



# Child's Dream Cambodia

Improving health and education for sustainable development

info@childsdream.org E  
www.childsdream.org W  
+855 (0)636 485 888 P

## End-year Report 2021-22

### Project concerned

High School Scholarship Programme (BESSP) - Cambodia  
*Part of our regional programme, covering the Mekong Sub-Region*

### Implemented by

Child's Dream Cambodia Organisation (CDCO)  
N. 160, Group 10  
Krous Village Svay Dangkum Commune  
Siem Reap, Cambodia

[www.childsdream.org](http://www.childsdream.org) | [info@childsdream.org](mailto:info@childsdream.org)

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"*

*– Nelson Mandela*

## Vision

Educated and empowered people responsibly shaping and sustaining fair, just and healthy societies for generations to come

## Mission

We exist to ensure that children and young adults in the Mekong Sub-Region, affected by inequality, grow up to be healthy and have access to quality education and better employment opportunities. Everything we do enables them to live empowered and self-determined lives as equal and active members of society, with the potential to become responsible leaders of change

## Executive Summary

This end-year report covers the programme activities and student updates for the 2021-22 academic year of the High School Scholarship Programme - Cambodia. 416 scholarship students across three grades were enrolled in the programme at the beginning of the year.

We are happy to report that all classes and activities went ahead in-person again after two years of intermittent school closures. Students reaped the benefits of face-to-face learning this year with an excellent passing rate of 95%. After three years in the programme, 119 students from Grade 12 completed their studies and have since graduated.

### Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
1. Why We Do It	2
2. Updates	3
3. Beneficiaries	4
4. Your Supported Students	6
5. Financials	6
6. Photographs	7
Attachments	
i) Statistics	
ii) Student list	

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) directly addressed by BESSP



## 1. Why We Do It: Bridging the Gap – Regional Scope

We initiated Child's Dream's High School Scholarship Programme to provide high school (also called middle school or upper secondary school, depending on the country) and vocational school students, aged 15 to 18, from rural and marginalised communities with the opportunity to continue education at a higher level. Currently offered in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Thailand, (and previously in Myanmar), the programme aims to improve the continuation rate of students between lower and upper secondary levels, by providing financial support to help them in continuing and completing their upper secondary education.

### Selection Criteria

- Have successfully completed lower secondary level education and possess strong desire to pursue higher education
- Are underprivileged and have a proven need for financial support
- Have strong academic performance
- Demonstrate good moral and ethical behaviour
- Students from very remote areas are given priority and we aim for a gender balance

### Selection Process

The timeline varies by country, but the criteria for acceptance remains constant across the three countries.

- Marketing and distributing application forms to students within our targeted schools
- Shortlisting and selecting potential candidates based on our selection criteria
- Conducting placement tests, interviews, and home visits to help us understand our students, get to know their parents and their living conditions
- Announcing results and signing agreements with our new cohort

### Main Activities

- Our annual activities start with the distribution of application forms in selected schools in Cambodia. The distribution of applications starts at the beginning of March and then followed by shortlisting of potential students in May.
- After the shortlist is finalised, we invite candidates to complete a placement test. Those who pass the placement test have interviews and home visits along with their parents. The results are announced 4-6 weeks later.
- In October, we conduct contract signing with all our supported students (new and existing) and transfer the first trench of scholarship funds.
- The beginning of November\* marks the start of the new academic year in Cambodia.
- Between December and January, our dedicated scholarship team conducts the annual scholarship camp to formally introduce newly recruited students to the older students.

*\*Since 2021 the school year has commenced in January and run until October because of delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is yet to be seen whether this timetable will remain in place or not. Our team has thus adjusted its recruitment timeline accordingly.*

### Ongoing Impacts of COVID-19 on Education in Cambodia

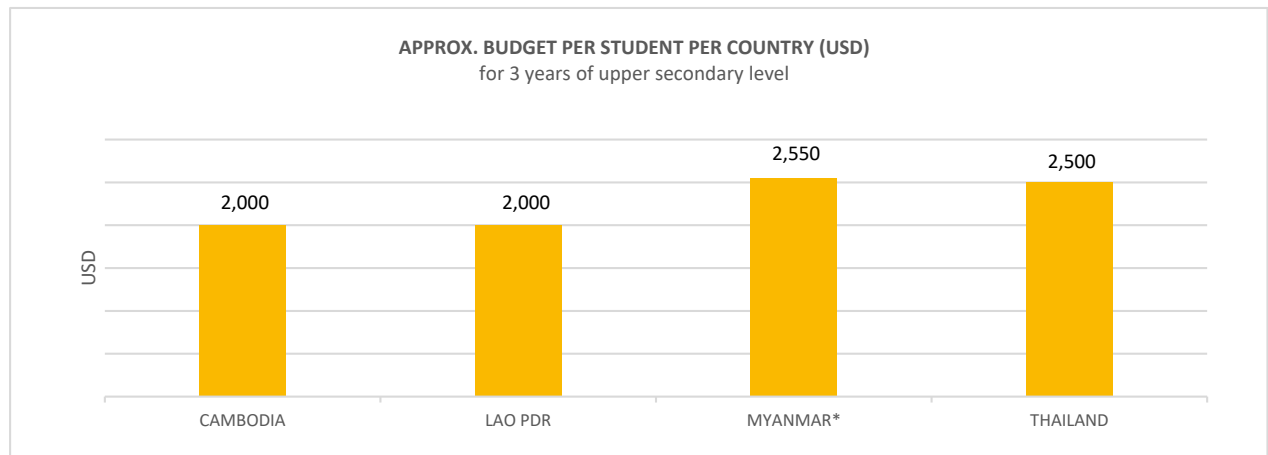
The spread of COVID-19 since March 2020 has had an adverse effect on education for Cambodian children and youth. There were nationwide school closures for large periods of 2020 and 2021 with an estimated 3.2 million students effected.

Classes were conducted online for large blocks of this period, however; this distance learning exacerbated the divide between rural and urban populations given the disparities in access to technology. Furthermore, economic hardship brought by the pandemic meant families had to make choices between sending their children to school or paid work (*UN Cambodia Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19, August 2020*).

Many children from these very poor families used their time during school closures to work, in order to contribute to the family income. Over 80% of students reported having no television at home, no smartphone or tablet, and insufficient internet bandwidth (*UNDP, 2020*). There were no means nor motivation to take part in online learning.

The loss of earnings over the past three years still has a bearing on children's education today. Families who lost income now face the risk of not being able to afford the direct and indirect costs of schooling and could opt to keep their children home in the longer term. (*UNICEF and Save the Children-Cambodia COVID-19 Joint Education Needs Assessment, March 2021*).

## Cost of Impact



*\*Our High School Scholarship Programme in Myanmar has been suspended as schools there are currently under the control of the junta government*

The donations we receive allow us to cover 100% of the scholarship students' financial needs for the duration of their entire upper secondary level, high school or vocational education. To ensure that students can complete their high school/vocational education, it is important that donors commit to funding for the full duration of the programme, leading to a high school or vocational diploma.

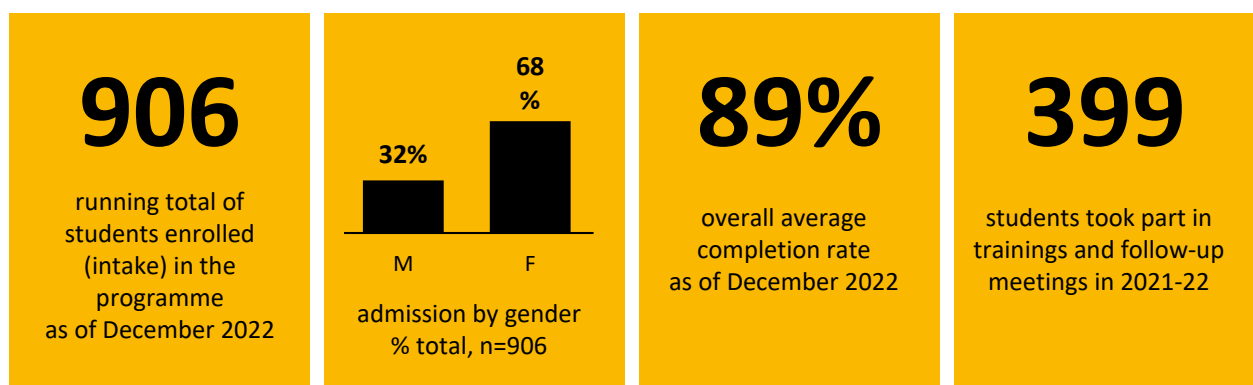
Donations cover the following elements of a students' academic experience: Tuition fee, accommodation, books and other essential equipment, emergency situations, implementation & monitoring, and administration overheads.

## Monitoring & Evaluation

Our team monitors the scholarship students' progress two times per year, in person if possible. Their teachers will act as advisors and will support us in mentoring and monitoring the students. Students will submit written reports (at least twice per semester) to share their reflections and highlight issues that they encounter during the academic period.

## 2. Updates

### High School Scholarship Programme (Cambodia) in Numbers

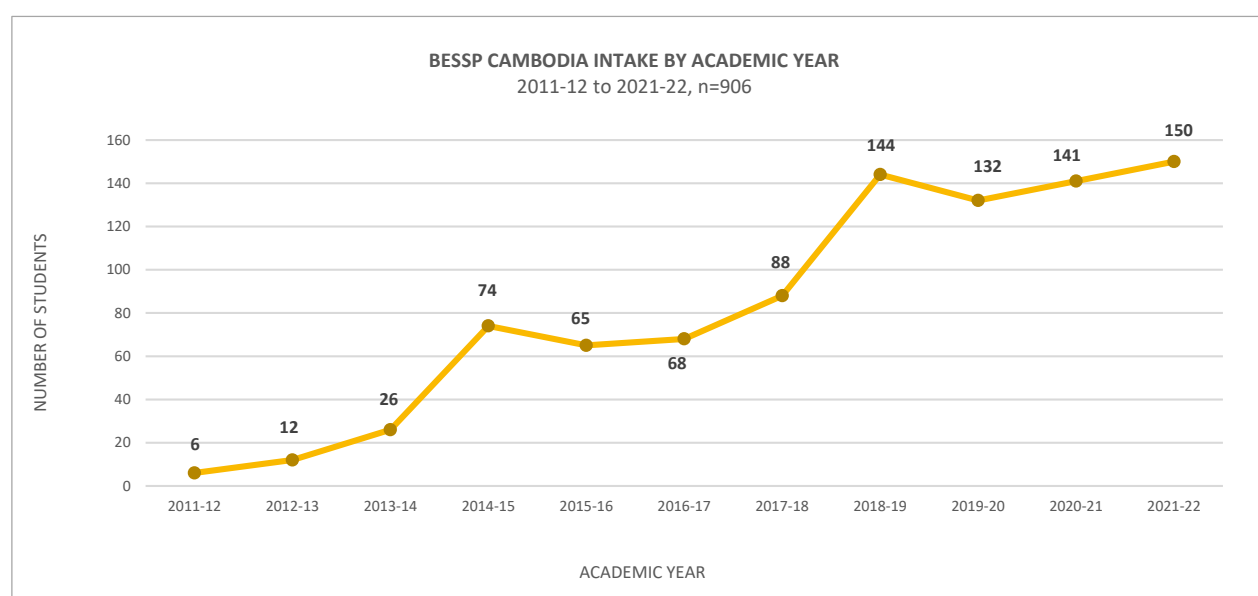


The following is an update of the main activities undertaken by the programme for the 2021-22 academic year.

- After our regular recruitment process, we conducted the contract signing in January 2022 for the new academic year 2021-2022 (delayed by two months). 150 new students and their parents signed the contract.
- 399 students from nine high schools took part in trainings and follow-up meets during this academic year. These were predominantly led by two to three Child's Dream staff members.

- 23 to 25 February 2022: We organised a three-day additional training session to team leaders (from the student group) and active teachers for BESSC students from nine high schools at Krorm Torng Training Centre. The purpose of the training was to build more confidence, leadership skills, teamwork, effective communication, and public speaking skills to all team leaders.
- March and April 2022: Our team conducted several meetings with school principals and representatives of the DoE (District of Education). There were two core topics up for discussion:
  - The application process for the scholarship programme
  - The low number of male applicants to the programme and how to encourage more males to apply
- During the first semester, all participating students received additional capacity building in March and in May. This is in addition to their core curriculum subjects. The trainings varied by school and by grade. Our team spent two to three days with each group, leading activities on the following topics:
  - Leadership, Dream-Vs-Reality, Communication Skills, Social Media, Budgeting, Time Management, Smart Learning Techniques, Family Planning, Team Work, Scholarship Applications, Goal Setting and Career Planning, CV and Cover Letter Writing, and Job Interviews
- June 2022: We organised a two-day study tour for Grade 12 students from all participating schools. The purpose of this study tour was for students to have a chance to explore and learn more about further education and training at universities or vocational colleges. A total of 116 students took part in the tour.
- From July to September, our team conducted training events at one high school (Pouk High School). The training was for G11 and G12 students on the topics of Job Introduction, CVs, Cover Letters, Job Interviews, Problem Solving, and Critical Thinking and Decision-Making.
- Our team sent the alumni and end-of-programme survey to students in October. They got 117 responses (from 119) to the end-of-programme survey and 158 responses (from 187) to the alumni survey. These surveys are crucial for helping us with the development and smooth execution of the programme.
- In November, the final face-to-face event of the year went ahead when we led a three-day camp for 91 students and six teachers from eight high schools. The topic for the camp was “21<sup>st</sup>-Century Skills” and students engaged in academic and practical activities.
- 119 students from Grade 12 completed the three-year programme in December 2022 and have since graduated.

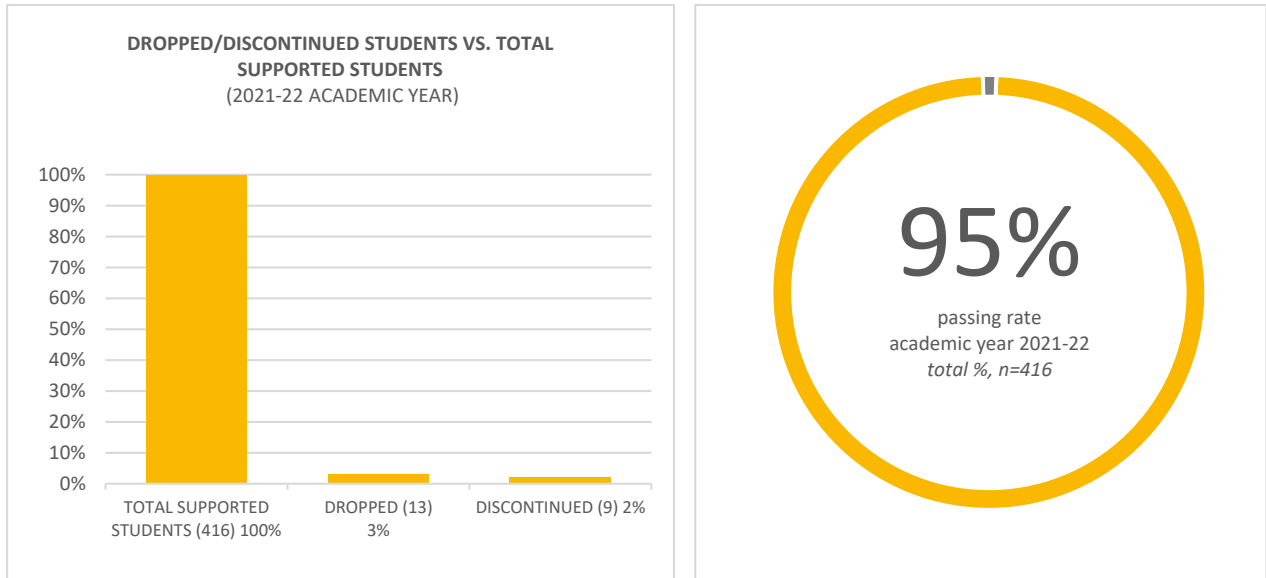
### 3. Beneficiaries – Cambodia only



Between the academic year 2011-12 and 2021-22, the High School Scholarship Programme - Cambodia has enrolled a running total of 906 scholarship students. Of these, 275 are active, 59 dropped out, 52 had their support discontinued, and a further 520 successfully graduated.

Since the start of the Cambodia programme in 2011, our alumni list has seen steady growth - now at 520 and counting. Overall, the programme has recorded a cumulative completion rate of 89%.

#### Academic Year 2021-22



In January 2022, a total of 150 new students were given a place on the programme, joining the other 266 active students.

During this reporting period (January to December 2022), 13 students dropped out and nine students had their scholarship discontinued by us. Given the total number of 416 supported students this year, and with only 13 dropped out students (3%), and nine discontinued students (2%), this is an excellent result with an impressive passing rate of 95%.



#### 4. Photographs



The candidates were interviewed home, and upon acceptance, signed the contract along with their parents



A three-day training event in February for team leaders (from the student group) and active teachers helped them foster a more pronounced sense of leadership, self-confidence, and communication skills



The additional capacity building sessions expose the students to scenarios that they otherwise would not experience. Some of the sessions this semester included goal setting (*left*), career planning (*centre*), and communication skills (*right*)



Grade 12 students from all schools went on a study tour at the end of June. The purpose was to make them aware of their options regarding further education and training at universities and vocational colleges





Students at Pouk High School take part in the training on jobs and CV-writing



The Dream -vs- Reality session takes a theoretical and practical approach on how to reach one's goals



Our team leads a session on Critical Thinking and Decision-Making; students learn practical life skills that are not typically taught on the national curriculum



The final event of the year was a three-day camp for 91 students and six teachers from eight different schools. In addition to academic sessions, the students also engaged in teambuilding activities and physical exercise.

We want to extend our sincere gratitude for your generous contribution to your scholarship students and to the success of the entire programme over the past years. We are happy to report that, after a challenging few years, the students are able to fully engage in their education once again.

We look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

All this would not be possible without you! Many thanks!

Chiang Mai, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Child's Dream Cambodia**



Marc T. Jenni  
Founder & Managing Director Operations



Daniel M. Siegfried  
Founder & Managing Director Programmes