ESCUP

April 2006

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

EQUIP1
Educational Quality Improvement Program
Classrooms • Schools • Communities

ESCUP Annual Report

Educational Support to Children in Underserved Populations (Cambodia)

Submitted by:
American Institutes for Research

With:
World Education, Inc.

and
Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE)
CARE International

U.S. Agency for International Development
Cooperative Agreement No. GDG-A-00-03-00006-00
Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 442-A-00-05-00004-00

American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW
Washington, DC 20007
www.equip123.net

Contents

List of Tables

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The EQUIP1 Cambodia Educational Support to Children in Underserved Populations (ESCUP) Program is a USAID funded initiative designed to improve access to a basic education of quality for marginal groups in Cambodia—namely, ethnic minority children, girls, disabled children, and the poor. ESCUP interventions are implemented in three large adjacent provinces: Kampong Cham, Kratie, and Mondulkiri. Across these three provinces, the program is supporting a total of 151 primary schools from 18 clusters, and 14 lower secondary schools. The overall program design has three overarching technical components—Access and Quality, Teacher Education, and School-Community Partnerships, and a fourth component, Program Management. The program's technical approach includes (i) using cluster and secondary school grants as a means of resourcing schools, (ii) using activity menus in the development of school improvement plans, and (iii) utilizing local committees such as Local Cluster School Committees (LCSCs) and Local Scholarship Management Committees (LSMCs) to implement activities on the ground. Overall, the program seeks to promote the government's recent adoption of Child Friendly Schools (CFS) as a front line strategy to improve quality in the basic education sector (i.e., Grades 1-9).

This report summarizes the progress the program has made, after one year of implementation, towards reaching stated performance indicator targets. In all, the program has identified 38 technical indicators, organized by component, and eight indicators that define performance standards for the Program Management Component for a total of 46 indicators in all. Data have been collected for 38 indicators; the data for the remaining eight indicators are time sensitive (e.g., repetition rate) and will not be available until the end of the current academic year. Over the course of the first year, the program has seen marked success in achieving significant results in all major components. Over all, ESCUP has either reached or exceeded stated targets for 30 indicators or 79% of those for which information is available.

Activities in the **Access and Quality Component** are aimed first at getting children at risk into school and then at fostering their retention in the formal education system. This component has a total of 23 indicators divided into four intermediate results. Data have been collected for a total of 20 indicators—the data for the three remaining indicators in this component are either contingent on end of the school year surveys that will not occur until the second year of the program or measure activities planned for full implementation only in the second year of the program. The program has reached or exceeded targets for 15 of the 20 indicators for which information is available under this component, or 75% of the indicators measuring change in educational access and quality. For example, ESCUP has successfully worked with schools and communities to identify children at risk. In this respect, the program is providing scholarships to 4,817 students of extremely low socio-economic status at primary level and another 809 at secondary level. Field reports indicate that 22% of these children are from minority groups. ESCUP has also facilitated the referral of 362 children with disabilities or who have debilitating health ailments to appropriate service providers and is providing remedial support to 3,417 students with special learning needs.

ESCUP has been particularly successful implementing interventions designed to promote access to education. In this respect, field offices have reported that a total of 77% of program schools conducted school mapping exercises to identify out of school children. As a result of these efforts, 536 children who were out-of-school were brought back into the school system; 60% of these re-enrolled students are either minorities, physically challenged, or girls. The assistance provided under the various interventions is reaching a large part of the total student population in target schools. For example, scholarship assistance at primary level is reaching one child in three in Mondulkiri and one in four in Kratie. Overall, one child in ten is receiving such assistance across all provinces. According to survey reports, nearly all scholarship recipients and those receiving health services have remained in school. Program interventions have also helped reduce the pupil to teacher ratio (PTR) in 67% of target schools, though this was somewhat below an initial target of 75%. Nevertheless, field offices reported that 63% of supported "incomplete" schools

have added a grade. Because dropout is usually linked to the prevalence of incomplete schools, it is expected that these improvements should have a major impact on dropout rates.

With respect to improvements in educational quality and relevance, ESCUP appears to have effectively implemented several interventions promoting relevant educational provision. For example, life skills activities are currently being offered to students in 33% of target schools, which exceeded initial expectations for the first year of program implementation. Also, 44% of schools received a score of "satisfactory" or better in a survey measuring educational relevance. In all, target schools were found to be implementing a total of 650 activities that promote educational relevance (e.g., life skills, remedial tutoring, library provision, etc). In addition, all the classrooms implementing the School Readiness Program appear to be meeting designated criteria for child friendliness; indeed, the vast majority of these classrooms received a satisfactory score with regard to the physical environment of the classroom. Data for indicators measuring improvements in the learning of slow learners (e.g., promotion rates) are not yet available but will be collected at the end of the academic year.

Activities in the **Teacher Education Component** have been guided by the pursuit of two intermediate results. One of these focuses on trying to improve classroom practice among selected teachers in a variety of different contexts; the other encompasses activities that seek to make the Provincial Teacher Training Colleges serving each target province more responsive to the needs of program schools. This component has a total of 10 indicators, and at this time data are available for six. The program has reached or exceeded the targets set for five of these six indicators measuring improvements in teacher education. For example, the Teacher Education Component has successfully implemented a variety of capacity building activities, which have resulted in improved classroom practices. In this regard, program personnel have trained and are supporting 52 teachers in the government's School Readiness Program. In observations of a sample of these teachers, 85% received a score of satisfactory or better on standards set for child centered classroom practice. In addition, ESCUP has trained a total of 184 Community Teachers, 97% of whom were successfully deployed and continue to work in classrooms. Of these Community Teachers, 92% of an observed sample scored satisfactory or better on a teaching proficiency standard.

ESCUP has also made significant progress in helping PTTCs to improve their responsive to local school needs. In this respect, program personnel negotiated with Ministry and provincial officials to increase the PTTC intake quota for remote districts supported by ESCUP. In many cases, schools in these districts suffer from severe teacher shortages. The negotiations with government resulted in a quota of 150 candidates for the target districts. The program helped recruit, prepare, and enroll 101 local candidates into PTTCs.[1] Among these candidates, 41% are female and 16% are from ethnic minority groups.

The **School-Community Partnership Component** supports activities that both increase community engagement in the provision of educational services as well as help schools to modify their way of working so that they are more sensitized to the needs of local communities. The School-Community Partnership Component has two intermediate results; namely, enhancing community participation in education and improving the sensitivity of schools to community needs. ESCUP has met or exceeded the targets set for three out of the five indicators measuring progress in this component. Field reports indicate that ESCUP has been rather successful in promoting community participation in educational provision. For example, of the 184 locally identified and recruited Community Teachers trained and supported by ESCUP, 26% are minorities. This compares with a reported 5% among state teachers, even in areas where minority groups comprise a large proportion of the local population. In addition, nearly all (90%) of ESCUP supported schools are implementing at least one activity that promotes school-community partnership (e.g., mapping, Community Teacher recruitment, etc.). In terms of the oversight of Community Teachers, a program survey found that all of the community-led Management Boards responsible for this task met the

[1] This does not include an additional 30 candidates for OPTIONS supported areas. Thus, both programs were able to collectively utilize 131 of the places provided under the government quota.

criteria for effective management. Finally, preliminary findings from focus group discussions with community members suggest that perceptions of school sensitization to community needs have improved since the beginning of the program. This observation was not true of all areas, school management practices being a notable exception, but did apply to issues relating to access and quality. These focus group discussion findings, however, will soon be followed up by a formal attitudinal survey at household level.

The **Program Management Component** provides the organizational support that enables program technical activities to occur smoothly. Thus far, data are available for seven of the eight indicators measuring performance under this component. According to the available data, ESCUP has met or exceeded the targets for all seven of these indicators. In this respect, all clusters and lower secondary schools prepared school improvement plans based on guidelines provided by program staff. Based on these plans, a total of $129,847 in grant funds has been disbursed to local committees, 85% of which has been liquidated thus far. Although the improvement plans submitted by schools were far from perfect, they nevertheless demonstrated reflection on local needs and were in many cases quite different from place to place. In this respect, clusters had identified 36 discrete activities to implement during the year. Across the 18 clusters and 14 secondary schools supported by ESCUP, this translated to the implementation of 358activities at primary level and 172 activities at secondary level.

Other Program Management Component indicators relating to the development of monitoring and evaluation systems, government counterpart participation in program implementation, and dissemination of lessons learned across all sites have also been reasonably satisfied according to the available data. To date, 111 cluster directors, teachers and community representatives have participated in exchange visits; similarly, PoE and DoE personnel have conducted a total of 494 visits to ESCUP supported schools during the academic year.

The lessons learned from the implementation of the ESCUP program over the course of the last year have been both numerous and significant. These span quite a number of issues ranging from the design of interventions to reduce language barriers to school access among minority groups, to the role of patronage networks in communities and the need for advocacy, as well as teacher issues relating to variable educational backgrounds and levels of interest in professional development opportunities. The latter of these has been particularly problematic because the opposition of some teachers to participating in program sponsored training workshops conflicts with a national policy that expects compliance with CFS guidelines among ‘all’ teachers. As an interim solution to this difficulty, ESCUP has decided to adopt a principle of ‘volunteerism’ in the recruitment of teachers to participate in classroom upgrading activities until the Ministry can achieve full compliance among all teachers either through salary increases or other non-punitive means. With respect to addressing language barriers among minority groups, the program found that traditional bilingual approaches generally used with homogeneous minority populations were not appropriate. This realization reflects the heterogeneous nature of the populations in program areas (i.e., minority children study with ethnic Khmer children in the same target schools) as well as ESCUP’s short time frame (i.e., bilingual education programs take many years to develop and implement). As a result, the program has opted to focus on a number of quasi-bilingual approaches that include Supplementary Khmer Language instruction (SKL) and the use of Bilingual Classroom Assistants (BCAs).

In terms of its future direction, the ESCUP program faces the prospect of selectively increasing the coverage of certain experimental interventions (e.g., BCAs) within existing program sites balanced against the need to consolidate, strengthen, and improve many of the interventions discussed earlier. This must be done at the same time that program personnel also complete implementation of several interventions that have been postponed to Program Year 2, namely the development of CFS classrooms and support to multi-grade teachers. Thus, the program faces a large challenge with respect to seeking a balance between expansion, consolidation, and the completion of planned programming.

2. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM SCOPE, STRUCTURE, AND STRATEGIES

2.1 Background

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual statement of the progress of the Educational support to Children in Underserved Populations Program (ESCUP) against agreed upon performance standards. The ESCUP Program is a recent initiative funded by USAID to improve access to a basic education of quality for marginal groups in Cambodia. These groups include ethnic minority children, girls, disabled children, and the poor. The program is currently working in three provinces in eastern Cambodia where access impediments have been significant. Major access impediments to basic education continue to exist throughout Cambodia but particularly in remote areas. The causality underlying this situation can best be understood as a complex interaction between supply and demand-side factors that include teacher shortages, low educational relevance, restrictive access due to direct and indirect costs, and the perceived low value of education by community members, among other factors.

ESCUP is implemented by three agencies (World Education, Kampuchean Action for Primary Education, and CARE) in Cambodia with oversight and management support from the American Institutes for Research in Washington, D.C. The program works closely with the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport including the Primary Education Dept, the Teacher Training Dept, the Secondary Education Dept, and the National EFA Secretariat. The program also works closely with Provincial and District Offices of Education, local school and community committees, and Commune EFA Commissions at local level. To facilitate cooperation with government counterparts at local level, program offices have generally been sited in government offices such as Provincial Offices of Education or Teacher Training Colleges.

2.2 Target Areas and Coverage

Program interventions are currently being implemented in three large provinces: Kampong Cham, Kratie, and Mondulkiri. All three provinces are adjacent to one another, which greatly facilitates coordination and communication between program sites. Direct assistance is being provided to eight school clusters in Kampong Cham Province, eight school clusters in Kratie Province, and two school clusters in Mondulkiri Province. A school cluster in Cambodia typically comprises anywhere between three and ten schools. In all, ESCUP is working in 151 primary schools across 18 clusters. This comprises about 47,612 children, according to school reports at the beginning of the 2005/6 academic year. In addition the program is also providing assistance to 14 lower secondary schools in each of the three provinces, comprising 9,524 children. Target areas have generally been selected based on their remoteness, poverty indexing, rates of dropout and participation, and prevalence of minority groups such as Chams and hill tribe groups.

2.3 Technical Approach and Program Design

Key Approaches: The program's technical approach builds on work done under the Child Friendly School (CFS) Initiative supported by UNICEF/Sida and KAPE in collaboration with MoEYS as well as life skills programming supported by World Education, and the Highland Children's Education Program supported by CARE. The key principle in CFS programming is to avoid stand-alone interventions and to approach school development holistically across multiple dimensions including (i) inclusive education; (ii) relevant education; (iii) good health and nutrition; (iv) gender sensitivity; (v) parental and community engagement; and (vi) good school governance. As noted above, program implementation relies heavily on the use of school clusters, which are formal groupings of schools overseen by a Local Cluster School Committee (LCSC). The organization of schools into clusters by MoEYS helps to simplify communication between program and schools and greatly expedites the ability of programs such as ESCUP to maximize coverage and increase penetration of rural areas. The program's technical approach also includes (i) the use of cluster and secondary school grants as a means of resourcing schools, (ii) the use of activity menus

in the development of school improvement plans, and (iii) utilization of local committees such as Local Cluster School Committees (LCSCs) and Local Scholarship Management Committees (LSMCs) to implement activities on the ground.

Program Design: Overall program design takes in three overarching technical components that include Access and Quality, Teacher Education, and School-Community Partnerships. A fourth component is responsible for Program Management. Each component has identified a number of Intermediate Results with ancillary indicators defining each result. Interventions implemented under each component often overlap, highlighting the complementarity of interventions. For example, quality-focused interventions to improve classroom environments can be found mostly in the Access and Quality Component while complementary interventions to improve the quality of classroom practice can be found in the Teacher Education component. In all, the program has identified 38 technical indicators, which are described in some detail in later sections of this report. In addition, there are seven indicators that define performance standards for the Program Management Component for a total of 45 indicators in all.

Implementation Approach: Interventions are generally implemented in one of two ways. Some number of activities are centrally mediated by ESCUP technical teams. Many, though not all, of these interventions refer to teacher education workshops that aim to improve the quality of educational provision. Such interventions are implemented across all sites (e.g., community teacher training, upgrading of remote teachers, school readiness program training, etc.) though in some cases they may be limited to case study sites where the interventions are more experimental in nature (e.g., bilingual classroom assistants). Budgetary resources for such interventions are not disbursed through local channels but directly by central level.

A large number of interventions are implemented directly by stakeholders (i.e., community members, teachers, school directors, and children or some combination thereof) though with technical support from ESCUP program teams. These interventions may be core activities in which case all sites must implement them (e.g., scholarships, school mapping, community outreach, etc.) while others are more discretionary (e.g., life skills, infrastructure improvements, library improvements, etc.). Activities are identified as part of a local needs assessment exercise in which stakeholders develop plans that outline needs, objectives, and appropriate interventions. Budgetary resources for the implementation of these activities are then provided to stakeholder institutions (LCSCs, CEFACs, etc) in the form of grants to maximize the level of ownership of the program.

3. PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS FOR ACCESS & QUALITY

3.1 Overview of the Component

Activities in this component were identified to achieve four Intermediate Results. Essentially, these results encompass a double-edged strategy to first get children at risk into school and then to foster their retention in the formal education system once they get there. Getting children into school entails mapping exercises to identify children at risk (both in and out of the school system), scholarships to reduce the direct (though not opportunity costs) of education, and health services to address any physical barriers that may be preventing a child's enrolment. On the other hand, retention strategies focus on improvements in the quality of educational services by fine-tuning educational provision to fit the needs of various groups of children. This includes the provision of remedial education for children with special learning needs, life skills education to increase the relevance of learning, and modifications in the learning environment to address language barriers for minority children who do not speak the national language. These quality-focused interventions are also complemented by activities in the Teacher Education Component designed to improve classroom practice as well as those in the School-Community Partnership Component that seek to engage community members in the implementation of various activities in which their participation is key (e.g., recruitment of Community Teachers, construction of Culture Centers, etc.).

3.2 Intermediate Result A: Identifying Children at Risk

Result Statement: Schools and clusters are able to identify children at risk (both in and out-of-school) using the appropriate criteria for selection.

A key result under this component relates to the identification and tracking of children in vulnerable groups. This often entails specialized surveys that rely on school personnel as well as members of the local community. Performance standards under this result are defined by seven indicators described below.

Indicator 1: 80% of schools complete mapping exercises in year 1.

Table 3.1: Schools Completing Mapping Exercises by Province

Province	Total Assisted Schools	Schools Completing Mapping	%
Kampong Cham	95	60	63%
Kratie	41	41	100%
Mondulkiri	15	15	100%
Total	**151**	**116**	**77%**

Overall outcomes under this indicator came in slightly below the performance standard set, which was the completion of mapping exercises in 80% of target schools (see Table 3.1). The purpose of these mapping exercises was to identify children who were out-of-school. In the event, only about 77% of schools completed such exercises though it should be noted that all schools in Kratie and Mondulkiri were able to develop maps that identified the locations of children not yet enrolled. The lower rate of coverage in Kampong Cham reflects the much larger number of schools to be covered as well as the attenuation of available resources. Given the improved experiential base among stakeholders developed during the current program year, it is hoped that it will be possible to develop maps for all schools early in the next academic year (2006/7).

Indicator 2: 3,000 or more primary school children are identified as eligible for scholarship assistance.

Table 3.2: Summary of Primary School Scholarship Selection by Sex and Province

Province	Scholarship Recipients				
	Boys	%	Girls	%	Total
Kampong Cham	1,019	48%	1,093	52%	2,112
Kratie	1,041	50%	1,052	50%	2,093
Mondulkiri	319	52%	293	48%	612
Total	**2,379**	**49%**	**2,438**	**51%**	**4,817**

In all, over 4,800 children were identified to receive scholarship assistance at primary school level; thereby exceeding earlier expectations by about 61% (see Table 3.2). This largely reflects the highly disadvantaged nature of the areas where ESCUP is working. Of those identified, slightly more were girls than boys (51% versus 49%). Scholarship assistance tries to address some of the direct costs of education among rural children and comprises school uniforms, shoes in some cases, writing books, and stationery.[2] Selection for scholarship assistance is generally linked to a child's socio-economic status, which is assessed through the use of standardized data collection instruments used at household level. These instruments are administered through local committees comprising community members who were trained by ESCUP program personnel at the beginning of the year.

[2] The total monetary of scholarship packages at primary level ranges from $6 per child at Grade 1 to $8 at the upper primary grades.

Indicator 3: 450 children or more at Lower Secondary School level have been identified for scholarship assistance.

The number of children receiving scholarship support at lower secondary school level far exceeded expectations. In all, 809 children were identified to receive lower secondary school scholarships in ESCUP target schools (see Table 3.3). Of this number, 685 or 85% are reported to be girls. To a large extent, this large number of beneficiaries is due to the high proportion of beneficiaries who are supported by KAPE in ESCUP target schools under a different project known as the Girls' Education Initiative (GEI).[3] In this respect, there are 671 children supported under GEI compared to 138 receiving direct support from ESCUP in Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces, where scholarship assistance was only just recently introduced this year. Because, ESCUP program activities at lower secondary school level in Kratie and Mondulkiri are identical to those supported by KAPE in Kampong Cham, this provides the rationale for treating GEI mediated activities in Kampong Cham as one and the same project vis a vis those occurring in other ESCUP supported provinces.

Table 3.3: Summary of Secondary School Scholarship Selection by Sex and Province

Province	**Scholarship Recipients**				
	Boys	% of Total	Girls	% of Total	Total
Kratie*	33	30%	78	70%	111
Mondulkiri*	18	67%	9	33%	27
Kampong Cham	73	11%	598	89%	671
Total	**124**	**15%**	**685**	**85%**	**809**

*Beneficiaries funded directly by ESCUP

Indicator 4: At least 25% of those targeted for scholarship assistance at all levels are from minority groups.

At the primary level, 1,071 children of the 4,817 receiving scholarships were found to be from minority groups (see Table 3.4). This comprises about 22% of all those receiving scholarships. Again, the actual outcome is somewhat short of the intended target of 25%, but only by a very small margin. To be sure, a review of the data submitted by schools indicated strong affirmative action in candidate selection in Mondulkiri Province where the Phnong hill tribe minority actually forms a significant majority of the local population. In this respect, it was reported that 466 or 76% of those receiving scholarships in this province were of Phnong background. In Kampong Cham and Kratie Provinces where ethnic Khmer tend to be more numerous, minority groups received 6% (mainly Cham) and 23% (Kuoy, Steang, Phnong, and Mil) of the scholarship awards provided, respectively. These proportions generally correspond with the demographic make-up of the populations in these provinces.

Table 3.4: Scholarship Recipients by Province & Minority Status (Primary Level)

Province	Total	**Minority Recipients**			
		Boys	Girls	Total	% of All Recipients
Kampong Cham	2,112	65	68	133	6%
Kratie	2,093	237	235	472	23%
Mondulkiri	612	237	229	466	76%
Total	**4,817**	**539**	**532**	**1,071**	**22%**

[3] The Girls' Education Initiative is funded by The Asia Foundation with the support of private donors.

Table 3.5: Scholarship Recipients by Province & Minority Status (Secondary Level)

Province	Total	Minority Recipients			
		Boys	Girls	Total	% of All Recipients
Kratie	111	16	17	33	30%
Mondulkiri	27	11	7	18	67%
Kampong Cham	671	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	**809**	**27**	**24**	**51**	**37%***

*Based on Kratie and Mondulkiri totals only.

At the lower secondary school level, reporting from program sites in Kratie and Mondulkiri indicates a very high level of affirmative action on behalf of minority groups. In this respect, each province reported 30% and 67% minority representation among scholarship beneficiaries at the secondary school level, respectively (see Table 3.5). This easily meets desired performance standards of 25% minority representation among scholarship recipients stated in Indicator 4. Of those identified, 27 (or 53%) were boys and 24 (or 47%) were girls indicating a relatively even split of awards by sex. Data collection was not completed in Kampong Cham Province in time for the present report.[4] This is partly due to the fact that the administration of scholarship assistance at lower secondary school level in this province is administered under the Girls' Education Initiative associated with KAPE. As noted above, this program is administratively separate from ESCUP but nevertheless operates in target schools supported by the program.

Indicator 5: At least 150 disabled children identified in local surveys are targeted for service referral.

Table 3.6: Identification of Physically Challenged Children Survey Results

Province	Total Number of Physically Challenged Children Identified													
	Visual		Auditory		Ambulatory		Cleft Palette		Hernia/ Urinary Problems		Other		All	
	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Kampong Cham	124	48	400	153	22	7	2	1	102	0	53	12	703	224
Kratie	140	15	349	134	70	32	6	3	330	1	15	6	910	191
Mondulkiri	36	21	97	32	6	3	0	0	66	20	21	11	226	87
Total	**300**	**84**	**846**	**319**	**98**	**42**	**8**	**4**	**498**	**21**	**89**	**29**	**1,839**	**502**

Schools in all sites completed health surveys over the first six months of the school year. The purpose of these surveys was to identify children with disabilities and chronic health problems, particularly in so much as these constitute a barrier to attending school. In all, these surveys identified 1,839 children (of whom 27% were girls) with health problems and disabilities of various kinds across all three provincial sites (see Table 3.6). Once again, this outcome far exceeded initial expectations set out in Indicator 5. This not only reflects a more expansive definition of 'physically challenged children' used by the program but also the poor health conditions in target areas leading in particular to serious ear infections and other maladies. In this respect, it should be noted that a large number of the ailments reported in surveys related to auditory problems and hernias/urinary problems,[5] each of which accounted for 46% and 27% of the total, respectively. The category 'Other' refers to a wide range of problems including children with severe burns, facial cysts, and tumors among others. Surprisingly, Kratie Province represented nearly half of all those identified (49%) followed by Kampong Cham Province at 38% and Mondulkiri at 12%. Although Kampong Cham Province represents the largest proportion of schools supported under ESCUP, fewer children were registered in ESCUP mediated health surveys due to the greater penetration of areas in this province by Commune Health Clinics, health education programs (supported by Asian Develop-

[4] Minority breakdown of scholarship recipients in Kampong Cham should be available in the next round of program reporting.

[5] The term 'urinary' is used loosely in this context to include children who have been improperly circumcised leading to difficulties in urination.

ment Bank/Save the Children Australia), and previous referral sweeps conducted by KAPE.

Indicator 6: 3,000 children or more with learning difficulties are identified for assistance.

Table 3.7: Students Receiving Remediation by Province & Sex

Province	Students Receiving Remedial Support								
	Lower Primary			Upper Primary			All Grades		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Kampong Cham	1,196	1,095	2,291	97	71	168	1,293	1,166	2,459
Kratie	871	763	1,634	146	161	307	1,017	924	1,941
Mondulkiri	177	136	313	7	5	12	184	141	325
Total	**2,244**	**1,994**	**4,238**	**250**	**237**	**487**	**2,494**	**2,231**	**4,725**

In January 2006, schools completed internal assessment marking the end of the First Semester. Based on these results, children who were found to be failing were reported to program offices in each province. In all, 4,725 children were identified as eligible for village-based remediation activities (see Table 3.7). This outcome is well over the performance standard stated in Indicator 6. Program staff assisted all school clusters in training Technical Grade Leaders assigned to each school. These TGLs in turn trained remedial teachers who are currently providing special assistance to these slow learners in an informal setting close to home. Altogether, 286 remedial groups with 10 to 20 children per group have been established throughout the countryside to assist these children during the time that they are not in school. According to school reports, 53% of the children receiving remedial assistance are boys while 47% are girls; this follows a historical pattern in Cambodia where boys tend to exhibit poorer academic performance than girls and have higher repetition rates. In addition, it was found that a majority of the children requiring such assistance are in the lower primary grades (89%) while only a small number (11%) are in the upper primary grades.[6] This was less true in Kratie Province where 16% of slow learners were found to be from the upper primary level. This suggests a need for further research in order to ascertain why somewhat more children are failing in Grades 4 and 5 in Kratie when compared with other provincial sites.

Indicator 7: Case study sites for interventions relating to language proficiency difficulties are identified.

Because several of the interventions implemented by ESCUP were experimental, it was decided to select what are called 'case study sites' to pilot implementation rather than quickly going to scale with a set of as yet untried activities. In using a case study approach, program planners recognized the need to select specific sites where it would be possible to implement an intensive mix of experimental interventions. These interventions refer in particular to those that ease language barriers to learning (i.e., in cases where many minority children do not speak Khmer as their first language). Selected case study sites were defined in a way so that each province would possess one such site, usually a cluster. Thus, three clusters were chosen from among the 18 that are currently receiving support. Selection criteria considered a number of contextual factors as well as language proficiency survey data. These criteria included the following:

[6] Lower Primary is defined as Grades 1-3 while Upper Primary is defined as Grades 4-6.

Intervention-specific Factors
- Large minority presence
- Low Khmer language proficiency (operationalized by survey results)
- High level of need for proposed interventions (e.g., high dropout rates, high repetition rates, etc.)
- High concentration of Community Teachers

Community and School management related factors:
- Activity level of CEFACs
- Strong school management
- Strong cooperation at DoE level
- Representation of women and minority groups in management

Other factors:
- Level of community involvement
- Cluster is geographically viable

Based on the above criteria and survey findings, the following Case Study Sites were selected to host an intensive mix of experimental program interventions:

- Kampong Cham Province: Trawbeang Russei Cluster
- Kratie Province: Koh Dambang Cluster
- Mondulkiri Province: Bou Raing Cluster

The Language Proficiency Survey conducted by ESCUP staff was a key investigative activity that helped to assess the degree to which language barriers impeded learning among minority children in selected case study sites. In this sense, these surveys helped to validate tentative selection decisions made on the basis of the 11 criteria described above. The Language Proficiency Survey took place in the three clusters cited above and was based on interviews with classroom teachers at Grades 1 and 2 because preliminary investigations had indicated that this is where minority children have the least proficiency in Khmer Language.

Survey results were striking in that they suggested the existence of significant difficulties in understanding the language of instruction among minority children in comparison to ethnic Khmer children. Given the fact that teachers have tended to underestimate the significance of language barriers in school in similar surveys,[7] these findings were rather surprising. The extent of the language barriers found in the survey was particularly striking in Kampong Cham Province where it was reported that 98% of minority children at Grade 1 spoke Cham as their primary language and that about a third had difficulty understanding Khmer Language. The comparable proportions in Mondulkiri were 87% and 86%, respectively. These patterns were persistent through to Grade 2 where teachers reported similar proportions of children encountering difficulty in understanding. While the findings in Mondulkiri Province are not surprising given the ethnic homogeneity of large tracts of the province and the remoteness of minority communities from Khmer-speaking areas, the results in Kampong Cham ran counter to the conventional wisdom on the extent of assimilative tendencies in this mainstream, highly populated province. Although many members of the education establishment maintain that Cham children in Kampong Cham speak Khmer Language from an early age, program survey results did not support this view. This speaks to the fact that Cham communities tend to be highly insular in spite of the fact that they live in close proximity to ethnic Khmer villages. In contrast to the survey findings in Kampong Cham and Mondulkiri, Kratie Province did not exhibit serious language barriers, at least in Koh Dambang Cluster where the survey took place. Indeed, it was surprising to find that although Kuoy children constituted 100% of the survey population, none could speak the Kuoy Language. This suggests the possible need to review whether Koh Dambang should be kept as a case study site in spite of its high standing with respect to other contextual variable considered (e.g., community engagement, management, etc.).

[7] See, for example, surveys conducted by CARE in Ratanakiri Province for the Highland Children's Education Program (HCEP).

3.3 Intermediate Result B: Effective Implementation of Interventions Designed to Promote Access

Result Statement: Interventions designed to increase access and retention are implemented effectively.

The indicators under this result statement focus on tracking the effectiveness of the implementation of those interventions designed to meet the needs of children who have been identified as being at risk. This refers both to improved access to school as well as support to stay in school once enrolled. Performance standards in this regard examine rates of dropout among high-risk children, levels of advocacy (e.g., affirmative action for minorities), and the degree to which targeted services have been received (e.g., treatment of health ailments and physical rehabilitation). Readers should be reminded that key interventions such as scholarships have not yet been implemented in one school cluster in Kampong Cham Province, which lowers the total number of assisted schools in the reporting year from 151 to 144. This variation in numbers is reflected in the variable total number of schools reported for several of the indicators below.

Indicator 8: At least 40% of primary schools report declines in dropout from baseline levels.

Although the academic year is not yet finished, ESCUP has undertaken school-wide surveys to assess dropout levels among the general student population in assisted schools at mid-year (March). These surveys will be undertaken again at the end of the school year to determine final dropout rate across all grades. Currently, 97 schools have reported that dropout levels are lower than they were in the previous academic year (see Table 3.8). This comprises about 67% of those schools receiving interventions during Project Year 1. Kratie appears to be doing particularly well with 75% of schools reporting lower dropout rates. To be sure, dropout levels often spike after the Khmer New Year holiday in April when the planting season begins. Nevertheless, the program is so far exceeding performance standards that expected only 40% of schools to report declines in dropout levels by the end of the first academic year.

Table 3.8: Change in Dropout Rates by School at Mid-Year in Project Year 1

Province	Number of Schools	Schools Reporting Decline in Dropout at Mid-Year	%
Kampong Cham	89	57	64%
Kratie	40	30	75%
Mondulkiri	15	10	67%
Total	**144**	**97**	**67%**

Indicator 9: At least 40% of those identified as being outside the school system are enrolled with scholarship support.

Table 3.9: Out-of-School Children Re-enrolled and Receiving Scholarships by Province

Province	No. of Out-of-school Children Identified		No. of Out-of-school Children Re-enrolled				No. of Re-enrolled Children Receiving Scholarships			
	Total	Female	Total	%	Female	%	Total	%	Female	%
Kampong Cham	1,081	486	339	31%	166	34%	328	97%	130	78%
Kratie	650	246	188	29%	92	37%	139	74%	67	73%
Mondulkiri	9	5	9	100%	5	100%	9	100%	5	100%
Total	**1,740**	**737**	**536**	**31%**	**263**	**36%**	**476**	**89%**	**202**	**77%**

During school mapping exercises (also known as Child Seeking Schools activities) mentioned earlier, 1,740 children were identified as being out-of-school. Of these, about 42% were girls (see Table 3.9). Advocacy efforts and the promise of assistance through scholarship support and other interventions re-

sulted in the eventual enrolment of 536 of these children during the early months of the school year. This represents about 31% of those identified as being outside of the educational system. This number falls short of the hoped for outcome of 40% re-enrolment among this group. Further discussions are taking place in schools to find solutions for those who continue to be out-of-school. In many cases, the problems preventing enrolment exceed the capacity of the program to intervene and include extreme poverty, no annex school provision, distance, and/or rugged terrain between school and home. An important outcome of the Child Seeking School exercise is that each school now has an up-to-date and clear picture of the situation in the coverage area about families at risk. School staff and community representatives have agreed to appoint focal points in each village to establish good relationships with these families and discuss how the school and ESCUP can respond to their specific needs to eliminate these additional barriers to enrollment. The program is, therefore, optimistic that it can increase the number of re-enrolled children over the course of the next school year.

It should also be noted that the number of children identified as being outside the school system in Mondulkiri is surprisingly low. In this respect, only 15 such children were identified, all of whom were eventually re-enrolled. Discussions with communities and school personnel in the province revealed that they define the catchment area of their schools in a very narrow way and only consider those villages in closest proximity to the school. This is partly because un-served villages may be many kilometers away over very difficult terrain. Thus, mapping exercises in the next academic year may need to help communities in Mondulkiri redefine school catchment areas in order to consider the needs of as yet un-served villages.

In awarding scholarship assistance, clusters were asked to attach considerable significance to the enrolment status of a child; that is, whether the child was previously enrolled or had been out-of-school for at least several months. Except in cases where the reason for being out of school was non-economic, most of those children who re-enrolled at the beginning of the school year did so with scholarship assistance. According to Table 3.9, this included 89% of all those re-enrolled and 77% of those who were female.

Indicator 10: 60% of the children out of school who are enrolled are girls, disabled, or come from minority groups.

Table 3.10: Demographic Characteristics of Re-enrolled Children by Province

Province	% Girls	Minority Re-enrollees†		Physically Challenged Re-enrollees†		% Coming form Target Groups*
		% Girls	% Boys	% Girls	% Boys	
Kampong Cham	54%	6%	6%	0.2%	0%	60%
Kratie	53%	4%	9%	0%	0%	62%
Mondulkiri	33%	8%	21%	0%	0%	54%
Total	**53%**	**6%**	**7%**	**0.2%**	**0%**	**60%**

*Accommodates overlap between groups by sex; †Percentages calculated on the basis of Total Re-enrolled Children

In advocating for the enrolment of out-of-school children, ESCUP had sought to ensure that a large number of those re-enrolled came from target groups (i.e., girls, minorities, and physically challenged children). Survey reports indicate near exact conformity with a performance standard in which 60% of those re-enrolled come from target groups. In this respect, survey teams indicated that 53% of those re-enrolled were girls while 13% were from minority groups. Sadly, physically challenged children did not figure prominently among those re-enrolled and only one child in this category was among those previously out-of-school but who opted to re-enter the school system. Nevertheless, accounting for the overlap between target groups, survey reports indicate that exactly 60% of those re-enrolled were female, of minority extraction, and/or physically challenged.

Indicator 11: 3,000 children or more are receiving scholarship assistance in all grades.

Table 3.11: Scholarship Assistance in the Context of Total Enrolment (18 Target School Clusters)

Province	Total Students Enrolled	Total Scholarship Recipients	%
Kampong Cham	37,350	2,112	5.7%
Kratie	8,383	2,093	25.0%
Mondulkiri	1,879	612	32.6%
Total	**47,612**	**4,817**	**10.1%**

As noted earlier, 4,817 children have been receiving scholarship support from ESCUP since the beginning of the school year. As a percentage of the total student population in target schools, approximately one child in ten is receiving scholarship assistance from ESCUP (see Table 3.11) though this average is much higher in provinces such as Kratie where one in four is receiving support and Mondulkiri where one in three is receiving such support. Program staff members have reported some difficulties in implementation. These relate to the timeliness of disbursement of scholarship materials. Although schools in Kampong Cham were able to make disbursements in November, those in Kratie and Mondulkiri did not succeed in doing so until December 2005. Timeliness of scholarship support is often crucial to its effectiveness. Children at risk of dropping out of school often do not wait for slow bureaucrats but rather leave school without notice. In addition, many school directors in Kratie provided all scholarship aid in one disbursement instead of two as was originally agreed. The experience of other scholarship programs indicates that effectiveness is best maximized by spreading out reinforcing assistance over a long period rather than providing everything at one time. Because this is the first time that scholarship support activities have been run in Kratie, it is understandable that implementation has had problems. Nevertheless, program personnel will soon be conducting spot checks and review meetings with stakeholders in order to improve implementation.

Indicator 12: Transition rates to lower secondary school increase in 80% or more of target schools.

Program monitors found great difficulty in monitoring transition rate at target schools because of the many obstacles in determining student flows among those studying in feeder schools. In some cases in Kratie, for example, total Grade 7 enrolment exceeded total Grade 6 enrolment in official feeder schools leading to rates in excess of 100%. This suggests significant inflows from other schools or cohorts. Alternatively, transition rates in some schools in Kampong Cham have been affected by hand over of intakes from KAPE to a World Bank scholarship program that does not possess boarding provisions. This has led to a decline in transition in several schools there as children from remote areas cannot cover their costs to attend with the monetary provisions under the Bank program. In Mondulkiri, secondary schools in the two ESCUP affiliated districts were only constructed in 2005 making it difficult to establish a baseline in these areas. In all, the information presented in Table 3.12 is somewhat confusing and does not make it possible to make definitive statements about changes in transition. Be that as it may, field reports indicate that eight schools (or 67%) out of the 12 with baseline figures have raised their rate of transition. Overall, the average rate of change in transition was reported to be +13%.

Table 3.12: Change in Transition Rates in Assisted Schools

Province	Secondary School	Transition Rate (Baseline Year)	Transition Rate in 2005/6	Change
Kampong Cham	1. Tbong Khmum HS	73%	83%	+10%
	2. Khnar Jr HS	80%	71%	-9%
	3. Kbal O Jr HS	42%	73%	+31%
	4. Krek Jr HS	77%	70%	-7%
	5. Ponyea Krek HS	72%	59%	-13%
	6. Kandaol Chrum Jr HS	73%	98%	+25%
Kratie	7. Svay Chreas Jr HS	81%	79%	-2%
	8. Pa-ak Jr HS	91%	119%	+28
	9. Veal Kyang Jr HS	45%	76%	+31%
	10. Hun Sen Snuol Jr HS	90%	101%	+11%
	11. Sampakborak Jr HS	92%	107	+15%
	12. Sandan HS	94%	131%	+37%
Mondulkiri*	13. Oraing Jr HS	--	118%	--
	14. Keo Seima Jr HS	--	60%	--
	Average	**76%**	**89%**	**+13%**

Indicator 13: At least 85% of scholarship beneficiaries at all levels remain enrolled.

Table 3.13: Dropout Rate among Primary School Scholarship Recipients

Province	Total Scholarship Beneficiaries			Beneficiaries Dropping Out			Beneficiaries Remaining			Remaining as a % of Total Beneficiaries		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Kampong Cham	1,019	1,093	2,112	18	12	30	1,001	1,081	2,082	98%	99%	99%
Kratie	1,041	1,052	2,093	9	8	17	1,032	1,044	2,076	99%	99%	99%
Mondulkiri	319	293	612	7	7	14	312	286	598	98%	98%	98%
Total	**2,379**	**2,438**	**4,817**	**34**	**27**	**61**	**2,345**	**2,411**	**4,756**	**99%**	**99%**	**99%**

Among those receiving scholarship support at primary school level, retention levels have been very high. In this respect, only 61 children out of 4,817 beneficiaries have opted to leave school at primary level. This represents less than 1% of those receiving support. This pattern of retention appeared to be true across all provinces where rates are generally found to be between 98% and 99%. Once again, these retention levels greatly exceed original expectations though it can be expected that dropout pressures will be very great when the new planting season begins in May.

Table 3.14: Dropout Rate among Secondary School Scholarship Recipients

Province	Total Scholarship Beneficiaries			Beneficiaries Dropping Out			Beneficiaries Remaining			Remaining as a % of Total Beneficiaries		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Kampong Cham	73	598	671	4	30	34	69	568	637	95%	95%	95%
Kratie	33	78	111	0	0	0	33	78	111	100%	100%	100%
Mondulkiri	18	9	27	0	0	0	18	9	27	100%	100%	100%
Total	**124**	**685**	**809**	**4**	**30**	**34**	**120**	**655**	**775**	**97%**	**96%**	**96%**

A similar pattern of high retention has been reported at the secondary school level where no scholarship recipients have dropped out in schools directly supported by ESCUP (i.e., those in Kratie and Mondulkiri) (see Table 3.14). Schools in Kampong Cham, however, report that 34 beneficiaries dropped out over the course of the last six months. Overall, the program has been able to demonstrate 96% retention among beneficiaries at secondary school level. The difference in dropout patterns between Kampong Cham and other provincial sites may be related to the kind of scholarships provided. In this respect, a large number of beneficiaries in Kampong Cham receive what are known as Category 1 scholarships where there are no provisions for room and board. Because of the more pronounced nature of remoteness in Kratie and Mondulkiri, a large number of scholarship recipients are receiving Category 3 scholarships because they live so far from the school. Previous experience tends to indicate that when children live away from their families, they are more insulated from the pressures of everyday living including the pressure to drop out of school. Thus, Category 3 Scholarship recipients tend to have very low levels of dropout. In addition, a large number of the dropouts in Kampong Cham reportedly dropped out at Grade 9 where opportunity cost pressures are severe. This is in contrast to Kratie and Mondulkiri where the newness of the program has ensured beneficiaries at Grade 7 only. This factor, along with the very large number of beneficiaries supported in Kampong Cham may explain the difference in dropout levels between sites.

Indicator 14: At least 150 disabled children identified in surveys receive some form of assistance.

Following the completion of health surveys in all sites, ESCUP began the process of making referrals to service providers both in the province of origin and in Phnom Penh. Since the beginning of the school year, 362 children have been referred for treatment to various service providers (see Table 3.15). This accounts for about 20% of those identified thus far, suggesting a large caseload for the remaining quarters of program implementation. Nevertheless, the program has once again far exceeded the number of children that it thought it could reach as originally articulated in Indicator 14.

Table 3.15: Treatment of Disabled Children and Those with Chronic Health Problems by Province

Province	Total Children Receiving Treatment															
	Visual		Auditory		Ambulatory		Cleft Palette		Hernia/ Urinary Problems		Other		All		As a % of Those Identified	
	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F
Kampong Cham	6	4	116	46	0	0	1	0	39	0	4	2	166	38	24%	17%
Kratie	13	9	74	31	21	10	1	1	37	3	1	1	147	55	16%	29%
Mondulkiri	8	5	26	13	3	1	1	0	10	0	1	1	49	20	22%	23%
Total	**27**	**18**	**216**	**90**	**24**	**11**	**3**	**1**	**86**	**3**	**6**	**4**	**362**	**113**	**20%**	**23%**

Mobilization of resources for referrals began with a strong focus on children in Kampong Cham (166 referrals) and Kratie (147 referrals) due to the difficulties posed by the remoteness of reaching potential beneficiaries in Mondulkiri. Referrals in Mondulkiri began in January 2006 and have so far resulted in the treatment of 49 children. Decision-making for the selection of referred cases has been difficult and usually depends on the seriousness of a child's ailment. For example, one girl with a large facial cyst that was displacing her eyes was in danger of losing her sight. A visiting American surgeon at Kheang Khleang Hospital was able to perform major surgery that led to the removal of the cyst. Such cases are usually classified as a priority, particularly when the presence of visiting specialists ensures only a small window of opportunity for treatment. ESCUP was also able to coordinate with an Operation Smile Team who was visiting from the United States. This led to interventions for four children suffering from cleft palette. Using the service referral network earlier developed by KAPE, ESCUP has been able to benefit from major discounts in the provision of medical services. This includes the free services at Kheang Khleang, free facilities at Handicap International/Kampong Cham, and special discounts for operations at a clinic in Maemot District (Kampong Cham Province) operated by Save the Children Fund Australia as well as provincial hospitals in Kampong Cham and Kratie. Grants for assistance to disabled children generally apply for the travel and lodging costs of beneficiaries and an accompanying parent, medicine, and discounted operations when required.

Case Study: A Life Changed

Trav Rith is a 13 year old boy who studies at Pou TruLeu Primary School in Mondulkiri Province. He was born in a family of two children and his parents divorced a long time ago. Last year his mother passed away due to an unknown disease; therefore, Rith's old grandmother has taken over the care of the children. Rith has had health problems since birth as he suffers from a hernia. During the cool season or when he has a fever, his condition seems to worsen. He could not attend school regularly and he found it hard to concentrate on his studies. For a long time, Rith felt very shy and ashamed of his condition, especially among his friends.

At present Rith studies in Grade 3. This year his school received support from the ESCUP program for several activities and Rith was selected for a scholarship, which made him and his grandmother very happy. But when the ESCUP program also offered to assist him in receiving medical treatment for his hernia, he was really excited. Although he worried about both the operation and the need to stay in the hospital for 9 days, he was happy to hear that his condition could be treated. Rith went to the hospital in Memot District in Kampong Cham province and explains that he feels healthy and happy since the operation.

Rith's View: "I am not ashamed among my friends anymore. I enjoy going to school and study hard and I can concentrate much better. This semester I was Number 8 in my class! I hope that ESCUP will continue its support so that other children with the same problems as me will also feel happy and healthy".

Indicator 15: 80% or more of physically challenged children receiving assistance stay enrolled.

Table 3.16: Dropout among Physically Challenged Children Receiving Assistance

Province	Physically Challenged Children Assisted*	Physically Challenged Children Dropping Out	% Dropping Out	% Remaining
Kampong Cham	101	0	0	100%
Kratie	119	0	0	100%
Mondulkiri	48	1	2%	98%
Total	268	1	0.4%	99.6%

*Totals do not include children suffering from acute ailments such as ear infections, respiratory infections, etc.

Surveys of children suffering from chronic disabilities but who have received medical assistance from the program indicate that the vast majority have remained enrolled in school. Indeed, one child in this category in Mondulkiri was reported to have dropped out. Thus, retention rates among this group have averaged 99%, far in excess of the stated performance standard of 80% (see Table 3.16). It is of course difficult to determine with certainty whether it was program interventions that have made a difference in retention levels or whether these children would have remained enrolled without such support. This suggests the need for some validation of the reported outcome. This might refer to a special survey of a random sample of 'all' those children who have been identified with a chronic disability to determine comparative rates of dropout vis a vis those reported for children receiving medical treatment.

Indicator 16: PTR declines in at least 75% of clusters.

Table 3.17: Change in Pupil Teacher Ratio in Supported School Clusters

Province	Total Schools	Schools Reporting Decline in PTR	As a % of All Schools	Average PTR Level in 2005/6
Kampong Cham	98	58	65%	61:1
Kratie	40	28	70%	43:1
Mondulkiri	15	11	73%	44:1
Total	**144**	**97**	**67%**	**55:1**

Interventions intended to achieve changes in Pupil Teacher Ratios reflect a key part of ESCUP's overall design. Lowering of PTR levels in target schools is a necessary enabling condition that makes quality improvements in classroom practice possible. That is, it is clearly not possible to effect child-centered instructional techniques when there are 80 or 90 children to a classroom. Thus, the program has invested considerable amounts of resources in the provision of Community Teachers and official recruitment of local teaching candidates for entry into Provincial Teacher Training Colleges. According to survey reports, these changes have had major impact on PTR levels with a total of 67% of schools reporting a decline in PTR levels from last year (see Table 3.17). The biggest impacts have been reported in Mondulkiri with 73% of schools reporting such reductions and Kratie where 70% of schools reported declines in PTR. Impacts were significant but still somewhat muted in Kampong Cham due to the high population concentrations to be found in there. Overall, the average PTR level in supported schools changed from 64:1 in 2004/5 to 55:1 in the current academic year. To be sure, the PTR reductions described fall short of the stated program performance standard in which it was expected that 75% of schools would be able to report reductions in PTR levels. In addition, it may be difficult to make further inroads with respect to reducing PTR levels as strained program resources will likely not permit any further increases in the number of Community Teachers currently fielded or additional recruitment of PTTC scholarship candidates.

Indicator 17: 25% or more of incomplete schools add at least 1 grade

Table 3.18: Incomplete Schools Adding a Grade by Province

Province	Total Number of Incomplete Schools	Total Schools Adding a Grade	As a % of All Schools
Kampong Cham	35	18	51%
Kratie	19	12	63%
Mondulkiri	10	10	100%
Total	**64**	**40**	**63%**

Increasing the total number of grades taught at incomplete schools is another major program strategy designed to make permanent structural changes in the local educational system leading to long-term reductions in dropout levels. In explanation, it is believed that a major underlying cause for dropout lies in the fact that young children attending incomplete schools are often faced with a difficult decision either to continue their education at a far-away school with the next grade to which they have been promoted or to dropout. In many cases, families opt for the latter choice. Thus, adding grades to incomplete schools is seen as a means of keeping children enrolled by reducing access barriers. ESCUP has implemented interventions in this area primarily by building temporary school structures with communities, making structural additions to existing school buildings, and helping local communities to recruit local teachers. These interventions appear to have had a major impact against intended outcomes with 63% of incomplete schools reporting that they have been able to add a grade since the previous academic year (see Table 3.18). This far exceeds original expectations that only 25% of such schools would be able to make such improvements in access. This outcome helps to justify the strategic diversion of considerable amounts of resources to expanded recruitment and training of Community Teachers at the beginning of the school year.

Indicator 18: Retention rates among minority children receiving interventions designed to improve language proficiency improves from a baseline (case study sites only.)

To be assessed at the end of the academic year

3.4 Intermediate Result C: Learning Achievement among Slow Learners

Result Statement: The learning achievement of slow learners improves as the result of remedial interventions.

Outcomes under this result refer primarily to terminal learning achievement among those children receiving remedial support. Remedial activities are still in progress as of the writing of this report. These will conclude in June 2006 shortly before children are scheduled to take internal end-of-year tests that will play a significant role in promotion decisions. Data relating to the effectiveness of interventions under this intermediate result will, therefore, not be available until the end of the academic year in July 2006.

Indicator 19: At least 50% of those designated as slow learners are promoted.

To be assessed at the end of the academic year

Indicator 20: Student repetition rates decline in at least 40% of target schools by the end of the academic year.

To be assessed at the end of the academic year

3.5. Intermediate Result D: Relevant Educational Provision

Result Statement: Educational provision in schools is more relevant to student needs.

In contrast to Intermediate Results A and B, which concentrate on educational access, this intermediate result focuses primarily on 'quality' concerns in the educational system. In this context, quality is defined largely in terms of the 'relevance' of educational provision to children's learning needs and school/classroom environments that are conducive to optimal learning. ESCUP has tried to operationalize educational relevance first by promoting and monitoring life skills education in as many schools as possible, following a framework developed by Ministry in collaboration with Research Triangle Institute (RTI). In addition to this, ESCUP has adapted an assessment tool developed by KAPE that tries to determine the extent of quality-focused activities occurring in schools. These activities take in life skills instruction as well as the availability of library services, the occurrence of field trips, and other activities/services that promote quality learning. Finally, the program has also provided support to the Ministry's School Readiness Program, which seeks to provide enhanced learning environments and educational provision to children at Grade 1 level. ESCUP has agreed to support 52 such classrooms during the 2005/6 academic year. Progress against indicators measuring this intermediate result is described below.

Indicator 21: At least 25% of target schools provide more relevant education in the form of local life skill activities.

Table 3.19: Schools Providing Local Life Skills Provisions by Province

Province	Total Assisted Schools	Schools Providing Local Life Skills	As a % of All Schools
Kampong Cham	89	22	25%
Kratie	40	21	53%
Mondulkiri	15	5	33%
Total	**144**	**48**	**33%**

As part of the school improvement planning process at the beginning of the school year, many clusters requested grant funds to support life skills activities in selected schools. These life skills activities, provided over a period of 10 to 18 weeks, are of two kinds. One genre focuses on pre-vocational skills such as hair cutting, sewing, bicycle repair, and cooking. Another genre looks at cultural life skills and entails instruction in traditional dance, music, and even language if communities are interested in this. The latter genre of life skills is a new experimental activity being piloted by ESCUP while the former is a tried and tested intervention that has been adopted from earlier programs in Kampong Cham. According to local reports, 48 schools are currently in the process of providing life skills instruction in ESCUP sites, representing about 33% of the schools currently receiving support (see Table 3.19). Thus, the number of schools providing more relevant educational provision exceeds the original target by 8%.

Indicator 22: 40% or more of schools achieve a score of satisfactory or better on a standardized instrument measuring educational relevance.

The indicator stated above describes 'educational relevance' in a more expansive sense than just life skills provision. Although this definition of relevance includes life skills education, it also takes in several other kinds of educational provision that contributes to improved quality of learning. These are listed below:

1. Presence of a life skill activity or cultural life skill activity
2. Presence of efforts to address language barriers in instruction (BCA or SKL)
3. Presence of library facilities

4. Availability of library books rotated from a school with a library
5. Availability of Learning Corners in classrooms
6. Availability of special tutoring support from teachers
7. Availability of special tutoring support from peers
8. Children have participated in Field Trips to educational places of interest
9. Indication that children have an opportunity to write and exchange correspondence with other children
10. Children have participated in Market Simulations
11. Children have received orientations about health protection (protecting eyes, ears,
12. Educational exhibitions in schools (e.g., cultural centers with artifacts, labeling of plants & trees, etc.)

Survey teams attempted to assess relevance by determining the number of activities cited above that are occurring in each school. An acceptable level of relevance was defined as the provision of five or more of the activities identified from among the 12 that ESCUP will support. Survey results indicated that 44% of all schools are meeting the program's criterion for more relevant educational provision as compared to earlier expectations of 40% stated in the indicator (see Table 3.20).

Table 3.20: Schools Scoring 'Satisfactory' on an Educational Relevance Scale by Province

Province	Total Assisted Schools	Schools Scoring 'Satisfactory' on a Relevance Scale	As a % of All Schools
Kampong Cham	89	30	34%
Kratie	40	22	55%
Mondulkiri	15	12	80%
Total	**144**	**64**	**44%**

The total number of activities relating to educational relevance across program-supported schools is quite striking. Altogether, there are 650 such activities occurring across all schools with the most frequently implemented ones being health protection orientations,[8] teacher tutoring, and peer tutoring (see Table 3.21). Field trips, learning corners, and market simulations are among the least cited though it is hoped that this will change as clusters gain proficiency in school improvement planning and implementation.

Table 3.21: Number of Activities Designed to Promote Educational Relevance across All Supported Schools

Activity	Number of Activities Implemented by Each School			
	Kampong Cham	Kratie	Mondulkiri	Total
1. Life Skill/Cultural Life Skills	22	21	5	**48**
2. Linguistic-based Interventions	7	5	8	**20**
3. Presence of library facilities	50	17	9	**76**
4. Rotating Libraries	14	4	11	**29**
5. Learning Corners	8	8	1	**17**
6. Teacher Tutoring	78	38	11	**127**
7. Peer Tutoring	57	31	10	**98**
8. Field Trips	4	1	1	**6**
9. Pen Pal Networks	28	22	6	**56**
10. Market Simulations	2	2	0	**4**
11. Health Protection Orientations*	83	35	14	**132**
12. Educational Exhibitions	12	16	9	**37**
Total	**365**	**200**	**85**	**650**

[8] Health Orientations occur as part of the screening procedure to identify children in need of medical treatment and service referral

Indicator 23: 50 classrooms meet criteria defining child friendliness. (Grade 1 only)

Table 3.22: School Readiness Program Classrooms Meeting Criteria for Child Friendliness

Province	Total Number of Target Classrooms	Classrooms Scoring 'Satisfactory' or better on a CFS Scale	As a % of Targeted Classrooms
Kampong Cham	26	26	100%
Kratie	26	26	100%
Mondulkiri	--	--	--
Total	**52**	**52**	**100%**

As part of its support to the School Readiness Program, ESCUP invested considerable funds in enhancing classroom environments. This included provision of new furniture that would facilitate group work and classroom demonstrations, materials for colorful and interesting classroom displays, and teaching aids. A total of 52 classrooms received assistance in this regard in Kampong Cham and Kratie. No assistance was provided to Mondulkiri because of the late return of state teachers from their home provinces at the start of the new school year. Survey teams developed a special assessment form that evaluated classroom displays, furniture arrangements, and cleanliness & order. Classroom practice was evaluated in a special evaluation project that was done in collaboration with UNICEF and KAPE (see Indicator 24). According to surveys, all classrooms met minimum performance standards with respect to the organization of the physical environment (see Table 3.22). However, average scores tended to show weakness in the organization of classroom displays where the average score was only 67% (see Table 3.23). In this regard, survey teams found that a sizable number of teachers had not bothered to use materials provided to decorate classrooms in an attractive manner or had failed to appreciate the perspective of the child in the way that they had arranged didactic posters and pictures (e.g., placing posters 3 meters high). This partly resulted from the fact that many teachers reported that they had been forced to participate in the School Readiness Program by school directors in spite of program guidelines to seek out volunteer teachers only. Program managers had foreseen that forcing teachers to comply with SRP implementation guidelines would likely not be very successful and this is exactly what has happened in the classrooms with such teachers. This serves as an important lesson for future expansion of the SRP program and CFS classrooms, which will be undertaken in the next academic year.

Table 3.23: Performance Scores for Physical Environments of SRP Classrooms

Criterion	Average Score*	Classrooms Scoring Satisfactory or Better	As a % of All Classrooms
Classroom Display	67%	47	90%
Furniture Arrangements	86%	52	100%
Cleanliness & Order	74%	52	100%
Total	**77%**	--	--

*50% or better is considered 'satisfactory'

4. PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

4.1 Component Overview

Activities in the Teacher Education Component have been guided by the pursuit of two intermediate results. One of these focuses on trying to improve classroom practice among selected teachers in a variety of different contexts. These contexts include improvements in Grade 1 classrooms under the government's School Readiness Program, intensive preparation and support of Community Teachers, teachers working in bi-lingual environments, multi-grade classrooms, and experimental CFS classrooms. The other intermediate result encompasses activities that seek to make the Provincial Teacher Training Colleges serving each target province more responsive to the needs of program schools. Some of the interventions supported by ESCUP in this respect build on existing initiatives (e.g., SRP and CFS experimental classrooms) while others are more experimental in nature (e.g., Supplementary Khmer Language classes, Bi-lingual Classroom Assistants). If one includes Community Teachers recruited by ESCUP, there is a total target population of 892 teachers working in program-supported schools. During the first year of programming, ESCUP has provided technical support to about 243 of these representing about 27% of all teachers. This proportion of assisted teachers will hopefully increase as additional interventions come on line, particularly with respect to the implementation of CFS experimental classrooms.

4.2 Intermediate Result A: Capacity Building and Changes in Classroom Practice

Result Statement: Classroom practice becomes more child-centered in comparison to a previously established baseline.

Indicators under this intermediate result pertain primarily to the provision and scope of capacity building activities and the terminal results observed in subsequent classroom practice. Because of the breadth of activity under this result, feedback for several indicators has been postponed to the next program year.

Indicator 24: Classroom practice among 50% of a sample of SRP teachers becomes more child-centered.

Table 4.1: School Readiness Program Classrm Practice & Standards for Child-centeredness by Province

Province	Total Number of SRP Teachers	Total Number of Observed Teachers	Number of Teachers at Satisfactory or Better	As a % of Those Observed
Kampong Cham	26	5	5	100%
Kratie	26	8	6	75%
Mondulkiri	--	--	--	--
Total	**52**	**13**	**11**	**85%**

Classroom practice among SRP teachers was assessed in a joint evaluation conducted by KAPE that was funded by UNICEF and ESCUP. As part of the assessment, a statistically randomized sample of 50 teachers across four provinces (i.e., Kampong Cham, Kratie, Prey Veng, and Kampong Thom) was observed of whom 13 were working in ESCUP classrooms. Evaluative information presented in this report is based on the performance of that part of the sample comprised by ESCUP affiliated teachers. In this respect, it was reported that 85% of the teachers observed had scored 'satisfactory' or better on a standardized classroom observation instrument (see Table 4.1). This instrument assessed 13 discrete proficiencies in teaching across three broad parametric areas including (i) Classroom Organization; (ii) Teaching & Learning; and (iii) Development of Key Skills. Two teachers (or 25% of the sample) in Kratie Province had scored below a minimum standard of performance.

In more general terms, the sample wide assessment report compiled by KAPE and World Education made some very telling observations about the program. Evaluators found that the program's theoretical underpinning encourages teaching methodologies used in early childhood programs of quality worldwide. SRP seems to have had a real effect on the success of the first months of formal education of children in Grade

1. In this respect, research findings indicated that the program had been most successful in its ability to create effective classroom learning environments. Using a very high standard for educational quality, it had some though more limited success in promoting proficiencies in the areas of teaching and learning. On one level, most teachers had been able to successfully develop an approach to their lessons where children engaged in numerous activities designed to promote basic literacy and numeracy. They were relatively conversant in organizing children to learn in both large and small groups and used teaching/learning aids effectively to implement activities. On another level, however, teachers had not yet fully internalized the program's philosophy about how children learn. This was particularly true with respect to their ability to provide opportunities for decision-making, self-directed behavior, inquiry, and contextually meaningful learning. As a result, they had more limited success in promoting higher-order thinking skills in their classrooms. Based on these observations, the evaluators noted the possible need for a two-tiered assessment of the School Readiness Program.

In a larger sense, the need for a two-level assessment highlights a growing tension in the CFS framework to reconcile earlier themes of developing program models that promote higher-order thinking skills with nation-wide concerns to address the failure of many children to achieve basic literacy and numeracy skills, particularly in Grade 1. Thus, to some extent, the School Readiness Program can be forgiven for striving to achieve a more minimalist standard that focuses on the 'basics' in an environment where student repetition rates are sky-rocketing and children reach the end of Grade 1 with little or no ability to do basic arithmetic, read, or write. Notwithstanding these concerns, the above discussion does highlight the need to consider efforts to bring the School Readiness Program to the next level, particularly for more experienced teachers.

Indicator 25: At least 180 community teachers receive training in a 10-day preparatory course at the beginning of Program Year 1.

As an interim strategy to address the severe teacher shortage problem in target areas, ESCUP moved quickly to identify and train locally recruited community teachers in supported schools at the beginning of the academic year. Although ESCUP had originally planned to support 60 such teachers, local requests for assistance greatly exceeded initial expectations leading to a total recruitment of 184 teachers (of whom 36% were female), thereby meeting revised performance standards. Activities orchestrated by the School-Community Partnership Component led to community organized recruitment drives before schools opened in which minority groups and women were given priority for selection. Final recruitment and deployment of Community Teachers are summarized in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Community Teachers Recruited by Sex & Province

Province	Cluster	Schools with CTs	Community Teachers	Female
Kampong Cham	Khnar	11	15	6
	Tr. Russei	9	20	9
	Koki	9	14	6
	Ponhea Krek	6	9	5
	Ampouk	2	10	3
	Stung	2	10	4
	K. Chrum	8	19	2
	Ponley	7	14	7
	Total	*54*	*111*	*42*
Kratie	KohDambang	8	9	0
	O'Krieng	3	4	3
	O'Taneung	5	7	6
	Sandan	2	4	0
	Phi Thnou	4	6	1
	Ksoeum	8	8	4
	Svay Chreas	4	9	2
	Vealkyang	3	5	3
	Total	*37*	*52*	*19*
Mondulkiri	Keo Seima	10	13	5
	Boureang	4	8	1
	Total	*14*	*21*	*6*
Total	**18**	**105**	**184**	**67**

Community teachers are being remunerated at a rate of $18 per month until July 2006 at which time their contracts may be extended pending an evaluation of their performance.[9] Locally recruited teachers, working in a capacity and under conditions analogous to MoEYS Contract Teachers, will fill gaps in the ranks of teachers until the ESCUP-supported graduates of PTTC pre-service training return to their communes and schools after two years. One exception to this observation, however, is that community teachers, unlike contract teachers, have received ten days of intensive training and a CFS tool kit before they took up their posts as teachers at the beginning of November 2005. They have also received continuous technical support from ESCUP during the academic year thus far, which consists of periodic classroom visits by program staff as well as follow-up workshops once every two months where, for example, teachers can participate in demonstration lessons (see picture) and discuss methodological issues with program staff.

Indicator 26: At least 90% of community teachers complete the full year of teaching.

Table 4.3: Drop Out Among Community Teachers by Province

Province	**Total Community Teachers at Intake**	**Community Teachers Dropping Out**	**Community Teachers Remaining**	**Remaining as a % of Intake**
Kampong Cham	111	5	106	95%
Kratie	52	0	52	100%
Mondulkiri	21	0	21	100%
Total	**184**	**5**	**179**	**97%**

Dropout levels among Community Teachers have thus far been very modest. In this respect, there have been no dropouts among teachers recruited in Kratie and Mondulkiri and only five among those working in Kampong Cham. Altogether, 97% of the originally recruited and trained teachers currently remain at their posts, thereby falling within current the stated performance standard of 90% retention (see Table 4.3). Because remuneration levels for teachers are somewhat low ($18/month), it is not surprising that dropout would have occurred primarily in Kampong Cham where the cash economy is much more developed than in the other two provinces. Although it is not an optimal solution, ESCUP has recruited retired state teachers in order to take of the place of the five Community Teachers who have resigned in Kampong Cham.

Indicator 27: Classroom practice among 50% of a sample of Community Teachers meets an absolute standard for performance.

Table 4.4: Proficiency among Community Teachers by Province

Province	**Total Number of Community Teachers Observed**	**Community Teachers Scoring Satisfactory or better**	**As a % of Those Observed**
Kampong Cham	18	18	100%
Kratie	15	12	80%
Mondulkiri	3	3	100%
Total	**36**	**33**	**92%**

[9] It is currently proposed to raise remuneration levels of Community Teachers to $20/month from May 2006.

The assessment of Community Teachers was based on a statistically randomized sample of the 184 teachers trained. The resulting sample comprised 36 teachers or 20% of all Community Teachers. Program staff members used a standardized assessment instrument that looked at classroom performance against three broad parametric areas: (i) Classroom Environment; (ii) Teaching Practice; and (iii) Student Learning. Although 92% of teachers were found to be scoring at a level of 'satisfactory' or better (see Table 4.4) across all parameters, an examination of average scores suggested the need for additional technical support, particularly in the area of Student Learning where performance levels tended to be more marginal (see Table 4.5). Specific aspects of student learning that were examined in this regard included the use of individualized learning materials, student group work, elicitation of student questions, and integration of homework into classroom work. To be fair, however, program monitors have reported that many Community Teachers are working under appalling conditions (see picture). Field reports indicate that many classes have extremely poor infrastructure, no textbooks, no furniture, and in some cases not even any books for teachers. Although teachers have been provided with a learning kit designed to provide some basic learning materials for use with children, these are often of limited value because classrooms cannot be securely locked requiring the teacher to cart them back and forth each day. These reports suggest the need to redirect some program resources to address these conditions in the coming program year.

Table 4.5: Average Scores for Classroom Performance among Community Teachers

Performance Parameter	Average Score
Classroom Environment	65%
Teaching Practice	72%
Student Learning	55%
Grand Total	**66%**

Indicator 28: Classroom practice among 50% of a sample of Multi-grade teachers becomes more child-centered.

This activity has been postponed to Year 2.

Indicator 29: At least 100 teachers in selected remote area schools receive technical support (for multi-grade, SKL, general support, etc) over a 15-day period.

The bulk of activities under this indicator have been postponed until the next academic year. This is largely due to the fact that intakes for Community Teachers, Supplementary Khmer Language, SRP, and Bilingual Classroom Assistants pushed existing technical resources to the limit and allowed very little latitude for additional initiatives in CFS experimental classrooms and multi-grade teaching. To be sure, it should be noted that a pilot intake of seven Grade 1 teachers in Mondulkiri to teach Supplementary Khmer Language did occur as part of the activity set undertaken under this indicator. Outcomes are more fully explained below under Indicator 31.

Indicator 30: Classroom practices among 50% of a sample of Remote Teachers becomes more child-centered.

This activity has been postponed to Year 2.

Indicator 31: At least 50% of SKL teachers achieve proficiency in the use of targeted techniques by the end of the academic year.

The number of teachers trained in Supplementary Khmer Language (SKL) techniques was extremely

limited as this intervention is still experimental. In all, seven teachers have been trained in one case study site in Mondulkiri Province (Bou Rang Cluster). Mondulkiri was chosen as the pilot site because most schools there tend to be ethnically homogeneous so that most children are likely to be at a similar level of Khmer Language acquisition. CARE advisers provided considerable technical input into the design of the intervention and existing materials originally developed for use in Ratanakiri Province have been adapted for use in ESCUP sites. Essentially, SKL-based interventions attempt to train teachers to put Khmer language in a meaningful context that entails copious use of pictures, stories, and games. Because Grade 1 minority children are often the least linguistically acculturated children in a school, preliminary implementation has focused on training teachers at this Grade level only (see picture).

Implementation of SKL interventions began in late February 2006. Thus, teachers have only been in the process of implementation of the activity for about four weeks at the time of the writing of this report. Monitoring reports have, therefore, been largely anecdotal. Monitors report that all teachers have finished Unit 1 of the adapted CARE SKL materials. Rooms are nicely decorated with the special learning materials provided and children appear to be accustomed to doing many role plays, indicating that teachers have been using these techniques as part of their regular teaching. Teachers generally expressed satisfaction with the language enhanced activity program in SKL and expressed hope that they could continue this technique in coming years as well. Based on these very preliminary assessments, the activity appears to be unfolding within the performance standards stated.

4.3 Intermediate Result B: Improved Responsiveness at PTTC Level

Result Statement: Teacher education system at PTTC Level is more responsive to the needs of remote communities.

Indicators under this result have concentrated on advocacy for underserved districts with respect to teacher needs to both mitigate shortages and increase minority representation among PTTC intakes. Relevant activities under this result include active negotiation of PTTC intake quotas with Ministry and provincial officials, facilitation of recruitment drives in minority areas, and tutoring support in order to maximize pass rates among applying candidates. Outcomes for the two indicators developed for this intermediate result are provided below.

Indicator 32: At least 100 locally recruited candidates are admitted to PTTCs by December 2005.

Table 4.6: Results of Local Recruitment for PTTC Scholarship Candidates by Province and Sex

Province	Approved Quota	Candidates Applying from Target Communes		Passing Candidates (ESCUP sites only)		Candidates from Neighboring Communes		Total Accepted Candidates	
		Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
Kratie	30	69	17	21	6	9	4	30	10
Mondulkiri	10	22	8	10	2	--	--	10	2
Kampong Cham	110	78	30	40	15	21	15	61	30
Total	**150**	**146**	**55**	**71**	**23**	**30**	**19**	**101**	**42**

In order to facilitate local teacher recruitment from remote areas, ESCUP has worked closely with the Teacher Training Department (TTD) of the MoEYS to design and implement a Provincial Teacher Train-

ing College Scholarship program for the three provinces. ESCUP's counterpart from TTD has proven to be extremely successful in facilitating programmatic preparations with the personnel department of the Provincial Offices of Education, PTTCs, and personnel from the affected districts (i.e., those targeted by ESCUP). These negotiations led to formal agreement on a quota for the proposed PTTC intake that would be allocated to districts targeted by ESCUP as well as the US Dept of Labor funded OPTIONS program.[10] In all, seven districts with severe teacher shortages were targeted in this regard. The approved quota provided by government for program districts was 150 candidates. A total of 146 candidates recruited from officially designated remote communes applied to take the PTTC entrance exam (see Table 4.6). This total included some candidates from two districts in Kampong Cham supported by the OPTIONS program. In order to maximize pass rates among these applying candidates, ESCUP provided tutoring support in districts at no charge prior to the examination. For its part, the Ministry gave high priority to ESCUP affiliated candidates and gave the benefit of the doubt to many who failed the entrance exam by a small margin. Of the applying candidates, 90 passed the entrance exam, 71 of whom were affiliated with ESCUP. In order to top up the number of supported candidates under the official quota, passing candidates from communes neighboring those officially targeted have agreed, in return for scholarship support, to also accept teaching posts in ESCUP target schools following their studies. A total of 30 such candidates from neighboring communes are now receiving program support in this regard. In all, 101 individuals (30 from Kratie, 10 from Mondulkiri, and 61 from Kampong Cham) of whom 42% are female are receiving PTTC scholarship support from ESCUP, thereby exceeding the performance target by a small margin.

Indicator 33: At least 35% of locally recruited PTTC teacher candidates are from minority groups (Cham and hill tribe groups).

Table 4.7: Sex and Ethnicity among Selected PTTC Scholarship Candidates

Province	Approved Quota	Sex and Ethnicity of Passing PTTC Candidates (ESCUP Sites only)				
		Total	Female	Ethnic.	% Female	% Ethnic
Kratie	30	30	9	3	30%	10%
Mondulkiri	10	10	2	7	20%	70%
Kampong Cham	110*	61	30	6	49%	10%
Total	**150**	**101**	**41**	**16**	**41%**	**16%**

*Includes OPTIONS areas also.

Local recruitment drives have led to significant minority and female representation among prospective teachers in target provinces. Overall, minority groups represented 16% of the entire scholarship intake (see Table 4.7). This is somewhat below the target for this indicator. It is worth noting that in Mondulkiri, where 70% of the candidates are minorities, the target was exceeded. The true level of total minority representation may actually be higher than reported because many candidates often conceal their ethnicity due to certain national sensitivities in this area. Indeed, ethnicity is no longer indicated on national identification cards. Also, some minority groups, especially those who are Kuoy in Kratie, are quite assimilated and thus also are probably somewhat under-reported in official reporting. An additional factor that also influenced the lower than expected representation of minority groups in the PTTC intake relates to the unanticipated early cut-off date for candidates to apply to take the PTTC entrance examination. This significantly decreased the opportunities to conduct effective outreach and recruiting activities in some very remote areas. For the recruitment of candidates from the Cham community, valuable support was given by the Cambodian Islamic Youth Association (CIYA), one of ESCUP's local partners. CIYA visited sev-

[10] The OPTIONS program, which is also led by World Education, has budgetary provisions to improve the quality of education by addressing local teacher shortages through local recruitment. OPTIONS has asked ESCUP to negotiate implementation of PTTC scholarship provisions on its behalf.

eral Cham communities and mosques in Kampong Cham to explain the ESCUP program in general and the PTTC scholarship program in particular (see Case Study). These efforts led to the application of 17 Muslim-candidates who subsequently participated in the entry exam. Eight of these candidates passed the examination on 15 December 2005 and are now enrolled at the PTTC in Kampong Cham.[11] Valuable lessons were learned from this intervention. With greater lead-time to conduct targeted recruiting activities, a bigger pool of minority candidates could be attained.

Female candidates represented a total of 41% of the entire scholarship intake. Nearly half of the candidates in Kampong Cham are female as well as 30% of those from Kratie, and 20% of those from Mondulkiri. The education requirement to sit for the PTTC entrance exam requires the applicant to have completed high school. In very remote areas, such as many of the communities targeted by ESCUP, female dropout and completion rates are even lower than they are nationally. Therefore, the pool of qualified females to sit for the entrance exam tends to be quite limited.

Case Study: The story of Ly Rophat, a Scholarship Student at a Teacher Training College

Rophat is 21 years old and he grew up in a Cham Muslim community in Tbaung Khmom District, Kampong Cham Province. He has recently started his studies at the Provincial Teacher Training College (PTTC) with scholarship assistance from the ESCUP program. Rophat receives $18 per month for the duration of the 2 years needed to complete his training course, which will qualify him to take up a teaching post in his home commune. When interviewed by CIYA, Rophat said that he never believed that he could be a teacher, even though it was one of his dreams. After learning about ESCUP's scholarship program at the mosque and from the commune office in October 2005, Rophat and his friends decided to apply. He was relieved to hear that applicants were offered tutoring to prepare for the PTTC entry exams as he worried that he would not be able to pass. He said he was very excited and proud that he passed the exam. He is now officially enrolled at the PTTC and will complete his studies in July 2007. At the end of the interview, Rophat gave a big smile when he expressed his appreciation and gratitude to ESCUP's support to him and his community because this contributes to giving them a more positive outlook on the future.

Rophat's View: "I would like to be a teacher because this will increase my self-respect and integrity and also a chance to contribute to society's development. Many Cham people left Cambodia and face hardship in their adventures abroad. Not so many people in my community have good education. Therefore, I am very lucky to have an opportunity to study at the PTTC. I feel appreciated and respected at school and in the community. I hope that my future profession as a teacher can help me explain to the community about the risks of migration and other disruptive behavior such as drug use or domestic violence. I will try to make the best use of my knowledge to contribute to the well-being of people in my community."

[11] Six of these individuals are supported under ESCUP and two under OPTIONS.

5. PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS FOR SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The School-Community Partnership Component seeks to support activities that both increases the engagement of communities in the provision of educational services as well as help schools to modify their way of working so that they are more sensitized to the needs of local communities. This refers in particular to their cultural needs and interests (e.g., language issues, local traditions, etc.). To the extent possible, ESCUP has tried to work within existing frameworks in facilitating activities to achieve intermediate results under this component. This includes working with School Clusters, School Support Committees (SSCs), Commune-level EFA Commissions (CEFACs), and minority consultative bodies where they exist (e.g., Islamic district councils, etc.). Activities under this component have been organized on two levels to accommodate the two intermediate results developed under this component. At one level, activities take in capacity building support for community structures mentioned above leading to enhanced ability to manage key community-driven interventions such as school mapping, Community Teacher recruitment, local life skills, etc. An important theme running throughout this support is advocacy for minority groups in target areas. This refers in particular to increased representation of minorities among teachers and in school-community bodies. On another level, activities have been designed to increase the attraction of educational provision in the state school system so that they cater more to the individual needs of local communities. Interventions in this respect refer to activities that address language issues (e.g., bilingual classroom assistants) and make educational instruction more consistent with local needs and interests (e.g., cultural life skills, construction of culture centers, etc.). The School-Community Partnership Component has succeeded in implementing all the interventions that had originally been planned for Year 1 programming though with some variation in timing from the official work plan. Although some activities were limited to case study sites, many others have been program-wide involving many schools.

5.1 Intermediate Result A: Community Participation in Educational Provision

Result Statement: Communities demonstrate active participation in the instructional program of target schools.

Indicators under this result review levels of community participation, the success of advocacy efforts, and management performance for selected tasks. Four such indicators have been identified in this regard. These are described below.

Indicator 34: 180 Community Teachers are identified by local communities of whom 35% or more are minorities.

Table 5.1: Community Teachers by Province, Sex, and Ethnicity

Province	Total Community Teachers Recruited	Female Community Teachers	Community Teachers of Ethnic Extraction	Minorities as a % of All Community Teachers
Kampong Cham	111	42	17	15% (Cham)
Kratie	52	19	20	38% (Kouy, Phnong, Mill, & Stieng)
Mondulkiri	21	6	10	48% (Phnong)
Total	**184**	**67**	**47**	**26%**

The program recruited and trained 184 Community Teachers to meet the severe teacher shortages in target areas. Therefore, the program has slightly exceeded the stated target. Originally, ESCUP had set the target for this indicator at a total of 60 Community Teachers who would be trained and deployed. However, the demand at cluster level for Community Teachers exceeded original program expectations by a

factor of three. This intervention is a milestone in Cambodia as it marks the first time that community-recruited teachers have ever been systematically deployed to state schools on this scale. Community Teachers are working in 105 primary schools in targeted areas, comprising about 69% of the primary schools supported by ESCUP.

Community Teachers include a significant number of former Contract Teachers as well as a large number of young, recent secondary school graduates. Slightly over one-third (36%) of Community Teachers are women (see Table 5.1). With respect to minority representation, there are 17 Community Teachers from Cham ethnic minority communities in Kampong Cham with nine Kuoy, six Steang and 16 Phnong participants from Kratie and Mondulkiri Provinces. In all, minority groups represent about 26% of Community Teachers. In both Kratie and Mondulkiri where respectively 38% and 48% of the community teachers are minorities, minority advocacy targets for this indicator were exceeded. Overall, however, minority representation across all sites only reached 26%, thereby falling significantly short of the 35% target. This outcome is largely due to difficulties encountered in Kampong Cham Province where Cham groups have little representation in the education system at any level. In this respect, investigations by program staff members indicated that information relating to recruitment never reached Cham villages in many cases. These recruitment drives were often orchestrated by ethnic Khmer community leaders. This experience demonstrated the entrenched nature of patronage networks in the Cambodian countryside and highlighted the need for less naive assumptions about minority advocacy in the future.

Indicator 35: 100 locally recruited candidates from target areas are admitted to PTTCs.

See Indicator 32

Indicator 36: 100% of local reports indicate community participation in one or more of the following activity channels: LLSP, community teacher recruitment & mgt, teacher recruitment for PTTC entry, & school mapping.

Table 5.2: School Participation in Designated Activity Channels by Province

Province	**Total Schools Surveyed**	**School Participating in:**				Total No. of Schools Participating in at Least 1 Activity Channel	% of Schools Participating in at Least 1 Activity Channel
		1 Activity Channel	**2 Activity Channels**	**3 Activity Channels**	**4 Activity Channels**		
Kampong Cham	90	17	20	24	16	77	86%
Kratie	41	7	13	9	11	40	98%
Mondulkiri	15	1	8	3	3	15	100%
Total	**146**	**25**	**41**	**36**	**30**	**132**	**90%**
Percentage	**--**	**17%**	**28%**	**25%**	**21%**	**--**	**--**

Measurement of community participation in educational provision was deemed to be a difficult parameter to assess. In approaching this task, program planners identified four key community-led activities and based involvement in at least one of these channels as a minimum standard for performance. These activity channels are stated in Indicator 36. To be sure, not all of these activities were happening everywhere due to constraints in resources (as in the case of Local Life Skills) and/or variation in needs between sites (as in the case of deployment of Community Teachers). Nevertheless, it did seem to be a reasonable expectation that *all* communities would be involved in at least one of these activities. In the actual event, field surveys found that this expectation was met in about 90% of currently supported schools, a high margin certainly but below the expectation of 100% of all school-communities (see Table 5.2). It is hoped that with the expansion of school mapping activities described earlier to full coverage in Program Year 2, it should be possible to meet the performance standard stated in this indicator.

Indicator 37: 80% of Community Teacher Mgt Boards meet criteria for effectiveness.

During Year 1 of program implementation, ESCUP provided assistance to 4 Commune-level EFA Commissions. This included two CEFACs in Kampong Cham and one each in Kratie and Mondulkiri. In general, these commissions were located in case study sites except in Kampong Cham where an extra commission was added outside of the formal case study area. In all cases, the CEFACs were located in areas with significant minority numbers. Each commission received considerable amounts of capacity building using a set of training booklets developed for the purpose. Based on the experiences generated in Program Year 1, ESCUP hopes to be able to expand the number of CEFACs that it currently supports in future years.

CEFACs are the bodies that oversee Community Teachers. In this sense, they act as *de facto* management board for these teachers. Board assessments to satisfy Indicator 37 were based on interviews with commission members to determine their knowledge and organization of various activities under their management as well as a small number of Community Teachers to determine punctuality of payment and the perceived helpfulness of board members. Board scores are summarized in Table 5.3. Overall, each of the four boards achieved an aggregate score of 50% or better, which is the cut-off point for satisfactory, thereby meeting expectations for performance. One of the boards, however, was borderline in its score and demonstrated very weak general and financial oversight. In this respect, it was found that this particular board met less than once per month, did not have formal work schedules, and had great difficulty in citing specific things that it discussed with teachers and school directors when visiting the field. Happily, however, program monitors noted that nearly all teachers described highly punctual salary payments and had a generally positive impression of board members. Accountability measures in this respect exceeded 90% in all cases. Nevertheless, lower scores for General Oversight across most boards suggest that this is an area for review and additional capacity building.

Table 5.3: Community Teacher Management Board Performance Scores

Assessment Parameter	Average Performance Score (%)				
	Board #1	**Board #2**	**Board #3**	**Board #4**	**Average**
General Oversight*	63%	21%	63%	75%	**55%**
Financial Oversight*	40%	40%	100%	100%	**70%**
Accountability**	100%	94%	100%	100%	**99%**
Average Score	**68%**	**52%**	**88%**	**92%**	**75%**

*Based on interviews with board members; ** Based on interviews with Community Teachers

5.2 Intermediate Result B: Sensitization of Schools to Community Needs

Result Statement: Schools are more sensitized to the diverse cultural needs of their students.

This intermediate result has been measured by one indicator of great breadth. This indicator primarily focuses on investigating the degree to which communities feel satisfied with educational service provision since the start of the program. Community attitudes about service provision in the following areas have been explored: (i) access to school; (ii) school management; (iii) teaching and learning; and (iv) the accommodation of minority needs. The information in the present report is based on six preliminary focus group discussions in the three case study sites (two per site). This information will be supplemented by a formal attitudinal survey conducted at household level over the next several months.

Indicator 38: A majority of respondents in an attitudinal survey, conducted in the Case Study sites, demonstrate an improvement in their satisfaction with educational provision by the end of the program.

This indicator was originally designed for assessment against an attitudinal baseline. Because of the lengthy amount of time required to design an attitudinal assessment instrument, program activities had already started before any assessment activities could occur, thereby affecting the baseline. Given this background, it was decided to cancel a baseline assessment and conduct a post-activity attitudinal assessment using an absolute standard of measurement (as opposed to a comparative one) instead. A first stage in this assessment involved the participation of community members from the three case study sites in focus group discussions where they were asked to reflect on their impressions of educational provision since ESCUP started. Participants included commune chiefs, village chiefs, SSC members, parents, and other community members. A total of 72 people across six school sites participated in these discussions including 31 women and 41 men. The focus groups took place outside of school facilities in order to encourage individuals to speak freely about the state of education in their communities.

Access to School: The distance from school to community appears to vary greatly in the three provinces. In Mondulkiri, schools tend to be adjacent to communities but there are many as yet un-served villages, which are not generally considered to be part (though wrongly so) of the school catchment area; In both Kratie and Kampong Cham, on the other hand, children must walk up to three or more kilometers to get to school. The participants indicated that the economic burden of education is high and that this is a major barrier to access. Focus group members generally concurred that scholarships help defray the sometimes prohibitively high costs of education and enable many poor children to attend school. The school breakfast program (Kampong Cham only) in particular helps to address the needs of poor students.[12] Likewise participants stated that children with various health ailments and disabilities are now able to receive health treatment through programs coordinated with the schools and that this is also a great boost to school access. These were all seen as major improvements to service from previous years.

School Management: Participants tended to be pleased with positive changes in some management practices such as an increase in the number of meetings with community members. Some schools conduct these community meetings once a year at the beginning of the school year while other schools conduct meetings up to six times per year. However, participants expressed frustration over some of the operational problems in the system. There was a general consensus among participants from Mondulkiri and Kratie that teacher and school director absenteeism is problematically high. In an education system that lacks effective accountability mechanisms, effecting change in this area is quite complex and requires efforts at all levels of the system. To be sure, participants from the three provinces did state that Community Teachers (who are prepared and supported by ESCUP) maintain regular attendance and punctuality.

Participants were also asked about their knowledge of the administration and use of PAP funds. In the Mondulkiri groups, the participants agreed that the administration of the PAP funds was not transparent. Although they are usually told how much money the school receives each year, they have little idea how it is spent. The groups from Kampong Cham were split on this issue. In a vein similar to the sentiments expressed in Mondulkiri, one group indicated that the administration of PAP funds was not transparent. In the sense that community groups and the commune council members did not know how the PAP funds were used. Members from a second group in Kampong Cham and the groups from Kratie, however, were generally pleased with the administration of PAP funds. In this case, the communities stated that they participate in the planning and oversight of the use of the funds, which were often used for infrastructure repairs and purchasing teaching and learning materials.

Teaching and Learning: In the three provinces, the participants felt that students are learning more this year as compared to past years. Many students are now learning through more activity-based methods. Students have access to textbooks and teachers have supplies now to create teaching and learning materi-

[12] ESCUP is currently advocating with the World Food Program to extend the School Breakfast Program to sites in Kratie and Mondulkiri. As KAPE is an active partner of WFP in Kampong Cham, it was not difficult to start SBP service in new ESCUP sites there but expansion to new provinces is expected to be more difficult.

als. Students are also now helping gather locally available resources and bringing them to school to supplement teaching and learning materials in the classroom. Participants as a whole also agreed that school facilities have improved. They reflected favorably on the child-to-child networks being implemented in the schools. Remediation classes organized in some villages are also helping slow learners with their studies. Student clubs have helped improve the learning environment and the culture of the schools.

Minority Group Interests: The focus group participants discussed their views about how schools address the interests of members of minority groups. The consensus in Mondulkiri was that the school personnel did not treat minority group members any differently than their Khmer counterparts; though it is not clear whether this is a good or a bad thing. In Kampong Cham, the cultural centers have helped to inform children about the cultural traditions of local groups, both Khmer and Cham. In this respect, participants suggested that the centers help to provide a forum that can promote cross-cultural understanding. Participants from all three provinces said that the cultural centers (see picture) have improved the school environment. Participants in some groups indicated that minority children have a difficult time, especially in first grade, with the language of instruction. The children who speak a minority group language at home have a hard time keeping up with lessons when the language of instruction is Khmer. Some groups suggested that they would like to have bilingual classroom assistants in the classrooms for the minority students.

Areas for Improvement: Participants in the focus groups said that in some schools, classes are too big; some have sixty students or more per teacher. Other groups said that teachers do not use report cards while still others said that life skills classes have been discussed but not yet implemented. The participants in both Kratie and Kampong Cham indicated that teachers' salaries should be improved. In Kratie, one group said that the state teachers have not received salaries for over six months, which is probably a reference to the payment of newly posted teachers from the PTTC.

6. PROGRESS TOWARDS TARGETS FOR PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

This component provides the management support that enables other technical activities described earlier to occur smoothly. Such support refers in particular to setting up the financial mechanisms that enable grants to schools and other committees to flow from program offices to stakeholders at field level. This component also oversees relations with government counterparts at district, provincial, and central Ministry level in order to ensure proper communication and capacity building through the sharing of experiences. There are three intermediate results under this component that cover matters relating to (i) planning and grant disbursement among local committees; (ii) organization of data collection and monitoring mechanisms; and (iii) the documentation and dissemination of experiences generated by the program.

6.1 Intermediate Result A: Stakeholder Planning and Disbursement of Grant Funds

Result Statement: Local education structures (e.g., clusters, lower secondary schools) and local government (e.g., communes) demonstrate ability to plan and implement interventions to improve access and quality.

Indicator 39: All clusters, lower secondary schools, PTTCs, and CEFACs provide improvement plans that meet criteria for funding and implement subsequently allocated grants according to prescribed criteria by the beginning of the academic year.

All clusters and lower secondary schools prepared school improvement plans based on guidelines provided by program staff, thus meeting the performance standard stated in Indicator 39. Because of the more limited scope of work expected of CEFACs and PTTCs, program design was changed somewhat so

that formalized planning documents were not required from these bodies. Details on the planning process at cluster and secondary school level is provided below:

Table 6.1: Summary of Planning Activities Selected by Clusters (Primary Level)

No.	Activity	Clusters Selecting
1	Scholarships for Poor Students	18
2	Child seeking schools (Mapping)	18
3	Remedial Support for Slow Learners	18
4	Library Development	18
5	First Aid Kits	18
6	Build School Toilets	18
7	Community-based Life Skills	18
8	School Monitoring	18
9	Support for LCSC Meetings	18
10	Rehab for Disabled Children (Central Budget)	17
11	Construct Wells	16
12	Monitor Community Teachers	16
13	Construct Cultural Centers	16
14	SRP (Central Budget)	15
15	Child to Child Support Groups	14
16	Student Or Youth Association	14
17	Community Teachers	13
18	Cultural Life Skills Studies	13
19	School Breakfast Program	11
20	Infrastructure Support (Classrooms)	7
21	Train Multi-grade Teachers	7
22	Life Skills (IPM)	7
23	Life Skills (Home Economics)	5
24	Student-Parent Meetings	4
25	Bilingual Teaching Assistants	4
26	Teacher Upgrading (Central Budget)	3
27	Play grounds	3
28	Monitor Student Dropout	2
29	School Gardens (PAP)	2
30	Infrastructure Support (Office)	1
31	Provide Black boards	1
32	Home Study Visits	1
33	Village-based Study Clubs (Gr 1/2)	1
34	School Fence Construction (PAP)*	1
35	School Grounds Improvements (PAP)*	1
36	Volley Ball Court (PAP)*	1
Total Number of Activities Chosen		**358**

*PAP refers to instances where state funds will be used.

Cluster Level Planning: Program planning at cluster level was completed in Kampong Cham and Kratie by the end of September 2005. Planning documents in Mondulkiri were completed somewhat later due to the late return of many teachers from their home provinces. Component staff reviewed all 18 Cluster School Improvement Plans (CSIPs) submitted by target clusters during October 2005. All plans were approved by the end of October with the need for suggested modifications occurring in some cases. In general, however, most plans were consistent with program guidelines that had been explained to clusters as part of general orientations and capacity building activities that occurred in September 2005. These guidelines advised a balance in resourcing each of the five CFS dimensions, using standard unit costs to calculate budgets, and using state funds (as opposed to program ones) where appropriate. Revisions in submitted plans were generally suggested when the logic between activities and objectives was not apparent (e.g., building a flagpole will lead to greater enrolment), when costs appeared to be inflated, or in cases where it was clearly more appropriate to use state funds (e.g., building flower gardens, fences, gates, etc.). When clusters could justify why they could not use state funds in such cases, exceptions were sometimes permitted.

Overall, 36 separate activities were identified in submitted plans, several of which were listed as state funded (see Table 6.1). Although many activities were common to all plans (i.e., Activities 1-9), submitted plans did exhibit some modest level of diversity. In addition, some clusters included activities that were not indicated in the program activity menu, suggesting some interest in experimentation (e.g., home study visits, village-based study clubs, etc). Menus had been provided as much as a stimulant to clusters to think for themselves as well as a means to provide some common structure in planning documents. In all, a total of 358 activities are currently being implemented in target clusters ranging from scholarships, youth associations, and well construction. This gives some idea of the scope of activity currently being supported by ESCUP in the academic year currently in progress. As part of ESCUP's decentralized implementation approach, $156,870[13] in grant funds are being channeled to clusters to implement approved CSIPs (see Indicator 40).

[13] This includes $4,267 in matching funds from other sources such as UNICEF.

Table 6.2: Summary of Planning Activities Selected by Lower Secondary Schools

No	Activity	No. of Secondary Schools Selecting
1.	Life Skill (Community based)	14
2.	School Development Committee Mtgs*	14
3.	First Aid Kits	11
4.	School Library Development	12
5.	Improvements to School Environment	9
6.	Toilet Construction/Repair*	9
7.	Teaching Materials/Aids*	7
8.	School Visit/Site Exchanges	7
9.	Well Repair/Construction	7
10.	Home Economics for Girls/Boys*	6
11.	Teacher Ed: Cooperative Learning	6
12.	Academic Awards for High Achievers	5
13.	Student Clubs	5
14.	Volley Ball/Soccer Field Construction	5
15.	Teacher Ed: Taxonomy of Questions	4
16.	Classroom Repairs	4
17.	Rubbish Incinerator	4
18.	Tracking Student Dropout (Home Visits)	4
19.	Teacher Development: Children's Rights	3
20.	TGL Meetings	3
21.	Rubbish Bins	3
22.	School Fence Repair	3
23.	Community-Teacher Meetings*	3
24.	Student-Parent Meetings	3
25.	Student Tutoring Support	2
26.	Textbooks and Teacher Manuals	2
27.	Girls Counselors	2
28.	Village History Research	2
29.	Awareness Raising: Student Health Care	2
30.	School Mapping/Campaign for Girls	2
31.	Teacher Education: Micro-Teaching	1
32.	Teacher Education: Classroom Mgt	1
33.	Classroom Enhancement (White boards)	1
34.	Water Basin Construction	1
35.	Student Awareness Raising: Drug Use	1
36.	Footpath Repair	1
37.	School Gardens	1
38.	Community-School Visits	1
39.	School Monitoring and Evaluation	1
Total Number of Activities Chosen		**172**

*Indicates PAP cost-sharing

Secondary School Level Planning: Because of the crush of activity during the first quarter of the school year, planning at secondary school level did not get underway until December 2005. Program staff members designed and implemented foundation workshops that were similar to those that occurred at primary level in all 14 target secondary schools. Because many of the lower secondary schools in Kratie and Mondulkiri are very small (comprising 50 students or less), it was necessary to combine workshops in some cases. In all, there were 11 workshops across all three provinces leading to the development of 14 Secondary School Improvement Plans (SSIPs). Foundation workshops lasting two days used the same approaches as those employed earlier including a log frame planning format, activity menus, and standard grant allocations by CFS dimension. Approved plans had identified 39 discrete activities to be implemented across the 14 schools demonstrating some level of diversity in needs identification among sites (see Table 6.2). In all, schools will be implementing 172 activities during the school year.

A total of $27,113 has been allocated to the implementation of LSIPs, not including already allocated funds for secondary school scholarships.[14] The average grant amount to be allocated to secondary schools is $1,937. In general, the LSIPs submitted by schools were of a lower grade than those developed at primary level. There are several reasons for this. First, the Child Friendly Secondary School Program (CFSS) being developed by KAPE and UNICEF is new and many of the documentary materials are still experimental in nature. As ESCUP relied heavily on these materials, this partly affected outcomes. CFSS menus in particular are not yet well developed. This suggests another possible area of collaboration with the KAPE/UNICEF program where ESCUP may be able to provide many meaningful inputs. Another reason for the lower quality of LSIPs relates to the relative novelty of school improvement initiatives at secondary school

[14] Because of the complexity of the secondary school scholarship program and high unit costs, ESCUP has organized alternative implementation mechanisms that rely on a local partner to monitor and oversee.

level. The last decade has seen massive investment in quality improvement activities at primary level but very little at secondary. Thus, there is little experience (and sometimes even interest) in thinking about school improvement from the perspective of children. This round of LSIP planning has, therefore, generated many lessons learned about the secondary school context and the need for careful strategies when approaching improvements in quality and access.

Indicator 40: All clusters, lower secondary schools, PTTCs & CEFACs submit requests for grants and properly liquidate those requests.

Table 6.3: Approved Budgets for All Target Clusters

Province	Cluster	No. of Schools	Annual Budget	Funds Received to Date	Funds Liquidated to Date
Kampong Cham	1. Tr. Russey	18	$11,795	$11,678.75	$11,678.75
	2. Koki*	11	$7,874	$5,827.50	$5,827.50
	3. Khnar	13	$9,105	$9,054.50	$9,054.50
	4. Krek	9	$7,682	$7,645.75	$7,645.75
	5. Ampuk	4	$5,938	$5,876.25	$5,876.25
	6. Steung	14	$6,706	$6,730.75	$6,730.75
	7. Ponley	10	$5,487	$5,487.50	$5,487.50
	8. Kandaol Chrum*	10	$7,960	$5,700.50	$5,700.50
	9. Prey Sangker	6†	--	$0	$0
	Subtotal	*95*	*$62,547*	*$58,001.50*	*$58,001.5*
Kratie	10. Koh Dambang	3	$6,403	$5,217.00	$4,545.94
	11. Sandan	5	$12,490	$8,172.00	$4,940.94
	12. Veal Khyang	4	$8,887	$7,463.00	$6,847.51
	13. O Taneung	5	$7,551	$5,300.00	$4,374.06
	14. O Kreang	3	$6,259	$4,297.00	$2,641.40
	15. Khseum	10	$11,884	$8,698.00	$5,527.30
	16. 2 Thanou	6	$9,808	$5,837.00	$4,210.12
	17. Svay Chreas	5	$11,682	$8,158.00	$4,495.34
	Subtotal	*40*	*$74,965*	*$53,142.00*	*$37,582.61*
Mondulkiri	18. Keo Seima	9	$11,072	$4,009.00	$880.25
	19. Bou Raing	6	$8,286	$2,732.50	$2,608.31
	Subtotal	*15*	*$19,358*	*$6,741.50*	*$3,488.56*
	Total	**151**[15]	**$156,870**	**$117,885.00**	**$99,072.67**

*Includes $2,014 for Koki and $2,253 for Kandaol Chrum in UNICEF matching funds (Total: $4,267)

†Will receive assistance in Year 2 only.

Both clusters and lower secondary schools have been receiving grant funds from the program on a regular basis in all sites, thereby meeting the performance expectations set out in Indicator 40. In a change from the original program design, grant funds have been released to CEFACs via LCSCs while scholarship funds are being released directly to recipients in the form of personal checks made out to individual beneficiaries. Two such payments have made in this regard covering the period January-June 2006.

At primary school level, all clusters save one[16] developed school improvement plans, which were the basis for grant applications and subsequent grant disbursements/reconciliations. Grant funds have been is-

[15] The total number of assisted schools has declined from 152 reported earlier to 151 as two schools in Kratie have been shifted to another cluster and Kampong Cham Province has added a new temporary annex school for a net decline of one school.

[16] This refers to Prey Sangker Cluster, which will join other implementing clusters in Program Year 2.

sued to eight clusters in Kampong Cham, eight in Kratie, and two in Mondulkiri on a regular basis since November 2005. The approved budget amounts for these grants range from $5,487 to $12,490, with the average being $8,715. The grant money disbursed to date totals $117,885.00 constituting the bulk of the approved budgets for both Kampong Cham and Kratie (see Table 6.3). Because the process of capacity building took somewhat longer to complete in Mondulkiri as compared to Kratie and Kampong Cham, the disbursement and liquidation of funds there have been less regular and proportionally smaller than the clusters in the other two provinces. ESCUP personnel conducted intensive training and continuous support to clusters to ensure each cluster follows proper grant management and reconciliation procedures. Clusters reconcile grant expenditures monthly, with the exception of Mondulkiri where reconciliations take longer due to the extremely remote location of clusters as previously noted. To date, a total of $99,072.67, or 84% of disbursed funds have been reconciled. These grants cover such things as scholarships for students, the salaries for Community Teachers, rehabilitation of school infrastructure, remedial classes, and a range of other program activities. Most activities have been occurring on schedule, and as indicated in the results for the other program indicators, with marked success.

Table 6.4: Approved Budgets for All Target Lower Secondary Schools

Province	Lower Secondary School	Annual Budget	Funds Received to Date	Funds Liquidated to Date
Kampong Cham	1. Kandaol Chrum Jr HS	$2,048.25	$1,488.25	$1,488.25
	2. Krek Jr HS	$2,025.63	$1,193.00	$1,193.00
	3. Ponyea Krek HS	$2,375.75	$1,530.75	$1,530.75
	4. Kbal O Jr HS	$2,088.80	$1,446.00	$1,446.00
	5. Tbong Khmum HS	$1,995.00	$1,015.00	$1,015.00
	6. Khnar Jr HS	$2,078.75	$1,528.75	$1,528.75
	Subtotal	*$12,612.18*	*$8,201.75*	*$8,201.75*
Kratie	7. Sandann HS	$1,850.50	$303.00	$303.00
	8. Viel Kyang Jr HS	$1,854.00	$290.00	$290.00
	9. Sambo Jr HS	$1,900.00	$290.00	$290.00
	10. Snoul Jr HS	$1,769.00	$313.50	$313.50
	11. Phak Jr HS	$1,751.00	$312.00	$312.00
	12. Svay Chrash Jr HS	$1,665.00	$332.00	$332.00
	Subtotal	*$10,789.50*	*$1,840.50*	*$1,840.50*
Mondulkiri	13. O'raing Jr HS	$1,900.00	$905.00	$903.00
	14. Keo Seyma Jr HS	$1,811.00	$1,015.00	$679.50
	Subtotal	*$3,711.00*	*$1,920.00*	*$1,582.50*
Total		**$27,112.68**	**$11,962.25**	**$11,624.75**

In a manner similar to what occurred at cluster school level, lower secondary school personnel were trained by the program to develop school improvement plans, request grant funds, and liquidate requested funds properly. The budgets for requested grants for all lower secondary schools were approved in January 2006. These grants range in size from $1,665 to $2,376 with the average grant being $1,937 (see Table 6.4). As previously indicated in this report, activities at lower secondary school level only started in earnest in the last quarter of the first year. As a result, the disbursement of grant funds is somewhat farther behind schedule than is true at cluster level. To date $11,962 has been disbursed to lower secondary schools, and $11,625 or 97% of these funds have been reconciled.

6.2 Intermediate Result B: Data Collection and Evaluation Systems

Result Statement: Mechanisms are in place to collect data on program effectiveness.

Activities under this result relate to the need to collect information that would enable programmers to submit quarterly and annual reports based on accurate and timely information. Three indicators have been developed in this regard as stated below.

Indicator 41: All data collection tools developed by the end of the 1st Term.

Requirements for this indicator have been satisfied leading to the development of the present assessment report.

Indicator 42: The Student Tracking System developed by the US Dept of Labor adapted to fit the needs of ESCUP.

With assistance from the OPTIONS program, ESCUP has completed preparations to adapt a Student Tracking System (STS) developed by the US Dept of Labor to fit program needs. The revised database includes provisions to indicate children formerly out-of-school, ESCUP-specific interventions received by beneficiaries, and minority/disability status. These provisions are in addition to existing ones in the US-DoL database that indicate age, sex, address, school, grade, and enrolment status. Personnel in both Kratie and Mondulkiri have been trained to use the database by KAPE staff working in the OPTIONS program. All provinces have reported that they have completed a first round of data entry on all beneficiaries including minority and previous enrolment status. Additional data entry will occur at the middle and at the end of the academic year.

Indicator 43: A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework developed by the beginning of the 1st Term.

Various advisers working in ESCUP helped to develop a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework document that sets out in detail the rationale for all interventions, the 38 technical indicators (i.e., indicators for Components 1-3) to be used in assessing program impact and methodologies for tracking them, and the case study approach described earlier in the report.

6.3 Intermediate Result C: Dissemination of Experiences and Lessons generated by the Program

Results Statement: Lessons are documented and disseminated.

Indicators under this intermediate result reflect a strategy of disseminating lessons learned during the course of program implementation by promoting active involvement of stakeholders at all levels in the organization and monitoring of all activities. This includes promoting site exchanges for school personnel and community members, facilitating active involvement of provincial and district education officials in planning and problem solving, and providing regular reporting to officials at central Ministry. Two of the indicators included in this section describe performance standards relating to activities that enable stakeholders at school-community, district, and provincial to reflect on program implementation. A third indicator relating to formal presentations to central Ministry will only occur early in the next program year and has, therefore, not yet been assessed as part of this report.[17]

[17] To be sure, it should be noted that ESCUP does submit all quarterly reports to central Ministry on a regular basis in Khmer Language.

Indicator 44: At least 5 school/ community representatives from each cluster/lower secondary school visit other sites for purposes of professional development.

Table 6.5: Site Visits among Stakeholders during Program Year 1 by Province

Province	School/Community Representatives Visiting Other Sites Among:			
	Cluster Directors	Teachers	Community Representatives	Total Persons
Kampong Cham	8	48	10	66
Kratie	8	25	0	33
Mondulkiri	2	10	0	12
Total	**18**	**83**	**10**	**111**

School directors, teachers, and community representatives have engaged in exchange visits to other schools and clusters on several occasions as a means of cross-fertilization and professional development. Field reports indicate that an average of six individuals per cluster engaged in such visits, thereby exceeding performance standards set out in Indicator 44. This represents a total of 111 individuals moving between clusters (see Table 6.5). These site exchanges have involved cluster directors as well as a great number of teachers and community members. Program personnel report that these exchange visits have had an impact on various practices at school level. For example, upon their return from an exchange visit to an exemplary cluster in Kampong Cham Province, many teachers from Mondulkiri had re-organized and redecorated their classrooms in a manner similar to what had been found in the model classrooms observed. Nevertheless, the program has fallen short of expectations with respect to the number of community members who have participated in these site exchanges as well as the fact that no such visits have occurred between secondary school visits. As noted earlier, the shortness of time in which to implement a large number of interventions has led to tardy implementation of many activities at secondary school level.

Indicator 45: Representatives from DoE and PoEs visit each target cluster and secondary school.

Table 6.6: Site Visits among Local Government Counterparts during Program Year 1 by Province

Province	Total Site Visits among:		
	PoE Staff	DoE Staff	Total Visits
Kampong Cham	33	69	102
Kratie	162	135	297
Mondulkiri	44	51	95
Total	**239**	**255**	**494**

The program has helped to encourage and facilitate many cluster and secondary school field visits local government counterparts at both district and provincial level. Over the course of the program's first year, a total of 494 of these visits took place by provincial and district personnel. Officials in Kratie and Mondulkiri have especially been very active in this respect, conducting a total of 297 and 95 visits, respectively. In a focus group discussion conducted in the fourth quarter of the program, a group of community members said that they have noted a marked increase in the frequency of visits by government personnel to their school. ESCUP will continue to encourage this activity and provide additional support to the officials from Kampong Cham to increase their participation in these cluster and school visits as well.

Indicator 46: A formal presentation is provided to Ministry and provinces describing the results and outcomes of the program at the end of the program.

To be assessed early in Program Year 2.

7. LESSONS LEARNED AND ISSUES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Numerous lessons have been learned about the implementation of Child Friendly School interventions in remote schools with large numbers of minority groups. Some of the more important of these lessons are documented below.

7.1 Bi-lingual education

General discussions with CARE advisers during the first year of program implementation identified a number of important issues that were considered in the design of current program interventions. First, it is evident that because of the short time frame of the ESCUP program, it was not possible to mount major activities involving bi-lingual curriculum development and teacher training. Such efforts require many years to complete successfully as well as large amounts of external technical assistance in the form of curriculum developers, trainers, etc. They also require a cascading ratio between Khmer and native language instruction that spans many years. Under such a scheme, curricular instruction usually starts with mostly native language instruction in Grade 1 and is followed by greater and greater exposure to Khmer language instruction in the later grades. As ESCUP is funded for only two years, it was clear that these expectations could not be met. In addition, many of the areas in which ESCUP is working are not homogeneous with respect to the native language spoken by local children, as is the case in HCEP/CARE schools. Rather, local populations in target sites are characterized by a mix of Khmer speakers as well as one or more minority groups. As a result of these observations, CARE and ESCUP advisers agreed that the program should avoid full-blown bi-lingual education efforts but rather focus instead on less TA-intensive strategies such as the use of bi-lingual teacher assistants and Supplementary Khmer Language instruction.

7.2 The Need for Increased Modulation of Program Interventions

As the implementation of ESCUP interventions got under way, program managers realized the large differences that exist between program sites and the implications these differences have in the design and delivery of interventions. For example, some program sites are characterized by minority groups who have largely been assimilated by the majority culture and no longer speak their local language (e.g., Steang) while others are quite insular in their relationship with mainstream society and have managed to preserve their own cultural identity. (e.g., Cham and Phnong groups). Similarly, some areas are quite homogeneous in ethnic composition while others are very heterogeneous. Although the program's heavy reliance on a menu approach in the selection of interventions has helped to accommodate the differences in stakeholder needs and preferences, program managers are realizing that ESCUP must move further in terms of modulating the design of individual interventions in addition to providing a wide range of activities from which to choose. The following are some specific areas where the program has had to be highly flexible in modifying the design of individual interventions:

- Sex quotas for scholarship beneficiaries at lower secondary school level in Mondulkiri have needed modification in recognition of the fact that there are few Phnong girls enrolled in Grade 6, mostly as a result of pronounced cultural attitudes that discourage the education of girls. In the actual event, originally set quotas of 80/20% were modified to 50/50%.
- The use of bi-lingual classroom assistants will not be required in many Kuoy areas in Kratie, as most adults and children no longer speak these languages.
- In Mondulkiri, government has embarked on large-scale construction of boarding facilities to accommodate boarders from remote areas at lower secondary schools. Although ESCUP has designed a scholarship program that prefers boarding remote children with foster families near to target schools as a more socially desirable approach to meet their needs (particularly with respect to their socialization), the program has accepted that it cannot ignore the existence of these facilities and the fact that many are already boarding students in great need.
- Given the demand for Community Teachers in target areas, ESCUP has decided to divert some re-

sources intended for remote teacher upgrading into efforts to train community teachers. As a result, remote teacher-upgrading has been postponed until Program Year 2.

7.3 Need to Delay Implementation in Certain Sectors and Sites

As noted earlier, ESCUP found it necessary to place sites in Mondulkiri on a very different schedule for activity implementation due to the 'imported' nature of most of its school personnel. That is, while most school personnel were still on site in target areas in Kratie and Kampong Cham Provinces and could participate in preparatory activities early in the school year, this proved not possible in Mondulkiri. Most personnel there only returned from school holiday from their provinces of origin during the last week of September. As a result, most start-up activities in Mondulkiri had to be postponed until October-November of the school year.

7.4 Inhibiting Role of Patronage Networks

The process of Community Teacher selection during the year demonstrated the formidable nature of patronage networks that cut along cultural lines in areas characterized by heterogeneous mixing of ethnic groups. In this respect, the program found it unwise to rely on existing networks at school and community level to recruit Community Teachers when these networks are dominated by ethnic Khmer. As noted earlier, Community Teacher recruitment in many areas of Kampong Cham Province resulted in a profile of candidates that clashed sharply with the proportional representation of Chams in the local population. Local explanations that 'all Cham young people go to study in Malaysia' or 'Cham people are not interested in education' appeared ingenuous. As a result, ESCUP has recruited a local Islamic NGO to assist the program in linking directly with community networks in the Cham community. These links have proven to be crucial for candidate recruitment for entry into PTTCs and other activities involving minority groups.

7.5 Tendency for Needs to Outpace Resources

Program managers have been pleasantly surprised by the quickening pace of demand for program-mediated services. This speaks in particular to the explosion in demand for Community Teachers and interest in entering PTTCs on ESCUP sponsored scholarships. As noted earlier, the original quota for community teachers has more than doubled from 60 to 184; among PPTC scholarship candidates, quotas have also been increased from 60 to 100. Similarly, there have been additional demands for technical support for Community Teachers on Thursdays (a technical development day in Cambodia) for which the program does not yet have any explicit budgetary provisions. Demand for scholarship support at lower secondary school level among ethnic groups has also exceeded original expectations by program managers. In order to meet these demands, ESCUP has utilized funds that are intended for the next academic year (i.e., October 2006) but which will be available from when the first program year ends in March 2006. In the Cambodian education cycle, the school year will only be completed by July, which means that the first 'academic' year of the program is in process after the first 'contract' year has been completed. Thus, funds intended for a full year in Year 2 may only be used until the conclusion of the program in March 2007, slightly more than half way through the second academic year of the program.

7.6 Inadequate Teacher Educational Backgrounds

Teacher recruitment by community groups largely met criteria suggested by MoEYS with respect to background characteristics. This refers in particular to selecting candidates with 12 years of education in most areas and at least nine years of basic education in remote areas. In some cases, however, it proved necessary to recruit about 49 teachers or 27% of the total with less than nine years of basic education. In such cases, communities in very remote areas selected individuals with only a primary school education

(Grades 5-6). This proved true to some extent in all three provinces but was particularly the case in Mondulkiri where 19% or nearly one Community Teacher in five had not studied at secondary school level (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Level of Education of Community Teachers Working in ESCUP Target Areas

Province	Grade 9 or higher	%	Grade 7-8	%	Grade 6 or less	%	Total Teachers
Kampong Cham	95	86%	10	9%	6	5%	111
Kratie	33	63%	15	29%	4	8%	52
Mondulkiri	7	33%	10	48%	4	19%	21
Total	**135**	**73%**	**35**	**19%**	**14**	**8%**	**184**

The low education levels of some teachers have had implications for the instruction of subject matter, especially at the higher grade levels. Some PoE officials have complained that they have witnessed Community Teachers misspelling words on the black board, which weakens the credibility of the intervention. To be sure, there is a double standard at work in these observations as contract teachers employed by government under the same conditions are also often characterized by low education levels. NGO-supported programs, however, are expected to meet a higher standard. Nevertheless, ESCUP has been considering the allocation of additional funds for general upgrading of Community Teachers on Thursday technical days. Although state teachers are paid by government for attending such sessions, ESCUP Community Teachers are not; they, therefore, do not generally go to schools on these days when the sessions are held. Thus, proposed technical-support provisions on some scale may help to equalize the professional status of the Community Teachers supported by ESCUP and help to upgrade their knowledge of general subject matter.

7.7 Uneven Application of School Readiness Program Methodologies

Not surprisingly, assessment results of classroom practice among SRP teachers have shown wide variability with respect to the degree to which they implement desired methodologies. As part of the assessment of SRP implementation, pre- and post-observations of about 30% of the SRP teachers trained by ESCUP occurred during the period October through December. These results show overall average scores improving from 49% to 63%. This compares with observation scores from last year year's pilot where average scores moved from 63% to 75%. Anecdotal evidence indicates a wide range of performance among teachers but on a level, which is generally much lower than when activities were first piloted. These observations and findings suggest a common pattern of decreasing quality when pilots are expanded. It also suggests the tendency of training activities to become more mechanical as they increase in scope. Based on these outcomes, ESCUP technical personnel will likely be more involved in any future training activities (rather than relying so entirely on MoEYS trainers) and will also provide more active follow-up support to the 52 teachers who were trained this year.

7.8 Flagpole Syndrome

Although cluster school improvement plans were generally satisfactory, particularly in so far as they were the first such plans that many clusters had ever developed, there were areas of concern that were consistently true of a large number of the plans submitted. This refers especially to the tendency to propose illogical linkages between outcomes and activities. In this respect, many school directors seem to be fixated on a formulaic but shallow conception of a 'good' school, which is usually characterized by a flagpole, gardens, and window curtains. A large number of clusters expressed the astonishing belief that these improvements in their schools would reduce dropout and increase enrolment. This belief, which is increas-

ingly known as 'flagpole syndrome' appears to have a wide currency in Cambodia. Indeed, ESCUP staff members were genuinely surprised by the frequency of such assertions from clusters that were often separated by large distances. Aside from the fact that these sorts of expenditures are really the responsibility of the state to subsidize, it has been difficult to dissuade school directors from their tenacious belief by explaining that these inputs probably make little difference to the typical village child whose family is often verging on destitution. A kind and interested teacher, a scholarship award, a hot breakfast, or even the promise of health care are more likely to be effective factors that will pull children into the school. This experience highlights the as yet rudimentary understanding of many school-level educators about concepts relating to child-friendliness, the ability to look at education from the perspective of children, and the continuing dominance of outmoded ways of thinking about schooling. It suggests the need to focus more heavily in the next academic year on child sensitization sessions that help to provide more input from children as a prelude to next year's planning.

7.9 Criteria for Scholarship Awards and Out-of-School Children

It was stated earlier that only about 89% of those who were previously out-of-school are now receiving scholarship support as an incentive for re-enrolment. School-communities responsible for selecting scholarship recipients based their decisions primarily on socio-economic status using a standardized instrument provided by ESCUP. This suggests that the 11% of re-enrolled children were out-of-school for reasons that were not economic in nature. This situation has sparked a controversy whether all out-of-school children should automatically be eligible for scholarship assistance or whether socio-economic status should be the overriding criteria. The argument for an enrolment status criterion for scholarship eligibility is that it provides a tangible incentive for parents to re-enroll their children. The argument against is that it undermines the credibility of selection decisions and penalizes poorer children who have made the effort to stay enrolled in school. ESCUP staff will be discussing this issue with stakeholders further to reach some agreement on whether the overriding need to target out-of-school children merits a revision in scholarship selection criteria.

7.10 Modifications in the Structure of the School Week & Implications for Implementation

Effective March 2006, the MoEYS introduced special monetary incentives for all primary school teachers to teach Mathematics, Khmer Language, and Life Skills for three Thursdays each month. A fourth Thursday has been reserved for planning and training in preparation for the other Thursdays. Remuneration has been set at 10,000 Riels per Thursday (about $2.50 at current exchange rates). These changes effectively raise the teacher work week to six days and greatly reduces the window of opportunity for engaging teachers in capacity building activities on Thursday, which had traditionally been reserved as a technical day for training purposes. Restructuring the teaching workweek in this way will have grave implications for the ESCUP program as it will for many other projects. First, it will require the program to find an alternative time niche to provide life skills classes, which had been planned for Thursday mornings. For schools that are only in session during the morning, it may be possible to shift such classes to the afternoon. For double shift schools, however, it will only be possible to provide such classes on Sundays. Another important implication of this change relates to the workload and remuneration of Community Teachers. Because these teachers are not on the government payroll, they cannot qualify for the special payments described above. Therefore, requiring Community Teachers to work on Thursdays will necessitate additional payment from program funds, greatly straining budgetary resources in the process. At the present time, program management is planning to increase Community Teacher salaries from $18 to $20 per month effective in May 2006. Although this is only about one-third of what state teachers will be receiving, it will likely be paid more punctually than what is provided to state teachers who have to wait many months before being paid for their supplementary instruction. Finally and perhaps most importantly, the elimination of Thursday technical days means that the overall opportunity for working with teachers for purposes of capacity building will be greatly curtailed leaving only the vacation months as

the most feasible time during which to do so. As discussed earlier, this is highly problematic for teachers in places like Mondulkiri where most leave the province during the vacation months. In view of the grave implications of the changes described above, ESCUP personnel will be closely monitoring how diligent teachers are in complying with these new Ministry regulations and how regularly they are paid.

7.11 Limitations in Universalizing CFS Approaches in Classrooms due to Teacher Opposition

An important goal of MoEYS policy makers and the ESCUP program is to ensure improved classroom practice in as many schools as possible. This implies widespread adoption of target methodologies by 'all' teachers working in supported schools. These goals notwithstanding, the program has few illusions about achieving school-wide adoption of CFS methodologies in real practice if only because it realizes that it is not possible to force teachers to comply with this expectation if they are unwilling to do so. Already, KAPE has reported that recalcitrant teachers who have recently been forced to adopt CFS approaches in accordance with Ministry guidelines are actively organizing opposition among other teachers. Many of these teachers are members of the Cambodia Independent Teacher Association (CITA) who complain that the new approaches entail considerably more work with no additional remuneration. Based on these observations and the long history of failed teacher education initiatives in Cambodia that did not discriminate between variable levels of teachers' professional commitment, ESCUP has decided to return to a policy initially followed by KAPE in which teacher training is mediated by a principle of 'volunteerism' among teachers. Although this approach takes longer to leverage school-wide adoption of target methodologies, previous experience demonstrates that the peer pressure among teachers that it generates is a far more effective incentive to induce other teachers to voluntarily join the program than 'incremental compliance' measures mediated by central planners.

8. FUTURE PLANNING AND NEW DIRECTIONS

The review of program indicators above suggests that ESCUP has made great progress in establishing a functional implementation framework that can promote access and quality in remote schools with high risk populations. This framework refers not only to the adaptation of many innovative interventions (both old and new) to new contexts but also to the development of outreach networks at school and community level that have been very effective in increasing the absorptive capacity of remote areas with respect to their ability to utilize resources. As it moves into another program year, ESCUP must now consider waking a fine line between the need to consolidate these achievements while managing selective increases in their coverage. This refers in particular to more experimental innovations that currently only have currency in case study sites (i.e., three school clusters).

Efforts to consolidate programming will partly focus on the documentation of training approaches. This will happen mainly in the form of additional module development to add to the CFS Activity Menu previously developed by KAPE with support from UNICEF/Sida. In other cases, program staff members will work with counterparts in other projects (particularly those in KAPE and CARE) to modify existing modules that are either out of date or require revisions to meet the needs of remote areas. Training modules relating to the implementation of scholarship activities are a good example where collaboration could be very fruitful in this regard. Improving documentation of lower secondary school activity menus is also another area where there is considerable scope for improvement as most interventions are still new and highly experimental. The program will also need to review monitoring frameworks in order to better document and systematize data collection instruments and protocols. As the current report demonstrates, ESCUP has put into place extensive data collection mechanisms leading to the development of a plethora of monitoring tools. It would be very useful not only for ESCUP staff members but also to similar projects to have a comprehensive compendium of these instruments organized by component.

Consolidation efforts will also have to focus on additional training needs among stakeholders in order to ensure that momentum is maintained into the next academic year. Relevant stakeholders in this regard refer to Community Teachers, CEFAC members, and scholarship oversight committee members. Scholarship oversight committees are particularly important in this respect because they are responsible for several related activities including school mapping and home visits to students at risk of dropping out of school. A related aspect of consolidation refers to the need to better link ESCUP-supported activities that occur at school level with government financing mechanisms, namely PAP. In several cases, program design has already taken this into account, the most notable example being the introduction of local PTTC candidate recruitment linked with a phasing out of Community Teachers. While it cannot be expected that government pick up all ESCUP-supported activities, it should be possible to maintain a number of key ones. This includes maintaining investments in CFS/SRP enhanced classrooms, libraries, and life skills instruction.

As noted above, consolidation of current activities must be balanced against the need for expansion of coverage within existing sites as well as the introduction of new activities that are planned for Year 2 implementation. The latter relates to the establishment of at least 100 CFS classrooms and associated training activities for teachers in addition to the development of networks through which to provide support to multi-grade teachers. ESCUP hopes that it can accomplish improvements in multi-grade service provision by working closely with a remote schools development project funded by the Asian Development Bank, which is just getting under way. Expansion of current activities within existing sites refers mainly to the need to assist more Commune-level EFA Commissions and increase the coverage of BCA and SKL interventions. ESCUP must also grapple with the incremental nature of scholarship coverage. In this respect, scholarship support at lower secondary school level is expected to double in Kratie and Mondulkiri where a currently supported cohort will move to Grade 8 and a new intake is planned at Grade 7 level in Year 2. On top of all these considerations, ESCUP must also keep in play possibilities for geographical expansion to new sites in the event that program funding is extended beyond the current two years. Nevertheless, the program seems well positioned to successfully achieve a carefully modulated plan to achieve a balanced mix of consolidation and expansion. This refers in particular to a highly cohesive and effective national team, low reliance on external Technical Assistance, well-tuned monitoring mechanisms, and competent local committees that have demonstrated considerable skill in orchestrating many activities in a very short time frame.