make the wrong decisions and end up becoming under-skilled or obsolete resource for the labor market.
Career Planning Programme - Overview

Having closely engaged with the local youth through our High School Scholarship Programme, insight into persistent issue has encouraged us to work towards a solution that could further support the young students by providing occupational knowledge, training and emotional support as they step into the more complex adulthood and employment.

Our intervention is, therefore, the Career Planning Programme initiative, in which our local team collaborates with educational staff of our targeted schools to deliver the main goal of preparing high school students for future career which align with their capacity and ambition.

In 2016, we piloted the Career Planning Programme in Pouk High School, Siem Reap. Positive results from the pilot encouraged us to expand the implementation to Pich Chenda High School in Battambang in 2017. For the new academic year of 2019 – 2020, we have delivered the service to another school in Battambang – Bour High School and developed further within northwestern Cambodia to Oddar Meanchey Province – Trapeang Tav High School.
How It Works

With the programme operating annually from early September to August the following year, we aim to provide students of Grade 10 - 12 a more holistic education to help students find their identity, meaning and purpose in life as well as broadening their limited career prospects. The activities include:

- Providing life-skill development sessions with a curriculum that focus on soft skills such as problem-solving skills (critical thinking + decision making), understanding cultural diversity, time management, learning how to be (self understanding, values and reflection), communication skills, people management and leadership, etc. Besides life skills, grade 12 students are more exposed to topics related to employment and unemployment, quality in job application, resumes and interviews as well as working culture and challenges.

- Teacher training sessions of professional development and meetings for reflection and further development.
How It Works

- Interactive seminars and workshops with guest speakers invited to share with the students career knowledge and experiences, inspirational stories of successes in school, work and life. *(Donors who wish to contribute as guest speakers are very welcome)*

- Career fairs: organising field trips and expositions with participation of private enterprises / NGOs for, particularly, Grade 12 students. These serve as an opportunities for the youngsters to receive first-hand information and understanding about the labour market and to allow students to network with potential employers.

The programme is inclusive to any student within the targeted level who are interested in registering. With the number capped at 150 participants for each grade, we directly support approximately 1,500 student beneficiaries and 12 teacher beneficiaries (full-time staff) every year at all four high schools.
Objectives

- Enable students to make effective choices for their major at university or further studies such as vocational training that align with their passion and capacity
- Strengthen students’ employability with skills and attributes needed in the job market
- Support students in their awareness of higher education and job opportunities
- Encourage students to contribute to social development through understanding themselves and others
- Promote social mobility through decent employment and economic opportunities.
Budget

The total annual budget is estimated **USD 35,000** for academic year 2019-2020. Payment is proceeded quarterly at reception of narrative and photo reports as well as monthly financial & activity reports.

Monitoring & Reporting

Evaluation is conducted by the management committee at every end-of-year to analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the programme and its activities. Feedback through student surveys is also obtained directly by our local team for improvement.

We report to donor(s) on a semester basis.