

# Change a life

## HIGHLAND CHILDREN'S EDUCATION PROJECT – COMPLETE

The primary objective of the Highland Children's Education Project (HCEP) was to address the needs of disadvantaged ethnic minority groups through the establishment of community schools targeting girls and boys who have never enrolled, or who have dropped out of the formal system.

The project established schools in six remote ethnic minority communities with teaching undertaken by locally recruited and trained indigenous community teachers, through a bilingual model of education.

This broader program is on-going and encompasses a number of individual projects including the Highland Community Education Program supported by Computershare.

### OUTPUTS:

#### **1) Six functioning Community Schools managed by Community School Boards and attended by village children in Grades 1-6**

CARE has upgraded 38 community classrooms. All of them now have concrete floors, new wooden walls (originally schools were built with bamboo walls), new windows and doors and new wooden furniture that is age appropriate and supports interactive teaching and learning.



The upgrading of the schools is entirely funded by Computershare.

#### **2) A stable force of CARE-trained indigenous community teachers**

There are currently 43 community indigenous teachers who are teaching in HCEP schools.

#### **3) State school teachers working effectively in the Community Schools, teaching in Grades 4-6**

The HCEP program has not been able to retain all State School Teachers in the Community Schools. It is very hard for Khmer State School Teachers to live far away from their families and social support structures, while surrounded by a culture they are not familiar with and a language they can't speak.

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**4) Government approved and culturally appropriate curriculum materials in four minority languages as per the bilingual educational model, with supplementary materials which explore development, human rights and the changing environment and includes ethnic minority views on these.**

Curriculum is being developed by HCEP to support Bilingual Education in Community Schools and the final product is anticipated to be handed over to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports at the end of 2009.

During this project period CARE has made significant achievements in regards to project specific activities as well as contributing to the overall Highland Community Program, particularly considering the challenging and complex environment. Now a fully established program, the education component is benefiting and strengthening through the overall program being able to address other influencing factors which greatly impact on access to education, such as food security as well as specifically addressing girls access to education.

Although challenges such as community land loss and inadequate supply of quality teachers persist, the HCEP is committed to ensuring access to quality education for ethnic minority communities in Cambodia. Through undertaking advocacy, continuing a strong teacher training component and local capacity building, the project and broader program aims to minimize the risk and impact of these challenges on future initiatives.

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