

Cambodia: Komar An II Project

Improved ECD and Primary School Education in Sameakki Mean Chey District



Project location

Sameakki Mean Chey District,
Kmpong Chhnang Province,
Cambodia

Project duration

January 2024 - December 2026

Project budget

CHF 526'220

Background and problem

In the Sameakki Mean Chey project area (86'275 inhabitants) in the southwest of Kampong Chhnang province in Central Cambodia, most people live from agriculture. The district comprises of nine communes, where 1'552 children go to kindergarten and 11'558 children to primary school. About 30% of the children of school age are currently not enrolled in school - another 5,500 children. There are 37 state primary schools and 59 kindergartens. Access to and quality of education in Sameakki Mean Chey district is poor. The local education authorities classify all schools in the district as "disadvantaged schools": they are not child-friendly and lack learning and teaching materials. Not surprisingly, the quality and learning outcomes are low and school attendance is poor. Poor school enrolment and completion rates are exacerbated by the above-average poverty in the district.

Based on the national education strategy, Komar An II focuses on kindergarten and primary school and promotes public primary schools and kindergartens in eight villages. All of them currently perform particularly poor in terms of quality and accessibility. On the one hand, the project improves the infrastructure and equipment of the schools and, on the other hand, works towards an improved and child-friendly teaching methodology including customized training. There are also additions to the curriculum – such as reading promotion by means of classroom libraries - as well as assistance for improved school management. Special attention is given to supporting the most vulnerable students and the poorest families, for example by providing bicycles and school scholarships.

Goals

- Improved access to education and increased enrolment
- Improving the quality of teaching and learning
- Improvement of school equipment and infrastructure (incl. sanitary facilities)
- School development through improved school management and involvement of parents

Partner organisation

SOFDEC was established and registered as an independent Cambodian NGO in October 2006.

Vision: Better living standards for people in rural communities in Kampong Chhnang province.

Thematic focus: income generation, primary education, environmentally friendly farming methods, microfinance, sustainable use of natural resources.

www.facebook.com/sofdecngo

Beneficiaries

- 9 primary schools and 12 kindergartens
- Around 1,700 school and kindergarten children and 44 teachers per year
- Indirectly, another 8,000 people in the school communities benefit each year

Activities

- Distribution of school uniforms and school materials as well as bicycles for children with a long way to school
- Scholarships for 225 families and income projects for 45 families
- In-service training for all teachers and additional pay for 12 kindergarten teachers of \$30/month
- Conduct regular standard tests to determine learning levels and provide tutoring and support classes for weaker students
- Construction of three kindergartens; connection to the electricity grid, installation of lights and fans and distribution of hygiene materials to all schools and kindergartens
- Complete equipment of all kindergartens (play and learning material, child-friendly design) and additional material for primary schools; installation of classroom libraries and computer rooms at primary schools
- Management training for the school management and members of the school committees
- Development and implementation of a school development plan by each school management and school committee
- Annual public campaign for enrolment in each school community
- Theatre performances on environmental themes, participation in regional sports competitions

Impact and Sustainability of Engagement in Cambodia

CO-OPERAID and SOFDEC have been collaborating since 2012 to improve education in public schools in Kampong Chhnang. This engagement at a total of 39 government schools - as of December 2023 - shows clear success.

Both enrolment and completion rates increased significantly while the drop-out rates decreased. The support of the poorest families with scholarships and income-generating projects ensured the schooling of their children and the support classes enabled better school performance.

The education projects implemented in Cambodia so far have shown the following aspects of sustainability:

- The teachers apply the knowledge gained throughout their careers. Thus, thousands of schoolchildren will continue to benefit from improved teaching in the future.
- Activities such as creating a school development plan, placement tests or the annual school enrolment campaign continue independently after project completion.
- The awareness of the value of a basic school education and the commitment to it is improved successfully during a project period of three years. The status of school committees is improved as well as their functionality. And the enrolment of all children at the beginning of the school year is successfully strengthened.
- The poorest families are significantly relieved by the minimal material support and their living conditions improve.
- Selected families for agricultural income-generating projects subsequently generate persistently higher income, yet still subject to weather extremes.



Child-friendly kindergartens



Valuable: Targeted tutoring



Important: PC lessons

CO-OPERAID is committed to the international right of children to education in East Africa and Southeast Asia. The association was founded in 1981, is a politically and denominationally independent registered NGO and has been ZEWOCERTIFIED since 1998.

Vision: Quality education for children and adolescents is the foundation of a self-determined and dignified life.

Thematic focus: primary education and vocational training with complementary elements such as poverty reduction, income projects, promotion of girls, HIV/AIDS prevention, health.

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