IBEC FINAL REPORT

Improved Basic Education in Cambodia Project

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

WORLD EDUCATION

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIR	American Institutes for Research
ALS	Advanced Life Skills
BLS	Basic Life Skills
BSDA	Buddhist Social Development Association
CBE	Cambodia Basic Education Program
CBO	Community Based Organization
CESSP	Cambodia Education Sector Support Program
CFS	Child Friendly Schools
CFSI	Child Friendly School Initiative
CFSS	Child Friendly Secondary School
CG	Consultative Group
COP	Chief of Party
CWCC	Cambodian Women's Crisis Center
CR	Cambodian Riels
DCD	Department of Curriculum Development
DIW	District Integration Workshop
DOE	District Office of Education
DOSA	Discussion-Oriented Organizational Self-Assessment
DPO	District-based Project Officer
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EA	Equal Access
EDA	Economic Development Association
EEQB	Enhancing Education Quality Program
EFA	Education For All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESCUP	Educational Support to Children in Underserved Populations
ESDP III	Education Sector Development Program III
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GPP	Good Practices Project
IBECP	Improved Basic Education in Cambodia Project
ICDL	International Computer Driver's License
ICR	Intermediate Classrooms
IMS	Information Management System
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IR	Intermediate Result
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KAPE	Kampuchean Action for Primary Education
KWA	Khmer Women's Association
LMC	Leadership Management Course
LNGO	Local Non-Governmental Organization
LOP	Length of Project
LSMC	Local Scholarship Management Committee
LWG	Local Working Groups
LS	Life Skills
MEP	Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
NPRS	National Poverty Reduction Strategy
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OI	Open Institute
OP	Operational Plan
PB	Program-Based Budget
POE	Provincial Office of Education
PED	Primary Education Department
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PTTC	Provincial Teacher Training College
PWG	Provincial Working Groups
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SbEP	School-based Enrichment Program
SED	Secondary Education Department
SfL	Schools for Life Program
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SIG	School Improvement Grant
SMLTC	School Management & Leadership Training Course
SSC	School Support Committee
SSF	School Support Fund
STS	Student Tracking System
TA	Technical Assistance
ToT	Training of Trainers
TPO	Technical Program Officer
TRAC	Total Reading Approach for Children
TSG	Technical Support Groups
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTD	Teacher Training Department
TTS	Thunthean Seksa
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
USDOL	United States Department of Labor
VSO	Volunteers Serving Overseas
WEI	World Education, Inc.
WCRD	Women's and Children's Rights Development
WEI	World Education, Inc.
WCRD	Women's and Children's Rights Development

MAP OF CAMBODIA

CAMBODIA

THAILAND

LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Samrong

Cheom Ksan

Siempang

BANTEAY
MEANCHEY

SIEM REAP

Phnom Thbeng
Meanchey

PREAH VIHEAR

STUNG
TRENG

RATANAKIRI

Boung Long

Poipet

Sisophon

Sreng

Angkor Wat

Stung Treng

Lumphat

Siem Reap

Chas

Mekong

Kong

San

Battambang

Tonle
Sap

Pailin

BATTAMBANG

KAMPONG THOM

KRATIE

MONDOL
KIRI

Moung
Roessei

Sen

Senmonorom

Pursat

Kampong
Thom

Chinit

Kratie

Peam

Kampong
Chhnang

Tonle Sap

KAMPONG CHAM

Snoul

PURSAT

KAMPONG
CHHNANG

Mekong

Kampong Cham

VIET NAM

Krong
Koh Kong

KAMPONG
SPEU

Phnom
Penh

Prey
Veng

PREY
VENG

GULF
OF
THAILAND

KOH KONG

Kampong
Speu

Ta Khmau

KANDAL

Banam

SVAY
RIENG

Sre
Ambel

Chhak
Kampong
Saom

Takeo

Svay Rieng

Basak

CAMBODIA

KAMPOT

TAKEO

Sihanoukville

Bok Kou

Kampot

SIHANOUKVILLE

Legend	
⊗	National capital
⊙	Provincial capital
○	Town, village
✈	Major airport
—·—·—	International boundary
—··—··—	Provincial boundary
——	Rroad
┼┼┼┼	Railroad

*The boundaries and names shown and the designations
used on this map do not imply official endorsement or
acceptance by the United Nations.*

0 10 20 30 40 mi
0 20 40 60 km

Map No. 3860 Rev. 4   UNITED NATIONS
January 2004

Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General Background

The Improved Basic Education in Cambodia Project (IBEC) was a major education development project supported by USAID during the period 2009 to 2014. The project was implemented by World Education as the prime contractor and included strong cooperation with civil society partners and government. The project lasted five years and had an overall budget of $10 million. IBEC was characterized by an integrated design that provided support to 301 schools in three provinces including Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, and Kratie. The project eventually expanded some of its programming elements (mainly life skills education) to 30 additional secondary schools in Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Kampong Thom Provinces. Overall, the project provided enhanced educational services to 81,024 primary school students (39,301 girls or 49%) and 55,359 secondary school students (24,981 girls or 45%) by Year 5. In total, 136,383 children benefited from IBEC of whom 49.5% were girls.

IBEC focused heavily on youth with a large preponderance of interventions aimed at secondary school level. The project also supported interventions at primary level but these were intended to promote transition to Grade 7 and focused heavily on interventions at Grades 4, 5, and 6 where dropout rate levels start to accelerate. In designing IBEC, World Education developed a program structure with four technical components and a number of subcomponents. This included components for: (i) Local NGO/Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability; (ii) More Equitable School Access; (iii) Improved School Management and Community Engagement; and (iv) Educational Relevance. Component 2 had two subcomponents: Scholarships and School Grants. Similarly, Component 4 had three sub-components: Workforce Development through Life Skills Education, Educational Innovation for Science & Technology, and Teacher Education. Component 4 supported activities at both local and national level as it developed a Life Skills Curriculum that was field-tested, revised, and adopted by MoEYS. The project's commitment to Workforce Development as well as Science & Technology also echo development themes in USAID's new Education Strategy and USAID Forward.

Promoting educational innovation was a key concern of IBEC, leading the project to introduce many new service elements to the educational development model started under earlier programming including a major focus on life skills education at the secondary school level, creating the institutional context to support life skills education (through a two-year School Management and Leadership Training Course or SMLTC), and major investments in water and sanitation systems in both primary and secondary schools. Another major new element in IBEC related to its focus on institution-building, especially local NGO partners and government. A special component dedicated specifically to this goal was created as part of IBEC's overall design. An accreditation process for two of these partners was initiated in Year 3 (2012) through the NGO Good Practices Program (GPP) operated by Committee for Cooperation in Cambodia (CCC)[1] leading to the eventual accreditation of both agencies, a major achievement. IBEC also focused on a number of cross-cutting development themes including local partnerships, gender equity, poverty reduction, and public private partnerships.

Impacts and Success Rate

The success of the IBEC Project was measured by regular reporting on 70 Length of Project (LoP) indicators or performance standards to be achieved by the end of the project. Of these indicators, 11 were considered Operational Plan Indicators (OP) that required reporting to Congress. OP Indicators are standard USAID indicators that are compiled globally for Congressional reporting. Overall, the project reported achieving 66 LoP indicators or 94% of those identified with three indicators that were not achieved (within a margin of 10%), and one that was cancelled. All but one OP indicator was achieved or 91% of the total. For the four indicators that were not achieved, the following explanation was provided:

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[1] GPP is funded by AUSAID, ActionAid, Concern, and AECID.

Table 1.1: Explanation for Indicators That Were Not Achieved

No.	Indi-cator	LoP Targets	Actual	Deviation from Target	Explanation
1	18	70% of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline	Not Achieved: 54% for primary schools and 72% for secondary schools of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline.	-16%	Although the project did not achieve its goal of increasing gender parity in 70% of all schools, it did achieve this performance standard at secondary school level, where 72% of assisted schools reported an increase in parity levels. This was mainly due to large female quotas of 70% or more in the number of beneficiaries selected. At primary level, however, where the target was not achieved, there were no female quotas because gender disparities were thought to be less severe. Overall, Gender Parity Indices increased from 0.92 to 0.94 at primary level and to 1.12 at secondary school level.
2	22	90,879 learners enrolled in primary schools or equiv-alent non-school based settings (OP Indicator)	Not Achieved: 81,024 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based setting .	-11%	Primary school enrolment has declined from an earlier high of 89,221 because of the decision to terminate assistance to 11 schools due to non-performance. The removal of these schools in addition to the loss of students in target urban schools due to competition with private schools accounted for most of the loss of students.
3	29	At least 65% of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	Not Achieved: 45% (31% of cycle 1 and 52% of cycle 2) of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	-31%	Although this indicator had been achieved for the first four years of the project, reduction rates inexplicably declined in the final year of the project, perhaps due to reduced material support.
4	58	Technology and Sci-ence Theme Schools meet standardized criteria for effective functioning each year (pending Ministry approval)	Cancelled	--	This indicator had to be cancelled due to the project's inability to reach an acceptable agreement with the Ministry's ICT Office regarding the role of software producers (i.e., Microsoft Corporation). Although a Secretary of State had given a green light for this support, subsequent negotiations proved to be so lengthy that annual funding for the activity had expired with no agreement in sight. The Ministry's policy requires only the use of open source software in state schools and although Microsoft offered to provide software licenses on very reasonable terms with no obligations on the part of the government, an agreement could still not be reached.

IBEC's positive impacts have also been validated by an external evaluation that was contracted by USAID in May-June 2014[2]. In this respect, evaluators noted that "[T]he end of project performance evaluation provides evidence to confirm that IBEC largely achieved its objectives to improve access, quality, and relevance of basic education in Cambodia" (p. 39).

Key Elements of Success

There were many key innovations that the IBEC Project contributed to the education system over its five-year implementation period. Some of the more important of these innovations include the following key successes:

1. **Successful Life Skills Curriculum Development and National Adoption:** The project developed a structured life skills curriculum for lower secondary schools that responded to many of the problems that had undermined earlier efforts to implement the MoEYS' 2006 Life Skills Education policy.

2. **Strengthening Civil Society**: Institution-building efforts resulted in the accreditation of two civil society partners by CCC including Kampuchean Action for Primary Education and Buddhist Social Development Association.

3. **Innovations in Public Private Partnership**: IBEC assisted KAPE in setting up a social enterprise Thunthean Seksa or TTS. This enterprise became fully independent of the project in 2012 and is now ensuring sustained access to innovative teaching and learning aids to all of Cambodia's schools.

4. **Developing Innovative School Selection Approaches**: The project was able to establish new methods of school selection based on structured surveys of interest and motivation among candidate schools that helped to ensure greater commitment to the to the project's goal structure.

5. **Innovations in ICT Access**: IBEC also successfully mainstreamed revolutionary innovations in technology in rural Cambodian secondary schools using what are known as *thin client devices* that have successfully addressed many of the technological challenges undermining other donor investments in ICT labs. These devices were able to reduce costs, save energy, and lower maintenance needs for all computer labs.

6. **Career Counseling Innovations**: IBEC is the first project to develop a hands-on manual on school-based career counseling that was successfully piloted in collaboration with the Vocational Orientation Department. While significant challenges remain for replicating such services, an important first step has been taken with useful protocols for implementation and clear documentation designed to help youth plan their futures.

7. **Additional Innovations in Educational Quality**: Other key achievements of IBEC in the area of educational quality include the introduction of (i) subject classrooms, (ii) provisions to maximize science lab utilization, and (iii) the use of Student Councils and Subject Clubs to amplify student learning.

8. **Synergies with Other Programming**: During its implementation, IBEC was able to leverage its resources significantly by partnering with other projects and donors. These synergies not only achieved significant knock-on effects for the funding provided by USAID but have also helped to transform the project into a key national network for disseminating educational innovation throughout hundreds of schools at both the primary and secondary school level. Significant partners in this regard included ADB's Education Sector Development Program III, financial literacy activities supported by Barclay's Bank, early grade literacy supported by All Children Reading, and the development of Beacon Schools supported by the Oaktree Foundation.

9. **Sustaining Technical Innovations through Increased Involvement of Commune Councils**: From its inception, IBEC sought to engage commune councils in improving educational services to local schools within their geographical jurisdiction. This engagement process involved training schools to advocate with Councils for funding support from investment funds received from the central government, thereby establishing institutional habits of support to local schools, which will continue after the completion of project assistance.

10. **Establishing Beacon Schools as a Means to Promote Best Practice**: Beacon Schools are special schools with generally strong management that can be trusted with higher levels of investment and the required maintenance of these investments. There have also been many visits from other agencies to learn from the IBEC Beacon Schools including VSO, Save the Children, Child Fund, and many others. Beacon Schools have also received very strong recognition by the Ministry of Education and various elements of the approach have been incorporated into recent educational reforms. The Beacon School approach employed by IBEC has, therefore, had an impact on the on-going Educational Reform Program recently initiated by the new Minister of Education leading the Minister to dub the IBEC Beacon Schools as 'Future Generation Schools'. The establishment of such schools throughout the country are now a key platform of the Ministry's Education Reform Program.

11. **Solving Teacher Shortages**: Another major success of the IBEC project relates to its strategy to address teacher shortages. This approach relies heavily on local teacher recruitment, PTTC-level scholarships, and the use of Community Teachers on an interim basis. The strategic recruitment and placement of teachers in this way has helped to reduce PTR levels by 8% in target areas and field 360 locally recuited teachers.

12. **Massive Expansion in Access to WASH Facilities**: Investments in WASH facilities have been a key area of support for IBEC since Year 1. The project completed its investments in Water & Sanitation facilities during Year 4 implementation, followed by some repairs and small additional investments in Year 5. Over the five-year period of its implementation, the project invested approximately $1 million in WASH systems in 290 schools benefiting about 133,580 children and teachers (67,054 females). Many of these investments have introduced new designs in WASH facilities such as Wash Stations and Toilet Blocks with aesthetic designs to blend into the school environment

13. **Strong Ministry Buy-in**: It should be noted that for each of the achievements mentioned above, IBEC achieved a high level of project 'buy-in' by MoEYS stakeholders at the highest levels, especially by the Minister of Education himself and the Director General of the Directorate of General Education who chaired IBEC's oversight committee (known as the Consultative Group).

Constraints in Implementation

In spite of these successes, however, there were key constraints encountered by IBEC that included the following factors:

1. **Loss Rate Among Educators in Target Schools**: One of the key challenges facing capacity-building programs like IBEC in the education system is the rapid loss rate of trained personnel in schools. These losses stemmed from a variety of reasons including retirement, transfer, position change, death, and incapacitation. Systematic surveys carried out during the course of the project indicated loss rates that in some cases reached as high as 30% and affected school directors, teachers, librarians, and computer teachers.

2. **Flooding and Its Impact on School Opening**: At the beginning of each school year, field offices frequently reported that 80 schools or more were regularly affected by flooding, mostly in Kampong Cham Province. These events and the damage done to school infrastructure frequently delayed the opening of many schools and required considerable rescheduling of activities, to say nothing of the loss of study-time for students.

3. **Poor Understanding of Ministry Policy by Local Authorities**: During the implementation of key interventions such as Life Skills Education, both Ministry and project personnel were surprised at the low level of knowledge of Ministry policies relating to key areas of educational operation. This rigidity in the local bureaucracy is a challenge for the reform-minded Ministry leadership in Phnom Penh and projects that are working with them to improve the implementation of national policies.

4. **Minimalist Approaches to Education and ICT Software Policy**: IBEC has struggled unsuccessfully with Ministry policies that prohibit the use of licensed software in state schools. These restrictions resulted in the project's failure to successfully negotiate support for the development of proposed Technology Theme Schools that were to be supported in collaboration with Microsoft Corporation who could have done much to introduce cutting edge technologies to state schools.

5. **Future Roll-out of Life Skills Programming**: While Ministry engagement from the three technical departments involved in the assessment of the life skills pilot has been excellent, the project retains some anxiety about the Ministry's future attitude towards the life skills curriculum and delivery system that has been piloted during IBEC's tenure. Component technical staff members have detected some sentiment that the Ministry's adoption of the life skills curriculum will depend largely on continued assistance. In order to address this sentiment, the project has made some modifications in its project design in the later years of implementation to divert additional resources to life skills programming, particularly as these relate to the support of a Ministry committee to review, revise, and formally adopt the approved life skills manuals that have been developed and piloted. A second round of printing of revised manuals has contributed greatly to these efforts; nevertheless, the lack of resources for training to animate an incremental roll-out of the new curriculum remain a considerable obstacle.

6. **Increasing Headwinds for Dropout Rate Reduction at Secondary School Level**: The project's ability to bring dropout levels at target secondary schools to below baseline among a majority of schools became increasingly problematic as the project progressed. Key social transformations occurring in Cambodian society relating to migration and factory penetration of the countryside likely account for the stubbornly high rates of dropout in schools. These economic developments likely heighten the opportunity costs for students to remain in school because many of them are of working age. While improvements in educational quality certainly increase the attractions of attending school, they cannot outweigh the economic benefits of entering the workforce prematurely.

7. **Project Complexity and Integrated Project Designs**: Complexity in project design has been a major constraint in managing the IBEC Project and required high levels of coordination and expertise within and between components as well as with local partners and government. This was particularly true in the project's identification of too many indicators (over 70 as noted earlier) that were a tremendous drain on resources and management. It is an important lesson for future integrated programming designs to try to limit the number of indicators to only key measures of impact and not give in to the temptation to let the number of indicators proliferate too widely.

Conclusions

The relative success of the IBEC Project in terms of the number of performance standards achieved (94%) and its impacts on both educational access (e.g., declines in dropout) and quality (e.g., improved promotion rates among failing students, reductions in teacher shortages, Life Skills Education Curricula) is evidence that holistic educational designs are both feasible and effective, in spite of the increased complexity that they imply. This outcome gives pause for thought when considering recent developments in the sector that are trending back to a time of simpler, more uni-dimensional programming. IBEC is perhaps the last of a long line of integrated education projects in Cambodia (e.g., CFSI, ESCUP, SfL) that were built on the painful lessons of the past in which uni-dimensional programming resulted in static rates of school efficiency. Several studies that were funded by donors at the beginning of the last decade concluded that projects must be multi-dimensional in design to be effective. Such conclusions demonstrate both the evidence-based justification for integrated projects like IBEC while the overall positive results of the project itself have generally verified the feasibility of such designs in spite of their high level of complexity.

Nevertheless, in spite of its successes, the project's external evaluation has also rightly noted the need to improve project accountability in terms of data keeping and analysis and indeed, the vast number of performance indicators made data collection a very challenging task indeed. In this regard, it should be noted that IBEC's holistic approach to educational development ensured that the project would be highly complex in its scope, encompassing many activities across multiple components (e.g., access, educational quality, management capacity, community engagement, etc. Thus, the danger in a complex project like IBEC is the tendency to promote a corresponding 'complexification' in the design of the assessment framework with a profusion of unnecessary indicators. This is an important lesson learned that should not be overlooked in future program development undertaken by USAID.

Opportunities and Challenges

The current programming environment in Cambodia is currently one of great contrasts. There are both great challenges involving issues of migration, opportunity costs, and private sector enrolment encroachment as well as huge opportunities afforded by new leadership at the highest level of the education system. Nevertheless, the rapid penetration of the countryside by factories and large plantations has created unprecedented opportunity costs for children and their families with respect to staying in school. These social transformations have reduced the perceived value of public education by many stakeholders who are increasingly turning their eyes to a thriving private education sector where profit margins ensure strict accountability and efficiency, unlike the state schools where low performance accountability is one of the key problems underlying low educational quality. These are major challenges that the education system will need to address if it wishes to remain viable.

In spite of the above daunting problems, many observers feel that new leadership in the Ministry and an accompanying Educational Reform Program have brought increased willingness to take reasonable risks where the pay-off in terms of educational quality and efficiency seem warranted. Similarly, the Minstry has taken dramatic action regarding future PTTC intakes, nearly doubling the number of teacher intakes to address teacher shortages, thereby providing a rare opportunity for donors to provide support for local recruitment and policy reform. This change in attitude towards reform and risk-taking has opened the door to innovation that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. This includes transparent and competitive teacher selection, mixed management models in schools involving non-state actors, and openness to new curricula in schools among many others. These attitudinal changes represent an unprecedented opportunity for engagement with Ministry and a renewed partnership between development partners, local organizations, and government.

2. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM SCOPE, STRUCTURE, & STRATEGIES

2.1 Background

On 1 October 2009, World Education and its partners began implementation of the *Improved Basic Education in Cambodia Project (IBEC)* with funding support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID). This was a five-year project with funding of $10 million. The project was successfully completed on 30 September 2014, running its full term of 20 quarters. IBEC was designed to employ an integrated, multi-dimensional approach to educational development, building on the lessons learned from previous programming in Cambodia during the 1990s that comprised many stand-alone projects with uni-dimensional designs. By and large, these earlier designs were less successful because unaddressed issues in the child's learning environment undermined focal interventions. The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport's (MoEYS) *Child Friendly School Policy* introduced a multi-dimensional, holistic approach to educational development during the last decade, which IBEC sought to build on and reinforce. IBEC was the latest (and perhaps the last) integrated educational development project supported by USAID/Cambodia that follows a long line of successful integrated predecessors including *Educational Support to Children in Underserved Populations* (ESCUP, 2005-08) and *Schools for Life* (2008-09).

As the lead international partner, World Education provided management and technical oversight of IBEC while Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE), a key local partner, provided direct implementation of activities at the field level. There were in all five local NGO partners (including KAPE) and two international organizations that worked with World Education to implement IBEC. The extensive use of local NGOs in IBEC implementation reflected a theme from *USAID Forward* in which the US Government seeks to shift responsibility for educational development from international to national NGOs, following a model successfully implemented by USAID in Cambodia's health sector where development is now largely led by national agencies. Thus, IBEC differed from its predecessors by including a special unit dedicated to building the capacity of civil society. The project was initially established in three provinces including Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, and Kratie (the selected provinces were required by USAID). In Year 4, the project established Demonstration Life Skills Education Sites in three additional provinces on a limited scale in Kampong Thom, Svay Rieng, and Prey Veng. The project negotiated a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport in 2009 that was signed by the Minister. As part of the MoU, the project established a Consultative Group (CG) headed by the Director General of the Directorate of General Education. The CG provided oversight by the Ministry and a channel for active involvement by Ministry departments whose representatives sit in the CG.

2.2 Development Hypothesis

The **development hypothesis** underlying IBEC's technical approach is that in order to achieve access to a relevant basic education of quality, as stated in USAID's strategic planning framework, one has to simultaneously address a myriad of demand and supply side constraints in a way that both empowers local stakeholders and builds ownership. These constraints are often inter-linked and vary according to the local context. Therefore **programming must take a holistic approach that is flexible enough to respond to evolving needs identified by stakeholders at the local level as well as the national policy context.**

2.3 Technical Approach and Program Design

Subsector Focus: The design of the IBEC Project focuses heavily on youth with a large preponderance of interventions focused at secondary school level. The project also supported interventions at primary level but these were intended to promote transition to Grade 7 and focused heavily on interventions at Grades 4, 5, and 6 where dropout rate levels start to accelerate. IBEC carries forward much of the work started under previous USAID-supported programming (i.e., ESCUP and SfL) including a stakeholder-driven development approach, the use of activity menus, school

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[1] CFS Dimensions include: (1) Inclusive Education, (2) Effective Learning Environments, (3) Health and Sanitation, (4) Gender Sensitivity, (5) Child, Parental, and Community Engagement, and (6) Enabling Environments (i.e., School Management).
[2] MoEYS' Child Friendly School Policy stipulates that schools should be classified into 3 need levels: Basic, Intermediate, and Developed.
[3] GPP is funded by AUSAID, ActionAid, Concern, and AECID.

grants, holistic programming based on the Ministry's six Child Friendly School (CFS) Dimensions[1], and the use of local committees for direct implementation of activities. The program also continued to place a strong emphasis on solving pervasive teacher shortages as an essential prerequisite to effective educational development. The project modulates development assistance to fit local contexts and institutional potential by classifying schools into different tiers based on their level of developmental readiness to utilize external assistance. This practice operationalizes a provision in the Ministry's Child Friendly School (CFS) policy often overlooked by other programs[2].

Technical Components: In designing IBEC, World Education developed a program structure with four technical components and a number of subcomponents. This included components for: (i) Local NGO/Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability; (ii) More Equitable School Access; (iii) Improved School Management and Community Engagement; and (iv) Educational Relevance. Component 2 had two subcomponents: Scholarships and School Grants. Similarly, Component 4 had three sub-components: Workforce Development through Life Skills Education, Educational Innovation for Science & Technology, and Teacher Education. Component 4 supported activities at both local and national level as it developed a Life Skills Curriculum that was field-tested, revised, and adopted by MoEYS. The project's commitment to Workforce Development as well as Science & Technology also echo development themes in USAID's new Education Strategy and USAID Forward.

Innovative Program Elements: IBEC also brought many new elements to the educational development model started under earlier programming including a major focus on life skills education at the secondary school level, creating the institutional context to support life skills education (through a two-year School Management and Leadership Training Course or SMLTC), and major investments in water and sanitation systems in both primary and secondary schools. Another major new element in IBEC related to its focus on institution-building, especially for local NGO partners and government. A special component dedicated specifically to this goal was created as part of IBEC's overall design. LNGOs have been assisted in doing self-assessments, setting benchmarks for improvement, and reviewing progress towards stated goals, as part of the capacity-building process. An accreditation process for two of these partners was initiated in Year 3 (2012) through the NGO Good Practices Program (GPP) operated by Committee for Cooperation in Cambodia (CCC)[3] leading to the eventual accreditation of both agencies, a major achievement.

Cross-cutting Themes: IBEC also focused on a number of cross-cutting development themes including local partnerships, gender equity, poverty reduction, and public private partnerships. Exemplars of activities under each theme are provided below:

Table 2.1: Supplementary Cross-cutting Development Themes in Project Implementation & Notional Exemplars

Development Themes	Local Partnerships	Gender Equity	Poverty Reduction	Public Private Partnership
Exemplars	• National Life Skills Workshops through NEP • Field Trips for Best Practice • Advocacy with Communes for Matching Grants • Establishment of Provincial Working Groups • LNGO Capacity Bldg	• Expansion of Girls' Scholarships • School-based Girls' Counselors • Affirmative Action in Teacher Recruitment • Affirmative Action in School Support Committee Elections • Affirmative Action in Formation of Children's Councils	• Strong Links with WFP's funding of School Feeding Program (e.g., kitchen construction) • Linking USAID scholarships with WFP Take-home Rations • Using Government issued Poverty Cards to Assist Scholarship Recipient Identification	• Partnership with Barclay's Bank to Support Life Skills • Private Funding for ICT Labs • Microsoft Discounts on Software for ICT Labs • Apple Grants

IBEC made particularly strong progress in its efforts to promote gender balance in various school level institutions. In this respect, project personnel completed surveys of gender representation in several key stakeholder bodies including Student Councils, School Support Committees, and among Provincial Teacher Training College (PTTC) candidates receiving scholarships from the project. There has been considerable progress from baseline levels with respect to the representation of women and girls in all these groupings (see Table 2.2). The general trend in each grouping is towards greater female representation. For example, the number of Student Councils with female chairpersons now stands at 36%, up 7% since baseline; although female vice chairpersons have decreased since baseline, the current figure is still near parity at 48%. Similarly, female representation in School Support Committees has also increased from very low levels. At the start of the project, only one SSC reported having a female executive officer. By the end of the project, there were 22. This is still a very low number considering that there are now 291 committees in supported schools of which about 8% have female chairpersons. Nevertheless, the number of committees with female executive officers (treasurers, secretary, etc) has increased from 6% at baseline to 31% or an increase of 25%. The number of PTTC scholarship candidates who are female has maintained a very high proportion since start-up with about two-thirds of those receiving such support being female. At the end of Year 4 implementation, 67% of those supported by the project are female.

Table 2.2: Results of Gender Balance Surveys among Stakeholder Groupings, 2013

Stakeholder Grouping	Female Representation	Baseline	End of Year 2	End of Year 3	End of Project	Change since Baseline
Student Councils	Total Councils (Secondary School Level)	76	100	95	95	+19
	SCs with Female Chairperson	22	37	37	34	+12
	SCs with Female Vice Chairperson	85	113	125	95	+10
	% with Female Chairpersons	29%	37%	39%	36%	+7%
	% with Female Vice Chairpersons	56%	50%	59%	48%	-8%
School Support Committees	Total Committees	156	--	248	291	+135
	SSCs with Female Chairperson	1	--	10	22	+21
	SSCs with Female Executive Officers	10	--	52	91	+81
	% with Female Executive Officers	6%	--	21%	31%	+25%
PTTC Candidates	Total PTTC Candidates	120	192	240	120	0
	Female PTTC Candidates	77	128	162	80	+3%
	% Female PTTC Candidates	64%	67%	68%	67%	+3%

Table 2.3: Summary of Support from the Private Sector for IBEC Program Activities (Year 1 to Year 5)

Corporate Donor	Nature of Assistance	Cash Equivalent	Activities Supported
Barclay's Bank	Cash	$61,124 $40,179	• Implementation of financial literacy classes in 10 IBEC schools in Kratie Province • Implementation of financial literacy classes in 10 IBEC secondary schools in Kampong Cham Province • Salary support for DPOs working in Kratie • Printing of Life Skills Manuals • Salary supplements to DCD and VOD for finalization of Life Skills Manuals supported by USAID
Microsoft Corporation	In-kind	$14,160	• 74% discount on licensed software for IT Labs
Apple Corporation	Cash	$32,000	• Beacon School Development (Demonstration School)
Total		$147,463	

With respect to Public Private Partnership, IBEC was also highly successful in soliciting corporate support for specific program activities in the project. For example, in June 2013, *Apple Corporation* agreed to provide a cash grant of $32,000 to support IBEC's intensive technical assistance to Beacon Schools. Beacon Schools are schools with high levels of good governance that the project has identified for specialized support for innovative programming in areas such as ICT and science labs. This support intensifies the incidence of good practice and innovation, which can in turn be leveraged to surrounding schools to promote such practices. The support from Apple supplemented over $100,000 in corporate support since start-up from *Barclay's Bank* for financial literacy activities linked with IBEC's development of economic life skills manuals as well as about $14,160 in support from *Microsoft Corporation* for in-kind support for discounted licensed software. Altogether, the project estimates that it has been able to generate approximately $147,463 in corporate support for project activities since Year 1 that satisfy the cross-cutting theme for Public Private Partnership (see Table 2.3 above).

2.4 Target Areas and Coverage

Administrative Units and Schools: IBEC was initially implemented in three provinces, namely Kampong Cham, Kratie, and Siem Reap. After the completion of the life skills pilot in Year 3, the project sought to assist MoEYS in an incremental roll-out of the revised curriculum by setting up Demonstration Sites in three additional provinces in Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Kampong Thom. A total of 49 districts were targeted compared to six under ESCUP and 11 under SfL. This included a dramatic increase in the number of communes as well with 195 communes receiving capacity building support. This change in numbers demonstrates the dramatic expansion in USAID support to the formal education sector, especially at secondary school level where the number of supported schools (322) is four times higher than under *Schools for Life*. At the beginning of the project, there were 76 lower secondary schools as well as 133 primary schools that started to receive assistance from the project. The project expanded in Year 2 and again in Year 4, adding 113 new primary and secondary schools, which were selected in collaboration with Provincial Working Group members. By the end of the project, at total of 192 primary schools and 130 secondary schools or 322 schools in all were receiving assistance (see Table 2.4). Primary schools were organized into cluster groupings as per MoEYS policy, of which there were 61 in all.

Table 2.4: Scope and Coverage of IBEC

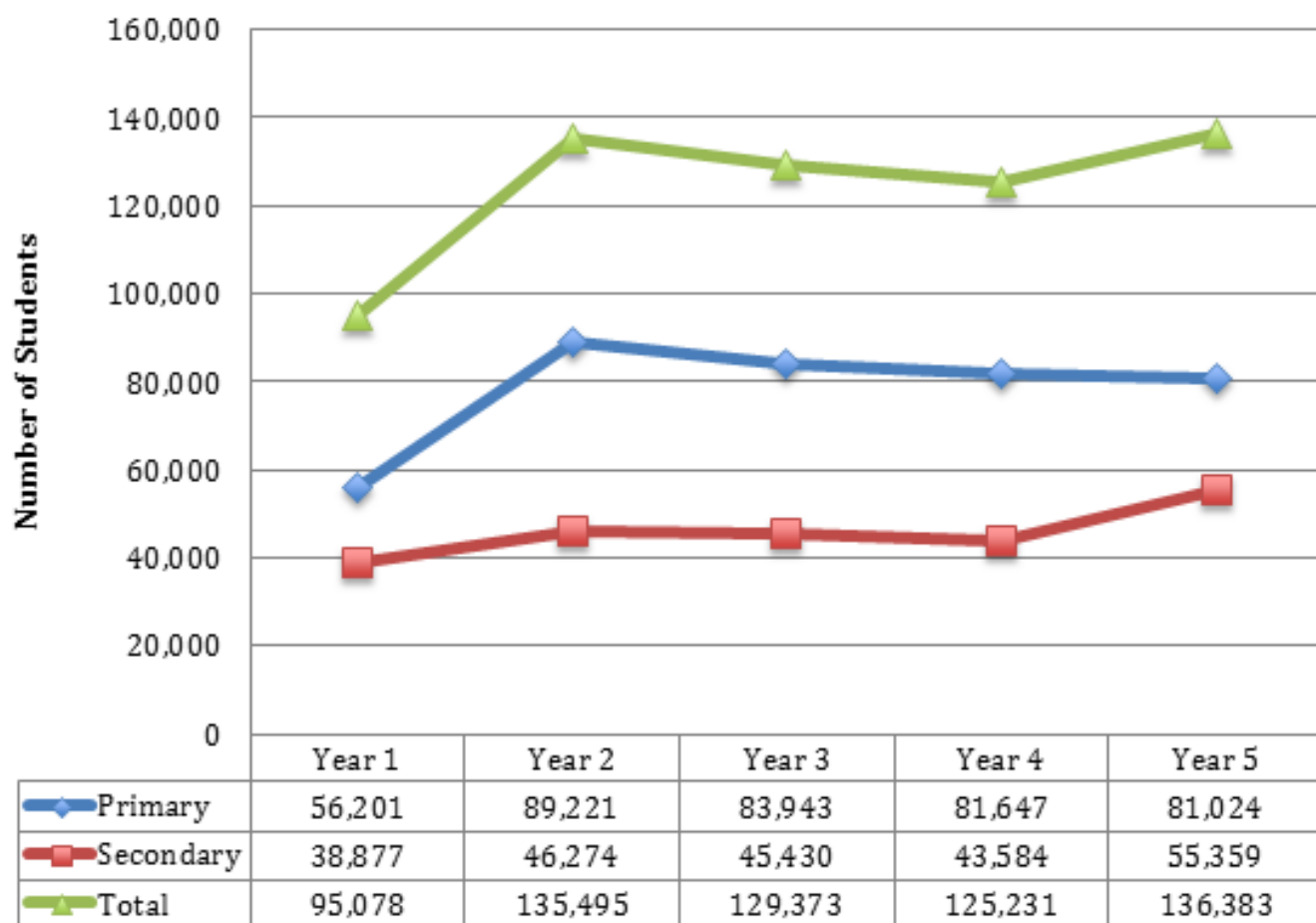| Province	Communes	Districts	Clusters	Schools		
				Primary	Secondary	Total
Original Provinces						
Kg Cham	102	16	23	110	49	159
Kratie	21	9	15	30	21	51
S Reap	42	6	23	52	30	82
Subtotal	165	31	61	192	100	292
Newly Added Provinces						
Kg Thom	10	5	0	0	10	10
Svay Rieng	10	5	0	0	10	10
Prey Veng	10	8	0	0	10	10
Subtotal	10	18	0	0	30	30
Total	195	49	61	192	130	322

School Development Cycles: In order to make the management of interventions more manageable and given the very tight time frame for start-up at the beginning of Year 1, IBEC organized schools into two grant cycles. Each grant cycle lasted for three years, during which time schools received capacity-building support to undertake sustainability planning and advocate for funding support from local government, primarily commune council investment funds. *Cycle 1* schools came on line in Year 1 and completed their development cycle at the end of Year 3 implementation while *Cycle 2* schools started in Year 2 and completed their grant cycles at the end of Year 4. All schools were expected to prioritize activities after the completion of each grant cycle and depend on local funding from Year 5 onwards, with some amount of matching fund assistance from the project to stimulate interest from commune councils to provide support.

Student Enrollment Levels: Overall, the project provided enhanced educational services to 81,024 primary school students (39,301 girls or 49%) and 55,359 secondary school students (24,981 girls or 45%) by Year 5. In total, 136,383 children benefited from IBEC of whom 49.5% were girls (see Table 2.5).

Table 2.5: Overview of Student Enrolment in Target Schools, Year 5

Province	Primary			Secondary			All Students	
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Total	Girls
Kg.Cham	24,096	22,550	46,646	11,324	11,531	22,855	69,501	34,081
Kratie	5,262	5,101	10,363	2,918	3.240	6,158	16,521	8,341
Siem Reap	24,015	11,650	24,015	5,967	6,946	12,913	36,928	18,596
Svay Rieng	--	--	--	2,896	2,536	5,432	5,432	2,536
Prey Veng	--	--	--	2,399	2,196	4,595	4,595	2,196
Kg.Thom	--	--	--	1,637	1,769	3,406	3,406	1,769
Year 5	53,373	39,301	81,024	27,141	24,981	55,359	136,383	67,519
Year 4	42,370	39,277	81,647	21,246	22,338	43,584	125,231	61,615
Year 3	43,670	40,273	83,943	22,154	23,276	45,430	129,373	63,549
Year 2	46,239	42,982	89,221	23,440	22,834	46,274	135,495	65,816
Year 1	29,293	26,908	56,201	19,620	19,257	38,877	95,078	46,165

Figure 2.1: Change in Target School Enrolment, Year 1 to 5 (All Provinces)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Primary	56,201	89,221	83,943	81,647	81,024
Secondary	38,877	46,274	45,430	43,584	55,359
Total	95,078	135,495	129,373	125,231	136,383

Since the project began with one cycle of schools in Year 1 (extending over a three-year period of support from Year 1 to 3) and added another cycle in Year 2, student numbers rose sharply in the project's second year of implementation (see Figure 2.1). While secondary school students increased markedly in the later years of project implementation as well due to the decision to help the Ministry incrementally expand life skills education in three additional provinces (Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, and Kampong Thom), primary school enrolment declined from a high of 89,221 in Year 2 to 81,024 in Year 5. This was due to the decision to expel several schools from the project in Year 3 due to repeated failures to respond to warnings regarding non-performance as well as reported declines in enrolment among urban primary schools, where there is fierce competition with the rapid profusion of private schools.

Classification of Schools by Developmental Readiness Level: When schools were admitted to the project, they were classified into tiers according to their readiness to receive developmental assistance. In general, determinations of developmental readiness are based on assessments of management capacity and motivation levels in each school. The project identified three tiers defining developmental readiness including Advanced (Tier 1), Intermediate (Tier 2), and Preparatory (Tier 3). The volume of grant assistance administered by the project was modulated according to tier designations with Tier 1 schools receiving the most assistance (given their higher capacity to utilize aid effectively) while lower tiers received less grant assistance but more intensive capacity-building support so that they might receive greater grant assistance. Grants ranged in size from $400 to $600 per primary school and $1,000 to $3,000 per secondary school.

Based on an assessment of their progress, schools could either move to a higher tier or be downgraded in cases where regression had occurred. These arrangements were intended to stimulate motivation for a school to improve its management capacity and motivation. By the end of the project 44% of primary schools had upgraded their tier from baseline levels (see Table 2.6) while 79% of secondary schools had done so (see Table 2.7). In all, 74% of schools upgraded their tier level by the end of the project (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.6: Tier Breakdown and Change (Primary Schools)

Province	Baseline Year			Year 5			Change		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Upgrade	Downgrade	Upgrade as a %
Kg Cham	33	69	8	65	23	22	46	29	75%
Kratie	10	15	5	17	6	7	12	11	40%
S. Reap	6	44	2	31	10	11	26	13	25%
Total	49	128	15	113	39	40	84	53	44%

Table 2.7: Tier Breakdown and Change (Secondary Schools)

Province	Baseline Year			Year 5			Change		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Upgrade	Downgrade	Upgrade as a %
Kg Cham	7	24	18	37	8	4	37	1	75%
Kratie	2	8	11	12	7	2	18	1	86%
S. Reap	2	20	8	25	4	1	24	1	80%
Total	11	52	37	74	19	7	79	3	79%

Table 2.8: Tier Breakdown and Change (All Schools)

Province	Baseline Year			Year 5			Change		
	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Upgrade	Downgrade	Upgrade as a %
Kg Cham	40	93	26	102	31	26	83	30	52%
Kratie	12	23	16	29	13	9	30	12	59%
S. Reap	8	64	10	56	14	12	50	14	61%
Total	60	180	52	187	58	47	163	56	74%

3. PROGRESS AND VERIFIABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

3.1 The Means Used to Measure Success and Performance in Each Component

Measuring the success of the IBEC Project has been guided by USAID's stated Goal to promote **"better educated youth"** and its *Strategic Objective for Basic Education*, which is **"Increased relevance, quality, and access in basic education"** (see Box 3.1). In the Cambodian context, basic education is defined as Grades 1 to 9. The project's goal structure has been further defined by two Sub-objectives, namely: Sub-objective 1 - "Increased Access," and Sub-Objective 2 - "Improved Quality of Basic Education." Each sub-objective has been additionally defined by one or more *Intermediate Results (IRs)* as determined by USAID in its solicitation for this project in 2009. These intermediate results are also summarized in Box 3.1 to the right. A Cross-cutting Objective that was also included in the project's goal structure refers to "increased local capacity of Local Civil Society and Government," which echoes themes from *USAID Forward*, a global initiative promoted by USAID to empower civil society, among other things.

To monitor each of the objectives and intermediate results identified in Box 3.1, the project formulated 70 performance indicators, which are summarized in the project's Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP). The assignment of intermediate results specified by USAID and indicators by technical component is summarized in Table 3.1 below. The description of each performance indicator and its achievement status is summarized in Table 3.15 of a later section.
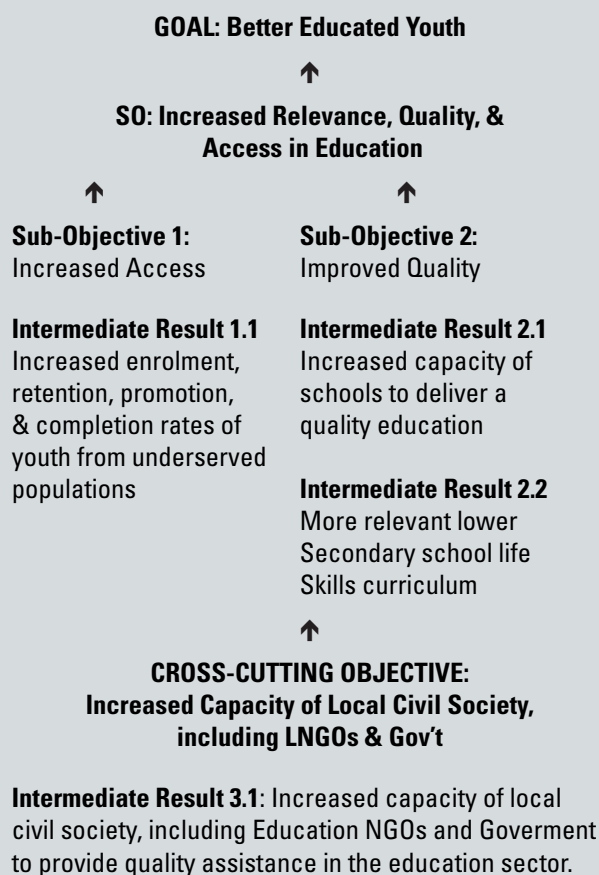
BOX 3.1: PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL: Better Educated Youth

↑

SO: Increased Relevance, Quality, & Access in Education

↑   ↑

Sub-Objective 1: Increased Access

Sub-Objective 2: Improved Quality

Intermediate Result 1.1 Increased enrolment, retention, promotion, & completion rates of youth from underserved populations

Intermediate Result 2.1 Increased capacity of schools to deliver a quality education

Intermediate Result 2.2 More relevant lower Secondary school life Skills curriculum

↑

CROSS-CUTTING OBJECTIVE: Increased Capacity of Local Civil Society, including LNGOs & Gov't

Intermediate Result 3.1: Increased capacity of local civil society, including Education NGOs and Goverment to provide quality assistance in the education sector.

Table 3.1: Summary of Indicators by Technical Component and Intermediate Result

Component	Intermediate Result	Number of Performance Indicators
1. Local NGO/Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability Component	IR 3.1: Increased capacity of local civil society, including Education NGOs and Government to provide quality assistance in the education sector	9
2. More Equitable School Access Component	IR 1.1: Increased Enrolment, retention, promotion, and completion rates of youth from underserved populations	24
3. Improved School Management and Commu nity Engagement Component	IR 2.1: Increased capacity of schools to deliver a quality education	11
4. Improved Educational Relevance Component	IR 2.2: More relevant lower secondary school life skills curriculum	26
Total		70

3.2 Local NGO/Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability Component Performance

Overview: Component 1 was highly successful in working towards its impact targets with all performance standards achieved within a margin of 10%. A key performance target in this regard related to the institution-building and technical support provided to five civil society organizations who were partners in project implementation. The names of these partners, their role in the project, and their institution-building status are summarized in Table 3.2 below. Three out of four[4] of the LNGO partners targeted with capacity-building support made significant progress with respect to institution-building targets and two were actually able to achieve accreditation status with CCC's Good Practices Project (GPP) as planned, a very rigorous certification process. These investments have had a significant impact on the ability of civil society organizations in the formal education sector to

> **BOX 3.2: COMPONENT 1 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**
>
> 1. Indicators Achieved: 100%
> 2. 75% of targeted LNGOs achieved institution-building benchmarks
> 3. Two LNGOs accredited by GPP
> 4. Local government partners achieved performance benchmarks
> 5. 27 communes with institutional patterns of financial support for local schools

participate in development activities. This is particularly true of KAPE, which quadrupled its funding portfolio from less than $800,000 per year before IBEC to over $3 million per year by the end of the project

Table 3.2: Summary of Institution-building Targets for Local Partners, Years 1 to 5

	Agency Name	Location	Tasks/ Responsibilities	Remarks
1.	Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE)	Kampong Cham (Main Office), Kratie, Siem Reap	• School Grant Administration • Oversight of Local Partners • Oversight of all Field Operations, including scholarships • Oversight of consultancies to assist government	• Accredited • Achieved 80% of institution-building targets
2.	Women and Children's Rights Development (WCRD)	Kratie (Main Office)	• Administration of secondary school scholarships in Kratie • School-community outreach to vulnerable families	• Achieved 48% of institution-building targets
3.	Buddhist Social Development Association (BSDA)	Kampong Cham (Main Office), Kratie	• Civics Instruction (Life Skills) • School-community outreach to vulnerable families	• Accredited • Achieved 88% of institution-building targets
4.	Economic Development Association (EDA)	Kampong Cham (Main Office)	• School-community outreach to vulnerable families	• Achieved 73% of institution-building targets
5.	NGO Education Partnership	Phnom Penh	• National Seminars • Field Trips to Spread Good Practices	• Already accredited • No targets set

Sustainable Teaching Aid Production: The Component was also able to achieve its goal of putting in place sustainable teaching aid production provisions that will not only provide teaching/learning aids long after project closure but will also generate school support funds in two provinces. These efforts refer mainly to the technical assistance provided to KAPE to set up a social enterprise called *Thuntean Seksa* (TTS) that has created a sizable portfolio of teaching/learning aids. With loans from KAPE internal resources (derived from non-project sources), the enterprise became independent of the project in 2012 and is now self-sustaining. Revenues to date amount to over $200,000. As the project ended, TTS has established a widely known reputation and continues to innovate in the development of teaching aids while providing continuing support to schools within KAPE target areas.

[4] NEP did not receive capacity-building support in this regard because it is already accredited.

Local Government: Finally, the project has been very successful in building the capacity of local government with Provincial Working Groups and a majority of assisted Commune-EFA Committees achieving agreed performance benchmarks. In this regard, the average performance score of a sample of assessed CEFACs was 83% (see Table 3.3). In addition, the project also succeeded in putting in place institutional habits of financial support for local schools in 27 communes (25 had originally been planned for) through a system of matching funds. Funds raised by communes for local schools were matched by project funds as a means to prime the pump. These efforts also included training school directors how to lobby for funds from local government and ensure that school support requests are included in District Integration Workshops each year. DIWs are where commune councils formalize their funding requests to the Ministry of Interior. All of these efforts will greatly add to the sustainability of activities that are prioritized by schools as part of their sustainability planning exercises.

Beacon Schools: Component 1 has also succeeded in setting up Beacon Schools in 27 districts (or 87% of those targeted) to act as models for best practices to surrounding schools. These are schools that have met the highest standards set by the project. The establishment of models of good practice in so many districts will enable both local partners and government to continue to leverage development efforts through other development projects, and maintain continuous contact with the management in these schools.

3.3 More Equitable School Access Component Performance

Table: 3.3: CEFAC Assessment Results, Final Year (based on a random sample)

No	District	Commune	Result
SIEM REAP PROVINCE			
1	Puork	Prey Chruk	90%
2	SvayLer	Svay Ler	87%
3	Banteay Srey	Khna Sanday	73%
4	Chikraeng	Anlong Samnor	77%
5	Varin	Prasath	90%
Average			83%
KRATIE PROVINCE			
6	Snoul	Svay Chras	75%
7	Chhlong	Hanchey	88%
8	Prek Brasab	Prek Brasob	82%
9	Sambo	Sorndan	98%
10	Krong	O-Roesey	88%
Average			86%
KAMPONG CHAM PROVINCE			
11	O Rang Euv	Ampil Tapork	80%
12	Cherng Prey	Soteb	68%
13	Prey Chhor	Lvea	95%
14	Prey Chhor	Kor	62%
15	Ponhea Krek	Kandol Chrum	95%
Average			80%
Average across All Provinces			83%

Overview: Progress in the More Equitable School Access Component was defined by 24 performance indicators ranging from changes in school efficiency (e.g., dropout, repetition, and completion rates in Grade 9), to providing special services to the poor (e.g., scholarships, health referrals for physically challenged children, counseling services for girls), to solving teacher shortages, among many others. In all, the Component achieved 21 of the 24 indicators set out or 88% of the total, which signifies a very strong outcome. Performance standards that were missed included the following:

Table 3.4: Component 2 Performance Standards Not Achieved

Indicator	Status
1. 70% of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Indices from baseline	Not Achieved: 54% for primary schools and 72% for secondary schools demonstrated improved GPI from baseline.
2. 90,879 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings (OP Indicator)	Not Achieved within a margin of 10%: 81,024 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based setting.
3. At least 65% of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	Not Achieved: 45% of lower secondary schools (31% of Cycle 1 schools and 52% of Cycle 2 schools) reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.

Gender Parity: Although the project did not achieve its goal of increasing gender parity in 70% of all schools, it did achieve this performance standard at secondary school level, where 72% of assisted schools reported an increase in parity levels. Scholarship support was decisive in this regard where female quotas exceeding 70% characterized each scholarship intake at secondary school level[5]. The magnitude of the scholarship support at secondary school level, averaging $70 per student compared to only $11 per student at primary level, may account for the disparity in the impact levels between the two sub-sectors. Overall, Gender Parity Indices increased from 0.92 to 0.94 at primary level and to 1.12 at secndary school level.

School Enrolment: As noted in Section 2, primary school enrolment has declined from an earlier high of 89,221 because of the decision to terminate assistance to 11 schools due to non-performance. These schools had been repeatedly warned that they were in danger of losing aid but to no effect. In most donor programs, there is little accountability for performance and schools hardly ever lose their assistance even when they do nothing; IBEC tried to follow a higher standard. The removal of these schools in addition to the loss of students in target urban schools due to competiton with private schools accounted for most of the loss of students. Overall, final enrolment levels in target primary schools came in at 11% below target (81,024 children), just outside the 10% margin for achievement. Although the project was able to make significant gains in reducing grade repetition at primary level (69% of schools reported a decline from baseline), the project was unable to make similar impacts at target secondary schools. Overall, repetition rate at secondary schools remained constant at 7% (5% among females).

Scholarships and Dropout Rate: In spite of the shortfalls recounted above, Component 2 was still able to make significant progress in achieving all other performance standards. Some of the key results in this regard are summarized in Box 3.3. For example, scholarships were provided to 9,679 vulnerable children (5,832 girls) over the course of the project, the majority of whom (about 60%) were either female, from an ethnic minority group, or disabled. Inputs siuch as scholarships, child help networks, health referrals, and other access-boosting interventions are reflected in increases in retention with 63% of primary schools reporting a decline in dropout and 54% of secondary schools able to do so by Year 5 (see Figure 3.1). The overall dropout rate declined from 4% to 3% at primary level and from 15% to 13% at secondary level. Based on the data received from field offices, interventions had dramatic impacts on changes in dropout at the beginning of school development cycles, which tended to taper off around Year 3 as grant assistance began to wind down. However, reductions in dropout appeared to rebound in the final year of the project, especially for secondary schools, as contributions from commune councils and the Ministry's School Improvement Grant (SIG) program began to kick in[6]. Among scholarship beneficiairies, completion rates at Grade 9 exceeded expectations and reached 81%.

**BOX 3.3: COMPONENT 2 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Indicators Achieved: 88%
2. 7,438 vulnerable primary school children received scholarships
3. 2,241 vulnerable secondary school students received scholarships
4. 81% of secondary school scholarship recipients completed Grade 9
5. 63% of primary schools reported a decline in dropout from baseline
6. 54% of secondary schools reported a decline in dropout from baseline
7. 298 physically challenged children referred for health services
8. WASH systems emplaced in 300 schools
9. 716 classrooms repaired
10. 69% of primary schools reported a decline in repetition from baseline
11. 360 teachers recruited locally and supported with PTTC scholarships to solve teacher shortages

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[5] 71% of those receiving scholarship support at secondary school level were girls.
[6] Schools in Cambodia began receiving additional grant support from SIG in 2013, which is funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). SIG assistance has provided a convenient means for IBEC to hand over grant assistance with minimum interruption to the activities that it had formerly supported.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of Schools Reporting a Reduction in Dropout Rate from Baseline, Years 1-5

|	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Primary Schools	65%	62%	56%	65%	63%
Secondary Schools	57%	63%	50%	44%	54%
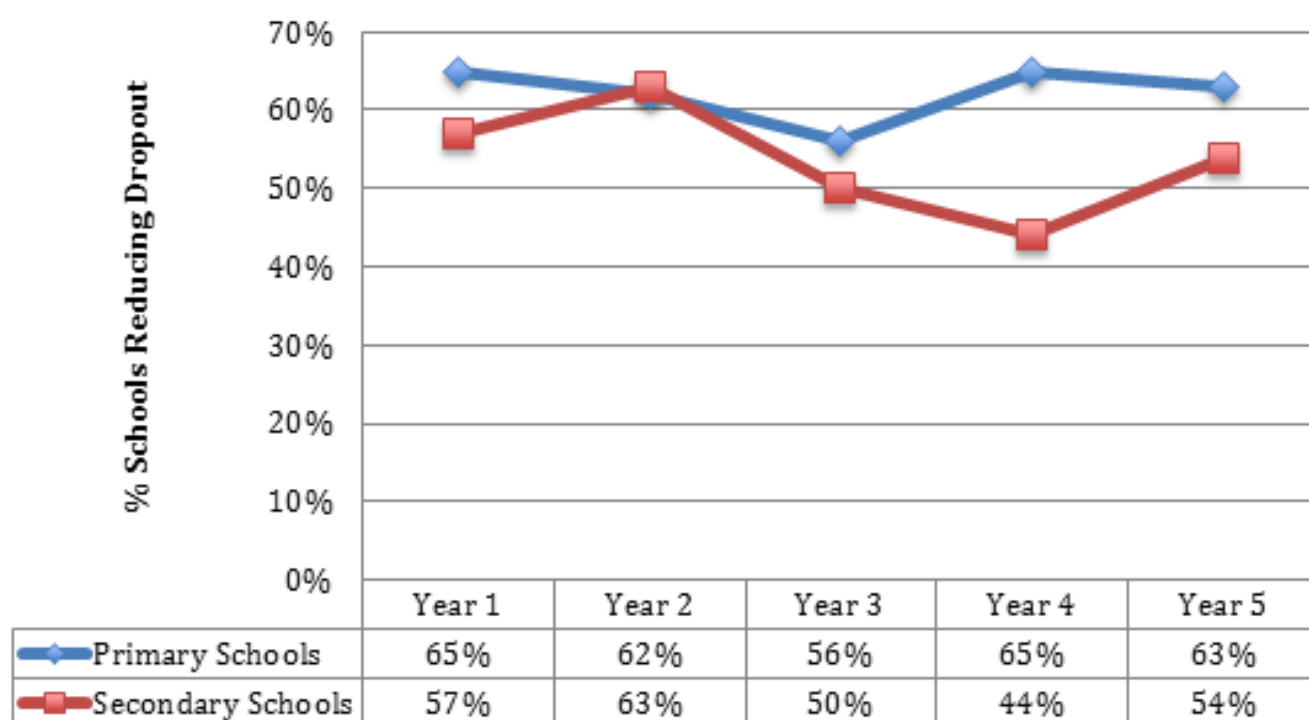
Libraries, Temporary Classrooms, and Teacher Shortages: The project also built 21 model libraries and 32 temporary classrooms in very remote areas with no educational service, thereby providing educational services to about 1,000 chidren who previously had no education provision. These classrooms are staffed by Community Teach-ers who will eventually transition to state teachers who were recruited locally by the project and supported in their two-year study program at Provincial Teacher Training Colleges with scholarship support. With advocacy from the project and the close cooperation of the Teacher Training Depart-ment, these individuals will be posted directly to their communes of origin where the pos-sibility of transfer is less likely[7]. In all, 360 individuals were recruited locally from com-munes designated by the Ministry as suffering from teacher shortages. During the time that these prospective teachers are studying at PTTCs, the project also fielded 398 Communi-ty Teachers who were trained to temporarily fill a shortage until a more permanent teacher with a state salary could be posted to the target school. This approach by IBEC has generally led to a lasting solution to teacher shortages in the areas where the project has been working. This success is demonstrated by the decline in Pupil Teacher Ratio from baseline to the final year of the project, mainly in Kampong Cham and Siem Reap. In this regard, PTR declined from 53 to 51:1 in Kampong Cham while Siem Reap declined from 59 to 50:1. Overall, PTR levels in target primary schools declined by 8%, since baseline (see Figure 3.2).

Model Library in an IBEC School.

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[7] Teacher shortages are not only due to a lack of personnel but also to structural inefficiencies in the way that teachers are recruited and posted. Many new teachers are often posted to communes to which they are not native. Given the small salary that these newly posted teachers receive, they prefer to be closer to their parents where they can live and eat for free. Thus, many teachers wait out their two-year posting and then transfer to their commune of origin where they may or may not be needed.

Figure 3.2: Reduction in PTR Level by Province since Baseline

	Kg Cham	Kratie	Siem Reap	Total
■ Baseline Year	53	40	59	53
■ Final Year	51	42	50	49
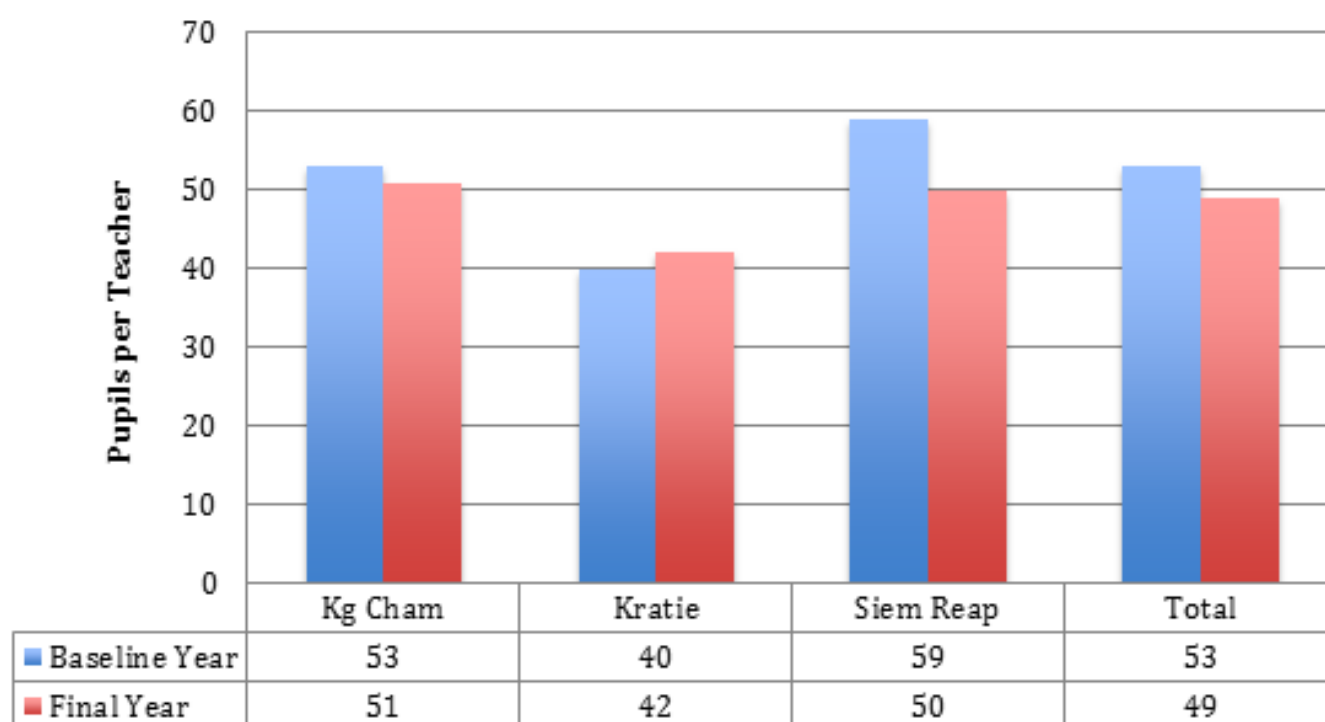
Repetition Rates: Through a combination of teacher education interventions (see Section 3.1.5) and remedial support for students with special learning needs, the project was able to make significant reductions in repetition rate, particularly among primary schools. In this regard, 69% of primary schools were reporting that rates of repetition were lower than baseline levels by the end of the project (see Figure 3.3). Secondary schools had made similar gains during the earlier years of the project but then these were inexplicably reversed in the final year of project implementation when the percentage of schools reporting declines from baseline dropped to only 45%. Project personnel were not able to identify a satisfactory explanation for this reversal in progress in the final year of the project.

Figure 3.3: Percentage of Schools Reporting a Reduction in Repetition Rate from Baseline, Years 1 to 5

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
◆ Primary Schools	71%	67%	56%	59%	69%
■ Secondary Schools	57%	50%	61%	70%	45%
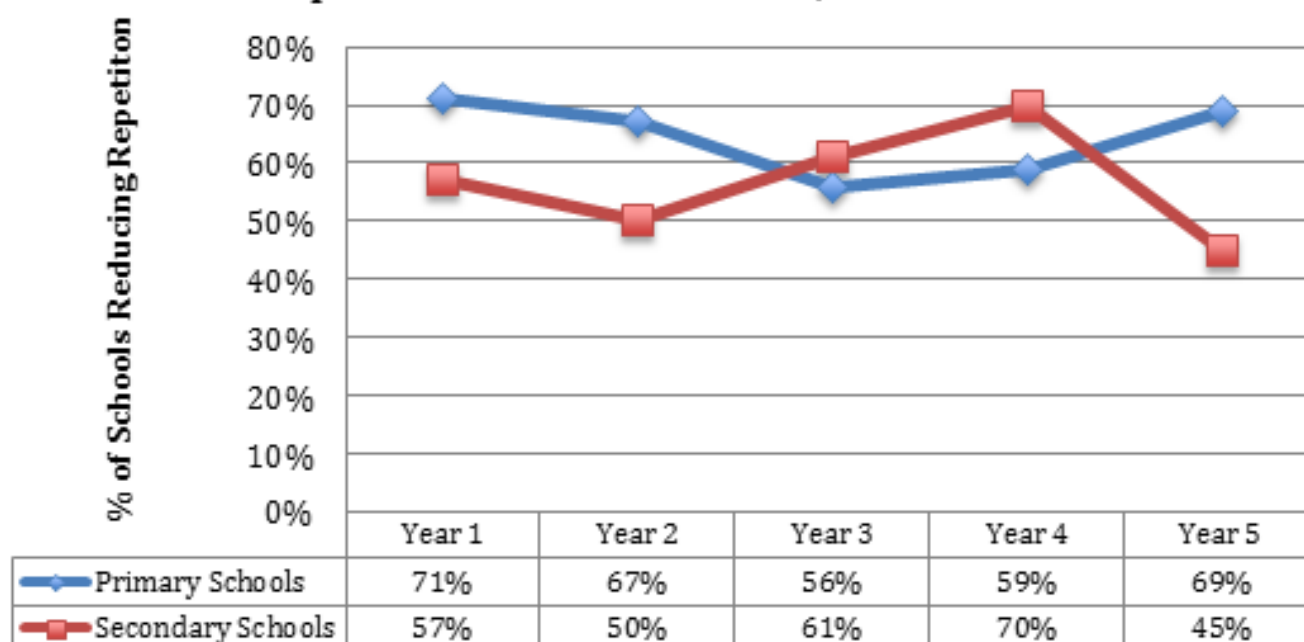
Classroom Repairs: The Component also invested heavily to ensure that learning environments were sanitary, uncrowded, and secure, as these factors can impact greatly on attendance and enrolment. Accordingly, the project repaired 716 classrooms and reinforced their security so that teaching aids could be safely stored there. Such repairs were a pre-condition for the provision of learning aids and teacher education regarding their use. Bundling interventions in this way in a holistic implementation environment is an excellent example of how integrated programming can be a highly effective development model.

WASH Facilities: Finally, it should be noted that the project made significant investments in the provision of WASH facilities using innovative designs. In this respect, IBEC built water systems comprising toilets, wash stations, and piped water in 290 schools. This included 86 ring wells, 113 water pumps, 1,834 water filters, and 237 new toilet blocks with 474 toilet repairs (see Table 3.5). Once again, the holistic development approach employed by the project enabled these interventions to complement other key interventions such as School Feeding activities that were supported by the World Food Program and administered by IBEC's local partner KAPE. These investments in WASH facilities accounted for approximately $1 million in funding provided by the US Government.

***Sustainable Development:** Children cleaning the lavatories of a brand new toilet block at their school*

Table 3.5: School Improvements in Water & Sanitation Systems, Years 1-5

Year	Ring Wells	Water Systems (school)	Ponds	Water Tanks (tank)	Water Pumps (pump)	Wash stations	Water Filters (filter)	Toilet Repair (block)	Toilet New (block)
Year 5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Year 4	5	39	3	18	13	108	557	51	44
Year 3	14	70	5	70	16	18	196	98	87
Year 2	16	53	0	37	24	32	212	148	45
Year 1	50	128	0	132	60	87	869	177	61
Total Since Start-up	86	290	8	257	113	245	1,834	474	237

Note: Units are indicated parenthetically.

3.4 Improved School Management & Community Engagement Component Performance

Overview: The rationale for creating this component lay in the need to create enabling administrative environments that would facilitate effective implementation of interventions organized by Components 2 and 4 such as school improvement planning, library oversight, and administration of computer/science labs. Thus, the Intermediate Result under ths component was to 'increase the capacity of schools to deliver a quality education' embodied by many of the activities supported by IBEC (IR 2.1). The Component focused on 11 performance standards and achieved all of them within a margin of 10%. Key results in this regard are summarized in Box 3.4.

School Management Training: The flagship activity under Component 3 was the development and implementation of a *School Leadership and Management Course (SMLTC)* that lasted two years. The course built on leadership curricular materials developed by the World Bank under the Cambodia Education Sector Support Program (CESSP) but added significant elements relating to school management. The SMLTC differed in the way that it was imple- mented in many other projects in that it was administered like a university course that not only required attendance of four founda-

BOX 3.4: COMPONENT 3 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS
1. Indicators Achieved: 100%
2. 553 school administrators trained of whom 95% were certified upon successful completion of a management course
3. 890 school managers, teachers, and community members participated in exposure visits to a Beacon School
4. 56% of schools (79 Secondary and 84 Primary Schools) are able to improve their performance tier designation by end of the development cycle.
5. 90% of School Support Committees meet minimum performance standards by the end of each development cycle.
6. 848 vulnerable families in target schools adopt practical livelihoods activities as a result of school- community outreach.

tional workshops but also the completion of task work between workshps. School administrators had about six to eight weeks to complete agreed task work on a topic that they had studied at their own schools following each seminar. Such tasks could include setting up a Student Council, creating a School Vision in a particpatory manner, or setting up a teacher support system, among other tasks. Ministry core groups who were trained by the project worked closely with component personnel in delivering workshops and doing the follow-up of task work, thereby building national capac- ity to replicate similar approaches to school management improvement in the future. Depending on transcript scores, those successfully completing the course were certified. Basing certification decisions on completed course work in this way gave some credible meaning to the certificates received. In the actual event, 95% of the 553 administrators (57 females) participating in the course were actually certified Evidence of the impact of school leadership and man- agement training can also be seen in progress among schools to improve their tier status. In this regard, 161 schools or 56% were able to improve their development tier designation, which led to increased grant funding. This improvement

Validating the Successful Completion of Task Work: A Ministry trainer meets with a student coun- cil that a school director has established as part of his task work.

was particularly evident among the 79 secondary schools that were able to register this improvement, which accounts for nearly 80% of all secondary schools.

Community Engagement: Another key achievement of the Component was to improve the operational efficiency and engagement of School Support Committees in educa- tion. SSC assessments to determine the achievement of this indicator were based on a standardized tool that looked at such factors as SSC participation in school self-evaluations, organizing community events, assisting the school to iden- tify children at risk or out of school and such management factors as the selection of SSC officers through elections and regular meetings. Based on these surveys, Component personnel determined that 90% of surveyed committees had achieved a minimum standard of performance (see Table 3.6). As noted earlier, a particularly strong example of advocacy orchestrated by the project refers to the increase in female representation in SSC executive committees with an increase from 6% at baseline to 31% by the end of the proj- ect, a major achievement.

Table 3.6: School Support Committees Achieving a Minmum Performance Standard

Province	Committees Assessed	Committees at Minimum Standard or Better	Improvement as a % of the Total
Kg. Cham	41	39	95%
Siem Reap	82	72	88%
Kratie	22	20	91%
Total	145	131	90%

N = 145

Outreach to the Poor: Another highlight in the Component's list of achievements that should be mentioned refers to the Schools Helping Families Program. This program was developed as a sub-activity in IBEC to help school directors build relationships with communities by demonstrating the relevance of education to the income situation of vulnerable families. The activity helps scholarship recipients receiving life skills education in their schools to link what they learn to income needs in the family. IBEC provided a small grant to identified families of about $50 as part of the scholarship assistance provided. This activity was implemented by local partners such as KAPE, BSDA, and WCRD. To ensure that the families who received grants to improve their livelihood in exchange for keeping their children at school, the project team and partner NGOs made regular visits to make sure that the grants are utilized properly and that their children remain at school with regular attendance. Overall, 848 vulnerable families were assisted with these grants that sought to link life skills education that vulnerable students received at school, scholarship support, and family livelihoods (see Table 3.7).

Linking Life Skills, Livelihoods, and Scholarship Assistance: A scholarship recipient inspects his family's ducks that were purchased with a livelihoods grant from the project

Table 3.7: Vulnerable Families Receiving Scholarship Assistance Who Received Other Specialized Support since Start-up

Province	Families Assisted (Actual)	Technical Areas of Assistance	Implemented by
Kampong Cham	323	Chicken raising	BSDA
		Food processing	EDA
Kratie	495	Chicken raising	BSDA
			WCRD
Siem Reap	30	Chicken raising	KAPE
Total	848	--	--

3.5 Improved Educational Relevance Component Performance

Overview: With three subcomponents[8] and 26 indicators defining standards of successful performance, Component 4 is IBEC's largest technical component. The Component's main goal was to contribute to student retention by making education more attractive to youth, leading in particular to the creation of a "more relevant lower secondary school life skills curriculum" (IR 2.2). This was intended to assist MoEYS in actualizing its Life Skills Education Policy, which had been formulated in 2006 but had encountered many difficulties in implementation. The content of many interventions in the Component was also guided by USAID's new, global Education Strategy to promote employability skills for youth (e.g., through life skills education) as well as innovation in science and technology. Although the project was originally designed to focus mainly on the upper primary grades to promote transition to secondary school, Component 4 also introduced some activities at lower primary level to make the project compliant with USAID's Education Strategy goal to promote early grade reading. Overall, the Component was able to achieve 96% of its 26 indicators (see Box 3.5).

Life Skills Education: The flagship activity under Component 4 and indeed for the entire project was the Life Skills Education Pilot that was designed in Years 1 and 2 and implemented in Years 3 and 4. Final revisions and adoption by MoEYS occurred in Year 5 of project implementation. In undertaking the pilot, the Component first carried out an audit of existing life skills materials and developed 30 teacher manuals across three topical domains to provide more structure to the Life Skills curriculum. These domains included a combination of soft skills (e.g., Socially Relevant Themes such as drug abuse) and hard skills (e.g., pre-vocational topics). These manuals were designed as user-friendly teacher session plans complete with handouts for students (rather than expensive student books), posters, and re-usable study slides to facilitate group work to address the lack of materials and teacher expertise in life skills curriculum design and implementation. IBEC succeeded in getting approval for all but two manuals, which given the frequently slow rate of Ministry approvals for new curricula is a notable accomplishment (see Table 3.8). These manuals are now being mainstreamed into the general curriculum by a recently issued directive from the Minister of Education himself. This is the first time that the Cambodian education system has in place a structured life skills curriculum focusing on both 'soft and hard skills' that is practical, low cost, and easily sustainable with good school management.

> **BOX 3.5: COMPONENT 4 ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**
>
> 1. Indicators Achieved: 96%.
> 2. New Life Skills Education developed, piloted, revised, and adopted by MoEYS.
> 3. 85% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum demonstrate satisfactory mastery of competencies in Cycle 1 and 2 schools.
> 4. 65% of schools demonstrate more relevant education according to a tool designed for the purpose
> 5. 70% of sampled schools register effective Career Counseling Services.
> 6. 26 ICT Labs and 24 Science Labs in place by the end of the project.
> 7. 98% of students in schools with computer labs indicate that they study IT 1 hour or more each week
> 8. 86% of schools register satisfactory performance in the operation of Science Labs according to a standardized instrument.
> 9. 85% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum demonstrate satisfactory mastery of competencies in Cycle 1 and 2 schools.
> 10. 87% of assisted classrooms meet criteria defining child friendly physical environments by the end of the academic year.

Ongoing Life Skills Implementation in Schools: Mushroom raising in a target school in Kampong Cham

The project also succeeded in getting explicit Ministry support to pay teachers to teach life skills in state schools using overtime funds allocated to each Provincial Office of Education, another major policy achievement. Over the course of the project, IBEC distributed 232,860 manuals, learning slides, posters, and other learning materials to target schools.

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[8]Workforce Development through Life Skills Education, Educational Innovation for Science & Technology, and Teacher Education.

Educational Impacts of Life Skills Support: Using an attitudinal baseline survey tool developed and administered in Year 2, the Component re-administered its attitudinal survey at the end of the project to the same sample of students chosen at Grade 7 during Year 2. The results of the survey continued to be positive with 85% of the sample expressing satisfaction with their learning environment since the introduction of life skills education activities designed to improve educational relevance. This compares with a baseline score of only 44%. However, these results must be qualified by the observation that less than half of the original sample remains from when the survey was first administered in 2011, i.e., at baseline. Thus, the project must conclude that while life skills education provisions of 2 hours per week have helped in improving relevance, they are not sufficient by themselves to persuade students to stay in school and out of the workforce.

Table 3.8: Status of Life Skills Manual Approval, Year 5

Domain	Life Skills Manual Topic	Status		
		Approved	Pending	Not Approved
Socially Relevant Themes	1. Drug Abuse Prevention	√		
	2. Alcoholism Prevention	√		
	3. Civic Awareness			√
	4. Water Sanitation	√		
	5. Safe Migration	√		
	6. Environmental Issue	√		
	7. Gender Sensitivity	√		
	8. Cultural Awareness	√		
	9. Music and Dance			√
	10. Personal Understanding	√		
Business & Economic Studies	1. My Marketing Skill	√		
	2. Money Management	√		
	3. My Future	√		
	4. Saving & Spending	√		
	5. World of Work	√		
	6. Social Enterprise	√		
	7. Choosing Your Future	√		
Practical Livelihoods	1. Bio Gardening	√		
	2. Fish Raising	√		
	3. Frog Raising	√		
	4. Rice Cultivation	√		
	5. Mushroom Growing	√		
	6. Chicken Raising	√		
	7. Vegetable growing	√		
	8. Bicycle Repair	√		
	9. Hair Cutting	√		
	10. Sewing	√		
	11. Fruit Processing	√		
	12. Masonry	√		
	13. Cooking	√		
	Total	28	0	2
	%	93%	0%	7%

Educational Relevance:
Educational relevance is a key measure of Component 4's success in improving educational learning environments. IBEC measures educational relevance each year through an assessment tool that reviews the number of educational quality enhancement interventions that a school has implemented. At the end of the project, this performance standard was administered to 67 primary schools and 80 secondary schools in Cycle 2 to determine levels of educational relevance. In all, a total of 147 schools were surveyed. Quality enhancement activities include life skills activities and eleven other key activities that contribute to educational quality. Overall, there were 383 instances of

Life Skills Manuals: Revised Life Skills Manuals recently approved by MoEYS' Textbook Review Committee. This is Cambodia's first structured Life Skills Curriculum.

implementation of 'relevance enhancing' activities in targeted primary schools and 505 instances in targeted secondary schools. The standard used for 'relevant' was defined as the implementation of five or more of the 11 activities mentioned in the table. Survey results indicated that 69% of primary schools and 61% of secondary schools are meeting the program's criteria for more relevant educational provisions (see Table 3.9).

The Quest for Quality and Relevance: IBEC has made many improvements in school settings including both material and technical support for Life Skills Education such as bicycle repair classes.

Table 3.9: School Performance on Educational Relevance by Province.

Province	Total Assisted Primary Schools	Total Assisted Secondary Schools	Schools Scoring 'Satisfactory' on a Relevance Scale		As a % of All Schools
			Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	
Kg.Cham	8	35	7 (87%)	21 (60%)	65%
Kratie	7	15	6 (86%)	9 (60%)	68%
Siem Reap	52	30	33 (63%)	19 (63%)	63%
Total	67	80	46 (69%)	49 (61%)	65%

ICT Access and Science Education: IBEC made a significant investment in building computer and science labs in the best managed schools. Because of the size of these investments and the experience of other projects where lab utilization rates have been low due to poor management and limited accountability in schools, IBEC was very careful in its selection of the schools that received lab investments. ICT Labs supported by IBEC employed a new kind of technology well suited to local conditions that require less energy, are cheaper, and very low maintenace. Known as *thin client devices*, their use in IBEC target schools have helped solve many of the technical problems that lead to short shelf lives for ICT labs in Cambodia, and indeed, all labs are still in use, even those emplaced since the start of the project.

Table 3.10: Computer Lab Establishment in IBEC/Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Province	Proposed Labs	Labs on line	Assigned Computer Teachers		Estimated Student Beneficiaries		Work Stations on Line
			Total	Female	Total	Female	
Total (Year 5)	1	1	3	1	1,247	658	16
Total (Year 4)	2	2	5	1	1,036	527	26
Total (Year 3)	8	8	23	6	10,892	5,675	156
Total (Year 2)	7*	7*	29	5	8,368	4,092	113
Total (Year 1)	8	8	29	13	11,505	5,749	104
Total IBEC Labs	26	26	89	26	33,048	16,701	415
Labs Established under Schools for Life & ESCUP	11	11	35	11	6,697	2,048	121
Grand Total	37	37	124	37	39,745	18,749	536

* Includes two labs constructed with cost share funds from the Oaktree Foundation

In all, IBEC built 26 ICT labs (comprising 536 workstations) and 24 science labs over the life of the project (see Table 3.10). When including ICT labs completed under the *Schools for Life Project*, IBEC's predecessor upon which much of current programming is based, USAID will have supported the construction of 37 computer labs across four provinces through the World Education-KAPE partnership (see Table 3.10). These labs provide services to nearly 40,000 students, helping them to acquire basic computer literacy skills as well as understanding of how to use computers in their regular subjects. Other projects have also adopted the Thin Client Lab model first developed under *Schools for Life* including Creative Associates (108 labs), Asian Development Bank (12 labs), Plan International (2 labs), Oak Tree Foundation (2 labs), Save the Children Australia (1 lab), Alcatel-Lucent Foundation (1 lab), Vitol Foundation (1 lab), and others who are also considering support. Thus, USAID programming in this area has had a significant knock-on effect that reaches well beyond IBEC target sites.

Revolutionary Technology: A Thin Client Device, so small it can be clipped to the back of a monitor

The ICT Team undertook extensive annual attitudinal surveys to assess student access to computer lab facilities and overall attitudes about digital literacy instruction among students during each year of implementation. In this respect, the ICT team surveyed 1,147 students across target schools (see Table 3.11). Surveys were administered directly by project staff and comprised self-administered questionnaires. Most students reported high access to IT facilities with 99% reporting that they had studied ICT at least 1 hour per week, an important measure of access. About 77% reported that this was the first time that they had ever had the opportunity to study ICT, suggesting that the investments made by the project in these schools was very much worthwhile. Similarly, 72% indicated that the availability of ICT facilities in their school had played a major role in their decision not to dropout. Nevertheless, 23% of students indicated that the depth of their understanding in ICT was highly limited while about 71% indicated moderate understanding. These results suggest reasonably high levels of efficiency thus far in the administration of ICT access activities and the desire to empower youth.

Table 3.11: Results of Student Attitudinal Survey on IT Access, Impact, & Efficiency

Question	No	Response	%
On average, how many hours per week were you able to study computer with your teachers?	Not at all	16	1%
	1 hour	605	53%
	2 hours	484	42%
	3 hours or more	42	4%
Is this the first time in your life that you have ever had the opportunity to study computer?	Yes	881	77%
	No	266	23%
How satisfied were you with the quality of computer instruction that you received during the year?	Very satisfied	706	62%
	Moderately satisfied	421	37%
	Not very satisfied	19	2%
How would you describe your understanding of what you were taught in your computer class?	Very high Understanding	67	6%
	Moderately high understanding	819	71%
	Low understanding	261	23%
To what extent did the opportunity to study computer help to influence your decision to stay in school?	A great deal	825	72%
	To some degree	186	16%
	Not at all	135	12%
Were you asked to pay for using the computer center during the last term?	Yes	68	6%
	No	1,079	94%

(N=1,047)

Nationally, low utilization rates of expensive science labs provided by development partners are a pervasive problem. There are numerous causes for this situation such as the reluctance of teachers to reduce their income generating 'rien kua'[9] classes to use the labs, the inability of teachers to combine theory and practice when they teach, and the very abbreviated time available for science instruction (e.g., 4 hours per month). IBEC has sought to address these factors by only choosing the schools with the most professional teachers to emplace a science lab, intensive training in hands-on science reviewing all lessons in the textbook and how they can be taught less theoretically, and timetabling instructional hours so that two hours can be grouped together in any given week for a particular science subject. There have also been important links between Component 3 and 4 programming to be sure that ICT and science lab usage and the establishment of science clubs is included in management training workshops.

Promoting Hands-on Science: *A student conducts an experiment while the teacher stands in the background.*

Student survey results indicate that the above measures have been moderately successful with 80% of surveyed students indicating that they did experiments themselves (at least some of the time) and a very high rate of satisfaction with science instruction at their school (82%) (see Table 3.12). To be sure, these response rates are starting from a very low baseline but nevertheless indicate that educational development projects can take effective measures to safeguard large investments in science education.

[9]This is a Khmer term that refers to private classes with under the table payments to teachers that are frequently linked to promotion decisions. Although such classes are technically against MoEYS policies, they are endemic in the education system have proven highly resistant to efforts to eliminate them.

Table 3.12: Summary of Assessment Results for Science Lab Usage by Students (Years 1-5)

Questions	Respones			
How frequently did you study science in the lab this year?	Never	Once or twice	3-6 times	More than 6 times
	14%	19%	38%	28%
When you used the lab, did you do experiments directly or just watch the teacher?	Never did any	Sometimes I did, Sometimes I watched	Did myself	
	19%	55%	26%	
How important is practicing science to you	Not Important	Important	Very Important	
	0%	16%	84%	
How satisfied are you with the quality of science instruction provided to you?	Not very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied	
	0%	18%	82%	

N = 477

Failure to Establish Four Technology Schools: It should be noted, however, that the Component had to cancel one performance standard relating to the establishment of Technology Schools in collaboration with Microsoft Corporation due to the failure to reach an agreement with the Ministry's ICT Office regarding the role of software producers. The Ministry's policy requires only the use of open source software in state schools and although Microsoft offered to provide software licenses on very reasonable terms with no obligations on the part of the government, an agreement could not be reached, requiring the project to abandon this goal.

Teacher Education: Component 4 undertook a very large number of workshops to improve teacher capacity during the project's five-year implementation period. As a result, a huge number of teachers were trained and re-trained through reflection workshops as follow-up. Training inputs focused on both helping teachers to implement the new Life Skills Education curriculum as well as provide technical support for child friendly school teaching methodologies. The primary training tool used in this regard refers to the Effective-Teaching & Learning (ETL) Manual developed by MoEYS and part of the CFS Policy Package.

Teacher participants in IBEC workshops were recorded in the Trainet System and reported to USAID to ensure proper reporting to Congress according to USG standards (e.g., no double counting, etc). As can be seen in Box 3.6, the project greatly overshot its targets from the original estimates in the approved MEP. This was due to a number of factors including the high turnover rate among teachers (requiring continual retraining efforts), the decision to increase the number of target secondary schools from 70 to 100 at the beginning of the project, and subsequent decisions to add another 30 secondary schools at the end of the project as part of an incremental roll-out of the life skills pilot. Impacts from teacher training inputs were significant with a high level of behavioral compliance found among sampled classrooms that were observed by Component personnel (see Box 3.7).

BOX 3.6: NUMBER OF TEACHERS TRAINED

	Target	Total	Female
Secondary School Teachers	1,000	1,904	829
Primary School Teachers	700	1,603	903
Community Teachers	200	398	248
Total	1,900	3,905	1980

BOX 3.7: IMPACTS OF TEACHER EDUCATION INPUTS

- 95% of teachers were able to use the Life Skills Curriculum Menu effectively in Cycle 1 and 2 schools.
- 85% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum demonstrated satisfactory mastery of competencies.
- 87% of assisted classrooms met criteria defining child friendly physical environments by the end of the academic year.
- 81% of a sample of Community Teachers trained met an absolute standard of performance by the end of the academic year.
- 86% of a sample of CFS Experimental Classroom Teachers trained in Year 5 became more child-centered by the end of the academic year.
- 84% of a sample of CFSS Classroom Teachers trained in Year 5 became more child-centered by the end of the academic year.
- 100% of sampled schools registered enhanced reading environments through 1 or more of the following channels: a) Story book hour in libraries; b) Reading corners in classrooms; c) Use of special readers and other materials developed by BETT in classrooms; d) Administration of formative reading tests.
- 72% (18 among 25 schools) of sampled schools achieved a minimum standard of reading on a competency test designed for the purpose.

In this regard, learning environments were frequently found to comply with agreed standards (i.e., 87% of assisted classrooms) and 80% of teachers or more were found to be in compliance with agreed principles covered in workshops. To be sure, there are questions about whether teachers have truly internalized the target classroom behaviors and will sustain these behaviors into a post-project environment.

Introduction of Experimental Teaching Methods and Project Work Fairs: By the end of the project, IBEC was supporting 36 secondary schools with ICT lab facilities including 16 labs in Kampong Cham, five in Kratie, and 11 in Siem Reap. These labs include IBEC-supported schools with labs provided under the *Schools for Life Project*. As part of its ICT programming, IBEC supported a number of activities to promote what is known as

Promoting Innovative Practice: IBEC trains teachers on how to conduct science experiments with their students

ICT integration, meaning the use of ICT facilities in other learning besides just acquiring digital literacy. Efforts in this regard focused on experimental teaching methodologies, which have rarely been used in Cambodia including Project Method and Constructivist Learning. Essentially, these methods give opportunities to youth to create their own knowledge through the use of ICT facilities. In this regard, students learned how to use publishing programs to create school newspapers, make PowerPoint presentations on research they had carried out in the local area, and science guides describing experiments they had learned about in science clubs.

A Great Example of Youth Empowerment: Students put on a cultural performance, make power point presentations on topics that interest them, and demonstrate science experiments that they have researched during Project Work Fairs in all three provinces.

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A conscious effort was made to encourage ICT in education through five activity channels. Activity frequencies in targeted channels at each of the supported schools with ICT facilities were reported as follows:

- 15% of schools with School Newspaper activities
- 97% of schools using PowerPoint for presentations
- 59% of schools with subject clubs that relied on ICT
- 79% of schools conducting activities employing Project Work
- 85% of schools participating in Project Work and Clubs Fairs

These outcomes demonstrated the project's ability to use ICT to both empower youth and enhance learning environments in many secondary schools.

Results of Remedial Support Activities: In order to enhance promotion rates at target schools each year, IBEC provided technical support to schools and teachers to set up village-based remedial classes (mainly in the case of primary school students) that keep student groupings small and informal with copious use of learning aids. These efforts involved organizing hundreds of remedial groups throughout the countryside in schools where students were failing in large numbers. Student selection for this intervention was based on the identification of children at the end of Term 1 who had class averages of 4.99 or less in specific subjects[10]. The organization of this intervention runs over a period of 15 weeks with at least six hours of tutorial support each week. Since the start of the project, IBEC has provided remedial support to 21,312 students at both primary and secondary school level. Approximately 48% of this number were girls. Of the students receiving support, 89% were eventually promoted. If one considers that the cost of educating one student in Cambodia is 183,051 Cambodian Riel[11], the IBEC Project saved the education system approximately 3,386,443,500 CR or $846,610 over the course of the last five years, a significant savings to the government and parents.

Table 3.13: Results of Student Remediation (Primary & Secondary School)

Province	Students Receiving Remediation		Drop-Out		Repetition		Promotion		% Promoted by Province	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
Kampong Cham	9,640	4,501	360	139	829	324	8,478	4,070	88%	90%
Kratie	4,373	2,149	107	42	408	143	3,848	1,964	88%	91%
Siem Reap	7,299	3,522	282	145	843	316	6,174	3,044	85%	86%
Total	21,312	10,172	749	326	2,080	783	18,500	9,078	87%	89%
%	100%	100%	5%	4%	7%	7%	89%	91%	--	--

3.6 Overview of Achievement of Performance Indicators
3.6.1 Program-wide Review of All MEP Indicators

The Monitoring & Evaluation Plan (MEP) approved by USAID includes 70 Length of Project (LoP) indicators or performance standards to be achieved by the end of the project. Of these indicators, 11 are considered *Operational Plan* Indicators (OP) that must be reported to Congress. OP Indicators are standard USAID indicators that are compiled globally for Congressional reporting. During the design phase, projects such as IBEC were provided with examples of standard indicators in the RFA that could be included in the project's monitoring plan. Accordingly, World Education and its partner KAPE selected 11 such indicators.

The remaining indicators that are monitored by IBEC have only local significance and are known as regular MEP indicators. The tables presented below refer to the status of each Length of Project indicator. Overall, the project reported achieving 66 LoP indicators or 94% of those identified with three indicators that were not achieved (within a margin of 10%), and one that was cancelled (see Table 3.14 below). All but one OP indicator was achieved or 91% of the total.

[10]The scoring system in Cambodia is based on a scale of 1 to 10.

[11]Bray, M. (2005). *Balancing the Books: Household Financing of Basic Education in Cambodia,* Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press.

Table 3.14: Summary of Indicator Achievement by Component (LoP Indicators)

Component	Total Annual Indicators	Achieved	Not Achieved	Cancelled	Achieved (%)
1. Capacity Building	9	9	0	0	100%
2. More Equitable Access	24	21	3	0	88%
3. Improved School Mgt & Community Engagement	11	11	0	0	100%
4. Improved Educational Relevance	26	25	0	1	96%
Total (All Indicators)	70	66	3	1	--
%	100%	94%	4%	2%	--
Total (OP Indicators)	10	9	1	0	90%

For the reader's convenience, a complete listing of all 70 individual MEP indicators is provided in Table 3.15 below. Unachieved indicators are highlighted in grey in the table below.

Table 3.15: Status of MEP and OP Indicators Year 1 to Year 5 for IBEC (LoP Targets)

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
COMPONENT 1: Local NGO and Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability		
Cross-Cutting Objective: Increased Capacity of Local Civil Society, Including Education NGO(s), and Government	1. At least 2 agencies or more accredited by CCC by Year 3.	Achieved: Two agencies KAPE and BSDA accredited by CCC.
	2. At least 50% of assisted LNGOs meet accepted generic standards in program management and direction, financial mgt & accounting, and technical capacity by Year 3.	Achieved: 75% (3 among 4 LNGOs) of assisted LNGOs meet accepted generic standards in program management and direction, financial mgt & accounting, and technical capacity by Year 3. KAPE, BSDA, and EDA were able to achieve 80%, 88%, and 73% of benchmarks, respectively. WCRD was unable to meet expected institution-building targets (48% of agreed benchmarks achieved only).
	3. All LNGO partners are able to successfully complete self-assessments each year	Achieved: All LNGO Self-assessments completed. (KAPE, WCRD, EDA, BSDA)
	4. School Assistance Funds generated by LNGO(s) are in place in at least two provinces by Year 5.	Achieved: Two provinces have received School Assistance Funds (Aknuwat Primary School in Kg.Cham and Svsy Cheas PS school in Kratie).
	5. At least 80% of target districts can identify at least one Beacon School at secondary school level to stand as a local model of good practice	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 25 districts identified Beacon Schools (75%) among 31 districts in 3 provinces.
	6. At least 15 commune/district councils provide matching funds to schools by Yr 4; 25 councils by Yr 5	Achieved: 27 councils provide matching funds to schools.
	7. At least 75% of assisted councils meet accepted standards in general mgt principles, governance, financial accounting, & technical capacity by Yr 5	Achieved: 100% of selected CEFACs meet minimum performance standards. (a sample 16 CEFACs among 27 achieve average score of 83%).

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
	8. Multiple channels for dissemination of programming active and in place. ○ 10 National Workshops ○ 19 CG Meetings ○ 1 website (updated regularly) ○ 5 research articles ○ 18 newsletters ○ 2 brochures ○ 10 radio programs ○ 6 comic books ○ 30 cases studies (10 per year from Year 3 onward) ○ Total Products: 101	Achieved within a margin of 10%: Multiple channels for dissemination of programming active and in place: ○ 9 NEP and National workshops ○ 17 CG meetings ○ 1 website created and updated ○ 4 Research articles ○ 19 Newsletters ○ 2 brochures (Project Brochure & Life Skills Brochure) ○ 10 radio programs ○ 6 comic books ○ 10 case studies per year (30 in all) ○ Total Products: 98
	9. All PWGs can meet minimum performance expectations each year.	Achieved: 3 PWGs meet minimum performance standards. The average score 84% of the 3 PWGs .
COMPONENT 2: More Equitable School Access		
Subcomponent 1 Scholarships		
Sub-Objective 1: Increased Access to Basic Education Increased enrollment, retention, promotion, and completion rates of youth from underserved populations (including marginalized girls/boys, poor, ethnic and religious minorities, & handicapped children – (USAID-supported) (IR 1.1)	10. 7,500 primary school children receiving scholarships in target schools	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 7,438/4,246 primary school children received scholarship in target schools.
	11. 2,245 secondary school children receiving scholarships in target schools	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 2,241/1,586 secondary school children received scholarship in target schools.
	12. At least 360 individuals from remote and high priority areas receive PTTC scholarships.	Achieved: 360 individuals from remote and high priority areas receive PTTC scholarships.
	13. At least 70% of scholarship recipients at secondary level are girls, minority, and/or physically challenged	Achieved: 70% of scholarship recipients at secondary level are girls, minority, and/or physically challenged.
	14. At least 60% of scholarship recipients at primary level are girls, minority, and/or physically challenged	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 56% of scholarship recipients at primary level are girls, minority, and/or physically challenged.
	15. At least 65% of feeder primary schools report a decrease in drop-out rates by the end of the development cycle	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 63% (67% of cycle 1 and 55% of cycle 2) of feeder primary schools report a decrease in drop-out rates by the end of the development cycle
	16. At least 60% of lower secondary schools report a decrease in dropout by the end of the development cycle.	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 54% of lower secondary schools report a decrease in dropout by the end of the development cycle.
	17. At least 55% of scholarship recipients successfully complete Grade 9.	Achieved: 81% of scholarship recipients successfully complete Grade 9.
	18. 70% of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline	Not Achieved: 54% for primary schools and 72% for secondary schools of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline.

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
	19. Tracer studies for secondary school scholarship recipients are completed over the life of the program.	Achieved: 37% help parents work and field work, 18% factory workers, 12% local migration, 11% earn income outside, 10% get marriage, 9% migration to Thailand, and 3% others.
	20. At least 85% of primary and secondary school scholarship beneficiaries stay in school over the life of the program.	Achieved: 94% of primary and 83% secondary school scholarship beneficiaries stay in school over the life of the program.
	21. Comparative studies of retention for scholarships demonstrate impact.	Achieved: Studies completed since Year 2.
	Subcomponent 2: Stakeholder-driven Discretionary School Grants	
	22. 90,879 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings (OP Indicator)	Not Achieved within a margin of 10%: 81,024 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based setting.
	23. 50,478 learners enrolled in secondary school or equivalent non-school settings (OP Indicator)	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 55,359 learners enrolled in secondary school or equivalent non-school settings
	24. 126,458 people in target areas with access to improved drinking water supplies (OP Indicator)	Achieved:141,043 people (67,626 females) with access to improved drinking water supplies
	25. 126,458 people in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities (OP Indicator)	Achieved: 141,043 people (67,626 females) in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities
Same as Subcomponent 1	26. 30 classrooms constructed (OP Indicator)	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 32 classrooms constructed.
	27. 700 classrooms repaired (OP Indicator)	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 716 classrooms repaired (CFS and TCR).
	28. At least 65% of feeder primary schools reduce repetition by the end of development cycle.	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 69% (75% of cycle 1 and 58% of cycle 2) of feeder primary schools reduced repetition by the end of the development cycle.
	29. At least 65% of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	Not Achieved: 45% (31% of cycle 1 and 52% of cycle 2) of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.
	30. At least 266 schools with improved water and sanitation facilities	Achieved: 300 schools with improved water and sanitation facilities.
	31. All schools /clusters are able to request/ liquidate grant funds properly each year	Achieved: All schools /clusters are able to request/ liquidate grant funds properly each year
	32. 300 physically challenged children assisted by the end of the project.	Achieved within a margin of 10%: 298 physically challenged children assisted by the end of the project (77 girls).
	33. 200 Community Teachers are recruited and trained by the end of the project.	Achieved: 398 Community Teachers are recruited and trained by the end of the project (248 female)

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
COMPONENT 3: Improved School Management & Community Engagement		
	34. 602 school administrators/officials trained (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 553 school administrators/officials trained.
	35. 301 Parent Teacher Associations or similar governance structures supported (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 292 Parent Teacher Associations or similar governance structures supported.
	36. 301 institutions with improved management information systems (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 292 institutions with improved management information systems.
	37. All schools/clusters complete school improvement plans that meet standard requirements laid out in grant administration workshops.	<u>Achieved</u>: All schools/clusters complete school improvement plans that meet standard requirements laid out in grant administration workshops.
	38. At least 50% of schools are able to improve their performance tier designation by end of the development cycle.	<u>Achieved</u>: 56% of schools (79 secondary and 84 primary schools) are able to improve their performance tier designation by end of the development cycle.
	39. At least 85% of school directors and other TSG members who do a 2-year management training course receive satisfactory certification by the end of Year 3.	<u>Achieved</u>: 95% (528 among 553) of school directors and other TSG members who do a 2-year management training course receive satisfactory certification by the end of Year 3.
	40. At least 80% of School Support Committees meet minimum performance standards by the end of each cycle.	<u>Achieved</u>: 90% of sampled SSCs (88% Cycle 1 and 90% Cycle 2) meet minimum performance standards by the end of each cycle.
	41. At least 600 school directors, teachers, and community members visit a beacon school at least once by the end of the program.	<u>Achieved</u>: 890 school directors, teachers, and community members visit a beacon school at least once by the end of the program.
	42. At least 90% of school directors/ administrators achieve satisfactory marks each year on completed course work leading to the award of a certificate of school management.	<u>Achieved</u>: 95% of school directors/ administrators achieve satisfactory marks each year on completed course work leading to the award of a certificate of school management.
	43. At least 900 vulnerable families in target schools adopt practical livelihoods activities as a result of school- community outreach.	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 848 vulnerable families in target schools adopt practical livelihoods activities as a result of school- community outreach.
	44. At least 70% of assisted SSCs in Cycle 1 primary schools and 55% in Cycle 2 schools are exercising accountability for reading proficiency by the end of Year 3 (based on a standardized set of criteria)	<u>Achieved</u>: 90% of assisted SSCs in Cycle 1 primary schools and 92% in Cycle 2 schools are exercising accountability for reading proficiency by the end of Year 3 (based on a standardized set of criteria).

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
COMPONENT 4: Improved Educational Relevance		
Subcomponent 1: Work Force Development through Life Skills Education		
More relevant lower secondary life skills curriculum (USAID-supported schools) (IR 2.1)	45. Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided (OP Indicator) a) 1,500 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; b) 138,600 laminated learning slides distributed; c) 30,000 LS posters distributed; d) 10,000 primary readers distributed.	Achieved: 232,860 Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided: a) 2,417 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; b) 176,275 laminated learning slides distributed; c) 20,941 LS posters distributed; d) 10,000 primary readers distributed; e) 23,227 Life Skills Teacher manual distributed.
	46. At least 30 LS curriculum modules are completed by Yr 3 (2012).	Achieved: 30 Life Skills curriculum modules were completed by Yr 3 (2012).
	47. At least 75% of students and parents express satisfaction with learning environment/ curriculum at LSS in comparison to a baseline.	Achieved: 85% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum express satisfaction with learning environments and curricula.
	48. At least 60% of schools demonstrate more relevant education according to a tool designed for the purpose	Achieved: 65% of schools demonstrate more relevant education according to a tool designed for the purpose
	49. 10 audio guides for in- classroom audio materials, Thin Client systems, and We Can Do It listening libraries are produced	Achieved: 10 audio guides for in- classroom audio materials, Thin Client systems, and We Can Do It listening libraries are produced
	50. 10 audio exercises to compliment life skills curriculum and Thin Client system, utilizing characters students will recognize from the We Can Do It show	Achieved: 10 audio exercises to compliment life skills curriculum and Thin Client system, utilizing characters students will recognize from the We Can Do It show.
	51. At least 70% of sampled schools register effective Career Counseling Services through participation in two or more of the following channels: a) Completion of student career assessment forms; b) One-to-one Interviews conducted with students for career counseling; c) World of Work Life skills module implemented in the school; d) d) Mapping of local career opportunities	Achieved: 70% of sampled schools register effective Career Counseling Services through participation in two or more agreed channels:

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
**Subcomponent 2: Educational Innovation for Science and Technology**	
Increased capacity of schools to deliver a quality education (USAID-supported) (IR 2.2)	52. 26 IT Labs constructed by the end of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 26 IT Labs constructed by the end of the project.
	53. 20 Science Labs constructed by the end of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 24 Science Labs constructed by the end of the project.
	54. At least 90% of schools register satisfactory performance in the operation of IT labs according to a standardized instrument each year.	<u>Achieved:</u> 100% of schools register satisfactory performance in the operation of IT labs according to a standardized instrument.
	55. At least 90% of students in schools with computer labs indicate that they study IT 1 hour or more each week during the life of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 98% of students in schools with computer labs indicate that they study IT 1 hour or more each week
	56. At least 80% of schools register satisfactory performance in the operation of Science Labs according to a standardized instrument by the end of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 86% of schools register satisfactory performance in the operation of Science Labs according to a standardized instrument.
	57. By project's end, at least 90% of schools with IT facilities demonstrate IT integration in the teaching-learning process through one or more of the following channels: a. Development of newsletters; b. A majority of trained teachers have developed PowerPoint Presentations for some selected lessons; c. Subject Clubs use the IT labs for their projects; d. Project work activities in progress; e. Participation in project club fairs.	<u>Achieved:</u> 100% of schools with IT facilities demonstrate IT integration in the teaching-learning process through one or more agreed channels: Channel a: 12% for one channel Channels b-e: 88%
	58. Technology and Science Theme Schools meet standardized criteria for effective functioning each year (pending Ministry approval)	Cancelled

Intermediate Results	Operational Indicator	Final Status
Subcomponent 3: Teacher Education		
	59. 1,000 teachers trained (secondary level) (OP Indicator)	Achieved: 1904/829 teachers trained (secondary level).
	60. At least 70% of teachers are able to use LS Curriculum Menu effectively	Achieved: 95% of teachers are able to use LS Curriculum Menu effectively in Cycle 1 and 2 schools.
	61. At least 75% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum demonstrate satisfactory mastery of competencies	Achieved: 85% of students using the new lower secondary life skills curriculum demonstrate satisfactory mastery of competencies in Cycle 1 and 2 schools.
	62. 700 primary level teachers trained to promote retention and transition (e.g., community teachers, BCAs, life skills teachers, etc.)	Achieved: 1603/903 primary level teachers trained to promote retention and transition (e.g., community teachers, BCAs, life skills teachers, etc.).
	63. 75% of assisted classrooms meet criteria defining child friendly physical environments by the end of the program.	Achieved: 87% of assisted classrooms meet criteria defining child friendly physical environments by the end of the academic year.
.	64. Classroom practice among 80% of a sample of all Community Teachers meets an absolute standard for performance.	Achieved: 81% of a sample of all Community Teachers trained in Year 2 meets an absolute standard of performance by the end of the academic year.
	65. Classroom practice among 65% of a sample of all CFS Experimental Classroom Teachers becomes more child-centered by the end of the program.	Achieved: 86% of a sample of CFS Experimental Classroom Teachers trained in Year 5 becomes more child-centered by the end of the academic year.
	66. Classroom practice among 65% of a sample of all CFSS Classroom Teachers becomes more child-centered by the end of the program.	Achieved: 84% of a sample of CFSS Classroom Teachers trained in Year 5 becomes more child-centered by the end of the academic year.
	67. By project's end, at least 70% of sampled schools register enhanced reading environments through 1 or more of the following channels: a) Story book hour in libraries; b) Reading corners in classrooms; c) Use of special readers and other materials developed by BETT in classrooms; d) Administration of formative reading tests.	Achieved: 100% of sampled schools register enhanced reading environments through 1 or more of the following channels: a) Story book hour in libraries; b) Reading corners in classrooms; c) Use of special readers and other materials developed by BETT in classrooms; d) Administration of formative reading tests.
	68. By the project's end, at least 70% of sampled schools achieve a minimum standard of reading on a competency test designed for the purpose.	Achieved: 72% (18 among 25 schools) of sampled schools achieve a minimum standard of reading on a competency test designed for the purpose.
	69. At least 80% of all remediated children have been promoted through the life of the program.	Achieved: 87% of children with reading problems who are remediated in Year 4 are promoted.
	70. Functioning Peer Support Networks for teachers, overseen by TSG members, are in place in 80% of schools by the end of the program	Achieved: Peer support/TSG networks established in 79% of all secondary schools.

3.6.2 Program-wide Review of OP Indicators

For the reader's convenience, a complete list of the 11 OP Indicators reported to Congress are presented in Table 3.16 below. Once again, OP Indicators are standard USAID reporting indicators that are compiled globally. As noted earlier, 91% of stated OP Indicators were achieved and one relating to primary school enrolment was missed by a very small margin. The primary reason for this missed target related to the project's decision to stop assistance to 11 primary schools due to issues of repeated non-performance, thereby lowering overall enrolment later in the project.

Table 3.16: Complete Listing of OP Indicators and their Achievement Status

Intermediate Results	OP Indicator	Final Status
COMPONENT 1: Local NGO and Government Capacity Building & Advocacy for Sustainability		
Cross-Cutting Objective: Increased Capacity of Local Civil Society, Including Education NGO(s), and Government	(None assigned)	--
COMPONENT 2: More Equitable School Access		
Increased Access to Basic Education Increased enrollment, retention, promotion, and completion rates of youth from underserved populations (including marginalized girls/ boys, poor, ethnic and religious minorities, & handicapped children – (USAID-supported) (IR 1.1)	1) 90,879 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings (OP Indicator)	<u>Not Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 81,024 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based setting.
	2) 50,478 learners enrolled in secondary school or equivalent non-school settings (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 55,359 learners enrolled in secondary school or equivalent non-school settings
	3) 126,458 people in target areas with access to improved drinking water supplies (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved:</u>141,043 people (67,626 females) with access to improved drinking water supplies
	4) 126,458 people in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved:</u> 141,043 people (67,626 females) in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities
	5) 30 classrooms constructed (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 32 classrooms constructed.
	6) 700 classrooms repaired (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 716 classrooms repaired (CFS and TCR).
COMPONENT 3: Improved School Management and Community Engagement		
Increased capacity of schools to deliver a quality education	7) 602 school administrators/officials trained (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 553 school administrators/officials trained.
	8) 301 Parent Teacher Associations or similar governance structures supported (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 292 Parent Teacher Associations or similar governance structures supported.
	9) 301 institutions with improved management information systems (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved</u> within a margin of 10%: 292 institutions with improved management information systems.
COMPONENT 4: Improved Educational Relevance		
More relevant lower secondary life skills curriculum	10) Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided (OP Indicator) • 1,500 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; • b) 138,600 laminated learning slides distributed; • 30,000 LS posters distributed; • 10,000 primary readers distributed.	<u>Achieved:</u> 232,860 Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided: • 2,417 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; • 176,275 laminated learning slides distributed; • 20,941 LS posters distributed; • 10,000 primary readers distributed; • 23,227 Life Skills Teacher manual distributed.
	11) 1,000 teachers trained (secondary level) (OP Indicator)	<u>Achieved:</u> 1904/829 teachers trained (secondary level).

3.6.3 Explanations for Indicators Not Achieved or Exceeded

As noted above, there were four LoP indicators that were not achieved or cancelled. In addition, eight other indicators were achieved but the target was exceeded by more than a margin of 10%, in some cases, greatly so. For these indicators, appropriate explanations are provided in Table 3.17 below.

Table 3.17: OP Indicators Not Achieved or Exceeded and Corresponding Explanations

No.	Indicator	LoP Targets	Actual	Deviation from Target	Explanation
1	18	70% of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline	Not Achieved: 54% for primary schools and 72% for secondary schools of supported schools demonstrate improved Gender Parity Index from baseline.	-16%	Although the project did not achieve its goal of increasing gender parity in 70% of all schools, it did achieve this performance standard at secondary school level, where 72% of assisted schools reported an increase in parity levels. This was mainly due to large female quotas of 70% or more in the number of beneficiaries selected. At primary level, however, where the target was not achieved, there were no female quotas because gender disparities were thought to be less severe. Overall, Gender Parity Indices increased from 0.92 to 0.94 at primary level and to 1.12 at secondary school level.
2	22	90,879 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings (OP Indicator)	Not Achieved: 81,024 learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based setting.	-11%	Primary school enrolment has declined from an earlier high of 89,221 because of the decision to terminate assistance to 11 schools due to non-performance. The removal of these schools in addition to the loss of students in target urban schools due to competition with private schools accounted for most of the loss of students.
3	24	126,458 people in target areas with access to improved drinking water supplies (OP Indicator)	Achieved: 141,043/67,626 people with access to improved drinking water supplies.	+11.5%	Earlier estimates for this target were based on an average school-size that proved to be somewhat conservative. The selection of several very large schools to participate in the project and their subsequent receipt of water systems caused the target to be slightly exceeded by more than 10%.
4	25	126,458 people in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities (OP Indicator)	Achieved: 141,043/67,626 people in target areas with access to improved sanitation facilities.	+11.5%	
5	29	At least 65% of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	Not Achieved: 45% (31% of cycle 1 and 52% of cycle 2) of lower secondary schools reduce repetition by the end of the development cycle.	-31%	Although this indicator had been achieved for the first four years of the project, reduction rates inexplicably declined in the final year of the project, perhaps due to reduced material support.

6	30	At least 266 schools with improved water and sanitation facilities	<u>Achieved:</u> 300 schools with improved water and sanitation facilities.	+13%	The previous existence of water systems at some schools (requiring repairs only) helped the project to reduce per school investments, thereby enabling a larger number of schools to receive WASH assistance.
7	33	200 Community Teachers are recruited and trained by the end of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 398 (248 female) Community Teachers are recruited and trained by the end of the project.	+99%	Due to the very low stipend paid by the project to Community Teachers ($25/month) and the rising cost of living, there was a huge loss rate of Community Teachers who had to be continually recruited each year and trained.
8	41	At least 600 school directors, teachers, and community members visit a beacon school at least once by the end of the program.	<u>Achieved:</u> 890 school directors, teachers, and community members visit a beacon school at least once by the end of the program.	+48%	The partner organization that organized these field trips did not adhere to stated targets in the interests of increasing the number of personnel who participated in exposure trips.
9	45	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (180,100) provided (OP Indicator) a) 1,500 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; b) 138,600 laminated learning slides distributed; c) 30,000 LS posters distributed; d) 10,000 primary readers distributed.	<u>Achieved:</u> 232,860 Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided: a) 2,417 LS curriculum menus printed & distributed; b) 176,275 laminated learning slides distributed; c) 20,941 LS posters distributed; d) 10,000 primary readers distributed; e) 23,227 Life Skills Teacher manual distributed.	+29%	Due to the rapid approval of revised life skills manuals in the final year of the project and the increased interest in rapidly adopting these manuals by the new Minister, the project made a strategic decision to reprint 28 approved manuals in Year 5 to assist the Ministry in rolling out the curriculum on an incremental basis. In addition, the project added 30 secondary schools in 3 new provinces in Years 4 and 5 as part of this incremental roll-out process, thereby increasing the need for life skills curricular materials even further. Finally, the project also agreed, with USAID approval, to assist the Ministry in printing and distributing 10,000 primary school readers, which was an unplanned form of support to the Ministry.
10	53	20 Science Labs constructed by the end of the project.	<u>Achieved:</u> 24 Science Labs constructed by the end of the project.	+20%	Because the project decided to try to equip every Beacon School (of which there were 27) with a science and ICT lab, this target was slightly exceeded.

11	59	1,000 teachers trained (secondary level)(OP Indicator)	Achieved: 1,904/829 teachers trained (secondary level).	+90%	Original estimates of the numbers of teachers per school were based on a mean school teacher population that was overly conservative. The eventual inclusion in the project of many very large schools resulted in a much larger pool of teachers than expected. Another important reason for greatly overshooting the performance target relates to the request from Ministry to increase the number of target secondary schools from 70 to 100 at the very beginning of the project. In addition, the high turnover rate among teachers (see Section 4.2.1) and the decision to add 30 secondary schools to the project as part of an incremental roll-out of the life skills program further added to overshooting the target.

3.7 Opportunities and Challenges

The current programming environment in Cambodia is currently one of great contrasts. There are both great challenges involving issues of migration, opportunity costs, and private sector enrolment encroachment as well as huge opportunities afforded by new leadership at the highest level of the education system. Nevertheless, the rapid penetration of the countryside by factories and large plantations has created unprecedented opportunity costs for children and their families with respect to staying in school. This is especially true of upper primary and secondary school children where the value of a child's labor is increasingly valuable. At the same time, improved transportation infrastructure has accelerated both internal and external migration. More Cambodian youth are going to Thailand to seek employment than ever before and traditional formulae for keeping children in school such as through scholarships are proving less and less effective as the IBEC Project demonstrates. These social transformations have reduced the perceived value of public education by many stakeholders who are increasingly turning their eyes to a thriving private education sector where profit margins ensure strict accountability and efficiency, unlike the state schools where low performance accountability is one of the key problems underlying low educational quality. That is, large investments in public education often lead simply to large modern facilities with computer and science labs that are rarely used by teachers or students. Those who can do so are quickly abandoning the public schools with the result that class differences are being amplified by an increasingly two tiered education system.

In spite of the above daunting problems, many observers feel that new leadership in the Ministry and an accompanying Educational Reform Program have brought increased willingness to take reasonable risks where the pay-off in terms of educational quality and efficiency seem warranted. Similarly, the Minstry has taken dramatic action regarding future PTTC intakes, nearly doubling the number of teacher intakes to address teacher shortages, thereby providing a rare opportunity for donors to provide support for local recruitment and policy reform. This change in attitude towards reform and risk-taking has opened the door to innovation that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago. This includes transparent and competitive teacher selection, mixed management models in schools involving non-state actors, and openness to new curricula in schools among many others. These attitudinal changes represent an unprecedented opportunity for engagement with Ministry and a renewed partnership between development partners, local organizations, and government.

The quest for Quality and Relevance: *IBEC has made many improvements in school settings including both material and technical support for life skill education such as Bio garden classes.*

4. KEY ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS & CONSTRAINTS ENCOUNTERED

4.1 Key Program Achievements
4.1.1 Successful Life Skills Curriculum Development and National Adoption

Without doubt, the key achievement of the IBEC Project has been its ability to create a practical approach to life skills instruction in Cambodian secondary schools that addresses many of the obstacles identified in earlier evaluations of the Ministry's life skills programming. These refer to inadequate structure in the curriculum, lack of resource documents, inability of teachers to design life skills courses as suggested in policy, and poor articulation between the Life Skills Policy and other Ministry policies and guidelines, such as the use of overtime pay for teachers. As noted earlier, the life skills pilot was a major achievement of the project and over 90% of the curricular modules developed by the project have been officially adopted by MoEYS. A letter issued by the Minister on 27 June 2014 officially instructed all state schools to start using the life skills curriculum developed by IBEC and recently approved (after revisions) by the Textbook Review Committee from the new academic year forward (2014-15).

***High Productivity for Life Skills Gardens:** A school in Siem Reap has used its life skills expertise in vegetable cultivation to start a very large chili production garden that will also generate income for future replication*

4.1.2 Strengthening Civil Society

The IBEC Project is one of the few, perhaps the only development project in the education sector that included an explicit component to increase the role of local NGOs in the formal education sector. USAID made major investments in building the capacity of two local NGOs in particular, namely *Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE)* and *Buddhism for Social Development Action (BSDA)*. Both agencies were accredited under a rigorous and coveted certification process led by CCC/GPP. Unlike the health sector where USG investment has created a vibrant network of local NGOs that dominate development in the sector, few donors have made any investments in the formal education sector to build the capacity of

***Another Milestone Achieved:** The Certificate of Accreditation awarded to BSDA by GPP.*

national civil society. Most donors prefer to make most of their investment in government only. USAID investment in civil society through IBEC has helped to change this situation by making investments that have achieved rigorous certification by the Committee for Cooperation in Cambodia (CCC) of KAPE and BSDA, a major achievement in the formal education sector where there are few large civil society organizations operating. The process employed for achieving this successful institution-building involved the use of a methodology known as DOSA or *Discussion-oriented Self Assessment*. The DOSA process was used to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, and translate findings into action plans for meaningful change. The DOSA technique, effectively an internal process that encourages mutual respect and engagement, builds stakeholder commitment and a strong foundation for sustained capacity building and training support. This approach helped NGO partners to assess their own organization in six main areas: 1) human resource management; 2) financial resource management; 3) service delivery; 4) external relations; 5) organizational learning; and 6) strategic management. Improvement in these six vital areas was essential to helping organizations not only provide quality services but also enable them to achieve organizational excellence.

4.1.3 Innovations in Public Private Partnership

One of the cross-cutting themes in IBEC programming mandated by USAID relates to the need for the project to promote PPP in educational development. In addition to successfully soliciting support from several corporations such as Apple and Microsoft for specific project activities, IBEC successfully established a social enterprise affiliated with KAPE. This social enterprise, known as *Thuntean Seksa* or TTS, develops and markets teaching and learning aids for schools. TTS became independent of the project in October 2012 and is now a self-sustained operation with revenues of over $200,000. This success addresses the frequent dependency that schools often develop for teaching aid access that hinge entirely on project-mediated supply chains. In most projects, this access ends when the project does, even in cases where schools have money to buy teaching aids. The establishment of TTS has sustainably addressed this problem and promises to be a lasting contribution to the education system in Cambodia with continuing access to innovative teaching aids that uses market forces for development and distribution.

Ensuring Sustained Access to Learning Aids: IBEC has successfully established a social enterprise that will ensure the development and distribution of innovative learning aids to schools long after the completion of the project.

4.1.4 Developing Innovative School Selection Approaches

A recent external evaluation of the IBEC Project discusses the interesting innovation of classifying schools into development tiers and experimentation in concepts relating to 'developmental readiness.' One aspect of the project's approach to modulating project assistance based on schools' developmental readiness relates to the process through which schools were selected. In this respect, IBEC departed from the usual practice in development projects of basing school selection solely on criteria of 'need.' The project also considered motivational factors and habits of 'risk-taking' as additional key criteria in school selection. The project reasoned that schools that are averse to risk-taking behavior or who have no interest in participating in a development project focusing on innovation would mute the effectiveness of development aid. During project start-up, all schools in the province were invited to an informational workshop on the project with explanations of the expectations for participating schools. All schools were invited to apply for participation by completing a standardized form that assessed motivational factors and risk-taking behavior. Of great interest and concern, only about 70% of schools in some provinces that attended the workshop bothered to apply, reflecting the very low levels of motivation and interest in innovation among many state schools. As a result of this process, target schools were able to self-select for project participation resulting in a pool of target schools that reflected not only need factors but also motivational ones as well. This is an interesting innovation that the project feels should be noted as an important innovation and lesson learned.

Promoting Hands-on Science Learning: Students do an experiment in an IBEC-supported school

4.1.5 Innovations in ICT Access

The IBEC Project successfully mainstreamed revolutionary innovations in technology in rural Cambodian secondary schools using what are known as *thin client devices* that have successfully addressed many of the technological challenges undermining other donor investments in ICT labs. In this respect, equipment costs, energy usage, and maintenance needs have all ensured that the number of labs built in Cambodian schools is small and characterized by a short shelf life. That is, labs usually fall out of use within a period of one to two years. Given the relatively large investments needed for the establishment of ICT labs and the high competition for increasingly scarce resources in the sector, many donors have curtailed their investments in this area significantly (e.g., Room to Read). While IBEC did not solve all of these problems, it did successfully reduce equipment costs by 56%, energy usage by 81%, and maintenance needs by over 90%. These successes have been empirically validated in a research report carried out by the project.

Happy Faces: *Young Cambodians get their first chance to learn about digital literacy at their school.*

4.1.6 Career Counseling Innovations

With a youth population comprising 65% of Cambodia's total population, career counseling has become a critically important need for the nation's school system. Unfortunately, the state school system has historically had no formal provisions for such counseling on school premises. Project surveys have found that 75% of students rely primarily on their parents, siblings, and friends for career advice with schools playing a very small role. IBEC is the first project to develop a hands-on manual on career counseling that was successfully piloted in collaboration with the Vocational Orientation Department. While significant challenges remain for replicating such services, an important first step has been taken with useful protocols for implementation and clear documentation designed to help youth plan their futures. Much of the work completed by IBEC in this area is being taken up by project partners such as KAPE who is now replicating and refining the interventions developed under a new project called Empowering Youth through Education and Advocacy.

4.1.7 Additional Innovations in Educational Quality

Other key achievements of IBEC in the area of educational quality include the introduction of (i) **subject classrooms,** (ii) **provisions to maximize science lab utilization**, and (iii) the use of **Student Councils** and **Subject Clubs** to amplify student learning. In this respect, the project has pioneered an effective response to the problem of 'talk and chalk' methods in secondary school instruction by using the concept of Subject Classrooms. Because classes remain stationery while subject teachers must move from room to room, there is a disincentive for teachers to carry around bulky supplies such as maps, science equipment (even when it is available), and math tools for their teaching. As a result, teachers primarily rely on talk and chalk for their instruction. By establishing fully equipped classrooms dedicated to a particular subject (e.g., Geography, Science, Math, etc) that require students to move from classroom to classroom, the project has made it much easier for teachers to easily access teaching and learning aids for their instruction. This institutional change in how schools work is spreading to other provinces and projects and deserves mention in the project's evaluation record.

In addition, IBEC has also made significant headway in improving the low utilization of science labs emplaced at secondary schools that has plagued other projects. The approach used in this regard has relied on a combination of strategies including specialized curricular materials referenced to the textbook that make science experiments much

clearer, modeling over 60 experiments that teachers actually do themselves at teacher training workshops, and school director training that introduces accountability for lab usage. Record books that help track the use of science labs have been very effective in this regard. Based on recent student surveys regarding lab utilization during close-out, about two-thirds of sampled students (66%) reported having access to computer labs at least several times or more during each semester. In addition, about a quarter of students reported that they did the experiments directly themselves while 55% reported alternating between watching the teacher and doing the experiments in groups themselves. While demonstrating additional room for improvement, these outcomes are a major improvement over baseline figures and higher than in most other projects.

Finally, the IBEC Project increased student ownership of the school through improved capacity-building of Student Councils. In addition to building student confidence, these efforts contributed to the success of life skills classes, library maintenance, and computer/science lab utilization. Evidence for these assertions are based on close-out assessments of student councils in which 76% of councils at primary level were operating at a minimum level of performance or better while 81% of those at secondary school level were doing so. The project has also been the first to introduce the idea of Subject Clubs to provide opportunities to students with particular interests in specific topics to increase their knowledge and experience learning in an enjoyable context. Capacity-building manuals in these areas have all been documented and successfully implemented.

4.1.8 Synergies with Other Programming

During its implementation, IBEC was able to leverage its resources significantly by partnering with other projects and donors. These synergies not only achieved significant knock-on effects for the funding provided by USAID but have also helped to transform the project into a key national network for disseminating educational innovation throughout hundreds of schools at both the primary and secondary school level. A number of important successes in expanding this network were achieved in the later years of project implementation including close consultations with the Asian Development Bank, leading to the submission of an official design report for the Third Educational Sector Development Program (ESDP III) adopting key IBEC products. This included the *Activity Menu* used in school planning, the *Life Skills Menu*, and many *Life Skills manuals*. The design report was officially accepted by Ministry, thereby ensuring the likely implementation of these interventions in 100 pilot schools under the School-based Enrichment Program, which is a component under ESDP III. Similarly, the start of World Education's Total Reading Approach for Children Project (TRAC) in October 2012, funded by the All Children Reading Coalition, provided significant opportunities for IBEC to greatly deepen its inputs to improve Early Grade Reading. This included the introduction of *mLearning activities*, *a Reading Toolkit*, and *Literacy Coaches* into project areas. All eight target schools under the TRAC pilot were also IBEC schools. World Education will be expanding TRAC to 170 schools in five provinces through September 2017 and incorporating elements from IBEC (e.g. School Management and Leadership Training, grade 4-6 learning interventions, TTS materials). TRAC followed a *pilot within a pilot model* that was also used successfully with financial literacy activities in Kratie Province under funding from Barclay's Bank. These activities have themselves been expanded with additional funding from Barclay's Bank, which was used in Kampong Cham Province to introduce financial literacy topics at secondary school level. Finally, the project continued to cooperate the *Beacon School Initiative*, a project implemented by KAPE with funding from the Oak Tree Foundation. This project operates in three IBEC schools and has made significant progress in producing learning environments of exceptional quality that contribute greatly to the beacon school activities supported under IBEC.

4.1.9 Sustaining Technical Innovations through Increased Involvement of Commune Councils

From its inception, IBEC sought to engage commune councils in improving educational services to local schools within their geographical jurisdiction. This engagement process involved training schools to advocate with Councils for funding support from investment funds received from central government. Project matching grants were initially used as a means to incentivize commune grant support, thereby establishing institutional habits of support to local schools, which would continue after the completion of project assistance. In this respect, it should be noted that IBEC provided all of its schools with three years of direct grants as part of the school improvement development cycle. Those schools starting their cycle in Year 1 (i.e., Cycle 1 schools) completed their direct grant support in Year 3 while Cycle 2 schools (starting in Year 2) completed their cycle in Year 4. While not all grant support could be replaced through shifted support from Commune Councils, schools were trained to prioritize the activities that worked best that they would like to see sustained through commune funding.

The shift to commune funding began in Year 4 when Cycle 1 schools had completed their three-year cycle of direct grant support. By the last year of the project, this strategy had been successfully implemented in 27 communes, generating about $7,000 in local support (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.2: Matching Grants for School Development in 27 Communes (Year 5)

Province	District	No	Commune	Funding Sources				Matching Funds in Year 5
				IBEC	CC fund	PB	Other	
Kampong Cham	O Raing Euv	1	Ampiltapok	$ 600.00	$ 180.00	$ 256.00		$ 1,036.00
	Krauch Chhmar	2	Peus2	$ 600.00	$ 180.00			$ 780.00
	Ponhea Krek	3	Krek	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
		4	Kork	$ 1,002.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,302.00
		5	Kanduol Chrum	$ 600.00	$ 180.00			$ 780.00
	Kos Soten	6	Mohaleab	$ 1,067.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,367.00
	Tboung Khmum	7	Sralab	$ 720.00	$ 180.00			$ 900.00
		8	Kor	$ 1,000.00	$ 303.00			$ 1,303.00
		9	Rokapobram	$ 598.00	$ 430.00			$ 1,028.00
		10	Thmer Pich	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Cherng Prey	11	Soteb	$ 600.00	$ 180.00	$ 277.00		$ 1,057.00
	Prey Chhor	12	Kor	$ 599.00	$ 180.00			$ 779.00
		13	Lovea	$ 1,060.00	$ 300.00	$ 200.00	$150.00	$ 1,710.00
Sub-Total				$ 10,446.00	$ 3,313.00	$ 733.00	$150.00	$ 14,642.00
Siem Reap	Puok	1	Prey Chrouk	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Svay Ler	2	Svay ler	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Sotnikum	3	Damdaek	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Banteay Srey	4	Sna Sornday	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
		5	Tbaeng	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Varin	6	Brasat	$1,018.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,318.00
Sub-Total				$ 6,018.00	$1,800.00	$ -	$ -	$ 7,818.00
Kratie	Sambo	1	Sandann	$1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
		2	Sambo	$ 600.00	$ 180.00			$ 780.00
	Kratie Krung	3	Rokakondal	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
		4	O'resey	$1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Prek Brasorb	5	Prek Brasorb	$ 1,200.00	$ 500.00			$ 1,700.00
	Snuol	6	Svay Cheas	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Snuol	7	2 Thnou	$ 1,000.00	$ 300.00			$ 1,300.00
	Chhaung	8	Hanchey	$ 600.00	$ 180.00			$ 780.00
Sub-Total				$ 7,400.00	$ 2,360.00	$ -	$ -	$ 9,760.00
Grand total				$ 23,864.00	$ 7,473.00	$ 733.00	$ 150.00	$ 32,220.00

4.1.10 Establishing Beacon Schools as a Means to Promote Best Practice

Another key sustainability strategy complementing the increased involvement of commune councils relates to IBEC's efforts to establish what are known as Beacon Schools. These are special schools with generally strong management that can be trusted with higher levels of investment and the required maintenance of these investments. Such investments include science labs, ICT labs, model libraries, and extensive capacity building for life skills education among others. Beacon Schools have generally gone the farthest in terms of their internalization of improved school management principles that they learned under SMLTC. Beacon Schools are intended to be dynamic models of best practice that provide educational training opportunities for other neighboring schools in the district. IBEC established one Beacon School in each of the 25 districts where the project was working and organized many exposure visits throughout the length of the project for other surrounding schools and community members to visit. In all, 890 school directors, teachers, students, and community members visited a Beacon School at least once during the project's implementation. In addition, there have also been many visits from other agencies to learn from the IBEC Beacon Schools including VSO, Save the Children, Child Fund, and many others. Indeed, during a Ministerial visit to an IBEC Beacon School in June 2014, the Minister was so impressed with what he saw that he asked assistance from IBEC to organize a national workshop on educational quality improvement to take place at the Demonstration School of Kampong Cham, a currently very well-known Beacon School with an increasing national profile. This workshop took place in August 2014 and was attended by the Minister himself for the full two days of its duration. This workshop was attended by over 150 participants from Provincial Offices of Education around the country as well as key development partners such as ADB and UNICEF. The Beacon School approach employed by IBEC has, therefore, had an impact on the on-going Educational Reform Program recently initiated by the new Minister of Education leading the Minister

Students at a Beacon School watch a documentary in a Media Center

to dub the IBEC Beacon Schools as 'Future Generation Schools'. Beacon Schools are now the foundation for a key platform of the Ministry's Education Reform Program to further develop Future Generation Schools.

4.1.11 Solving Teacher Shortages

Another major success of the IBEC project relates to its strategy to address teacher shortages. From the outset, IBEC planners realized that teacher shortages undermine teacher education activities at every turn. Teachers who teach double shifts (the most common way for the system to address shortages) have little time or energy to apply new methods that they might learn in training workshops. In actual practice, double shift teachers do not really teach the full eight hours required, thereby reducing contact hours with students from already very abbreviated levels. Thus, solving teacher shortages in classrooms is a pre-requisite for an effective teacher education program, a lesson that many other donors often miss. Building on a strategy that was developed in earlier USAID-funded education programs, the IBEC project combined the use of locally recruited Community Teachers on an interim basis combined with local recruitment of teachers for PTTC entry. With assistance from the Teacher Training Department and Provincial Offices of Education, locally recruited PTTC graduates who also receive scholarships from the project are allowed to return to their communes of origin where they are unlikely to transfer out because they are already close to their homes of origin. After two years of study, these graduates return to local schools to replace Community Teachers, thereby providing a permanent solution to a local shortage. The strategic recruitment and placement of teachers in this way has helped to reduce PTR levels by 8% in target areas and field 360 locally recuited teachers.

A Milestone Event for IBEC: The new Minister of Education (top, second from left) visits the Demonstration School. with the Charge d'Affaires of the US Embassy and the USAID Mission Director.

4.1.12 Massive Expansion in Access to WASH Facilities

Investments in WASH facilities have been a key area of support for IBEC since Year 1. The project completed its investments in Water & Sanitation facilities during Year 4 implementation, followed by some repairs and small additional investments in Year 5. Over the five-year period of its implementation, the project invested approximately $1 million in WASH systems in 290 schools benefiting about 133,580 children and teachers (67,054 females). Many of these investments have introduced new designs in WASH facilities such as Wash Stations and Toilet Blocks with aesthetic designs to blend into the school environment.

Innovations in WASH Design: New Hand Washing Station that allows access to multiple students at the same time.

4.13 Strong Ministry Buy-in

It should be noted that for each of the achievements mentioned above, IBEC achieved a high level of project 'buy-in' by MoEYS stakeholders at the highest levels, especially by the Minister of Education himself and the Director General of the Directorate of General Education who chaired IBEC's oversight committee (known as the Consultative Group). In this respect, H.E. Sam Sereyrath's support and advocacy for the project have been key to both its success and ability to leverage impacts. For example, the DG has been a key advocate for the project's ability to clarify the Ministry's policy regarding the use of overtime payments for secondary school life skills teachers, ensuring one of the most important policy changes that will help to sustain the new life skills curriculum and implementation framework developed. The DG has also been able to advocate successfully for a recent decree issued by the Minister of Education, Youth, and Sport himself, instructing all schools to use the new life skills curriculum manuals developed by IBEC from the 2014-15 school year onwards. This formalized endorsement of the curriculum at the highest level is one of the most important aspects of Ministry buy-in that should be noted in the project's list of achievements. This achievement is especially remarkable when one considers that the project did not provide any form of salary supplements to its Ministry counterparts, as is the practice of most other development partners.

4.2 Constraints in Program Implementation and Lessons Learned
4.2.1 Loss Rate among Educators in Target Schools

Assessing the Loss Rate Among Certified School Administrators: One of the key challenges facing capacity-building programs like IBEC in the education system is the rapid loss rate of trained personnel in schools. These losses stem from a variety of reasons including retirement, transfer, position change, death, and incapacitation. Component personnel undertook a survey of certified administrators to determine to what degree the management capacity provided to schools over the last four years of project implementation (when capacity-building activities were well under way) has been undermined by these factors. In all, it was found that 16.3% of trained administrators were lost to one of these reasons (see Table 4.4). The province suffering the most from these problems appears to be Kampong Cham with a 23% rate of loss, followed by Kratie with a 14.1% loss rate, and Siem Reap with only 4.8%. **The leading cause of loss appears to be retirement, which alone accounted for about 50% of the loss**. An additional 48% was accounted for by personnel movements of some kind or another and about 2% by death or incapacitation. **If one projects outward a loss rate of 16% each year, it would mean that about one-third of the management inputs made the by the project for these schools will be lost within the next three to four years and nearly two-thirds will have been lost within eight years**. These findings starkly paint the difficulties that capacity-building projects such as IBEC face.

Table 4.4: Loss Rate among School Administrators in Target Schools due to Assorted Reasons, Year 5

Province	Category	Director	V-Director	Total	Loss Rate by Category
Kampong Cham Total Administrators Catch-up: 29 Full Course: 284 Total: 313	Retired	25/ 1 Fem	6/ 0 Fem	31/ 1 Fem	9.9%
	Transferred	4/ 1 Fem	7/ 1 Fem	11/ 2 Fem	3.5%
	Changed Position	2/ 0 Fem	25/ 2 Fem	27/ 2 Fem	8.6%
	Deceased	1/1 Fem	1/ 0 Fem	2/ 1 Fem	0.1%
	Incapacitated	1/ 0 Fem	0/0 Fem	1/ 0 Fem	0.05%
	Subtotal	33/3 Fem	39/3 Fem	72/6 Fem	≈23.0%
Siem Reap Total Administrators Catch-up: 24 Full Course: 141 Total: 165	Retired	6/ 0 Fem	0/0 Fem	6/ 0 Fem	3.6%
	Transferred	0/0 Fem	1/ 0 Fem	1/ 0 Fem	1.0%
	Changed Position	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0%
	Deceased	1/ 0 Fem	0/0 Fem	1/ 0 Fem	1.0%
	Incapacitated	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0%
	Subtotal	7/ 0 Fem	1/0 Fem	8/0 Fem	4.8%
Kratie Total Administrators Catch-up: 3 Full Course: 96 Total: 99	Retired	8/ 1 Fem	2/ 0 Fem	10/ 1 Fem	10.1%
	Transferred	4/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	4/ 0 Fem	4.0%
	Changed Position	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0%
	Deceased	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0%
	Incapacitated	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0/0 Fem	0%
	Subtotal	12/1 Fem	2/0 Fem	14/1 Fem	14.1%
Total Administrators Total: 577	Grand Total	52/4 Fem	42/ 3 Fem	94/7 Fem	16.3%

Teacher Loss Rate Survey: A similar survey to determine loss rate among those teachers trained by the project since Year 2 found similarly high rates of loss and transition. In particular, there tends to be more movement among primary school teachers (27%) than secondary school teachers (18%), though there are also major variations among provinces to consider (see Tables 4.5 and 4.6). Kampong Cham Province exhibits the highest rate of loss with 21% of trained teachers leaving their posts at secondary school level and 29% at primary level over the last three to four years. Siem Reap seems to evince the lowest rate of loss though data reported at primary level could not be verified. The higher loss rate among primary school teachers is counter intuitive because they are more likely to be recruited and trained locally at provincial training centers (putting them closer to home) whereas secondary school teachers are generally recruited from more semi-urban areas where there are lycees and trained in regional centers so that they are often posted far from home. Other factors appear to be at play in accounting for the higher loss rate that may include lower status, less lucrative opportunities for charging student fees, etc. The annual rate of loss over a four-year period appears to be about 4.5% among secondary school teachers and nearly 7% among primary school teachers.

In terms of the cause of personnel movement, a number of different categories were considered including retirement, transfer, etc. The leading cause of leaving a school appeared to be 'transfer' among both primary and secondary school teachers, accounting for 78% of the movement among secondary school teachers and 42% of the total loss among primary school teachers. The prominence of transfer speaks to the challenges facing the MoEYS to post teachers to the places where they are most needed, though these postings may be far from home for the young teachers sent there. After two years, a teacher may request a transfer, which many do, to a place closer to home thereby perpetuating shortages in the rural areas most in need of teachers. Other factors such as changing one's post were more minor among secondary school teachers; however, these other factors seemed also to act as salient causes of personnel loss at primary level including a change of post (33%) (e.g., promotion to vice director, director, movement to work at a secondary school, etc), and retirement (17%), indicating that primary school teachers tend to be older and more likely to retire than secondary school teachers.

Table 4.5: Loss Rate among Trained Secondary School Teachers, Years 2-5

	Total Trained since Yr 2	Retired	Transfer	Changed Post	Deceased	Incapaci-tated	Total Loss	Loss Rate
Kg Cham	428	6	66	18	0	1	91	21%
Kratie	187	1	15	0	2	0	18	10%
Siem Reap	210	2	37	0	0	0	42	20%
Total	825	9	118	18	2	1	151	--
%	--	6%	78%	12%	>2%	>1%	≈100%	18%

Table 4.6: Loss Rate among Trained Primary School Teachers, Years 2-5

	Total Trained since Yr 2	Retired	Transfer	Changed Post	Deceased	Incapacitated	Resigned/ Long-term Leave	Total Loss	Loss Rate
Kg Cham	557	27	74	54	0	0	9	164	29%
Kratie	185	7	11	13	0	0	9	40	22%
S.Reap	Data Unavailable								4%[1]
Total	742	34	85	67	0	0	18	204	--
%	--	17%	42%	33%	0%	0%	9%	≈100%	27%

Overall, these surveys suggest a disturbing picture of an educational system struggling to reach equilibrium with the need for forced postings and frequent transfers to other more desirable locations. Nationally, the number of teachers has been declining even though the number of schools has been increasing and the number of classes has remained relatively constant over the last four to five years, suggesting that the personnel movements recounted above will likely get worse if such trends continue. This situation poses a very difficult situation for development projects that seek to build capacity among teachers, since loss rates of 20% to 30% among trained personnel over a four period suggest that these investments will have largely dissipated after a 10-year period.

[1] Reported by PoEYS but detailed data is unverified

4.2.2 Flooding and Its Effect on School Opening

At the beginning of each school year, field offices frequently reported that 80 schools were regularly affected by flooding, mostly in Kampong Cham Province. These events and the damage done to school infrastructure frequently delayed the opening of many schools and required considerable rescheduling of activities, to say nothing of the loss of study-time for students. The project also had to consider to what extent it could give assistance to schools to repair some of the damage to infrastructure. For example, several schools with computer labs were sometimes affected with considerable damage to furniture and in some cases to equipment. It was difficult to blame the schools for these problems since their schools have never experienced flooding on this scale in the past; that is, the problem of flooding appears to be getting worse, not better. Given that student-teacher contact hours and days that schools are in session are already very limited, these occurrences clearly have a deleterious impact on the ability of schools to improve educational quality and reduce grade repetition and dropout. This may partly explain the declining impact on dropout rates towards the end of the project.

Impact of Flooding: A resourceful community builds a temporary bridge to keep their school open during a flood on the Mekong River

4.2.3 Poor Understanding of Ministry Policy by Local Authorities

During the implementation of key interventions such as Life Skills Education, both Ministry and project personnel were surprised at the low level of knowledge of Ministry policies relating to key areas of educational operation. Many schools had no idea about the Ministry's Life Skills Education Policy (issued since 2006) and some POE administrators refused to authorize schools to use overtime payments for life skills teachers who taught more than their required teaching load. This refusal not only extended to project staff but to Ministry departments who assisted in the implementation of the life skills pilot. It was only through the intervention of H.E. Sam Sereyrath, the Director General of General Education, that IBEC and the Ministry were able to make local officials comply with what they should have understood were key Ministry policies. This rigidity in the local bureaucracy is a challenge for the reform-minded Ministry leadership in Phnom Penh and projects that are working with them to improve the implementation of national policies.

4.2.4 Minimalist Approaches to Education and ICT Software Policy

Because of the lack of resources in the Cambodian education system, the Ministry's ICT Office has developed a policy that promotes the use of open source software in schools that have computer labs. This policy is seen as a means to address the Ministry's inability to pay for licensed software for computers and also avoid legal issues that may arise if schools should be engaging in the use of unlicensed software. This policy should be effective for dealing with the dearth of resources available for ICT access when it comes to procurement of software. However, there is the danger that the policy may promote a minimalist approach to ICT education in Cambodian schools even in cases when particular donors and private sector agents might be willing to provide licensed software at no cost to the government. IBEC has struggled unsuccessfully with the proper interpretation of the policy for the development of proposed Technology Theme Schools that were to be supported in collaboration with Microsoft Corporation. Since the policy prohibits the use of licensed software when open source equivalents are available, the ICT Office has historically expressed concerns that it may not be possible to use Microsoft software in state schools at all, even though this is the international standard for software in the private sector. In the final event, the project was not able to successfully negotiate a flexible interpretation of the policy resulting in a lost opportunity for close collaboration with a leading software developer who could have done much to introduce cutting edge technologies to state schools.

4.2.5 Future of Roll-out of Life Skills Programming

While Ministry engagement from the three technical departments involved in the assessment of the life skills pilot has been excellent, the project retains some anxiety about the Ministry's future attitude towards the life skills curriculum and delivery system that has been piloted during IBEC's tenure. Component technical staff members have detected some sentiment that the Ministry's adoption of the life skills curriculum will depend largely on continued assistance. In order to address this sentiment, the project has made some modifications in its project design in the later years of implementation to divert additional resources to life skills programming, particularly as these relate to the support of a Ministry committee to review, revise, and formally adopt the approved life skills manuals that have been developed and piloted. A second round of printing of revised manuals has contributed greatly to these efforts; nevertheless, the lack of resources for training to animate an incremental roll-out of the new curriculum remain a considerable obstacle. In order to address these constraints, World Education has identified other sponsors who can provide assistance in printing and other forms of support. For example, GIZ has agreed to print several manuals while UNICEF has also made a tentative commitment to support the Ministry in its efforts to roll-out the curriculum. Similarly, the Asian Development Bank's ESDP III Project appears to be very interested in utilizing the IBEC life skills menu. A large number of possible corporate sponsors have also been contacted. World Education will continue to pursue such advocacy in a post-project environment to bring together as large a pool of resources as possible to convince the Ministry that there will at least be some modest support for a rollout of the life skills framework in future years.

4.2.6 Lessons Learned in Life Skills Implementation

MoEYS has had a long-term vision and ambition to improve life skills education in order to respond to now urgent needs for improved soft skills among the country's youth. However, there have been a number of challenges that have made the implementation of this vision difficult. These challenges (and responses to resolve them) include the issues outlined in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Problem Analysis Framework underlying the Design of the IBEC Life Skills Pilot

No	Observed Problem Before Pilot	Response in IBEC Framework
1	Lack of Comprehensive Life Skills Documents	• Development of 30 Explicit Life Skills Manuals • Standardized Templates
2	Teachers don't know how to teach topics	• Manuals formulated as teacher session plans
3	High Cost Student Books	• Learning Slides/Handouts that can be photocopied with PB funds
4	Lack of clear guidelines on HOW to implement life skills education at school level (e.g., time tables, role of student council, etc.)	• Implementation Framework Manual developed
5	Weak articulation of everyday skills in curriculum	• Introduction of EXPLICIT domain for socially relevant themes
6	Lack of guidelines for student assessment	• Development of EXPLICIT student assessment framework for each manual
7	No overtime payments for life skills instruction	• MoEYS engagement in assessment has led to policy reform on overtime pay

During the design of the life skills pilot in 2009, World Education and KAPE counterparts worked closely with Ministry counterparts to try to devise strategies to address some of these observed challenges. The biggest problem mentioned by schools, local authorities, and MoEYS counterparts concerned the lack of educational content for life skills education. Even in cases where a document on a life skills topic was available, teachers did not know how to teach the topic. In previous pilots, it was suggested that teachers would develop their own lessons. This proved to be very difficult for teachers who have neither the expertise in curriculum development nor in many cases adequate knowledge of the topical area. Similarly, existing documents came in many different formats making it difficult to achieve comparability and standardization across the education system. In many cases, these documents did not give clear guidelines on how students should be evaluated creating additional challenges for standardized assessment of variable topics.

Competing for Youth: *The gate of a massive new shoe factory near a target school employing over 4,000 workers has been an increasingly common sight in many rural communities in Cambodia.*

From a logistical point of view, schools also did not have a clear sense of the organizational needs in schools to implement life skills education effectively. This included the development of timetables, the role of student councils and communities in managing and maintaining activities, managing life skills materials so that they are easily accessible, etc. The need for a clear institutional framework for successful life skills teaching, therefore, also posed a serious challenge for the Ministry, which the IBEC Project believes it has successfully found a framework through which to address such challenges.

Ministry counterparts have also expressed the need for more economical means to provide life skills documentation. Producing student books for life skills instruction, for example, was seen to be prohibitively expensive and very difficult for the Ministry to replicate. The development of laminated learning slides that can be re-used along with student handouts in teacher manuals that can be photocopied with PB funds have also been adopted by IBEC as reasonable responses to these challenges. Each of the responses to the constraints identified above and outlined in Table 4.7 have worked very effectively during the life skills education pilot and represent a major achievement for both the Ministry and the project.

4.2.7 Increasing Headwinds for Dropout Rate Reductions at Secondary School Level

The project's ability to bring dropout levels at target secondary schools to below baseline among a majority of schools became increasingly problematic as the project progressed. As noted earlier, the number of schools reporting declines in dropout from baseline decreased as the project reached its conclusion. It is not clear why dropout levels continued to be so high in many target secondary schools in spite of the significant investments being made there other than that there are major social transformations occurring in Cambodian society relating to migration and factory penetration of the countryside. These economic developments likely heighten the opportunity costs for students to remain in school because many of them are of working age. The older students are, the higher the opportunity costs. While improvements in educational quality certainly increase the attractions of attending school, they cannot outweigh the economic benefits of entering the workforce prematurely. For example, one large school in Kampong Cham Province (Skon High School) reported that it was hit very hard by the opening of a huge shoe factory employing over 4,000 people about three kilometers away.

4.2.8 Project Complexity

IBEC has demonstrated the feasibility of implementing multi-dimensional educational programming within an integrated design. The project's designers maintain that integrated approaches to educational development, while complex, are the best way to get the best result for investment in the education sector. Uni-dimensional projects focusing on a particular aspect of education, while much simpler to implement, often have their impacts undermined by factors in the learning environment that they ignore at their own peril (e.g., low education demand, inefficient school management, etc). Nevertheless, complexity in project design was still a major constraint in managing the IBEC Project and required high levels of coordination and expertise within and between components as well as with local partners and government. This was particularly true in the project's identification of too many indicators (over 70 as noted earlier) that were a tremendous drain on resources and management. It is an important lesson for future integrated programming designs to try to limit the number of indicators to only key measures of impact and not give in to the temptation to let the number of indicators proliferate too widely.

5. SUSTAINABILITY PROVISIONS

The design of the IBEC Project demonstrates a culmination of many years of education programming to anticipate needs for sustainability in programming. While it is certain that not all aspects of project implementation can be sustained in a post-project environment, a considerable number of provisions are nevertheless in place to ensure the sustained operation of many interventions. Energy self-sufficient ICT labs, local recruitment of teachers to solve teacher shortages, institutional habits of commune support to schools, resource efficient life skills curricula are among the examples of creative sustainability provisions that will ensure long-term impact on the education system well after the project's closure. These provisions were summarized in an Exit Strategy document that gave additional guidance to project planners in the oversight of these provisions.

To be sure, there was also an element of good fortune in the way the IBEC Project unfolded in its later stages with the advent of an innovative Education Reform Program that was introduced by the new Minister of Education. Many of the platforms in the Ministry's evolving reform program have high convergence with IBEC programming themes including the development of Beacon Schools (now dubbed Future Generation Schools by the Ministry), more relevant education (furthered by the new Life Skills curricula), and ICT in education (promoted by new technologies introduced in the programming environment through USAID funding). In addition, new aid programs, such as Sida's School Improvement Grant (SIG) program and ADB's School-based Enrichment Program (SbEP) will dovetail with the exit of IBEC from grant support to target schools. The strong capacity left in place by the IBEC Project will no doubt also strengthen the efficiency with which SIG funds are implemented.

As part of its programming design, each component within IBEC has identified many key strategies to sustain project inputs in a post-project environment. The following list gives some idea of the amount of thought that went into the exit strategy process:

Component 1:

Introducing ***commune matching grants*** to put in place institutional habits in councils to see support for educational services as part of their mandate:

1. ***Training schools how to advocate*** for funds from commune councils
2. Development of ***Beacon Schools*** to act as permanent depositories of best practices developed by the project since these schools have high levels of management and professionalism and can be counted upon to maintain these practices.
3. Organizing ***exposure visits*** to Beacon Schools to disseminate best practices to surrounding schools
4. ***Organizing National Workshops to Promote the Dissemination of Best Practices*** to other agencies in collaboration with NEP
5. ***Documenting empirical evidence*** of best practice through the development of research articles each year
6. Establishing an independent social enterprise to ensure the sustainable development and dissemination of teaching aids that are not linked to any specific project (TTS)
7. Setting up ***School Assistance Funds*** in provinces that will be resourced by sales by TTS.
8. ***Certification of two LNGOs*** through extensive capacity building inputs so that they can play a major role in the education sector in terms of maintaining IBEC interventions with their continued institutional presence in the three provinces.

Component 2:

1. Structuring the school development process by establishing a ***fixed three year development cycle*** of grant support with transition to commune council mediated grants (see above).
2. Providing school grants in a way that ***builds local ownership*** of the activities by promoting stakeholder-driven planning.
3. Organizing ***Sustainability Planning*** in all schools to help them to prioritize the most successful activities and identifying external and internal resources accordingly.
4. Training schools how to advocate for resources from local government (i.e., commune councils)
5. Linking Community Teachers with the ***local recruitment of teachers*** in communes with severe teacher shortages who can study at PTTCs with scholarship support and return to their communes of origin upon completion of their studies with state salaries in order to sustainably replace Community Teachers.
6. ***Building the capacity of student councils*** to maintain libraries, WASH facilities, life skills education, and lab facilities.

Component 3:

1. ***Building the capacity of School Support Committees*** to increase their role in ensuring accountability for school performance, especially reading.
2. ***Building the capacity of school administrators in planning, fund raising, and quality control*** through a certificatory course in school management.
3. Providing grants to poor families that enable them to ***link life skills education with activities at home that generate income for the family***.

Component 4:

1. ***Advocacy with ADB*** to incorporate life skills education and career resource persons into the School-based Enrichment Program. The former Chief of Party advocated actively for this with the Ministry during a consultancy and MoEYS has accepted these recommendations as laid out in the Design Recommendations Report.
2. Establishment of ***Life Skills Demonstration Sites*** in three new provinces to promote an incremental and more practical approach to life skills expansion in new areas.
3. Agreement from Ministry for ***formal approval of 30 life skills manuals***.
4. Design and implementation of ***Life Skills Innovation Grants*** that enable schools to sustain life skills activities
5. ***Development of Science Education manual*** that links suggested experiments (identified in the state curriculum) with materials easily available in the local environment.
6. Design and implementation of ***Computer Labs that are energy self-sufficient and low maintenance.***
7. Successful advocacy with ADB for ***adoption of Computer Lab model*** in the EEQP Project
8. ***Training of Computer Teachers*** in trouble shooting and computer maintenance.

In all, IBEC has identified over 25 exit strategies for different activities to ensure that as the project reaches a conclusion, as many activities as possible will continue in a post-project environment.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 General Overview
6.1.1 The Desirability of an Integrated Approach to Development

The relative success of the IBEC Project in terms of the number of performance standards achieved (94%) and its impacts on both educational access (e.g., declines in dropout) and quality (e.g., improved promotion rates among failing students, reductions in teacher shortages, Life Skills Education Curricula) is evidence that holistic educational designs are both feasible and effective, in spite of the increased complexity that they imply. This outcome gives pause for thought when considering recent developments in the sector that are trending back to a time of simpler, more uni-dimensional programming. IBEC is perhaps the last of a long line of integrated education projects in Cambodia (e.g., CFSI, ESCUP, SfL) that were built on the painful lessons of the past in which uni-dimensional programming resulted in static rates of school efficiency. A review of past programming preceding IBEC may be instructive. In this respect, educational programming in the Cambodian school system during the 1990s was characterized largely by stand-alone project designs with a single focus. That is, most projects focused on only one aspect of a child's learning environment.

There were, therefore, infrastructure development projects, WASH Projects, Teacher Education Projects, Textbook Distribution Projects, and many other stand-alone programs each with very high transaction costs for schools, since they all had separate reporting requirements. There were few if any projects that brought multiple design elements together under one roof. In spite of $121,467,000 in investments in the primary education system by both government and donors during the period 1996-99, however, repetition and dropout rates at primary level remained static or changed only marginally throughout the decade[1].

Several studies that were funded by donors at the end of the 1990s concluded that most educational development projects focusing exclusively on supply-side investments (e.g., teacher training, textbooks, etc) benefited frequently absent children very little. Educational development up to that point lacked a balanced focus that included demand-side factors (e.g., scholarships, feeding programs, policy reform to abolish school fees, etc) to stimulate educational demand and bring marginalized children into the system to benefit from supply-side interventions. These empirical conclusions led to the formulation of Ministry's multi-dimensional Child Friendly School Policy and the beginning of integrated project designs of which IBEC was probably the biggest one. A more balanced approach to educational development was eventually expressed in the first Education Reform that began in the 2000s and was and continues to be laid out in rolling development plans formulated by MoEYS and known as the Educational Sector Support Program (ESSP). The first ESSP plan was developed for the period 2001-05 and continues to be updated each and every year up until the present time. Though not without problems, the ESSP has had dramatic effect on primary school enrolments for the poorest quintiles of the population when it was first introduced in 2000. This was particularly true for girls. In this respect, enrolment increases leaped from 11.5% for girls in the poorest quintile of the population in 1999 to 26.0% by 2001[2]. These dramatic impacts on school efficiency provided a powerful justification for continuing the evolution of educational development programming towards more balanced and integrated approaches that emphasize both supply and demand side factors.

The above discussion demonstrates both the evidence-based justification for integrated projects like IBEC while the overall positive results of the project itself have generally verified the feasibility of such designs in spite of their high level of complexity. The project's positive impacts have also been validated by an external evaluation of the project that was contracted by USAID in May-June 2014[3]. In this respect, evaluators noted that "[T]he end of project performance evaluation provides evidence to confirm that IBEC largely achieved its objectives to improve access, quality, and relevance of basic education in Cambodia" (p. 39).

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[1]Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (2000) Student Repetition in Cambodia: Its Cause, Consequences, and Relationship to Learning, Phnom Penh: UNICEF-Sida.

[2]Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (2003) Gender and Education in Cambodia: Historical Review of Trends and the Way Forward, Phnom Penh: Oxfam GB.

[3]Emerging Markets Consulting (2014) Evaluation: End of Project Performance Evaluation of the Improved Basic Education in Cambodia Project, Phnom Penh: USAID.

6.1.2 Monitoring Framework and Project Complexity

In spite of its successes, the project's external evaluation has also rightly noted the need to improve project accountability in terms of data keeping and analysis and indeed, the vast number of performance indicators made data collection a very challenging task indeed. However, the assessment of IBEC's data accountability should best be understood in terms of the project's overall context and the design of its M&E framework, since one of the biggest lessons learned from the IBEC experience relates to the dangers of complex programming vis a vis the development of evaluation frameworks and indicator identification. In this regard, it should be noted that IBEC's holistic approach to educational development ensured that the project would be highly complex in its scope, encompassing many activities across multiple components (e.g., access, educational quality, management capacity, community engagement, etc). Because USAID's M&E template, known as the MEP, does not limit the number of project indicators or prioritize them in terms of their importance, this limitation, combined with the project's high level of complexity, resulted in a profusion of indicators that in many cases did not adequately capture the overall impact of the project and created many unnecessary burdens for data collection. For example, reductions in repetition and dropout were accorded the same status as indicators with far less important measures of success such as the execution of tracer studies. The burden of data collection stemming from the large number of indicators somewhat overwhelmed the project's manpower assigned to undertake it. Thus, the danger in a complex project like IBEC is the tendency to promote a corresponding 'complexification' in the design of the assessment framework with a profusion of unnecessary indicators. This is an important lesson learned that should not be overlooked in future program development undertaken by USAID. These observations were also echoed in Data Quality Assessment (DQA) statements issued by USAID during the project's implementation.

6.2 Areas to Address in Future Programming
6.2.1 The Need for Continuing Support to Assist MoEYS in an Incremental Roll-out of Life Skills Education

Historically, MoEYS has sometimes moved too quickly in the transition from successful pilot project such as the Child Friendly School Initiative (implemented jointly by KAPE, UNICEF, and MoEYS) to national replication. The result is frequently harmful since it changes sound policy into a greatly diluted rollout with little substance. With the arrival of new leadership, there has now been a much wiser consideration of the merits of more 'incremental' approaches that can bridge the space between pilots and national replication. Accordingly, MoEYS has tentatively agreed to roll out the life skills education curriculum in an incremental manner, which should help to ensure an expansion with substance and not one that simply occurs on paper. Nevertheless, MoEYS will need assistance in these efforts. Up until the time of its closure, the IBEC Project has been able to assist the Ministry to put the new life skills education curriculum and framework in place in 126 lower secondary schools in six provinces comprising 8% of the nation's 1,622 lower secondary schools. There is, therefore, a large number of remaining schools to be reached, requiring systematic and long-term support to the Ministry to reach the remaining schools. IBEC partners World Education and KAPE have sought to address this challenge by advocating for the new framework in its other programming such as the Beacon School Initiative supported by the Oaktree Foundation and the School-based Enrichment Program supported by ADB. Considerably more advocacy of this nature as well as technical and material support, however, will be needed in the future.

Students practice their computer skills in a Thin Client ICT Lab supported by IBEC in Siem Reap province.

6.2.2 Imbalances in Stakeholder Involvement in Educational Development that Need to Be Addressed

The number of Local NGOs registered with NEP currently exceeds 100 organizations. Most of these organizations, however, tend to be very small with limited capacity to implement large projects. Furthermore, the majority of these organizations tend to work in the non-formal sector, which is one of the most under resourced subsectors in the education system. On the other hand, the number of LNGOs involved in formal education is quite small. For the few national organizations working in the formal sector, their projects tend to be very small with most of the support received targeted mainly at implementing interventions, not institutional capacity-building. The decision of USAID and World Education to include a capacity-building component within IBEC dedicated specifically to building the capacity of national organizations (leading to the eventual accreditation of two such organizations) has been a welcome though very rare occurrence in the education sector. This situation in the Education Sector is in stark contrast with the Health Sector where programming is dominated by very large national organizations such as Khana, RHAC, and RACHA, mainly as a result of massive capacity-building investments from the US Government. Unfortunately, most other multi- and bi-lateral donors have shown little interest in replicating this achievement in the formal education sector, with the vast majority of capacity-building support flowing primarily to government. The failure to build national capacity among civil society organizations in the formal education sector will likely have significant implications for cost and sustainability of most current investments. It also highlights another important area of need for USAID to continue its support, since most other donors do not see this as an area of any priority.

6.2.3 Addressing Teacher Shortages

In spite of the successful efforts of the IBEC Project, the national teacher shortage continues to be an 'invisible crisis' that few donors recognize, even though it is one of the single biggest constraints in improving educational quality. At primary school level, there are currently only 44,840 teachers to staff 58,837 classes according to the most recent data provided by EMIS[4]. Thus, there is a gap of about 14,000 teachers nationally, particularly in rural areas. If anything, this gap has grown worse over the years, not better, as the Ministry seeks to expand secondary school capacity and uses the local primary schools as a principal recruiting ground. Because the education system generally uses 'double shift teaching' to address the shortage, the impacts on quality are huge. Teachers who are required to teach two shifts (eight hours per day) are exhausted and have little time or energy left to use innovative teaching methods they may be trained in or make teaching aids. And in actual practice, most teachers do not teach two full shifts, preferring instead to reduce contact hours with students to only three or even two hours per shift. On paper, the problem is solved but the overall impact on educational quality is devastating. With such pervasive shortages, teacher education programs, which development partners usually fund at considerable cost, are greatly constrained in their overall impact. Helping the Ministry to address such shortages through local recruitment, policy reform (e.g., re-instating 9+2 intakes with forced compliance at provincial level), and increased PTTC intakes are an essential pre-condition for any future efforts to improve educational quality.

[4]EMIS (2014).