



TEACHING MATTERS

A POLICY REPORT ON THE
MOTIVATION AND
MORALE OF TEACHERS
IN CAMBODIA



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CESSP	Cambodia Education Sector Support Project
CITA	Cambodia Independent Teachers' Association
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOE	District Office of Education
EFA	Education for All
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
ESSP	Education Sector Support Programme
EQIP	Education Quality Improvement Programme
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
ILO	International Labour Organization
KTA	Khmer Teachers' Association
MIE	Mainstreaming Inclusive Education
MoEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance
MoEYS	Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
MoP	Ministry of Planning
NEP	NGO Education Partnership
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PAP	Priority Action Programme
POE	Provincial Office of Education
PTTC	Provincial Teacher Training Centre
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RTTC	Regional Teacher Training Centre
TTC	Teacher Training College
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been produced in collaboration with the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) in Phnom Penh.

THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Valuing Teachers reports have been produced by VSO in 13 developing countries to date, with the purpose of assisting in the application of policies designed to improve accessibility and quality of education. The programmes conducting the research are now working with governments and their civil partners to find ways of implementing recommendations drawn from the reports.

The purpose of this report is to:

- examine education in Cambodia from the perspective of its core providers: the teachers; it will focus on those issues that affect their motivation, morale and performance, and ultimately the quality of education they can deliver
- determine the views of other education stakeholders about the position of teachers and their role in providing quality education in Cambodia
- support the cooperative efforts of the Cambodian government and its civil and development partners by offering recommendations on how improvements might be made to teacher motivation, participation and performance, thus increasing the quality of education.

OVERVIEW

This report is made up of 11 chapters. Following the initial introductory chapter, chapter 2 examines the factors given by teachers in Cambodia as causes for motivation and de-motivation. Chapter 3 gives a brief overview of the socio-economic context and the education structure within which teachers work in Cambodia. Chapters 4 to 9 cover the six main themes (listed below) that have been identified as affecting teacher motivation. They state the relevant policy framework, followed by the experiences and views of teachers and other education stakeholders. Recommendations for possible actions, suggested by all stakeholders, have been included in the text of the relevant sections.

- **Terms and conditions:** covers salary and non-salary incentive issues, terms of employment and living conditions.
- **Human resource policy and management:** explores factors relating to recruitment, training, placement and promotion.
- **Education management:** examines how education policies are implemented at all levels and the various roles and responsibilities of the educational hierarchy.
- **School environment:** investigates factors in the school environment, facilities and resources that can present obstacles to teachers' practice and motivation.
- **Students:** discusses challenges for students in terms of discipline and behavioural issues, and how these affect their interaction with their teachers.
- **Teachers in society:** examines the status, motivation and role of teachers in society, and also investigates how much of a voice teachers have in Cambodia in the form of union representation.

Finally, chapter 10 contains observations and conclusions, and chapter 11 lists the recommendations contained within the report.

THE FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The findings show that public school teachers perceive themselves to be underpaid, under-supported and working in under-resourced schools. Their reasons for becoming teachers vary; job motivation is not a simple concept to define in a poor, yet developing, country, as Paul Bennell (2004: 8–12) explains in his report on teacher motivation:

“The received wisdom among occupational psychologists is that ‘pay on its own does not increase motivation’. However, pecuniary motives are likely to be dominant among teachers in those LICs (low income countries) where pay and other material benefits are too low for individual and household survival needs to be met. Only when these basic needs have been met is it possible for ‘higher-order’ needs, which are the basis of true job satisfaction, to be realised. A key empirical issue is therefore to establish the extent of this problem...”

De-motivating factors were clearly identified by teachers. Ranked in order of significance, they were: low salary, closely followed by corruption and nepotism, poor leadership and a lack of voice. Underlying causes of these sources of dissatisfaction are:

- the fact that Cambodia is a poor country with a correspondingly limited education budget
- systemic problems with transparency and accountability
- low capacity in management and administration
- insufficient leadership skills
- inadequate incentives.

CONCLUSIONS

Paying teachers adequately can be seen as an investment in the future of the Cambodian people. Salaries should be kept under constant review by the government and regularly adjusted on an annual basis to at least keep pace with the cost of living and current inflation. There should be no need for teachers to seek alternative ways of supplementing their low salaries. Success in achieving Education for All depends on long-term education expenditure and a continuing commitment to the implementation of their strategic plan by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Nevertheless, there are other issues that can positively affect teacher motivation. The research for this report shows that active community support for schools helps build a sustainable relationship between the community and teachers. This in turn provides a strong motivating incentive for teachers and, indeed, a feeling of being valued. This type of mutually beneficial relationship requires commitment and effort from all involved, including supporting non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donor organisations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for actions to address these causes of dissatisfaction are made to the Royal Government of Cambodia, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), non-governmental organisations, development partners, regional authorities, school directors, teachers and the teachers' unions, and communities and parents. They include:

- **Increasing the salaries of teachers, school directors and staff of the provincial and district offices of education to a level appropriate to the cost of living and linked to inflation.**

In every focus group conducted with teachers, the issue of pay emerged as the most powerful de-motivating factor. It is impossible to earn a living on a teacher's salary in Cambodia. This basic need is going to remain the top priority over and above any other aspirations teachers have for the quality of their teaching practice until it is fulfilled.

- **Train in leadership skills at all levels.**

Poor leadership is a strong de-motivating factor, identified as such by nearly 70 per cent of teachers in the research process for this report. Bennell and Akyeampong's report on teacher motivation (2007; 43) says:

"Teacher motivation depends critically on effective management, particularly at the school level. If systems and structures set up to manage and support teachers are dysfunctional, teachers are likely to lose their sense of professional responsibility and commitment. Teacher management is most crucial at the school level, where the importance of teachers' work and their competence in performing it are crucially influenced by the quality of both internal and external supervision".

- **Strengthen links and dialogue mechanisms between all education stakeholders.**

The development of mechanisms for regular dialogue, to discuss and negotiate issues that directly affect teachers, would benefit teachers, students and contribute to the Royal Government of Cambodia's aim of quality education for all.

- **Strengthen quality assurance processes at all levels within the education sector.**

Making standards and criteria public will help to normalise assessment, and will cause monitoring and evaluation to be seen as essential procedures. For example, evaluations of teacher actions that have an impact on students can be used to appraise teacher performance, as well as to improve a school's instructional evaluation and planning.

- **Develop reliable, effective data systems for education statistics to enable better planning and provision of resources, thereby helping to support teachers.**

Accurate national data, from independent and verifiable sources, will be essential if realistic targets are to be set and progress towards them is to be effectively monitored by all stakeholders. Future plans and budgets are currently being made from unreliable data. It is likely that teachers have a better awareness of the actual situation, at least in their own schools; this has an impact on their perceptions of the education system and thus on their morale.

- **Promote the value of quality education to parents and communities.**

Educated and informed parents realise the value of education and this can help to break the community cycle of undervaluing education.

- **Pass and implement the anti-corruption law.**

The effects of corruption and nepotism were identified as significantly de-motivating factors by teachers.

Detailed recommendations for MoEYS and other stakeholders can be found on page 60.

1 INTRODUCTION

The stated aim of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) is to provide free basic education for all by the year 2015. This is an ambitious aim and one that places great demands on all involved in the country's education process.

VSO programmes conducting Valuing Teachers research in other countries have had considerable successes in making representations to governments and development partners in the form of specific recommendations designed to improve access and quality of education. This Valuing Teachers report is the result of a research-based advocacy project that is part of VSO's Mainstreaming Inclusive Education (MIE)¹ project in Cambodia. It has been produced in collaboration with the NGO Education Partnership (NEP).

The purpose of this report is to:

- examine education in Cambodia from the perspective of its core providers: the teachers; it will focus on those issues that affect their motivation, morale and performance, and ultimately the quality of education they can deliver
- determine the views of other education stakeholders about the position of teachers and their role in providing quality education in Cambodia
- support the cooperative efforts of the Cambodian government and its civil and development partners by offering recommendations on how improvements might be made to teacher motivation, participation and performance, thus increasing the quality of education.

1.1 THE SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Many of the problems experienced within the education sector in Cambodia stem from the country's basic economic situation. It is beyond the scope or capacity of this report to comment or make recommendations on tax systems, fiscal policy or any of the other related topics covered by other reports with expertise to offer in these fields. Therefore, this report, while focusing on the realities of teachers' experience, will offer realistic suggestions and recommendations that may be achievable within the Cambodian context.

In keeping with the scope of the MIE project, this report focuses on primary schools and lower secondary schools only. The voices of teachers and other participants in the report are represented by translated quotations and through conclusions drawn from the research processes.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Five locations out of the 20 provinces and four municipalities in Cambodia were identified as representative in terms of geography, accessibility and local economies, including urban, rural and remote areas. These are:

- **Phnom Penh:** the municipality housing the capital city, and political and economic centre, with over one million inhabitants
- **Battambang:** a large province in the north-west of Cambodia; largely rural, with rice production being the main economic activity
- **Kampot:** a coastal province in the south, with fishing and rice as the main sources of income
- **Ratanakiri:** remote hill country in the north-east, with non-Khmer speaking ethnic groups; heavily reliant on natural resources such as forestry, cashew nuts and fishing
- **Siem Reap:** a predominantly agricultural province in the central north-west, which, despite its growing tourism industry due to Angkor Wat, continues to be among the three poorest provinces in Cambodia.

The qualitative and quantitative research process consisted of focus group discussions, interviews, questionnaires and desk-based research. In keeping with the advocacy-focused purpose of this report, more emphasis has been given to qualitative, experiential data.

For the quantitative element, 144 teachers from the five provinces were interviewed individually. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1. For the qualitative element, two focus groups

1 The MIE project is designed to ensure that primary and lower secondary children in rural Cambodia receive a quality basic education based on their individual needs and abilities, regardless of sex, disability or ethnicity.

were conducted in each of the five provinces. In four provinces (Battambang, Siem Reap, Ratanakiri and Kampot), one focus group was made up of teachers from urban schools, the other from rural schools. In Phnom Penh, all of the teachers in both focus groups were from urban schools. The groups were made up of a mixture of primary and lower secondary teachers at a ratio of approximately 60:40; each represented a range of ages and years of experience in teaching. In total, for the qualitative research, 119 teachers participated, of which 56 were male and 63 were female. Group sizes ranged from 10 to 13 participants.

The format of the discussions was carefully structured to ensure that teachers felt able to express their views freely, confidently and without prompting. Teachers were assured of their anonymity as respondents and of the non-political nature of the research. All responses were received without comment and no responses were shared between the groups.

In all group discussions, teachers were separated into smaller groups by gender. Some activities required group responses while some required individual responses. All responses were recorded by the participants themselves, with additional notes and quotations recorded by the facilitators as the discussions went on.

In addition, teachers from four primary schools taking part in a non-governmental organisation (NGO) salary-supplement project in Siem Reap were asked about the impact of the supplement on their teaching practice. Forty-three teachers responded to a questionnaire, while six took part in a focus group discussion. The Siem Reap questionnaires can be found in Appendix 2.

A number of interviews were then held with secondary stakeholders: teacher trainers, provincial and district offices of education, commune leaders and teachers' unions, and also with tertiary stakeholders: experienced educationalists, technical advisers and policy makers in order to test the findings and formulate recommendations.

1.3 PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

1.3.1 LANGUAGE

Both the focus groups and the questionnaires were designed in English, translated into Khmer, and the responses were then translated back into English. The challenge associated with this procedure was that, inevitably, shades of meaning changed slightly in translation.

1.3.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

Due to the poor condition of roads outside of the main towns, worsened in the wet season, it can be very time consuming to make field trips and to visit schools in Cambodia. Internet access and the postal service are very limited; paperwork is often delivered via the buses that run between Phnom Penh and the provinces.

1.3.3 DATA SYSTEMS

Data collection, recording and availability are all problematic in Cambodia. Information may be out of date, incomplete or unavailable. The data used to back up the findings of this report was gathered from the most reliable sources available.

2 TEACHER MOTIVATION IN CAMBODIA

“The proudest time for me was when one of my students got the top award for physics in the whole country and received an award from [His Excellency] Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister [Minister of Council of Ministers], and I received an award of US\$100.”
(Male secondary teacher, Takeo Province)

The most common reasons given by teachers in this research for wanting to go into teaching were:

- a strong interest in the job
- a desire to help Cambodia’s development by improving education
- because they enjoy contact with children.

While, for most teachers, proximity of the school to home is an important factor, some teachers spoke about volunteering to leave their own province to go and teach in a remote area because of the greater need for teachers there. Others said they had been influenced by their family and older teachers spoke movingly about entering the profession at a time when teachers were badly needed.

However, some admitted that teaching had not been their first choice of career. They had little alternative as they lacked resources or the ability to study at university or, for example, become a doctor. One male secondary teacher preferred his former job as a soldier but his family influenced him to change to teaching; another chose teaching to avoid conscription into the army.

For many teachers in Cambodia, enjoyment of the job is their main motivating factor; this can be manifested in various ways. Some teachers are motivated by a feeling of responsibility and pride, some by being a good role model. Some teachers enjoy the exchange of ideas between colleagues, while others appreciate the job security that being a teacher offers. Some feel ‘called’ to be a teacher, and believe that they are helping to develop education. A very strong motivator for teachers in Cambodia, which figured strongly in both the focus groups and the individual interviews, is the desire to help the future of the country and preserve its cultural traditions. As one teacher expressed it:

“Children [must] understand the literature and culture of the nation. When the literature vanishes, the nation vanishes”.

In addition, teachers recognise, and are motivated by, the need to develop Cambodia’s human resource pool. Several teachers stated that they wanted to eradicate illiteracy from the next generation. One teacher described how he wanted to help Cambodian society **“to have good spiritual and moral conduct”**. Thus, teaching is seen as a responsibility towards subsequent generations.

According to teacher respondents, the characteristics of a motivated teacher are:

- a happy, pleasant personality and good relationships and communication with students
- hardworking, punctual, conscientious, confident, with a serious attitude, focused on and committed to the job
- maintaining good student attendance, obeying rules and having a good working environment in the classroom
- skill and commitment to motivating student learning and achieving good results
- behaving in a moral way
- good lesson preparation and flexibility in its use
- good relations with other members of staff, sharing resources and so on
- using creative teaching strategies, such as using visual aids and classroom display
- taking students on field trips
- teaching students about Khmer culture
- making improvements in the school environment.

These all seem reasonable practices and attitudes to which new teachers should aspire. However, most of them require support from and cooperation with colleagues, supervisors, government and all the other stakeholders in the education system. The next chapters will investigate how much support and cooperation, and indeed reward, teachers in Cambodia do receive.

2.1 TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES

What do teachers themselves say about their present situation? The data in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3 (below) is taken from analysis of the answers from teachers involved in the research for this report and illustrates the factors given by teachers as causes for de-motivation, together with the teachers' views of where the sources (and hence responsibility) for these lie. Figure 1 shows the factors given by teachers as causes of dissatisfaction, together with their relative weight.²

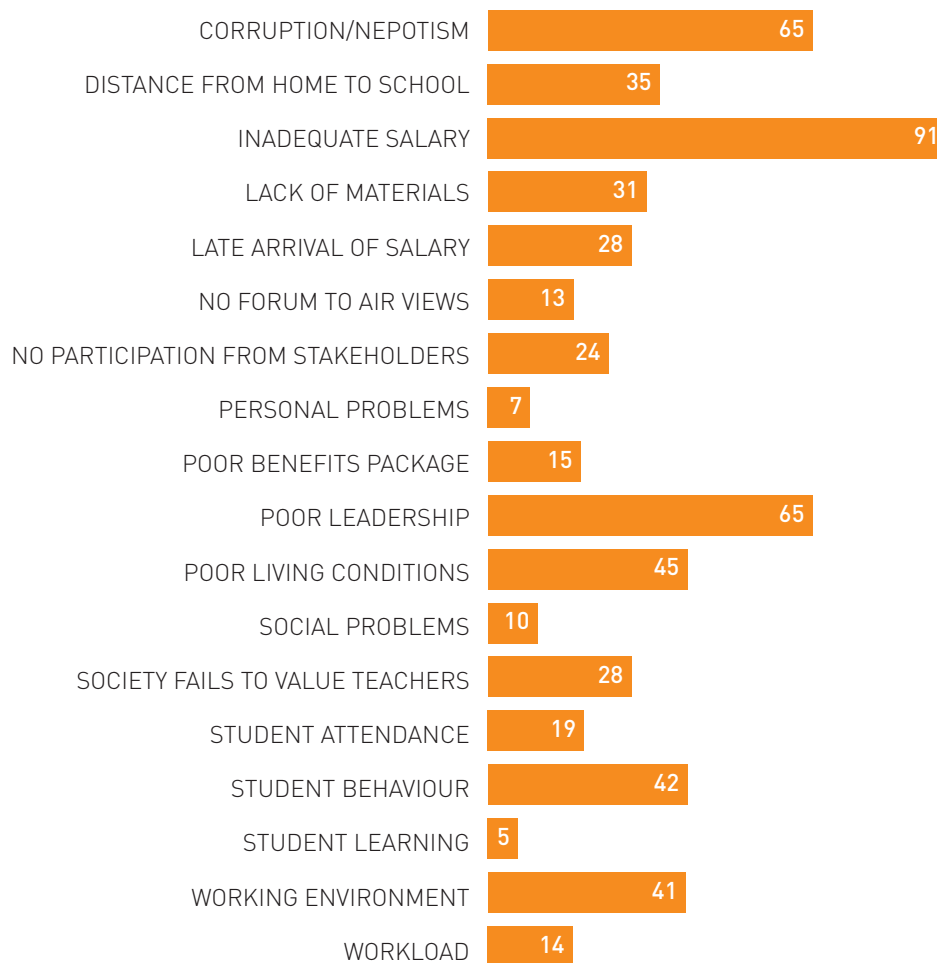


Figure 1 Causes of teacher dissatisfaction

Figure 1 shows clearly that, as expected from the anecdotal and qualitative evidence, the most significant single de-motivating factor for teachers is low salary. However, it also indicates that corruption and nepotism and poor leadership are highly significant factors. If these two factors were attributed to the same root causes, and consolidated, they would outweigh salary and become the most significant cause of dissatisfaction. However, since the impacts of corruption and nepotism and poor leadership are seen by teachers differently, they remain separate in terms of concerns as stated by the teachers themselves. Consequently, from the teachers' perspectives, inadequate salary remains the number one de-motivating factor.

Figure 2 shows the teachers' assessments of where the responsibility for each de-motivating factor lies. One item stands out clearly: the responsibility for inadequate salary is seen to lie with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). In all other cases, a more even spread of responsibility is attributed. Therefore, as a single identifiable factor for change, and the responsibility for implementing it, action by MoEYS to resolve the salary issue stands noticeably above all others.

² Based on total numbers of responses from teachers.

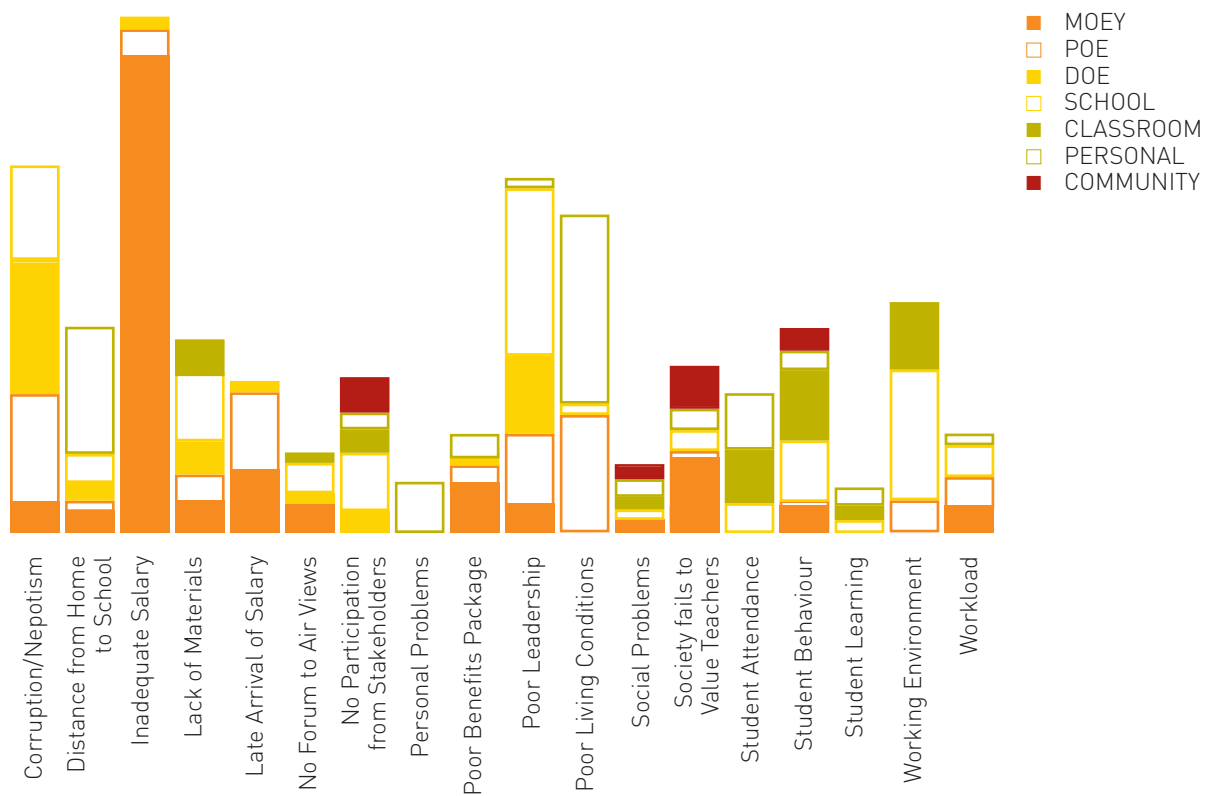


Figure 2 Attributed causes of dissatisfaction by source

Yet, when the sources of dissatisfaction are accumulated as shown in Figure 3 below, it becomes evident that action by a wider range of stakeholders is required to address the full range of concerns. While MoEYS emerges as the greatest source of dissatisfaction for teachers, the management of the schools themselves falls only three percentage points behind. This strongly suggests a need to improve both the capacities and performance of school directors as the next most important task after salary. Although action at both the provincial and district office of education levels (POE and DOE respectively) is seen as less significant, if aggregated they would lay only one percentage point behind school management. Consequently, improvement of performance at these levels would also be significant.

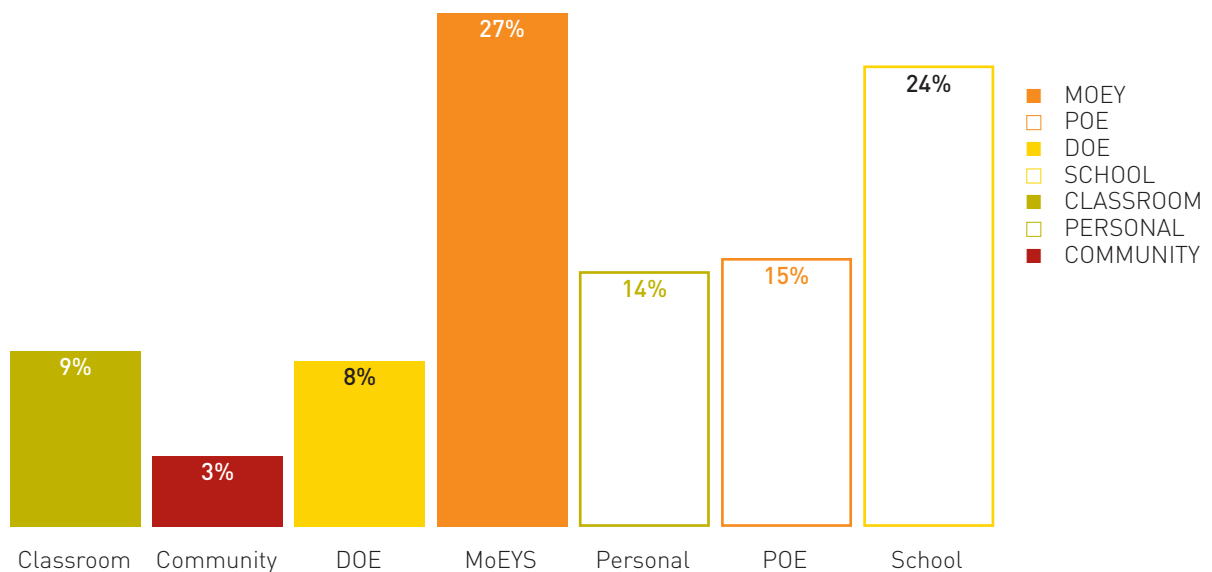


Figure 3 Attributed sources of dissatisfaction – accumulated

[Note: 'Classroom' refers to the student community, and by extension family support, within a school.]



3 CONTEXT

3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OVERVIEW OF CAMBODIA

Cambodia is officially termed a 'post-conflict society' and has only recently emerged from many years of war, civil war and their immediate consequences. As a result, while progress is being made on many fronts, it is important to remember this context: a huge number of the population lost their lives during the time of the Khmer Rouge (1975–79). Reports agree that this amounted to at least 1.5 million people, including 75 per cent of teachers, 96 per cent of university students and 67 per cent of all primary and secondary school pupils (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008). Thousands more people died in the years before the genocide in heavy US bombing along the border with Vietnam, and still more during the Vietnamese occupation from 1979 to 1989. In 1989, the United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia (UNTAC) took charge and administered the first national election in 1993. Nonetheless, armed insurgency continued until a coup d'état in 1997 and a second election in 1998. In the general election of 2003, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) took the majority of seats.

Since the series of armed conflicts ended, in 1998, efforts have been made to rebuild both societal and economic infrastructure. In 2007, Cambodia was rated the second poorest country (after Myanmar) out of five countries in the Lower Mekong Basin.³ It has a population of 14,197,000 and its major GDP outputs are from agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and construction, although 75 per cent of employment is in agriculture.⁴ According to the 2005 Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey,⁵ 15 per cent of the population lives in urban areas, of which the capital, Phnom Penh is the largest, while 85 per cent of the population remains rural. The World Bank reported in 2006 that 90 per cent of Cambodia's poor people live in the rural areas.⁶ In 2007, Cambodia's position was 131 in the Human Development Index rating of 177 UN countries.⁷

In response to the severe problems suffered by the Cambodian people, international donors have given an estimated US\$500 million a year since the early 1990s.⁸ However Cambodia has an acknowledged historical and current problem with corruption. In 1998, the RGC promised to fight this, eventually drafting an anti-corruption bill; this has since been redrafted many times and remains to be passed. Still, the RGC identifies corruption as one of the most significant and pervasive problems facing the country: the aim of 'fighting corruption' is given priority within the good governance section of the National Strategic Development Plan 2006–2010 (RGC 2005: 2.14: 10) and the government acknowledges that overcoming corruption requires a multifaceted approach:

"With multifarious dimensions of the problem of corruption, long- and short-term solutions need to be found in a number of areas, from increasing salaries of government staff, changing of 'attitudinal culture', to institutionalising checks and balances, and to punishment of the guilty."⁹

The field of education is no exception. For example, many teachers supplement their own small incomes by charging unofficial fees for teaching and administration services within schools. This in turn presents an additional barrier to accessing education for the poorest families.¹⁰

Given that 40 per cent of the population is under the age of 15, and that 36 per cent of the population lives below the Cambodian poverty line (US\$0.45 per day),¹¹ it is not surprising that many families rely on their children's labour to supplement their family income. It is often difficult for them to make the decision to send their children to school, and boys may get preference over girls for education if there has to be a choice within a family.

- 3 *Human Development Report 2007/2008*: UNDP 2007. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/>
- 4 *The World Factbook*: CIA 2008. These figures are dated 2005 and the UNDP Human Development Report 2007/2008 links to them directly. It is therefore assumed that no newer data is available. The position or ranking at the start of each entry is out of 177 countries worldwide. www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cb.html
- 5 National Institute of Statistics of Cambodia: Ministry of Planning 2005.
- 6 *Cambodia Poverty Assessment 2006*: World Bank 2006.
- 7 *Human Development Report 2007/2008*: UNDP 2007.
- 8 *UPI Asia Online*: 28 May 2008.
- 9 See also NSDP sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 on pages 23–24.
- 10 See the section on informal school fees on page 26 of this report.
- 11 National poverty is defined by UNDP as "the poverty line deemed appropriate for a country by its authorities", *Human Development Report 2007/2008*.

National literacy rates reinforce this reality.

Table 1 shows Cambodian literacy rates by age and gender; the disparity between men and women, although improving, remains marked.

Table 1 Literacy rates in Cambodia 2004

AGE GROUP	SEX		
	MEN	WOMEN	BOTH SEXES
All over 15	80.2	60.1	69.6
15–24	84.3	76.6	80.5
25–34	79.2	63.8	71.1
35–44	77.1	55.8	65.8
45–54	80.1	53.4	64.4
55–64	80.6	34.4	53.9
65+	62.8	12.4	33.3

(National Institute of Statistics of Cambodia, 2004)

3.2 EDUCATION CONTEXT

3.2.1 FUNDING

Data on economic and financial matters in Cambodia is often incomplete, sometimes out of date and regularly contradictory, especially when taken from different sources. Sources such as the RGC’s Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF), the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) all publish their own figures, which are not necessarily consistent.¹² Getting a true picture of the situation, as it affects teachers, is therefore not easy.

Nonetheless, it is clear that the funding provided for MoEYS generally reflects the high priority placed on education by the RGC. If the 2008 budget is implemented according to plan, MoEYS will receive the highest budget allocation of any single department at 22.25 per cent.¹³ However, while there has been a steady increase in the education budget since 2000, the overall level of growth has not been fully reflected in teachers’ salaries. Details of the economic situation and budget allocations are given in Appendix 3.

3.2.2 EDUCATION FOR ALL

Since 2000, the Royal Government of Cambodia, in cooperation with NGOs and development partners, has undertaken a process of education policy reform aimed at providing education services to all Cambodian children.

The RGC has expressed commitment to the six Education for All (EFA) goals agreed at the Dakar conference in 2000, as summarised below:

- pre-school provision
- free primary education for all by 2015
- skills learning for young people and adults
- 50 per cent increase in the literacy rate by 2015
- equal school enrolment and opportunities for boys and girls by 2015
- improving the quality of education.

The Education Law, adopted on 19 October 2007, states its aim as “**developing human resource through the provision of lifelong education for learners who want to achieve knowledge, skill, capacity, dignity, and morality**”.

12 For example, the IMF gives the GDP per capita for 2005 as US\$430; MoEF gives it as US\$448. For 2007, MoEF quotes US\$487, while the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) quotes US\$585 and the Economic Institute of Cambodia quotes US\$690. Other indicators and sources also show similar variations.

13 Data is taken from the latest published MoEF figures, 2007.

Poverty reduction, national economic growth, and inclusive education are all linked in to the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), from which were developed the five-year Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and the Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP). The ESP is the overall plan for education in Cambodia for 2006–2010 and the ESSP outlines programme priorities and activities, setting out the implementation and monitoring strategy for the ESP.

Within the ESSP is the Priority Action Programme (PAP), the financing mechanism for the recurrent programme priorities. PAP was developed to channel the government's education funds to ensure the basic funding necessary for school operation. This education fund is meant to provide free basic education to all children in grades 1–9, a major strategy for achieving the Education for All goals being to reduce parental cost barriers to children attending school.

The ESP and ESSP provide a focus for planning aimed at moving the education system away from the fragmented, heavily donor-driven interventions operating under different project implementation units that had characterised education assistance to Cambodia during the 1990s. A catchphrase often used to describe this shift is 'from donorship to ownership'. Reforms have included the provision of operating budgets to schools, the abolition of registration fees, and special incentives to the poor to attend school, such as scholarships.

There have been achievements, including steady and continuous growth in primary school admissions at age six, and enrolments in lower secondary that have more than doubled since 2000 from 283,578 (104,800 girls) to 626,005 (285,699 girls). Although not every district has access to upper secondary schools, the net enrolment rate and transition from lower secondary school regularly exceeds national targets. In 2000, in line with the poverty reduction strategy, the RGC implemented the child-friendly school (CFS) policy as a pilot in ten provinces; since 2001, this has been expanded nationwide to include lower secondary schools.

However, the impact of the reform process has been limited in many areas, for example, on the quality of provincial and local management. Its heavy emphasis on achieving quantitative impacts and demonstrating efficiencies and cost effectiveness has also been criticised for pushing attention to issues of quality to one side.

Nevertheless, in spite of these constraints and other areas of vulnerability, the ESP–ESSP initiative represents a break with the past, a willingness to acknowledge the realities of an under-resourced education system and the inequities that accompany it, and an acceptance of the need for greater accountability. It also represents a real step towards greater self-sufficiency for the Cambodian educational system.

3.2.3 STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

At the central level, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is responsible for establishing national education policies and standards. Schools are administered through provincial and district offices of education and are managed by directors, but the government is working towards decentralised decision-making that aims to bring about major changes in administration, management and practice.

Since 1996, the school system is based on: six years of primary (grades 1–6), three years of lower secondary (grades 7–9) and three years of upper secondary (grades 10–12). In the more populous, lowland areas, groups of neighbouring schools meet for administrative and professional exchanges under a school cluster structure. School clusters were established in Cambodia in 1993 in order to facilitate efforts to share resources and foster capacity-building.

Provincial education departments receive funds from central government for the structural upkeep and maintenance of provincial schools and to pay salaries for the teachers. Very little is allocated for resources or training; any extra funding is usually proportional to the enterprise of each provincial office to attract donors. MoEYS programme budget (PB) funds for equipment and teaching materials are applied and accounted for by school directors.¹⁴ However, this application process appears to be problematic. As a result, students are very often called upon to pay for items ranging from photocopied materials to exams.

14 See the section on school budget – the policy context on page 46 of this report.

The school system in Cambodia is uniform throughout the country. Yet, although similar structural constraints and difficulties are therefore common as a result, the condition of school buildings, the ratio of students to teachers and the quality of instruction vary a great deal even within the same province. Problems in rural areas are different from those in urban areas; traditional cultivation practices and habits vary from one region to another and harvest seasons, ceremonies and weddings can all interrupt the school timetable. Regional variations in the economic situation, the sensitivity of local authorities and training of personnel also play an important role.

3.2.4 SCHOOL HOURS, TYPES AND NUMBERS

Students attend either morning or afternoon classes. Teachers' basic teaching hours follow the same pattern:

- morning shift: Monday to Saturday 7:00am–11:00am
- afternoon shift: Monday to Saturday 1:00pm–5:00pm.

According to the mid-term review of the National Strategic Development Plan in 2008 (RGC, 2005: 2) in the school year 2007/8, there were:

- 6,476 primary schools (increased from 6,277 in 2005/6)
- 1,303 lower secondary schools (increased from 911 in 2005/6).

Lower secondary schools are unevenly distributed between provinces; for example, it is reported¹⁵ that Kampong Thom has a full quota compared to Kampong Cham which has few of these schools.

3.2.5 TEACHER NUMBERS

Except where indicated, all statistics in this section are taken from the MoEYS Education Statistics and Indicators 2006/7 (2007).

Table 2 shows the total number of teachers, broken down first by region and then by education level. It also includes a calculation of the student–teacher ratio for each case.

Table 2 Student–teacher ratios in Cambodia 2006/7

	STUDENTS	TEACHERS	RATIO
Total	3,387,310	77,974	43:1
Urban	653,607	20,459	32:1
Rural	2,628,902	55,599	47:1
Remote	104,801	1,916	55:1
Pre-school	77,899	2,810	28:1
Primary	2,461,135	47,991	51:1
Lower secondary	626,005	20,485	31:1
Upper secondary	222,271	6,688	33:1

3.2.6 CONTRACT TEACHERS

The term 'contract teacher' refers to locally recruited, unqualified staff, almost exclusively in remote and rural areas where there is an acute shortage of qualified teachers. Contract teachers therefore represent less than three per cent of total teacher numbers and consequently, they do not generally have a significant bearing on overall national student–teacher ratios. However, their presence is much more significant in the remote areas, as shown in Table 3.

15 EDUCAM (Education Committee) meeting, June 2008.

Table 3 Contract teachers: proportion of total teachers by area

URBAN	RURAL	REMOTE	TOTAL
0.29%	3.19%	13.07%	2.72%

The issue of contract teachers is historically interesting and still current, although the context has changed. In 1979, when schools were reopened, the Cambodian government faced the necessity of recruiting thousands of teachers from a population whose educated members had been targeted by the previous regime. Any literate person could be recruited as a teacher at the discretion of local authorities, receive a short training course and be posted to improvised classrooms throughout the country. During the 1980s, these teachers formed the backbone of the teaching body. Contract teachers who remain are mainly concentrated in former conflict zones and remote areas, primarily because these are the places in which MoEYS has had most difficulty deploying experienced or new teachers, despite offering a variety of incentives.

MoEYS policy now is to withdraw contract teachers. Although this would have fairly little effect on a general scale, their removal from remote areas would increase the student-teacher ratio to 59:1. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence is that they are not evenly dispersed across these schools, and that there are actually a number of schools that are staffed heavily or even entirely by contract teachers. Such schools would suffer disproportionately.

There have been many studies identifying the quality of teaching as a major influence on student learning and achievement. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE) report *Teachers for All* (2006: 26) lists the requirements for quality teachers as:

“...subject-specific expertise, knowledge of, as well as the ability to use, different teaching methodologies effectively, an understanding of information technology, and the ability to work collaboratively with other teachers, parents and other members of the community. Teachers also need to be equipped with the right attitudes to enable them to welcome all children to their classrooms, whatever their status, in order to avoid the perpetuation of existing exclusions... educational and wider societal inequalities”.

These requirements exceed the capacity of most fully trained teachers in Cambodia and certainly exceed the capacity of the under-trained or non-trained contract teachers. Thus the long-term use of such teachers will not help achieve quality education.

Yet a critical need to resource schools fully in the remote areas remains in order for MoEYS to succeed in its current aim to provide fully certified teachers to all primary schools in the country. Focusing on developing local teachers, especially in remote and ethnic minority schools, may prove an effective strategy. As Geeves and Bredenberg observe (2005: 4):

“Local teachers already have the socio-economic support in place to remain in the area and they also facilitate community involvement in education. In many of the more remote areas where children speak ethnic minority languages, the locally hired teachers can bring vernacular instruction and culturally relevant content”.

At present, there does not seem to be a consistent approach to dealing with the issue of contract teachers. School directors apparently continue to hire them in order to meet local needs, sometimes with NGO support. However, this is not a sustainable solution to a wider problem with staffing levels. At the same time, efforts have been made to integrate contract teachers into the profession in partnership with provincial teacher training colleges.

3.2.7 DOUBLE SHIFT TEACHING

To address continued teacher shortages, MoEYS has come to rely heavily on the strategy of double shift teaching. Many rural schools now depend on teachers who, in theory, carry out two four-hour blocks of teaching each day. This should involve a teacher working with two different grade classes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon (thereby compounding the established problems relating to lack of time for planning and administration). However, there

are reports of teachers combining these into one larger class because, although some teachers choose to accept a double shift workload, it has not been seen as a popular option.

There are two reasons for this. Firstly, it prevents the teacher pursuing a second job and secondly, most payments for the second shift are only made at the end of the year and are often delayed or reduced. The World Bank (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008) gives credence to these reports, as it states that while two-thirds of rural primary teachers claim to work double shifts, three-quarters also claim to have a second job, usually in farming. In urban and densely populated rural areas, lower secondary teachers, who are subject teachers, have the opportunity to be paid to teach for 32 hours per week.

3.2.8 MULTI-GRADE TEACHING

Teaching more than one grade per class, while a greater challenge and not the ideal, is *de facto* practice in schools in more remote areas. This is a pragmatic solution to current problems where the population is widely dispersed or where teachers and resources are even scarcer than is the norm. The MoEYS Teacher Training Department (TTD) gives training in multi-grade teaching that is designed to meet these challenges. However, the payment for such teaching is not a strong incentive to teachers, being 60 per cent of basic salary, paid at the end of the year for double grade and 80 per cent for triple grade.

4 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

4.1 TEACHERS' SALARIES

4.1.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 37 of the Education Law (2007) states that teachers have the right:

"...to compensation in accordance with one's professional capacity, dignity, and social status".

Teachers earn, on average, between US\$30 and US\$60 per month, depending on qualifications, years of experience and number of shifts worked. They receive a salary supplement of 5,000 riel (US\$1.25) for each child they have. Teachers in their first year of probation (stagiaires) are paid only the basic salary. According to the World Bank report (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008), salaries increase after 16 years of experience by around 20 per cent and after 28 years they increase by about 30 per cent of the initial base salary.

At the time of writing this report, it has not been possible to access current pay scales from MoEYS. It was noted at a meeting of the Government-Donor Coordination Committee (GDCC) in 2007¹⁶ that development partner consultants working on civil servant projects have not been provided with simple aggregate data of the type publicly available in other countries, such as numbers, categories and average pay levels of civil servants, and that this lack of available information has stalled important development work.

4.1.2 CONTRACTS

There are no formal contracts for teachers. Their terms and conditions are covered by civil service regulations and thus teachers' working conditions are not negotiated. Salaries seem to be comparable with those of health workers; newly qualified nurses earn US\$30 per month and doctors US\$60.¹⁷ The NSDP states that the RGC, **"shall continue to gradually raise the salaries of civil servants by 10-15% per year to improve their living standards to an appropriate and dignified level"**. This does not constitute a realistic strategy for a significant improvement of pay, especially in the light of subsequent high inflation.¹⁸ At the time of writing; inflation is reported to have been over 24 per cent in the first half of the year.¹⁹

In the year 2000, the government launched a pilot project designed to promote results-based performance and related pay awards within the civil service with a view to improving efficiency of services and transparency of processes. This would be achieved by mainstreaming salary supplements provided by development partners, basically merit-based pay initiatives; the vehicles for this were termed priority mission groups. However, to date, there has been little evidence of interest in developing or improving the models, with a corresponding lack of donor commitment. At present, awards of performance-related pay for teachers are decided at the school level between school directors and the school committee, and are approved at district or provincial level.

In order to implement merit-based pay initiatives, it is recommended that MoEYS establish a policy and strategy regarding performance-related pay to determine and implement transparent award selection criteria, selection processes, standard payment amounts and monitoring systems.

16 *Embassy News*, US Embassy: <http://cambodia.usembassy.gov> 9th Government Donor Cooperation Committee, Feb 12 2007. Joint Partner Statement by Ambassador of Australia Her Excellency Lisa Filipetto on Public Administration Reform.

17 Director of Thmar Pouk Referral Hospital in Banteay Meanchey Province.

18 As was pointed out by the Australian Ambassador at the 2007 GDCC meeting, a civil servant earning US\$35 today, with a 12 per cent annual increase, would not see a salary of US\$100 until 2016.

19 National Bank of Cambodia, Phnom Penh Post: 25 August 2008.

4.1.3 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

Teachers surveyed feel very strongly indeed that the remuneration they receive is inadequate, not just because it fails to reflect the work that they do, but because it is not enough to support basic daily living. Recent price increases in basic goods, as shown in Table 4, have affected teachers no differently from other Cambodians.²⁰

Table 4 Price increases in basic goods

	JUNE 07	JUNE 08	INCREASE
Gasoline (litre)	\$0.97	\$1.35	40.51%
Rice (kg)	\$0.42	\$0.80	94.12%
Fish (kg)	\$2.57	\$3.40	33.33%
Beef (kg)	\$4.35	\$6.07	40.45%
Pork (kg)	\$2.96	\$4.25	44.63%
Chicken (kg)	\$2.59	\$3.76	46.23%

However, the UN World Food Programme²¹ states that a daily food basket providing 2,100kcal might include the following items:

- Rice/wheat/maize: 400g
- Beans: 60g
- Vegetable oil: 25g
- Corn-soya blend: 50g
- Sugar: 15g
- Iodized salt: 5g

Over the course of a month, one individual Cambodian might therefore consume some 12kg of rice and some 3kg of fish as the principle source of protein.²² In June 2008 prices, this gives a monthly cost for each individual for just these two items of US\$19.80, which is 66 per cent of a teacher's basic salary. One teacher expressed his feelings about this as follows:

"A hungry stomach creates anger. Not [having] enough food leads to de-motivation".

In real terms, MoEYS budget for 2008 is somewhat over twice what it was in 2000 (US\$508,865,000 compared to US\$209,246,000). In the same period, teachers starting salaries are anecdotally reported to have increased from US\$20 since 1999 to US\$30 today (a rise of only 50 per cent). This suggests that, while other expenditures have risen, the proportion of MoEYS budget spent on teachers' salaries *has actually declined* over the period.

In every focus group conducted with teachers, the issue of pay emerged as the most powerful de-motivating factor for them, quoted by nine out of ten male and seven out of ten female teachers. Phnom Penh teachers tend to have higher rates of pay than provincial teachers and also have greater opportunities to earn extra money through private tuition. Despite this, most have much higher expectations of what a reasonable salary should be because of higher living and travel expenses in the capital; some say US\$300–US\$600 a month.

All the teachers consulted in the research recommended a substantial flat rate increase; a reasonable basic salary level, most agreed, should be around US\$100. POE staff also suggested US\$100 would be a reasonable salary, saying that teachers try hard despite low salaries. They argued that teachers' performance would improve if they received an increase as they would spend more time preparing lessons and be able to give up their additional jobs. It would then be easier for the POE to ask for extra effort or to take action where commitment is low. With four-hour school days the norm, and with the time and opportunity for additional employment that this allows, teachers giving up extra jobs may be a little optimistic. However, a reasonable

20 From an Economic Institute of Cambodia survey in Phnom Penh markets, 16 June 2008.

21 See www.wfp.org/operations/introduction/relief_operations.asp?section=5&sub_section=1

22 Data from the RGC Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry indicates that fish makes up some 75 per cent of Cambodian protein intake, at an average per capita consumption of 38kg per annum.

salary would make the pressure to earn a living wage less intense, which should have a positive effect on teachers' commitment and practice.

It is very important to establish and understand the link between a reasonable level of pay and motivation for teachers in Cambodia. While pay was not offered as a significant motivating factor for wanting to become a teacher, it would be a mistake to overlook the importance of any regular salary in this country. As one teacher interviewed for the research explained:

"You spend a lot of time and money learning how to be a teacher, then when you get a job you receive very little money".

Thus, while earning a basic living is impossible on a teacher's salary, that need is going to remain the top priority, over and above any other aspirations. Paul Bennell (2004: 12) asserts that:

"What is expected from teachers (the 'social contract') is not pitched at a realistic level in many countries given material rewards, workloads, and work and living environments".

Performance-related pay is an incentive to encourage teachers to improve their teaching practice, sums of around US\$30, US\$20 and US\$10 are awarded to teachers on merit. The methods of selecting the recipients of these awards vary from school to school, the most usual being by a school committee, sometimes with community involvement. One primary school director explained that he chooses a shortlist of names himself, submits these to the provincial and district offices of education to monitor, and then a staff committee of technical group leaders makes the final decision based on such things as classroom observation and resources produced.

However, there appear to be inconsistencies and inequities in the administration of this practice. In most provinces visited, only primary, not secondary, teachers receive the award. In some provinces, between 10 and 15 per cent of teachers receive these awards each year but in others, there is no knowledge of the scheme. In one province, all seem to be aware of the awards but no teacher interviewed has either received one or questioned the fairness of this. In another province, six teachers have never received the performance-related pay award, but four teachers had; one, the wife of the school director, had received it four times. One teacher had 5,000 riel deducted from the US\$30 he received while another said he received the certificate but no money to go with it.

Where the scheme is working well, it does seem to encourage teachers to work hard. Yet despite the reported positive effects in some provinces, these findings show that mechanisms for ensuring transparent and accountable decision-making about who receives such awards are currently either weak or completely absent. This has led to nepotism and corruption. In addition, the fact that only teachers and school directors in certain provinces are aware of the scheme means that the awards are currently inadequately promoted by the district offices of education, leading to an inequitable distribution of the awards across the country.

It is recommended that mechanisms for ensuring that the decisions about who receives merit-based pay awards should be strengthened by the establishment of more transparent procedures and monitoring systems, and criteria for these should be standardised and published in all provinces.

4.1.4 SECOND JOBS

The inevitable result of very low salaries and sometimes unreliable payment procedures is that teachers often have to endure very poor living conditions. At present, salary levels make it impossible for teachers to afford the basic necessities of food, housing, clothes, medicines, rent, supporting children and elderly relatives and the charity contributions that are expected in a Buddhist society. Teachers see themselves as having no option but to seek other income-generating activities; Ninety-three per cent of individual interviewees had second jobs and 99 per cent of them said that a teacher's salary alone is not enough for them to live on. In the words of one teacher:

"You cannot have a reasonable standard of living from just a teaching career".

Farming and rice growing are the most common second occupations in rural areas, but a more lucrative option is taking private teaching classes. Motorbike taxi driving and vehicle maintenance are also mentioned and, in Siem Reap, being a tourist guide.

“Teachers have to work in many places in order to guarantee a basic standard of living.”
(Practising teacher)

“Because of the low salary, I try to get motodop [motorbike taxi] jobs to feed my children – I have no option.”
(Practising teacher)

4.1.5 THE IMPACT ON TEACHERS’ PERFORMANCE

“Some teachers get up at 4am to drive a motodop so they can earn 4,000 riels (US\$1) to buy rice for their family and then go on to school.”
(Deputy Director, Ratanak Mondol District)

A teacher who works a four-hour shift in a school and has one or more additional jobs plus family responsibilities cannot allocate sufficient time to planning and preparing lessons, and delivering the quality education required by the government and other education stakeholders. Teachers themselves appreciate that their quality of work suffers and that perhaps they are open to criticism from communities for not working to the expected standard; they are devaluing their own role due to enforced circumstances.

“I always feel tired with my heavy workload; I feel resentful at not being paid enough for it. We don’t want to get another second job but feel we have to because of the low salary.”
(Male secondary teacher in rural area, Kampong Cham Province)

Teachers involved in an NGO pilot scheme in Siem Reap were given a salary supplement of US\$30 a month (doubling the most basic salary). While helpful to them in meeting the cost of living, it did not, by their own admission, make any significant improvement to the quality of their teaching practice, as it had not been enough to give up additional employment and spend more time on preparing lessons.

“If salaries went up, I could ask them to work harder, give up their second jobs and spend more time in school planning their work.”
(Primary school director, Ratanak Mondol District)

Among district office of education staff there is general agreement that realistic salaries should be around US\$100–US\$150 a month. This would remove a lot of the worries teachers have about their living conditions and supporting their families. Teachers believe that this income level would result in a general improvement in teaching standards and encourage teachers to work harder. Where teacher performance is below standard, low salary is the chief cause. Phnom Penh school directors said a salary increase (US\$300 was suggested because of the higher cost of living in the capital) would result in improved teacher performance.

4.2.6 INFORMAL SCHOOL FEES

The term ‘informal school fees’ refers to the payments given by families to some teachers for services ranging from the sale of snacks and bike parking to extra tuition and return of study records. One of the targets set out in Education for All, and subsequently revised in the government’s Education Strategic Plan 2006–2010, is to abolish informal payments nationwide in grades 1–9 by the end of 2008. Article 31 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

“All citizens have the right to receive without payment at least nine years of quality education in the public school. The Ministry in charge of education shall manage and plan policies and strategies to comply with the obligation to guarantee the quality of education in conformity with the provisions of this law”.

When asked about this issue, the Under-Secretary of State for Education, His Excellency Nath Bunrouen, stated that the practice of informal school fees was condemned by MoEYS and that a letter forbidding it had been circulated to all schools. He maintained that it was perpetrated by a minimum number of teachers and that it was a matter of their personal responsibility. There are no formal structures in place to monitor either the practice or the implementation of its abolition.

The issue of informal school fees is a complicated one. A recent NEP research report (2007: 22) on the impact of such fees on family expenditure determined that payments can be broken down into those that parents may consider acceptable as associated with their children accessing school attendance (food, clothing, transport), and those associated with being provided with education (lessons, resources, teachers' pay), which parents consider are the responsibility of the government. For example, private tuition sessions may not be supplementary to the curriculum but a continuation of it; thus, students who do not take the lessons miss out on essential learning.

During research for this report, every school visited, without exception, denied charging children any extra informal payments or fees for their education. It was, therefore, difficult to find out how widespread this practice is. The only evidence offered by teachers of the existence of this practice came from some who had children of secondary school age. These individuals reported that they had to pay 500 riel an hour (US\$0.125) for their children to receive the extra curriculum content necessary to complete their education, and also additional examination entrance fees. However, the NEP report, which approached informal school fees from the perspective of families, conveys that it is common practice. While these financial contributions may vary across schools, and parents themselves often have sympathy with the teachers who need additional supplements to their income, the fact remains that children of poorer families who cannot afford to pay informal school fees are at a much higher risk of failing or dropping out of school early. The practice does not enhance the public perception of teaching as a profession.

Although MoEYS asserts that collection of informal school fees by a minimum number of teachers is a regrettable lapse of personal responsibility, many would put it much more strongly than that. Those teachers, union leaders and others working in education asked about this issue see the practice as very damaging to the high level of respect that society has traditionally had for teachers in Cambodia. As with the issue of additional jobs, teachers are forced into the position of devaluing their own status. A significant increase in salary must be the first step towards actually abolishing informal school fees in practice. The responsibility for this first step does not lie with the teachers but with the government, as the NEP observes in its report (2007: 2):

“There is no intention to cast blame on teachers for collecting ‘informal fees’ in an education system that not only tolerates this practice, but relies on it to function”.

It is recommended that once teachers' salaries have been increased and the draft anti-corruption law has been passed, MoEYS implement abolishment of informal school fees.

4.2 RELATION OF TEACHERS' SALARIES TO THE EDUCATION BUDGET

It is possible to estimate how much of the recurrent budget is represented by teachers' salaries. MoEYS reports a total of 77,974 teachers in Cambodia in 2006/7. Actual details of teacher salary ranges and mean salaries were not provided by MoEYS in time for inclusion in this report, despite support for their release by the Under-Secretary of State for Education. Anecdotal evidence tells us that salaries start at the equivalent of US\$30 per month and can, in general, rise to US\$60 per month. This evidence is supported by data from the teachers sampled for this report, who also reported salaries of between US\$30 and US\$60 per month. Consequently, a mean figure of US\$50 per month (to include possible allowances) is used here for the purposes of analysis (although the anecdotal evidence suggests that the real figure is likely to be lower).

Using this figure gives a mean annual salary of US\$600. For a total of 77,974 teachers, this amounts to US\$46,784,400. In 2007, this would have represented 35.13 per cent of the annual recurrent budget, or 22.89 per cent of the total education budget for the year. In 2006, according to the World Bank report (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008: 62), the Education

Sector Working Group produced a breakdown of the recurrent education budget for 2005, as shown in Table 5. In this data, 59.89 per cent of the budget was found to be allocated to salaries; however, no differentiation was made between salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff.

Table 5 2005 Education recurrent budget

Salaries	59.89%
Operating costs	14.67%
Special programme activities (PAP)	23.32%
Social interventions	2.13%

MoEYS own EMIS data for 2006/7 (2006: 31) shows that teachers made up 82.4 per cent of total staff across the country. If the current budget breakdown is still similar to that of 2005, it is unclear what the remaining balance of the salary budget covers, since teachers themselves make up little more than half of the actual budgeted salaries.

Overall, these figures suggest that there should be considerable scope for reprioritising MoEYS' use of its budget to provide better salaries for teachers, as, at present, nearly 65 per cent of the recurrent budget appears currently to be used for other purposes.

It is recommended that, if possible within the education budget, there be a 50/50 split between teachers' salaries and other recurrent expenditure. This would allow an immediate increase in the mean teacher's salary to US\$71 per month (a 40 per cent rise) *with no requirement for any increase in the overall budget*. Salaries should be kept under constant review by the government and regularly adjusted on an annual basis to, at least, keep pace with the cost of living and current inflation.

4.3 PAYMENT ISSUES

Compounding the inadequacy of the salary, its late arrival was cited as a major de-motivating factor by a quarter of the participants in the focus groups. Over 50 per cent of teachers interviewed individually said that their salary was not received in a regular way each month. There seems to be no predictability about this, making it very difficult for teachers to budget effectively. Attempts to enquire as to the reason were sometimes met with hostility, as described by this teacher:

"The salary arrives late, no information is received about it, and when teachers go to enquire at the POE, the accountant treats them rudely, as if they were beggars".

Teachers either have to travel to their provincial offices of education to collect their salary or a school accountant makes the journey and then distributes the salaries through the school director. For those teachers who collect the salary themselves, this may necessitate a long journey if they work in remote or rural areas, and also must be done within POE hours of opening, thus during school time. Teachers may sometimes arrive at the POE after hours, necessitating an overnight stay and other staff may have to cover their classes. There are reports that salaries collected by school accountants and distributed by school directors have been cut by the time the teachers receive them.

It is recommended that a scheme be implemented, in cooperation with Acleda Bank, to pay teachers' salaries directly into their bank accounts. A pilot scheme has been successfully implemented for MoEYS staff and the intention is for this to extend throughout the civil service. Problems will still exist for teachers who live in areas with no bank branches at present; nevertheless, this would be a significant step forward.

Newly qualified teachers usually have to wait six months for their first pay. This is due to a lengthy four-stage initial process through MoEYS, which finally culminates in the Council for Administrative Reform sending its approval to the Ministry of Economy and Finance to release salary funds.

Teachers in remote areas receive US\$12.5–US\$15 extra allowance, but several report that this is invariably paid late. One teacher reported that the district office of education, without giving a reason, takes out 2,000 riel (US\$ 0.5) before he receives his salary. Another newly graduated female secondary teacher receives a monthly salary of only US\$24 for a 25-hour working week and some newly qualified teachers receive as little as US\$10.85 per month, depending often on their families or the generosity of the local community for food. No reason could be found for these inconsistencies.

One secondary maths teacher said that, in addition to his 18 hours a week, he acts as a stand-in for absent colleagues but receives no extra money for it. One 45-year-old male primary teacher reported that he works a 48-hour week of double shifts in the classroom and two hours a day giving extra private lessons in order to support his wife and five children. He has not received any remuneration for his second shift work for the past three years.

It is recommended that teachers should be provided with formal contracts covering salary scales, method and timing of payment, benefits and allowances, including additional allowances for covering sick leave, double shifts and multi-grade teaching and so on. Transparent scales of salary, increments and special allowances should be available.

4.4 NON-SALARY BENEFITS

4.4.1 PENSION

The statutory retirement age for both men and women teachers is 60. Depending on monthly contributions to a benefits scheme, teachers who have been in service for 30 years or more receive a pension of 80 per cent of their final salary; those of less than 30 years receive 60 per cent.

4.4.2 SICKNESS BENEFIT

There appears to be an arbitrary system whereby a teacher who is taken ill or has an accident while on a work- or training-related 'mission' can claim expenses from MoEYS. Teachers working in a school can request financial help from their school director. The unsatisfactory nature of these ad hoc arrangements is exemplified by the account of one teacher who was taken ill while at a workshop in Phnom Penh; his hospital stay cost him over US\$1,000; he received US\$50 from MoEYS towards his costs.

The family of a teacher who dies receives a flat payment of between US\$500 and US\$600 if payments have been made into the teacher's benevolent fund, administered by the Khmer Teachers' Association.²³ If a teacher's spouse dies, the payment is around US\$300, and if the spouse was also a teacher, the payments are combined.

4.4.3 HEALTH

THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 41 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

"Students and educational staff who are working at any institution with an official educational license have the right to a health check-up. The principles and processes for implementation of this health check-up shall be determined by the proclamation of the Ministry in charge of education and the Ministry in charge of health".

REALITY FOR TEACHERS

Major causes of de-motivation in teachers are feeling tired and unwell, with a lack of energy to do adequate planning and preparation, specific health problems, ill health of family members and the high cost of medication and treatment. According to MoEYS departments,²⁴ teachers can apply for sick leave.

An example of the costs of health care in relation to salary is that of a female primary teacher whose long hours of teaching double shifts and also working in the fields have affected her health. She is often sick; there are no medical facilities in the village, and attending clinics costs her US\$25 each visit. Another teacher, also in a remote school, stated that he had to have three operations, each costing US\$100. Paying for this on his teacher's salary was impossible, and he had to sell some of the animals he keeps to pay for the treatment.

23 Information about the benevolent fund administered by Khmer Teachers' Association can be found in the section on teachers' voice on page 53 of this report.

24 Department of Primary Education and Department of Early Childhood Education.

None of the provinces visited seemed to be providing screening for HIV and AIDS, although the Phnom Penh Education Department has an AIDS awareness policy operating with NGO support. All teachers receive a medical check-up after one year and AIDS awareness is covered in the primary and secondary curriculum.

Better medical care is recommended, including regular staff health checks, HIV and AIDS screening and more health education with NGO help. Procedures regarding sick pay should be standardised.

It is also recommended that public sector health insurance should be established for all government employees or a teachers' health insurance scheme could be set up, possibly to be administered by the Khmer Teachers' Association.

4.4.4 LIVING CONDITIONS

THE POLICY CONTEXT

The Education Strategic Plan 2006–10 (MoEYS 2005: 26) states that the education staff accommodation programme,

"...will have the main outcome of facilitating increased deployment and retention of staff, particularly in remote or difficult areas, through the provision of incentives, including a housing loan scheme... The indicative costs will be Riels 20 billion over the five-year period".

REALITY FOR TEACHERS

CASE HISTORY: Sopeap and Samoeun [not true names] are two married teachers working in a remote primary school in Ratanakiri Province. They live in a converted classroom in their school. This accommodation is cramped and unhygienic, but there is no possibility of buying or renting their own house on their small income. They have one child and Sopeap is expecting another in a few months; recently, her health has been very poor. Each earns US\$35 a month but has some of it taken by the district office of education when it arrives. They supplement their income selling fish in the market at weekends.

Teachers interviewed for this research stated that their performance would improve with better living conditions, adequate hygiene and clean water. The living standards and remuneration levels of teachers in the capital are considerably better than those in the provinces. However, the cost of living is higher in Phnom Penh and many teachers have to travel long distances to work when their school lies on the city outskirts. The living conditions for teachers in rural or remote areas are often deplorable; one high school director said he could not put any extra pressure on his staff because of their poor living conditions:

"Most teachers in this school stay in the teachers' house at the DOE. There is no privacy, eight people sleep together in one room and food is expensive".

(School director)

In Ratanakiri, a province with high numbers of ethnic minorities, school directors stated that teachers frequently leave their jobs because of the difficulties and problems of the poor living conditions they face and the boredom of living in a small village.

"My department is trying to improve the situation for teachers working in rural and remote areas. We provide teachers' housing; we use teacher association funds to support widowed teachers."

(District office of education)

The following are reports from two VSO education advisers in Kampot Province in 2008:

"In our older schools, the teachers may have a wooden shack with a dirt floor, no toilet and cooking outside. In other concrete schools, teachers have partitioned off part of the classrooms and live there with their families. In the newly built schools, they have concrete built accommodation, but it is shared with other teachers. In the out-of-the-way villages, they have to live with a family.

In the towns, teachers find houses to rent or stay with family or already have something. In the very rural areas, the provincial office of education tries to only send male teachers to schools where no one has any connection to the community because there is no accommodation for females. The school we visited had a wat [Buddhist temple] and three grass houses next to it; all the teachers (ten) stayed at the wat and ate with the monks in the morning and afternoon. They were on their own for evening meals and there was nothing around for miles. I think they only ate rice with salt at night; the wat provided the accommodation. I have met a teacher who slept in the school office behind a curtain: that was his accommodation that was provided by the school. The Ministry is trying to recruit people from villages to get teacher training so that they go back to where they came from and are supported by the village, and this is working better. This policy should be encouraged to continue”.

Some guest houses for teachers have been built with a 2001 EU grant of US\$40,000, but this is obviously an insufficient measure to address the wide scale of the problem.

It is recommended that teachers are posted locally to their homes where possible, and that relocation grants be provided to enable teachers and their families to move closer to their school where this is not possible.

A recommendation from the European Commission report (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008) involves the creation of a US\$1 million revolving fund managed through a commercial bank, which would provide housing loans of around US\$2,000 each to teachers willing to be posted and remain in remote schools, which would allow for around 1,000 houses over ten years. This appears to offer the best potential of achieving full provision for all teachers in remote postings in the long term, providing financial sustainability with no recurrent costs to MoEYS, and strong incentives for teachers to remain in remote postings. It is recommended that the loans be made interest free, as this would be a considerable help to teachers on their very low salary.

5 HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 RECRUITMENT

There is no apparent problem with recruiting teachers, as applicants to teacher training colleges (TTCs) generally exceed places available. (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008: 53). The quota of teacher training college places available is decided by the Council for Administrative Reform (CAR), and planned to fit with projected civil service demands. At present, graduation from a teacher training college is a guarantee of a job.

It is recommended that the level of recruitment of teachers is raised in order to tackle the shortage of teachers in many areas and to reduce the current need for double shifting and multi-grade teaching. The target set in 2006 (MoEYS 2005b: 2) was 10,000 new teachers trained by 2008. The figures given for 2006–2008 were 6,500 primary school graduates and 4,650 secondary school graduates (11,150 total).

5.2 TEACHER TRAINING

Although, teacher training issues were not ranked highly as de-motivating factors by the teachers involved in the research for this report, given their economic situation this may not be surprising. As Bennell and Akyeampong (2007: 4) argue:

“For example, teachers who are tired and hungry and excessively preoccupied about meeting their household’s livelihood needs, are unlikely to become strongly motivated by their involvement in professional development activities”.

These survival, or lower order, needs become de-motivating factors if not met. However, as is also discussed by Bennell and Akyeampong, in developed countries, pay incentives alone have been found to be generally ineffective in *increasing* teacher motivation. Consequently, improved teacher training will be a key factor in improving teacher motivation as part of Cambodia’s process of striving towards its national development goals, including basic education for all.

5.2.1 INITIAL TRAINING

Article 20 of the Education Law (2007) states:

“The state has to train staff through both pre-service and in-service programs... education personnel must complete pedagogical training which has been recognized by the Ministry in charge of education. The Ministry... shall determine foundation programs for the training of education personnel”.

All except the emergency-trained and contract teachers interviewed in this research had received some initial teacher training at a provincial teacher training centre (PTTC) or regional teacher training centre (RTTC), the older teachers receiving this some years after entering the profession. There are 26 teacher training centres around the country:

- the National Institute of Education (NIE and former Faculty of Pedagogy)
- six regional teacher training centres
- 18 provincial teacher training centres (some provinces do not have their own)
- one pre-school teacher training centre (PSTTC).

Primary school teachers receive two years’ full-time training at a provincial teacher training centre. Secondary school trainees attend one of the regional teacher training centres or the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh. The educational requirements for entry into teacher training college for training at primary level is grade 12, or grade 9 for placement to remote areas. Secondary training requires grade 12 for lower secondary, and grade 12 plus a university degree for upper secondary.

Official MoEYS policy, implemented by the Teacher Training Department, is to strengthen teaching and learning quality by the following measures:

- designing the teacher training curriculum for pre- and in-service training
- developing a teacher training plan for pre-service training for all levels (pre-school, primary and lower secondary)
- training primary and secondary inspectors
- managing the technical aspects of the provincial and regional teacher training colleges
- monitoring and evaluating the professional competencies and capacities of trainers and all education staff.

Currently, the pre-service training office has:

- revised the curriculum for primary teacher training
- developed a teaching practice handbook for student teachers
- conducted training of teacher trainers, directors, school teachers on multi-grade teaching, the child-friendly school programme and school readiness programme
- developed the Capacity-Building Medium-Term Plan 2008–2010.

The pre-service training curriculum is as follows:

- Student teachers enter the two-year primary teacher training programme, which incorporates four core subjects: mathematics, science, Khmer literature, moral and civic education.
- Entry to the two-year lower secondary teacher training programme requires study of two subject area specialisations.
- Training to upper secondary school level at the National Institute of Education requires one more year of training in education theories and practices.

A professor of tertiary education with many years of experience in teaching and training in Cambodia explained the legacy of the traditional Cambodian perception of education. Its embedded model of hierarchical relationships between teacher and pupil, where the focus is on teaching rather than learning, means that there has been no historical aim towards developing a facility for lifelong learning. He suggested that good, relevant in-service training would help to alleviate some of the demoralisation felt by teachers. However, he felt that most training is poor and concerned with administration rather than teaching methodology, and in most cases impractical because of lack of resources to implement it.

Based on these observations, it is recommended that the standard of, and investment in, initial training should continue to be raised so that teachers can begin their careers better prepared than at present.

To assess the gaps in this preparation, in March 2008, the Teacher Training Department conducted a training needs assessment on teachers, which involved a detailed self-assessment questionnaire designed to assess teachers' professional learning, practice, knowledge and ethics.

The report based on this training needs assessment (Oro, 2008)²⁵ recommends that teachers should undergo assessments that:

"...require the active construction of meaning rather than passive regurgitation of isolated facts. These assessments engage teachers in learning and require thinking skills and thus they are consistent with cognitive theories of learning and motivation as well as societal needs to prepare students for an increasingly complex workplace".

Among other recommendations were those that more emphasis should be placed on thinking skills that are needed to work cooperatively with others and that teachers should be expected to assess themselves rather than rely on others for feedback.

5.2.2 TEACHER TRAINERS

Other, continuous, functions of the Teacher Training Department are to monitor and evaluate student teachers during teaching practice and to conduct follow-up visits for multi-grade teachers. The Teacher Training Department recognises that trainers themselves should be monitored during their work with student teachers.

There is a serious shortage of experienced and thoroughly trained teacher trainers, undoubtedly one result of the decimation of the teaching service in the 1970s. One possible option might be to recruit a number of teachers from schools to be trained as trainers, but given the shortage of experienced, quality teachers in general, this would not be a sustainable solution.

It is recommended that, until a pool of experienced professional teachers is developed, development partners' training projects focus on training teacher trainers, employing international consultants if necessary.

25 The Training Needs Assessment of in-Service primary and lower secondary teachers was conducted in six provinces in Cambodia by the Teachers Training Department of MoEYS

5.2.3 IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Article 37 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

“...educational staff have... the right to professional development”.

There is wide variation in the amount of teachers' ongoing professional development. Phnom Penh teachers, on balance, tend to have more opportunity for, and receive more, in-service training from the Ministry and provincial office of education than their provincial counterparts. In some cases, in-service training is given by the regional or provincial teacher training colleges, but incomplete training and lack of skills in handling a wide ability range within classes are mentioned frequently by teachers; they also mention lack of time and training for teaching slow learners and mixed ability groups.

The amount of in-service training provided by the provincial and district offices of education or the Ministry varies by province. In one remote area, school cluster training is delivered by the provincial office of education. A number of teachers were critical about the way training courses were allocated by the management. Some younger teachers said that they get help and support from their director, technical group leader or more experienced colleagues when they experience difficulties with their teaching. However, a common perception was:

“Teachers don't ask or raise concerns. They just get on with their jobs in the classroom”.

(Practising teacher)

There is some confusion about where the responsibility for the lack of in-service training lies; only the more outspoken are prepared to criticise the provincial or district offices of education. Provincial office of education staff are aware of weaknesses particularly in rural and remote schools, where resources and training are lacking and they see much room for improvement. They said that assistance with delivering training is inadequate and want much more Ministry involvement in supporting staff, with certificates of recognition and incentives. Motivation could be raised, one high school director told us, by improving teachers' skills through training programmes delivered by experts.

Some primary teachers benefit from NGO methodology training through EQIP (Education Quality Improvement Project), KAPE (Kampuchean Action for Primary Education), CARE, VSO and others. Health and HIV and AIDS training and other short political courses on human rights are common. Other topics mentioned were hygiene and Khmer traditional dancing. Teachers are happy to have the training, but it appears to be absolutely crucial that MoEYS support the programme and that it is part of the curriculum and recommended methodological approaches. Education advisers report that teachers, school directors and provincial and district offices of education have a strong tendency only to follow Ministry guidelines, so if the Ministry does not explicitly support the programme, it will not be sustained.

An example is as follows:

The Cambodia Education Sector Support Project (CESSP) is supporting a bridging course aimed at increasing the flexibility of some teachers to teach at both primary and lower secondary level. Some of the best primary teachers, with five years' experience, are selected to train for 12 weeks over two years, specialising in two subjects and in child-friendly school methods. After continuous monitoring, and passing an exam, they become basic education teachers and are paid more for teaching the 12 subjects at secondary level.

5.2.4 THE PLACE OF CHILD-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS IN TRAINING

An example of Ministry and NGO-led training is the child-friendly school movement, which began in 2001 as a way to work for the rights of the child. It became formal MoEYS policy in December 2007 and now operates to address persistent challenges to the education system, through a holistic approach to child development and learning. The child-friendly school model includes interventions in six core interrelated dimensions, all designed to support children to learn well:

- all children have access to schooling (active encouragement of enrolment in inclusive education)
- effective learning
- health, safety and protection of children

- gender responsiveness
- involving families and community
- the national education system supports and encourages schools to become more child friendly.

It is recommended that there is continued and improved communication, consultation and cooperation between schools, MoEYS and NGOs regarding training programmes. Consistently embedding child-friendly school methods in pre-service training will give teachers a good foundation in these principles. In areas where multi-grade teaching currently occurs, teachers should receive training in effective multi-grade teaching methods.

5.3 TEACHER PLACEMENT AND PROMOTION

5.3.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Newly qualified teachers are placed by MoEYS for their initial one-year posting. In principle, this is based on merit; the score on a placement exam will determine the priority given to a graduating teacher's choice. Female graduates are given preference. The responsibility for the posting procedures lies with the relevant provincial office of education.

5.3.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

**"Teachers have to pay the provincial office of education if they want to move to another post."
(Practising teacher)**

There is much anecdotal evidence that high scores in the placement exams and changes in placements can be obtained by payment of a fee. Thus, for example, a teacher could pay not to be sent to a remote placement. Another reported practice involves those graduates from remote areas who actually wish to return home to areas most needing local teachers, some of whom have to pay as much as US\$1,000 to secure their placement. The World Bank (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008) reports that urban teachers are most likely to apply for their placement, while 70 per cent of teachers in remote areas felt they had little or no say in their placement. The consequence of these practices is that they exert even more financial pressure on teachers and thus exacerbate their need for extra income.

Teachers who are placed in schools in remote areas, or in schools that are a long way from provincial towns, need more support. If they live near or in the school, living conditions can be highly unsatisfactory, but even if they live with their families, being placed at a school that is far away from home can be a problem in terms of transportation. Having to fund the cost of a motorbike and fuel is one problem, but another is the difficulty of travelling long distances on bad roads. As one female teacher said:

"In the rainy season it is muddy and in the dry season it is dusty".

An NGO in Siem Reap reports on two teachers working at schools 65km away from the town where they live with their families. It is not feasible for them to commute to and from school every day. Sometimes they stay locally overnight; sometimes they do not make the journey.

Devolving responsibility for local recruitment to school directors would solve problems like this when there is a choice between teachers who live near to or far from a school and is to be recommended.

It is also recommended that the procedure for placement processes should be well defined and regulated with built-in procedures to ensure transparency and objectivity in decisions. In line with international standards and accepted practices, such issues belong in proper standardised terms and conditions of employment.

It is also recommended that places in teacher education institutions are matched with trainees, especially women, from areas suffering teacher shortages. This approach offers better prospects for addressing the issue in the long term. It would not rely on special financial incentives to attract and retain teachers from other areas and would also help promote accountability between school and community. Better deployment procedures are also recommended in order to reduce the need for double shifting.

As *Teachers for All* (GCE, 2006: 45) points out:

“Incentives such as placing teachers near their homes (which is especially important for female, disabled and ethnic minority teachers)... need not cost much at all, but can have strong motivating effects for teachers and ultimately on the quality of education they are able to deliver”.

Most teachers in the research identified large class sizes as a factor in de-motivation. At the primary level, high pupil–teacher ratios (average 51:1) are a result of the shortage of qualified teachers, and rural schools tend to have higher ratios than urban schools. Classes at secondary level (which average 32:1) are smaller because of the specialisation of subject teaching, although in the research, there were 76 pupils reported in one grade 9 maths class. There needs to be a consistent rise in the number of trained teachers being placed every year in order to reduce high pupil–teacher ratios.

An incentive that is missing within the teaching profession in Cambodia is a clear structure for promotion. Promotion to a higher position seems to usually be the responsibility of the school director, provincial and district office of education. In practice, the term ‘promotion’ often seems to equate to ‘pay rise’, which can be decided on by a school committee, rather than to additional responsibilities. The prospect and chance of promotion can be a good motivating factor and does not need to be on a grand scale. As Bennell (2004: 44) puts it:

“Teacher job satisfaction is also improved by giving them wider responsibilities than just class teaching, including supervision, professional development, and community relations”.

Thus it is recommended that clear, standardised promotion structures be implemented.

5.4 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

5.4.1 EQUAL GENDER OPPORTUNITIES

In all provinces visited for the research there is currently no formal policy for equal gender opportunities. Of the 30 Phnom Penh secondary schools, two have women directors and 70 per cent have women deputies; in primary schools, 15 per cent have women directors and 70 per cent have women deputy directors. One director said that he actively seeks to promote more women to senior posts. One province stated that it has 30 per cent women school directors and 40 per cent of its total workforce are women.

In provincial offices of education, it is usual to find at least two or three women deputy directors and chiefs of office, but rarely a woman POE director. In the district and provincial education offices visited, more than 80 per cent of the staffing is male; women tend to be employed in lower-level secretarial and support staff roles.

5.4.2 DISABLED TEACHERS

Provincial offices of education are aware of, and try to promote, inclusion for disabled people. MoEYS accepts that disabled people can become teachers, and there are some disabled teachers now working in schools. However, the Disability Action Council (DAC) reported that there is still a problem with the wording and interpretation of the Civil Service Law, which says that government officials must be **“of good physical appearance”**. It is recommended that this wording, and its interpretation, is reviewed.

5.4.3 ETHNIC MINORITIES

VSO, in its education policy, which closely supports Ministerial guidelines, puts particular emphasis on inclusive education, in which all children receive appropriate education in their individual needs and abilities, with particular attention to girls, children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and vulnerable, at risk, and other disadvantaged groups.

Although there does not appear to be discrimination against ethnic minorities in the education system in Cambodia, most provinces included in the research are not aware of any staff from ethnic minority backgrounds. In Ratanakiri, a province with a high proportion of ethnic minority children, there is one director and several teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds and an Equity Appointment Policy, handled by the Province’s Non-Formal Education Department. The provincial office of education director in Phnom Penh stated that there are no teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds teaching in Phnom Penh.



6 EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Poor management (leadership) is a strong de-motivating factor, identified as such by nearly 70 per cent of teachers and over half of all male and female participants in the research process for this report. The importance of good education management is explained in Bennell and Akyeampong's report for the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) (2007: 43) on teacher motivation:

"Teacher motivation depends critically on effective management, particularly at the school level. If systems and structures set up to manage and support teachers are dysfunctional, teachers are likely to lose their sense of professional responsibility and commitment. Teacher management is most crucial at the school level, where the importance of teachers' work and their competence in performing it are crucially influenced by the quality of both internal and external supervision".

6.1 THE ROLE OF THE POE AND DOE

"The POE do an inspection twice a year at the most. They talk to the director and have a look at the toilets and classrooms and then go away."

(Male secondary school teacher, Chi Kreng District, Siem Reap)

6.1.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

There are 24 provinces and municipalities in Cambodia. Each has a provincial/municipal office of education, which exercises control over schools within the province, including teacher appointments and deployments, as well as having an advisory role. Within provinces, district offices of education exercise direct supervision of primary schools only (secondary schools are overseen at provincial level).

6.1.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

Resources at POE level are extremely basic; those at DOEs are even more so and often consist of a few small rooms with tables and chairs; the majority do not have electricity. DOEs vary greatly in size and resources.

6.1.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Like teachers, school directors and trainers, POE and DOE staff are paid a basic salary of US\$30–US\$40 per month; they supplement their income by giving private lessons, driving motorbike taxis, working at the markets or farming. Thus, these education staff, with responsibility for the needs, supervision and support for all the school staff in their district, have the same problems as teachers in terms of giving time and priority to their jobs. In addition, the majority of staff are not trained sufficiently to be able to offer the support and advice needed by school directors and teachers. All staff interviewed for this report had qualified as teachers before their appointments, either at a regional or provincial teacher training centre, and had some teaching experience, but some had been teachers for only a short time before their appointments by the POE, in one case for only one year.

One DOE director reported that his district is short of 100 teachers; another complained of a heavy workload, excessive Ministry paperwork and additional (unpaid) responsibilities such as organising local elections. The requirement to meet government targets for education outcomes exert pressure on provincial and district offices and in one district, two teachers from different schools described how the DOE director 'forces' teachers to pass 95–100 per cent of children, even if they are 'slow learners'.

6.1.4 RELATIONSHIPS WITH TEACHERS

Unfortunately this heavy workload, combined with the lack of capacity and efficiency, leads to a lack of leadership. Almost all of the teacher focus groups spoke of the motivational force of receiving praise from their school director or other leaders (DOE, POE), and over half of the individual interviewees said that 'leadership and praise' are strong motivators for them; 48 per cent were de-motivated by lack of praise.

Teachers' criticisms include:

- weak management structure in most provincial and district education offices
- little respect or support for teachers
- no communication
- no proper inspection or assessment programmes
- unexplained salary cuts
- lack of textbook provision
- poor housing.

6.1.5 MONITORING TEACHERS' VIEWS

School inspections and assessments seem to be the main method for determining the level of teacher motivation and morale, although one province in the research group has a committee to work with teachers on improving motivation. Another province gauges motivation by results, for example: high primary completion rate, numbers of students going on to further study and gaining international scholarships abroad. Others do this from reports at school directors' meetings with the DOE.

One POE director interviewed said he gains knowledge of teachers' views by going out to remote areas himself and inviting groups of teachers to come and talk to him, but these types of visits can be very difficult in remote provinces where roads are sometimes impassable, particularly in the wet season. Also there is no travel allowance paid for school visits. It is recommended that there should be adequate funding allocated by MoEYS for such visits.

It is also recommended that provincial and district offices of education should receive a salary increase similar to teachers, and likewise have clearly defined contracts, career structures and incentives. MoEYS training and support of POE and DOE staff in their advisory role to schools is essential and in much need of improvement. Implementation of such training will require monitoring and evaluation and need support from development partners.

It is recommended that advisers placed at central Ministry level within the primary and secondary departments, and at POE level, should deliver training in confidence building, and the implementation of ESP quality measures.

6.2 THE ROLE OF HEAD TEACHERS

6.2.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

"In our schools, the quality of learning is the heart of the child. The good teacher is the heart of the classroom. The good school director is the heart of the school."

(His Excellency Nath Bunrouen, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Education Phnom Penh, October 2007)

6.2.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

The traditional view of school directors was that they were exclusively managers; their job was to implement the directives from their superiors and ideas of leadership, self-initiative or creativity were not expected. However, that view has been challenged over recent years and, when asked, school directors said that transparency, strong leadership and gaining staff cooperation are essential in motivating teachers.

In one province, the POE reported that all school directors receive management training in monitoring and assessment delivered by Ministry and POE staff, but it appears that there is little guidance given on support for teachers through line management, appraisals and continuing professional development. Lack of management training is a problem faced by many school directors, although one told us he had received some delivered by the Cambodia Education Sector Support Programme and also attended VSO workshops on management; another had done a management course before becoming a director.

School directors also receive a basic salary of between US\$30 and US\$40 and are, thus, also under the same financial pressures as teachers. It is, therefore, recommended that school directors should benefit similarly from a significant pay rise.

None of the school directors interviewed had actually applied for their jobs; most were appointed by the provincial office, in one case because she was the only one available; in another, because of financial mismanagement by his predecessor. One had been director of the school for 20 years and deputy before this; he became a teacher after the Khmer Rouge was overthrown, having been evacuated from Kandal Province to Banteay Meanchey, and only received the 21 days' emergency teacher training available at the time. This story is quite a common one, particularly among the older directors.

**"After the Khmer Rouge, there was only one school left in this district and I was the only teacher, so I was appointed director after only one year's teaching."
(Primary director, Kampot District)**

Teachers cite the following problems with school directors as de-motivating factors: partiality, nepotism, favouritism, and focusing on Ministry guidelines rather than actual teachers' problems:

**"The school director sets unclear plans which are difficult to implement".
(Practising teacher)**

Many teachers complained that their school director and other leaders only 'blame' and never praise:

**"The leaders criticise every little mistake made at work".
(Practising teacher)**

They talked of managers who do not take responsibility, who are 'inattentive', who are overbearing, who do not treat staff equally, or who make decisions that are not 'transparent':

**"The school director never tells the teachers what he is doing".
(Practising teacher)**

One teacher complained that her school director never makes classroom visits and where individual interviewees had been observed teaching by their school director and given feedback, only five per cent found this a useful exercise, because of the poor quality. Many said that managers do not understand the feelings of staff and that subsequently they do not feel supported:

**"Even if teachers make mistakes, people should talk nicely to others".
(Practising teacher)**

Since 2005, the Cambodian Education Sector Support Project has been offering leadership training for over 500 lower secondary and some primary school directors in ten provinces. This involves skills-sharing, whereby good school directors and provincial and district office of education staff become leadership trainers. They also work as part of a leadership team that visits other schools and supports the director to make improvements in leadership, as well as to the general teaching and learning environment.

This approach is reported as working well in most places and spreads the good practice of excellent school directors. One such team has implemented innovative ideas in a coastal village primary school, resulting in clean, attractive and environmentally educational school surroundings, a library containing books created by the children, and bright and welcoming classrooms and associated areas.

It is highly recommended that there is strong support for more skills-sharing between school directors.

6.3 TEACHER PARTICIPATION

6.3.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Within a primary school cluster, discussions on issues such as curriculum policy take place in weekly technical group meetings. School directors meet on a monthly basis with staff and issues of concern and interest can be raised; these are then passed on in monthly meetings with the DOE and POE. At secondary school level, there are no monthly district meetings. There is an annual education congress at the district level, after which strategies are taken to the provincial level and then to a three-day conference and series of workshops in Phnom Penh.

6.3.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

“We think it’s important to collect and send teachers’ views and opinions to the Ministry and to the National Congress”. (POE deputy director)

This appears to be a reasonable structure for the flow both of information on policy decisions and the reporting of concerns but, in practice, the forum is hierarchical and the direction is weighted top-down; any criticism of Ministry policies and performance is heavily and publicly condemned. There were many comments from teachers on this issue, including:

“Subordinates don’t have the right to express their views”.

“No input is allowed from teachers about the working of the school environment”.

“The managers mostly adopt what they understand and have seen for themselves. They rarely accept the opinions of the teachers”.

Teachers’ associations are seen to be for discussion purposes only and they have no power to decide anything or take action on teachers’ problems:

“Meetings are sometimes positive and sometimes negative. When there’s a problem in the school, we discuss it with the director and the community but usually with no result; the Ministry has all the power”.

(Secondary teacher, Ratanak Mondol District, Battambang Province)

One view commonly expressed by teachers is that they have little influence over national policy; they make requests but rarely get any feedback. Their views are ignored, one teacher said, because their job **“does not contribute any wealth to society”**.

A technical adviser to CESSP, a major stakeholder, vigorously challenged the acceptance of this perception, arguing that:

“Well-educated children are the key to improving the country’s ability to become more economically self-sufficient. Teachers need to be made aware of their important role in their country’s development, wealth creation and economic stability”.

This statement, while undoubtedly true, does depend on teachers having their views and opinions acknowledged and validated by some positive reaction, by knowing that their voices carry some weight. Many teachers said that they do contribute to school decision-making, and have some say in how the school programme budget money is spent through technical meetings. However, others said that, although they attend meetings regularly, they have no real influence on school policy, their views are listened to and reported but no action is taken; often a school director, although supportive when approached with a problem, has little power to change things. This may be due to a lack of clear goals and plans for schools at an individual level, exacerbated by a lack of leadership and advice from district and provincial levels.

As Bennell (2004: 44) argues,

“Professional growth tends to be most rapid when teachers are encouraged to work collegially. The ‘new professionalism’ replaces autonomy and isolation with ‘communities of practice’ based on a shared vision and the provision of peer advice and feedback in a non-threatening mode. Central to this process is the establishment of clear, shared goals for school improvement based on school development plans and management structures created to ensure that schools are supported in implementing these plans”.

Apparently, during the EFA, ESP and ESSP planning stages, teachers were encouraged by MoEYS through their provincial offices to participate. However, no formalised provisions for consultations, apart from the monthly school meetings, have been established. Although teachers did have input into this large-scale project, there is no consistent, identifiable mechanism for representing a broad range of teacher interests, rights and responsibilities. This also means a lack of a mechanism by which teachers are informed about upcoming initiatives or are able to convene, discuss and make planning recommendations as an organisation of professionals might expect to.

Teachers, and ultimately the government's goal of education for all, would benefit from the development of mechanisms for regular dialogue to discuss and negotiate issues of concern in education that directly affect teachers and the quality of education

6.4 SCHOOL BUDGET: ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT

THE POLICY CONTEXT

MoEYS programme budget funds are not allocated directly to the schools. The current process for this was implemented in 2007 as part of the move towards decentralisation. School directors now claim funds quarterly, based on their initial enrolment rates. One quarter's funding has to be accounted for before the next disbursement can be released.

REALITY FOR TEACHERS

"There is a budget for teaching and learning materials, but there are no learning documents or textbooks at all!"
(Practising teacher)

Accounts from school directors tell of an unwieldy bureaucratic process whereby claims are often sent back due to administration problems. Some directors wait many months or indeed the entire school year to receive any money. In these cases, except for what teachers are able to buy out of their own salaries, there is often nothing to support them in their teaching. A spokesperson for MoEYS stated that delays in payment are also caused by poor planning on behalf of school directors, who wait to see how many children actually turn up at school before sending in their budget request.

All school directors interviewed maintained that they operate transparent school financial processes and that their staff and the community do contribute to decision-making, school development and how to spend programme budget funds, mainly through technical group meetings. One secondary school operates a special committee for this, but only for grade 8 teachers and above. Teachers interviewed report issues of corruption around the distribution of programme budget funds:

"The school director embezzles the programme budget money and keeps it for his own spending".

"The school director keeps the programme budget money that is supposed to be for resources and the students are asked to bring their own resources from home".

One imaginative school director reported that he had come up with his own solution to ensuring transparency regarding programme budget funding and teacher and community participation in discussions about its allocation:

"When the programme budget money is received from the government, I go round the district on my bicycle announcing its arrival over a loud speaker, so everybody knows about it and can participate in deciding how it's going to be spent!"
(Primary school director, Siem Reap Province)

This may be a rather drastic solution to the transparency problem, but shows a willingness for accountability on the part of this particular director!

It is recommended that further training in the programme budget application process is given at all relevant levels, and the process reviewed and simplified, if possible. There should also be more transparency in allocation of school programme budget funds, with teachers sharing in decisions.

6.5 TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

THE POLICY CONTEXT

According to the National Strategic Development Plan 2006–2010 (RGC 2005: 2.14: 10):

“Corrupt activities are the result of opportunity, behaviour and risks...The higher the unsupervised discretion of an individual entrusted with performing duties while interacting with others, the higher the scope for corruption. Illegal and improper personal gain in cash, materials or services, to either do one’s duty or provide favours out of turn, or wrongfully, at public expense, leaves corruption clandestine by nature. It is not clearly measurable but its deleterious effects pervade all government activities”.

REALITY FOR TEACHERS

In the focus group discussions conducted for this report, corruption and nepotism were constantly raised as major de-motivating factors. The evidence is anecdotal and, while there is no verifiable evidence of the practices described, there is equally no reason to doubt their veracity. The ASPBAE and GCE Citizens’ Report Card (2008: 87)²⁶ on Asian Pacific countries, which ranks governments’ efforts to achieve Education for All, gives Cambodia 2.1 out of 10 on its corruption perception score, and an overall grade of D-, ranking Cambodia 9th sub-regionally. Corruption and its impact on teachers varies slightly from province to province, but the overall effect is the same. There are many examples of money being ‘cut’ from teachers’ salaries and allowances before they have been received, thus compounding the difficulties of living on an inadequate salary. As one teacher put it:

“The amount cut from the salary is higher than the salary received!”

In one province, there was unanimous agreement by all participants about the way money was always cut from sickness benefits. One case cited was of a teacher who applied to the Ministry for 35,0000 riel (approximately US\$85) in sickness benefits. He was awarded the full amount but when he went to the provincial office to collect the cash, he was given only 13,0000 riel (US\$30), although he had to sign to say that he had received the full amount.

There is a general feeling that there is a large degree of corruption at the district and provincial levels, and that MoEYS should take the responsibility and initiative for tackling the problem.

“The Ministry should do an inspection at POE and DOE level to sort out the corruption in those offices.”

(Practising teacher)

One teacher described how the DOE director collects money from Grade 6 students in exchange for the test answer papers. A male teacher described how undeserving students can be promoted to the next grade by the payment of a simple bribe.

One observation from Mr Rong Chhun, President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers’ Association (CITA), was that many problems could be solved if the government **“had the will”**, and that corruption was one of them. This perception was shared by many of the teachers interviewed:

“Our leaders are very good at ‘farming on other people’s backs”.

“Many ‘strings’ connect the Ministry, the POE and the DOE; money comes from international donors, but it never reaches the lower levels”.

It is recommended that the RGC pass and implement the draft anti-corruption law and that MoEYS implements this internally.

26 See http://global.campaignforeducation.org/schoolreport/2008_reports/index.php

6.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.6.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 9 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

“Within the education section, there shall be ongoing observation, inspection, and internal audits used in the process of evaluating the educational system”.

Article 22 goes on to state that:

“In order to ensure quality education, establishments must fulfil the national standards of education, national standards of training, and/or national standards of capacity building. Both public and private establishments have to create strategies for internal evaluation to examine and evaluate the quality of their educational programs and recommend remedial actions as needed for the institutions to implement. This mechanism of interior evaluation shall include the participation of the community”.

This legislation builds on the adoption by MoEYS in 2006 of the Teacher Professional Code, which was designed to regulate professional ethics and responsibilities, and to end any practice of conducting private tutoring in school hours. With the support of CESSP, the Teacher Training Department has designed the Teacher Standards Framework, now approved for implementation in September 2008. These standards will operate as a measure of performance of teaching practices, which can be observed and evaluated. They are organised around four domains: professional knowledge, professional practice, professional learning and professional ethics.

Each domain contains two or more fields and each field includes several 'standards statements'. A standards statement is a brief and clear description of what is valued in one vital aspect of what a teacher knows and does, and each statement is expressed in terms of observable evidence of teacher actions that have an impact on students. This evidence can be used to appraise teacher performance as well as for improving a school's instructional evaluation and planning.

An example of a minimal standard expected would be, for example: 'demonstrate commitment and dedication to the teaching profession'. Other standards represent what most teachers currently do, for example: 'provide a learning environment that is safe and challenging for all students'. Other standards cannot be met by all teachers, for example: 'use information communications technology and library resources, as available, to make teaching more effective'.

These standards should be seen as minimum or essential knowledge, values and skills to be covered. The framework also strongly advocates the development of a positive attitude among teachers towards habitual assessment practices and assessors as being vital to effective learning. Traditionally, Cambodian teachers are not used to having their practices assessed. A teacher has historically been viewed as the holder of knowledge that was imparted to the student, and the total destruction of the education system under the Khmer Rouge put the country far behind modern developments in assessment and reflective practice.

6.6.2 INSPECTORATE

Making standards and criteria public, as is increasingly happening, will help to normalise assessment, and will cause monitoring and evaluation to be seen as helpful procedures. Within MoEYS at central level, there are inspectors/advisers in the primary and secondary departments. There are also teams of inspectors with an advisory role at the provincial office level.

It is recommended that these inspectors receive training in assessment and evaluation skills.

There is UNICEF support for decentralisation and a seven-province pilot scheme completed with recommendations for a school self-assessment inspection tool. However, this would still be internal monitoring. It is recommended that an independent school inspection body is developed.

The apparent lack of funding for travel allowances can mean that school visits are not made regularly or consistently. It is recommended to MoEYS that a sufficient budget is allocated to inspectorate departments to enable staff to carry out their responsibilities (such as travel funds for school inspections).

6.7 CURRICULUM

6.7.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 23 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

“The Ministry in charge of education shall clearly define the programs of study for general education which are compulsory for all educational establishments in the Kingdom of Cambodia”.

6.7.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

Experienced teacher trainers in Cambodia have suggested that the present curriculum is too varied. There are actually 12 discrete subjects at secondary level, yet teachers often do not know enough about the subjects themselves to be able to teach them effectively. Education workers with experience in rural provinces, and in provinces with diverse ethnic communities, question the relevance and value of the existing curriculum for many pupils.

For example, in the tribal hill communities of Ratanakiri, teaching about *wats* is not necessarily relevant, as the population is not Buddhist. Likewise, their musical instruments are ones indigenous to the area, not the traditional Khmer ones included in the curriculum. On a more practical note, in many highland communities, chicken-raising is the main source of food, income, and even medicine, and chickens live in the houses, which is a risk factor for avian flu on the eastern border of Cambodia.

CASE HISTORY: Within CARE’s Highlands Children Education Project (HCEP), the teaching of alternative chicken-raising methods is a relevant and valuable part of the school curriculum. Other issues such as hygiene and nutrition are fundamentally important areas, which are incorporated in many education projects. From the point of view of teacher motivation, local teachers trained in relevant skills are more likely to get a good response from children and in turn feel valuable and valued themselves.

A new curriculum for 2008/9 had been planned in an attempt to standardise and direct the focus towards children’s attainments. Due to funding issues, this process has been delayed, but it is recommended that a new curriculum is introduced as soon as possible.

7 SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: BUILDINGS AND RESOURCES

7.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 21 of the Education Law (2007) states:

“In order to efficiently develop the country, the state has to place a high priority on the quality of basic education in order that students master content and skills as well as enhance both their capacity and ability. The state has to create sufficient modern facilities for both teaching and learning in order to ensure the quality of education”.

7.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

According to members of this study’s focus groups, many teachers are very motivated by a good working environment. This was a factor particularly strongly recognised by female teachers, being one of their top-three motivators. One in five male teachers in the focus groups classified this as an issue, and rural male teachers also put it high on their list. The absence of a pleasant working environment has the opposite effect; interestingly, more male teachers in the focus groups reported being de-motivated by an unpleasant working environment than females. For individual interviewees, 21 per cent found the state of the classroom or a poor school building a problem that prevented them being successful in their work, and this was especially the case in rural areas, where the majority of primary schools do not have electricity.

De-motivating factors described included:

- hot, stuffy classrooms
- lack of windows, toilets, doors or roofs
- lack of a well or clean water
- shortage of classrooms
- lack of maintenance of the school buildings and fences
- no space for displaying pupils’ work or notices
- untidy play areas and litter
- dust and chemicals
- excessive noise in the area around the school.

The first five of these factors could be seen as needing extra support and funding from the government, as programme budget money includes only a small amount for school maintenance and repairs. However, individual schools and district offices of education could also make some contributions, possibly in the form of working parties for simple maintenance. Issues such as display space and litter can be addressed with some imagination and cooperation between school staff and students. External factors could perhaps be addressed in cooperation with local community members.

It is recommended that district and provincial offices of education carry out inspections of school buildings and note examples of good maintenance practices that could be spread out to other schools; serious issues should be referred to MoEYS. It is also recommended that school directors and teachers enlist the help of students and community members in taking pride and interest in their school environment.

Another strong de-motivating factor for participants in the focus groups, especially for almost a third of female teachers, is the lack of teaching and learning materials. The individual interviewees went even further; no less than 76 per cent of respondents found the lack of teaching and learning materials an obstacle to their work, and 63 per cent named this as a de-motivating factor. A school director in a remote province mentioned the difficulty of getting resources to distant schools with ethnic minority children.

An often-reported factor was that the new programme budget does not provide enough money for materials, in addition to the complaints from school directors about the unwieldy process involved in applying for programme budget funds. An adviser at MoEYS pointed out that sometimes poor advance planning by school directors leads to money not being released early enough to buy books in time for the new school year, thus creating a gap between demand and supply. In order to address this problem, it is again recommended that further training in the programme budget application process is given at all relevant levels, and the process reviewed and simplified, if possible.

There are well-established problems with the provision of text books. Books are printed and distributed by MoEYS in Phnom Penh. Requests from school directors for books have to be processed through district and provincial offices, books are released by the Ministry's printer and then, it is reported, many do not arrive at schools but in book stores and markets in the capital. For example, an NGO in Siem Reap reported a shortfall of 2,050 books in five schools in their project in Siem Reap in the school year 2007/8.

However, there are also reports of piles of new books surplus to requirements sitting in some schools. At the moment, the single distributor mechanism is not seen as transparent by donors and there is a reluctance to fund provision of books as evidence seems to point to there being plenty of books produced. In these cases, distribution is the problem and it is recommended that this process is reviewed. Local authorities and schools should also take appropriate actions when books are distributed to the wrong schools or in excessive quantities.



8 STUDENTS: DISCIPLINE AND DROPPING OUT

8.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Discipline is as strong as the teachers and school directors can make it, but there is no standardised disciplinary procedure and no legal way that students can be excluded from school. MoEYS encourages school directors to talk to parents and to seek help from the community, but Article 31 of Chapter Seven of the Education Law (2007) states that a child has the right to a basic education and there is no special education provision for those who do not respect the school rules.

8.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

One of the most powerful motivating factors named by many teachers in the focus groups is the pleasure of working with students. This feeling of motivation comes from various aspects of the teachers' work, such as the joy of transferring knowledge to students, students gaining good results, students who are enthusiastic about their learning, students respecting the advice of teachers and following the rules, students who are well dressed and punctual and students who have good attendance. Two groups of rural male teachers also described the pleasure of having active participation in learning activities by students of both genders. For individual interviewees, this was also a motivator, with 69 per cent identifying it as one of the most motivating parts of their work.

However, teachers can also become de-motivated by their students. Female teachers in particular are de-motivated by students who are disinterested in their studies or disrespectful to the teacher; this is an issue that was noted by almost half of the female participants in the focus groups. Among individual interviewees, 78 per cent of the total respondents found 'pupil motivation and ability' a problem. A lack of respect is cited by teachers of both sexes and is attributed to problems in society.

One secondary school director said he has grave concerns about the absenteeism and lack of punctuality among some of his students, and the prevalence of smoking and drug abuse among a small minority. He informs parents regularly about these risks, but rarely receives much backing and support from them. Students who do not respect the school rules are also identified as a problem; both male and female teachers talk about 'gangster' students, who cause disruption in the classroom and many teachers see their own poor living conditions as an excuse for students to 'look down on them'.

Educated and informed parents realise the value of education and this can help to break the cycle in some families of undervaluing education, thus more promotion of education as a valuable thing is recommended. The establishment of parent-teacher and other such groups will build a general strengthening of links between schools and communities and of communication between schools, teachers and parents.

Poor attendance by students and high drop-out rates are identified as a de-motivating factor, with 79 per cent of teachers interviewed citing 'poor pupil attendance' as one factor that prevented them being successful at their work. The reasons for children dropping out of school will vary; for example, they might belong to migrant working families, the children might be needed as family income earners, costs of sending them to school may be too high and a lack of progression in or commitment to education.

According to the World Bank report (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008:15), there were 1,700 incomplete primary schools (not offering the full range of grades), and children do not always make the journey to the nearest school that does. Girls are slightly more at risk of dropping out than boys and rural children twice as likely to do so as urban children. However, the performance of teachers themselves has been shown to be a factor in keeping children in school, where the academic progress of the child is the issue:

"There is also evidence that the teacher's mathematics knowledge impacts their students' achievement in mathematics... The positive correlation between the teacher and student math scores is a reminder of the importance of pre-service content knowledge training. To be effective in the classroom, teachers must be familiar with the content for which they are responsible."²⁷

27 According to a Hierarchical Linear Model, an increase by 1 per cent in teacher mathematics knowledge is associated with an increase on average in students' grade 6 mathematics achievement of 0.41 standard deviations: *Education Statistics and Indicators 2006/7* MoEYS 2007.

Research evidence under EQIP also shows that the intervention most strongly associated with reducing student drop-out, increasing student promotion and improving student achievement test scores was teacher development (Benveniste, Marshall, and Caridad Araujo, 2008). Furthermore, in-service teacher training was among the most cost-effective interventions, together with health and vocational training interventions and pre-school preparation (Marshall, 2004).²⁸

There are re-entry programmes, such as one piloted in Battambang organised by the Non-Formal Education Department. The idea of this is to provide a programme in August and September, using experienced teachers and a 're-entry' curriculum that helps students to explore their reasons for dropping out, to examine their own situation and to find strategies to help them get back into education. MoEYS has supported this particular scheme with a monthly payment incentive for attending students and with some resources and travel costs.

It is recommended that school directors contact parents of students who have dropped out to try and ascertain the reasons behind non-attendance at school. Re-entry schemes need promotion through community members, such as monks and other students, and means of identifying students who have dropped out, such as school mapping network groups.²⁹

28 As reported in the Fast Track Initiative catalytic fund decision memorandum seeking approval of the World Bank country director and lead donor.

29 Each school is surveyed to verify and supplement local data, such as the number of school-age children and so on.

9 TEACHERS IN SOCIETY

9.1 COMMUNITY RELATIONS

9.1.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

The Education Law (2007) specifically assigns rights and duties to parents and communities, as in Article 36, which states:

“Duties of the parents or guardians who have custodial care of minors are as follows: bring the children who are at the age of 6 or at least 70 months to register for grade one at any school with a licence to operate from the government; make every effort to assist young children to study, especially in basic education; pay close attention to relationships among school, family, and community in order to encourage the child’s training and study”.

Article 35 outlines:

“[the] right to cooperate actively in the development of standards of education at the institutional level and at the national level either directly or by means of representatives”.

9.1.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

In his report on teacher motivation and incentives, Bennell (2004: iii) states that:

“Occupational status depends on the ‘public valuing’ of the competence, role and overall contribution of a particular occupation to individual and societal welfare. Occupations that have attained ‘professional status’ share the following characteristics:

- a high level of education and training based on a unique and specialised body of knowledge
- a strong ideal of public service with an enforced professional code of conduct and high levels of respect from the public at large
- registration and regulation by the profession itself
- trusted to act in the clients’ best interests within a framework of accountability
- a supportive working environment
- similar levels of compensation as other professions”.

Most of these issues, with the notable exception of pay, are addressed at some level. However, none of them at present satisfactorily meet the needs and requirements of the teaching population in Cambodia. It is recommended that all improvements in teachers’ conditions and training are planned with the objective of raising their professional status.

It is clear from the focus group findings that teachers are strongly motivated by encouragement and support from parents and from the community and community leaders; these were described as motivating factors by almost all the groups. Having good communication with the parents was deemed as important, and having parents who understand the value of education was seen as motivating.

However, general comments in the focus groups referred to problems including lack of parental interest or support on school discipline, pupil absenteeism, teachers not being valued or respected, lack of community knowledge and participation in school, and a high drop-out rate, particularly among working children. There was a strong feeling, expressed by nearly a third of teachers of both genders in the focus groups, that society does not sufficiently value teachers. Seventy-three per cent of individual interviewees felt that they only received a ‘medium’ level of respect from the community, often citing their low salary and poor living conditions as a reason for this.

“The parents of my girlfriend objected to our marriage because of my low salary and prospects. At celebrations, the rich people sit apart and don’t mix with teachers.” (Male secondary teacher, Siem Reap Province)

Rural teachers of both genders reported a lack of participation in the running of the school from the community and local authorities particularly strongly, and overall, one in five teachers in the focus groups named this as a de-motivating factor. This example was given by a rural male teacher:

“When the teachers grow crops in school (with the students), domestic animals eat them or someone steals them.”

Teachers in one remote province say they find it particularly difficult to establish contact with ethnic minority parents; the respect and support they receive depends a lot on how long they have lived in the province. Other challenges are to do with the small but rising affluent class, mainly in Phnom Penh. A grade 1 primary teacher complained of a lack of respect for teachers, particularly by the more affluent students and their families; others spoke of pressure from rich parents wanting to 'buy' examination success for their children.

There is a perception, noted by many working within communities at different levels (NGOs, volunteers, teachers), that many parents and families have to work very hard in order to make a basic living. They tend to see education as a means to a rather limited end: if, at the end of grade 3, a child can read, write and do the basic arithmetic, that will be enough to equip them for sustainable employment. There are many accounts of boys, especially, completing their lower secondary education at grade 9, probably at some cost to their families, and finding exactly the same sort of employment, for example in construction, as those boys who ended their primary education at grade 3.

**"Parents don't value education; they are too busy working to give the school any support."
(Practising teacher)**

CASE HISTORY: A commune chief in a busy part of Phnom Penh containing three primary schools described community relations with the schools:

"The commune has no formal links with the schools and no say in budgetary funding. Any contact with the school directors is maintained mostly by letter. The schools do involve parents in their children's education, sending letters out regarding absenteeism, and parents are welcome to go in to the school to discuss their child's progress. Several NGOs, particularly, provide material assistance to poor families enabling their children to attend school. The quality of education is generally improving and standards are rising; the local community respect teachers and want good education for their children, but the main problem facing teachers is their low salary."

Some teachers said they are well respected by and get good support from the local community, several having received a Community Award certificate as a highly rated teacher. Some contact parents regularly and do home visits, receiving a good response from parents. Others, however, maintained that teachers are looked down upon and criticised for their poverty and low living standards, and that the level of respect varies according to their training and qualifications.

Among school directors, views vary about the amount of community involvement they receive in the running of the school. In some cases, cooperation is good on matters like external repairs and maintenance, how the budget is spent, and the disbursement of Priority Action Programme funds, the breakdown of which is published locally. One school director, who receives training from UNICEF on budget management, encourages teachers to purchase materials on credit from the local market when the budget is late, until the money arrives.

There are excellent school directors who instigate and reinforce community involvement. One has developed integrated projects such as a school breakfast club, environmental groups and community banking. Another school director demonstrated improvements to the school compound made with community assistance, including construction of an extra library building and bookshelves, provided by the local timber firm. On the other hand, one newly appointed primary school director has difficulty encouraging community leaders to come into the school for meetings and reported that participation on curriculum matters is largely non-existent.

President of the teachers' union CITA, Mr Rong Chhun, when asked about how teachers think society regards them, made the following observations:

- Society does not value teachers as it did in the past because society itself is increasingly materialistic and low pay and subsequent low standards of living are looked down on. Everyone knows teachers need additional jobs and that these have a negative effect on teaching practice.

- The practice of collecting informal school fees, although understandable, is not approved of, so teachers are trapped in a cycle of poverty and low esteem.
- Education itself is not seen as being of value if it cannot guarantee better jobs.
- There are increasing problems with discipline due to drugs and gambling in the vicinity of schools.

The RGC's aim to decentralise educational planning and management should enhance opportunities for the development of local involvement in education. As commune councils and provincial educational leadership grow in confidence and skills, they have the potential to provide a forum through which local stakeholders can address educational issues as well as mobilising and managing resources. More community participation in schools will strengthen links between schools, teachers and parents; all measures to increase this are recommended.

9.2 TEACHERS' VOICE

9.2.1 THE POLICY CONTEXT

Article 29 of the Education Law (2007) states that:

"The state has to broadly open the education system to the participation of all concerned persons: public and private sectors, national and international organisations, non-government organisations and communities in the process of development, establishment, observations, evaluation of education practice, and work together with educational authorities to consistently re-evaluate, seeking better policy, principles, planning, and strategy of national education".

Article 37, dealing with the rights and duties of educational staff, goes on to outline the:

"...right to actively contribute to the development of education standards at foundation and national level either directly or by representatives".

This falls somewhat short of the expectations of the PACT report (Knight and Macleod 2004: 16), which argued that:

"Notes in the draft Education Law indicate that the rights of learners, parents and educational personnel (public civil servant educational personnel, contract educational personnel and private educational personnel) will be based on international treaties, Constitutional provisions, and standard-setting instruments and recommendations of UNESCO and the ILO".

9.2.2 REALITY FOR TEACHERS

An issue felt particularly strongly by some urban male teachers in the focus groups was the lack of any opportunity or mechanism for expressing teachers' views:

"There is no forum for expressing views without intimidation".

"[They] don't provide the right to express ideas or opinions in order to protest against some problems".

Teachers who were interviewed individually were asked whether there was any forum for them to express their views; over 77 per cent felt that there was not. When asked what kind of forum they would like, many teachers expressed a wish for an open opportunity for teachers to express their ideas and concerns, once or twice a year. Several felt that these events should be attended by officials from the provincial and district offices of education, while some felt that just asking for such a forum would cause trouble.

UNIONS

Teachers in Cambodia need, and many of them express the wish for, a forum to express their views and concerns, as well as a mechanism to make those views known to the government. As the PACT report (Knight and Macleod 2004) states:

"Teacher training, deployment, salaries, and teacher/pupil ratios are all potential targets for additional planning and strategy revision in collaboration with teachers. Yet without the right to organise, the right to appeal decisions, and a recognised presence in the decision making process, teachers' concerns continue to be focused on individual problems and have not played a big role in the public arena".

There are two teachers' organisations concerned with the welfare of teachers: the Cambodian Independent Teachers' Association (CITA), an independent organisation created in 2000, and the Khmer Teachers' Association (KTA).

The KTA is essentially a benevolent organisation designed to support teachers and their families in the event of death or serious illness. Membership is automatic for public school teachers and members pay a joining fee and a monthly subscription of 2,000 riel (US\$0.5). In 2000, a scheme was set up with the KTA for building teachers' housing in the provinces with US\$40,000 of EU money, and to date, 32 have been built. The national director of KTA, Yos Eang, emphasised that his association was non political and existed essentially to help and support its members, and that he did not see it as a means of putting pressure on the government. However, he sympathised with the low salary and poor living conditions that many teachers had to face and saw the need for an impartial, non-political intermediary to represent teachers' views and opinions.

Following international pressure on the government, CITA was recognised by the Ministry of the Interior as an organisation in July 2001. CITA could not register as a union, because union membership for civil service employees is not yet a right under Cambodian Civil Service Law. Its stated aims are to support teachers by negotiating improved salaries, working conditions and professional development and to help to improve the quality of education in Cambodia.

All government-employed teachers are eligible to apply for membership in CITA. The organisation now has a membership of 8,000 (approximately ten per cent of teacher numbers) and a presence in 19 provinces. CITA members pay an initial membership fee of 500 riel and monthly dues of 200 riel, not a prohibitive amount for teachers to pay for membership.

In an interview with Mr Rong Chhun, President of CITA, he stated that the organisation is working towards a membership of 70 per cent of Cambodia's teachers. He attributes problems with recruitment to shortage of staff, a lack of understanding of the benefits of belonging to a union, and intimidation by management.

Unfortunately, there is currently no dialogue between MoEYS and CITA, as the government regard CITA as being fundamentally in opposition to them. In the past, CITA has been forcible in its demands for a large and immediate increase in teachers' salaries and vocal in its insistence on an improvement in general working conditions. Its main advocacy strategy has been the strike. The CITA Constitution, Chapter 9, Article 33 (2007: 15) states:

"CITA considers peaceful and non-violent strikes as an option to improve and protect the interests of teachers in Cambodia. All strikes led by the organisation will be in accordance with Articles 37 and 38 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Cambodia, which allows strikes as a means to: Protect the status and freedom of teachers... Demand an improvement in the status and working conditions of teachers and improve the exercise of democracy in the Kingdom of Cambodia".

CITA is presently planning a series of 30 workshops on advocacy for two per cent of all teachers in Cambodia, with a view to developing teachers' confidence and skill in negotiation and conflict resolution, and to promote teacher participation in school management procedures.

When asked about the effectiveness of the role of CITA, given that there is at present no effective communication between them and MoEYS, Mr Rong Chhun stated that it does have a voice that has influenced the government at times. For example, it exposed a case of corruption involving a director selling donated school food. It also continues to demand salary increases on a regular basis. Indeed, CITA recently wrote to the government to ask for a salary increase and threatened strike action if there was no response,³⁰ but the president has since stated that he will not risk the security of CITA members if a strike was called without permission from the government.

Here lies the anomaly, and the predicament, of a teachers' union in Cambodia. Teachers, as civil servants, are subject to the 1994 Civil Service Law of the Kingdom of Cambodia, which forbids them to strike. This law conflicts with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, most notably the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No 87), and the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No 98).

Both of these Conventions have been ratified by Cambodia, but the Civil Service Law fails to ensure the rights of public employees to organise unions, does not protect union activity, and fails to allow for collective bargaining rights. Thus a main lever in the usual bargaining power of a workers' organisation, that of withholding labour in return for improved working conditions, is being denied them.

It is recommended that the Civil Service Law is revised in order to comply with the ILO Conventions No 87 and No 98.

It is recommended that efforts are made for the inclusion of all stakeholders, including teachers' unions, in efforts by government, NGOs and development partners to improve incentives and conditions for teachers.



10 OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

10.1 EDUCATION REPORTING

A general observation needs to be made on data relating to education in Cambodia, which is that it is often inaccurate, and sometimes contradictory. There is anecdotal evidence that some of it is falsified. Reliance on the statistics gathered from schools by the RGC is complicated by the practice, widely reported by education NGOs, of schools and district and provincial offices of education compiling two separate sets of data on issues such as exam results and pupil attendance. One set of numbers, such as the exam pass rate, is reportedly presented to the Ministry in response to targets set by them, while the other is given when NGOs ask for the 'real' figures. Such discrepancies are reported to be widespread.

Accurate national data, from independent and verifiable sources, will be essential if realistic targets are to be set and progress towards them is to be effectively monitored by all stakeholders. Future plans and budgets are currently being made from unreliable data. It is likely that teachers have a better awareness of the actual situation, at least in their own schools; this has an impact on their perceptions of the education system and thus on their morale. The data that has been used in this section is supported by inputs from NGO and Ministry advisers, economists and statisticians working in the education sector and is useful to illustrate issues and draw general conclusions as to how data can be misinterpreted.

The example that follows in Table 6 shows the completion rate figures reported in the MoEYS Midterm Review Report 2008 on the Implementation of the National Strategic Development Plan 2006–10.

Table 6 MoEYS strategic plan indicators: completion

MAIN EDUCATION INDICATORS	2006	2007	2008	TARGET 2008	TARGET 2010
Grade 6 completion rate: total	42.9%	90.8%	86.3%	80%	100%
Female	42.2%	89.8%	88.0%	80%	100%
Grade 9 completion rate: total	19.3%	41.9%	48.7%	50%	75%
Female	18.5%	35.2%	44.3%	50%	75%

To look only at completion rates would give a very misleading picture of how many children actually successfully finish their primary education. Admission and survival rates provide the full picture. For example, if, in grades 1–6, there is a 50 per cent survival rate of an original 90 per cent admission³¹ rate, this means that half of the originally admitted children stay at school until grade 6. If there is a further 80 per cent completion rate, then that means that 80 per cent of those remaining children actually pass an exam that would enable them to move on to grades 7–9. So a final completion rate is always a percentage of a survival rate. In this case, only 36 per cent of children in total would successfully complete primary education, not the 50 per cent implied if only looking at the survival rate, and certainly not the 80 per cent implied if looking in isolation at the grade 6 completion rate. Actual primary survival rates for 2006 and 2007 are shown in Table 7.

31 MoEYS uses the term 'admission' to refer to entry into grade 1, and the term 'enrolment' to refer to all students at each particular school level.

Table 7 MoEYS strategic plan indicators: survival

MAIN EDUCATION INDICATORS	2006	2007	TARGET 2010
Survival rates grades 1–6: total	49.3%	52.5%	100%
Male	49.6%	50.0%	100%
Female	49.9%	55.4%	100%

If 52.5 per cent of students had survived through grades 1–6 in 2006/7, then the highest the success rate could have been was only 47.7 per cent, not 90.8 per cent. This also does not take account of the original admission rate.³² Nonetheless, the National Strategic Development Plan mid-term review report (2008: 4) claims that, for 2007, **“The Primary School completion rate... is higher than its 2007–08 target”**. Considering that the grade 6 completion rate for 2006 was reported as 42.9 per cent, this sudden jump in support of a claim for achievement of the target raises concerns about the handling of statistics.

Reporting completion rates as shown in Table 6 is at best misleading and, for teachers who daily see the realities of the education system in their own schools, probably also de-motivating. The reported figures suggest that targets are being met and that more than eight out of ten children are successfully completing primary education. This is not the case.

It is recommended that training in monitoring and collection of data is treated as a priority need in capacity-building programmes. There also needs to be monitoring and auditing of data compilation and improved data systems in order to enable better planning and provision of resources, thereby reducing de-motivating factors for teachers.

10.2 PLANS AND MOTIVATION

The Education Strategic Plan (MoEYS 2005a) is very ambitious in its target dates and percentages. Lessons can be learned from Western governments here as to the high expectations caused by over-optimistic targets and the subsequent pressures on managers, workers, and ultimately government, when it finds itself unable to meet them. Such a situation can all too easily lead to discontent and de-motivation. Unrealistic targets can become counterproductive as stakeholders, including teachers, cease to strive towards them.

There seems to be an increasing awareness and understanding of the importance of quality education to the future development of the country. There is a willingness to invest aid heavily in school building and to direct resources towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including that of free universal education. The number of children entering primary school each year is growing, enrolment into lower secondary school appears to consistently exceed targets, and despite many students dropping out later in their schooling, chiefly from economic necessity, many Cambodian families realise the importance of education.

10.3 QUALITY EDUCATION

However, it is clear from much NGO research and discussion with communities that there are also many parents in Cambodia today who do not appreciate that there is real benefit to their children or themselves in investing precious time and money on education. They see little evidence that an education will make accessible any employment opportunities different from those available to uneducated children. Unfortunately, the ‘quality’ education that they are being urged to access, and indeed demand, for their children, is often not actually being offered due to shortages of schools and resources, poorly paid and under-trained teachers, poor planning and weak accountability mechanisms.

32 Admission rates are extremely difficult to quantify from accurately MoEYS data. In 2000, only 76.4 per cent of six-year olds started grade 1; however, MoEYS data suggests that an approximately equal number of older children started grade 1 at the same time.

Teachers are fundamental to achieving the aim of quality education for all. Without good teachers, increasing enrolment, new classrooms, and a new curriculum are all of limited value. Cambodian teachers may have a deep sense of commitment to their jobs, but inadequate salaries, poor living and working conditions, lack of training and resources and a perception that teaching is a low status profession means that many teachers either struggle with serious difficulties and frustrations every day, or seek what opportunities they can to leave the profession.

10.4 TEACHER MOTIVATION

Improving teacher training, working and learning environments and promoting greater decentralisation of efficient education management will all improve teacher motivation. Currently, however, almost all teachers require a second job to support themselves and their families and the extra workload that this places on them naturally has a damaging effect on the quality of their work in the classroom and the learning of their pupils. Improving teachers' pay and conditions of service is integral to achieving a better quality of education and should be regarded as an investment in the future of Cambodia.

Paying teachers adequately needs to be a top spending priority for education expenditure. Salaries should be kept under constant review by the government and regularly adjusted on an annual basis to at least keep pace with the cost of living and current inflation. There should be no need for teachers to seek alternative ways of supplementing their low salaries. Success in achieving Education for All depends on long-term education expenditure and a continuing commitment to the implementation of their strategic plan by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

Nevertheless, even taking the undoubted financial hardship and related difficulties of teachers into account, there are other issues that can positively affect their motivation. The research for this report shows that active community support for schools helps build a sustainable relationship between the community and teachers and this in turn provides a strong motivating incentive for teachers and, indeed, a feeling of being valued. This type of mutually beneficial relationship requires commitment and effort from all involved, including supporting NGOs and donor organisations.

Those specialists consulted for this report, some of whom have been involved with education for many years in Cambodia, all say that there is a slow but noticeable improvement year on year, in the form of strategies, training plans and facilities. Like much else in Cambodia, it is often the lack of experienced leadership (planners, managers and trainers) that make it hard or impossible to implement them. Cambodia has come a very long way in the last ten years, but it will take some years more for the skills base to get to where it needs to be. The people of Cambodia need the quality education that the RGC states as an aim and that is why Cambodia needs to value its teachers.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

“Tork tork penh bampong.” (Drop by drop fills the container.)

A common Cambodian saying, which was heard many times during interviews for this report, is ‘step by step’ (*muy muy*),³³ meaning that things get better slowly but progressively. The truth of this saying depends, in this case, on the steps of all the education stakeholders heading in the same direction.

11.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO MOEYS

11.1.1 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Increase salaries of teachers, school directors, POE and DOE staff to a level appropriate to the cost of living and linked to inflation.
- Once the anti-corruption law is passed and teachers’ salaries are increased, implement the abolishment of informal school fees.
- Provide teachers with formal contracts covering salary scales, method and timing of payment, placement processes, benefits and allowances, including additional allowances for covering sick leave, double shifts and multi-grade teaching and so on, as well as transparent scales of salary, increments and special allowances.
- Expand the current scheme whereby some MoEYS employees have their salaries paid directly into their bank accounts to also include those teachers who desire this.
- Provide incentives in the form of clear, standardised job descriptions and promotion structures.
- Strengthen the processes related to current policy regarding performance-related pay in order for this policy to be acceptable to all stakeholders. This will require the determination and implementation of: transparent award selection criteria, selection processes, standard payment amounts, and monitoring systems in order to ensure the system is fair and free from corruption and nepotism. Criteria for these should be standardised and published in all provinces.
- Offer better medical care, including regular staff health checks, HIV and AIDS screening and more health education with NGO help. Procedures regarding sick pay should be standardised, and a health insurance scheme set up, possibly to be administered by the Khmer Teachers’ Association.
- Provide relocation grants and interest-free loans to assist with housing problems.
- It is recommended that the Civil Service Law is revised in order to comply with the ILO Conventions (No 87: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948; and No 98: the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949).

11.1.2 MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

- Increase the level of teacher recruitment to tackle the shortage of teachers and high pupil-teacher ratios in many areas and to reduce the current need for double shifting and multi-grade teaching.
- Ensure places in teacher education institutions are matched with trainees, especially women and ethnic minorities, from areas suffering teacher shortages. Better deployment procedures are also recommended in order to reduce the need for double shifting.
- Devolve responsibility for local recruitment to school directors, with clear guidelines and supports.
- Provide further training in the programme budget application process at all relevant levels, after reviewing and simplifying the process.
- Allocate a sufficient budget to all inspectorate departments (central and regional) to enable staff to carry out their responsibilities.
- Develop mechanisms for regular dialogue to discuss and negotiate issues of concern in education that directly affect teachers and the quality of education.

33 Literally, ‘one one’.

11.1.3 QUALITY EDUCATION

- Continue to raise the standard of, and investment in, initial training. Teacher trainers should be monitored during their work with student teachers.
- Develop training in assessment and evaluation skills for teacher trainers and school inspectors.
- Provide more leadership training and strong support for skills-sharing between school directors.
- Train, support and resource POE and DOE staff in their advisory role to schools.
- Implement improved and sustained communication, consultation and cooperation between schools, MoEYS and NGOs regarding training programmes.
- Consistently embed child-friendly school methods and training in effective multi-grade teaching methods, where required.
- Introduce a new curriculum as soon as possible.
- Develop independent inspection processes for schools. Making standards and criteria public will help to normalise assessment and will cause monitoring and evaluation to be seen as helpful procedures.
- Introduce monitoring and auditing of data compilation and improved data systems.
- Expand the promotion of education as valuable to all.

11.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT OFFICES OF EDUCATION

- Carry out inspections of school buildings and note examples of good maintenance practices that could be spread out to other schools.
- Put processes in place to ensure that books or other resources are distributed to the right schools and in the correct quantities.

11.3 RECOMMENDATIONS TO SCHOOL DIRECTORS

- Enlist the help of students and community members in taking pride and interest in their school environment.
- Encourage skills-sharing mechanisms between teachers.
- Ensure transparency in the allocation of school programme budget money, with teachers sharing in decisions.
- Take action to ensure that books or other resources are received, and in the correct quantities.
- Contact the parents of students who have dropped out of school to try to determine the reasons behind non-attendance.
- Develop school mapping network groups to help identify students who have dropped out or who have never attended school.
- Establish parent-teacher and school-community groups to build links between schools and communities.

11.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO TEACHERS

- Enlist the help of students and community members in taking pride and interest in their school environment.
- Cooperate with school directors to build skills-sharing opportunities between teachers.
- Promote community support of re-entry programmes.

11.5 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COMMUNITIES

- Assist with the promotion of re-entry programmes for students who have dropped out of school.
- Encourage more community participation in schools to strengthen links between schools, teachers and parents and to support school directors.
- Get involved with schools and contribute skills to help make them better places for learning.

11.6 RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNIONS

- Develop lines of communication between teachers, community groups, NGOs and the government concerning issues in education that directly affect teachers and the quality of education.

11.7 RECOMMENDATIONS TO NGOS

- Support improved and sustained communication, consultation and cooperation between schools, MoEYS and NGOs regarding training programmes.
- Advocate for marginalised groups.
- Promote re-entry programmes through community members, such as monks and other students.

11.8 RECOMMENDATIONS TO DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- In partnership with MoEYS, focus on training teacher trainers.
- Treat training in monitoring and collection of data as a priority need in all capacity-building programmes.
- Support the government to reform public sector pay levels.

11.9 RECOMMENDATION TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS

- Ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders, including teachers and teachers unions, during the discussion, planning and implementation of measures by the government, NGOs and development partners to improve incentives and conditions for teachers.
- Emphasise the development of regular dialogue to discuss and negotiate issues of concern in education that directly affect teachers and the quality of education.

11.10 RECOMMENDATION TO THE ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF CAMBODIA

- Pass and implement the anti-corruption law.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN THE FIVE PROVINCES

NO:

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS VALUING TEACHERS

Valuing Teachers is a research project carried out by VSO in several developing countries worldwide, aimed at discovering what are the key factors influencing teacher motivation. This is because teachers are the main learning resource in developing countries and their level of motivation has a significant impact on their performance. The factors influencing motivation are discovered by means of focus groups such as this one and through one-to-one interviews with teachers, school directors and other stakeholders throughout the education system, including DOE, POE and MoEYS personnel. In Cambodia, this research is being carried out by NEP, supported by VSO. Once views have been collected and analysed, they can be used to inform the Ministry as a method of suggesting changes to Ministry policies in ways that support those things that help teachers to be well motivated.

1	Province:	2 District:		Commune:
		<input type="checkbox"/> Urban		<input type="checkbox"/> Rural
I	PERSONAL DETAILS			
3	Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male		<input type="checkbox"/> Female
4	Age:	years		
5	Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits your activities or the work you can do?			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No
II	MORE DETAILS			
6	Level taught (tick any relevant boxes):	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 1–3	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 4–6	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade 7–9
7	Number of years teaching:	years		
8	Number of schools taught in:			
9	Are you a contract teacher:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No
10	How many hours do you teach in a week?	hours		
11	What shifts do you work?	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Double	<input type="checkbox"/> Triple
12	If double or triple, do you teach the same grade each time?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No
13	Do you have any multi-grade shifts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No
14	How many children on average are in each class that you teach?			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 30–40	<input type="checkbox"/> 40–50	<input type="checkbox"/> 50–60
				<input type="checkbox"/> Over 60
15	Do you have extra responsibilities in the school?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No
16	If yes, what responsibilities do you have?			
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III MOTIVATION AND STATUS

17 What were your reasons for going into teaching originally?

Please choose up to THREE that apply:

- Job security
- Professional status
- Respect from the community
- No other option available
- Help the future of Cambodia
- Like to work with children
- Financial security
- Other (please specify)

18 What do you find the most motivating part of your job?

Please choose up to THREE that apply:

- Interaction with children
- Training and professional development
- Leadership and praise
- Relationship and support from colleagues
- Respect from community
- Other (please specify)

19 What level of respect do you feel the community has for you as a teacher?

Please choose ONE option:

- High
- Medium
- Low

20 What are the reasons for this? (Record free answer)

21 Do you participate in any activities in the community as a teacher?

- Yes
- No

22 If yes, please give more details:

23 Do you feel Cambodia values teachers? Yes No

24 What makes you think this? (Record free answer)

IV PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

25 Do you feel you have had enough training to do your job well?

- Yes
- No

26 Did you receive any teacher training? Trained Untrained

27 What level of pre-service teacher training did you receive? Tick ALL that apply:

- PTTC
- 7+3
- 9 + 2
- 12 + 2
- RTTC
- None
- Other: (please specify)

28 Did you get any in-service training? Yes No

29 If yes, what type?

- Workshop (1)
- Thursday technical meetings (2)
- Observation and feedback from school director (3)
- Visit from inspection office with feedback (4)
- Other (please specify) (5)

- 30 Which did you find the most useful?

- 31 Have you had any training for children with special needs? Tick ALL that apply:
 HIV and AIDS Learning disability
 Physical disability Ethnic minority groups
- 32 Do you have a good supply of teaching and learning materials?
 Adequate Inadequate
- 33 Are there enough teachers in your school? Yes No
- 34 Do you feel supported by the school director? Yes No
- 35 What level of support in your teaching does the school director offer?
 Very strong support Strong support Some support
 Little support No support
- 36 Is there a fair system of how you are able to get a promotion? Fair Unfair
- 37 Is there a fair system for you to decide where you are posted? Fair Unfair
- 38 Are you involved in any policy making decisions as a teacher? Yes No
- 39 Is there a forum for you to raise your concerns as a teacher? Yes No
- 40 If yes, please give more details. (Record free answer)

- 41 If no, what would you like? (Record free answer)

V TEACHER MORALE:

- 42 These are some suggestions about things which may make you feel negative about your job. Please select up to FIVE that apply:
 Poor management and leadership High workload
 Lack of praise Lack of materials
 Poor working conditions Limited training
 Low salary Poor health
 Poor housing/living conditions
 Other (please specify)

- 43 What problems and difficulties do you have that prevent you being successful in your job? Please select up to FIVE that apply:
 Lack of teaching and learning materials Size of classes
 State of classrooms Poor school buildings
 Poor pupil attendance Pupil motivation and ability
 Having to work a second job Poor health or tiredness
 Lack of time for lesson preparation Lack of subject knowledge
 Lack of encouragement and leadership
 Other (please specify)

44 If there was one thing you could change about your job that would make you more motivated as a teacher, what would it be? (Record free answer)

45 Do you intend to stay in teaching? Yes No

VI TERMS AND CONDITIONS

46 Is your salary received each month in an effective way? Yes No

47 How much money do you receive from the Ministry in a month? (Record free answer)

48 Is this enough for you to live on? Yes No

49 If no how do you supplement your income?

- Farming Moto driving Private tuition
 Market stall Small business Other (please specify)

50 Have you ever received a performance-related pay award? Yes No

51 What other benefits do you receive as a teacher? Please tick ALL that apply.

- Accommodation Maternity leave
 Retirement fund Wife and child benefits
 Sick leave Funeral costs
 Other (please specify)

52 The following forms of payment exist, do any happen that you know about?

- Teachers selling cakes in school Daily teaching fees
 Selling lesson materials Private tutoring
 Exam papers/lesson handouts Others (please specify)

APPENDIX 2

QUESTIONNAIRES USED IN SIEM REAP

QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER FOCUS GROUP SIEM REAP

- 1 **Salary supplement:** please tick which level MOST fits what you use your salary supplement for (mark only one level):

COST OF FOOD FOR YOU/YOUR FAMILY	
HOUSING AND UTILITIES	
YOUR OWN CHILDRENS' EDUCATION	

- 2 Has your supplement enabled you to give up your additional jobs and spend more time preparing and planning lessons?

- 3 **Additional jobs(s):** please tick which level MOST fits what you use your additional job for:

COST OF FOOD FOR YOU/YOUR FAMILY	
HOUSING AND UTILITIES	
YOUR OWN CHILDRENS' EDUCATION	

- 4 How has your salary supplement improved your teaching practice?
- 5 Are there any other issues apart from salary that affect your teaching practice?
- 6 Are there any suggestions or recommendations you would make to government, management or NGOs to address these issues?

TEACHERS' SURVEY OF IMPACT OF SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN OF CAMBODIA SALARY SUPPLEMENT, SIEM REAP

- 1 How much salary do you get from the government?
- 2 Do you receive your salary regularly?
- 3 How much salary supplement do you get from SCC?
- 4 Did you/your family rely on additional jobs before you got this salary supplement?
- 5 Do you/ your family still rely on these additional jobs?
- 6 If you have additional jobs, do you have enough time to prepare lessons?
- 7 If not, how much salary increase would enable you to have enough time to prepare lessons?
- 8 Are there any factors besides salary that affect your teaching?

APPENDIX 3 ECONOMIC SITUATION AND EDUCATION BUDGETS

The figures used to illustrate economic performance and relative budget spending are taken from MoEF statistics³⁴ and represent the most up-to-date information published by the RGC. Nonetheless, the last year for which definitive statistical data is available is 2005. The figures for 2006 are estimated and those for 2007 and 2008 are predicted.

Figure 4 shows the solid and continuous growth of GDP in real terms since 2000 (in millions of US\$ at constant 2006 prices). As can be seen, GDP has more than doubled in less than a decade, albeit from a very low starting point.

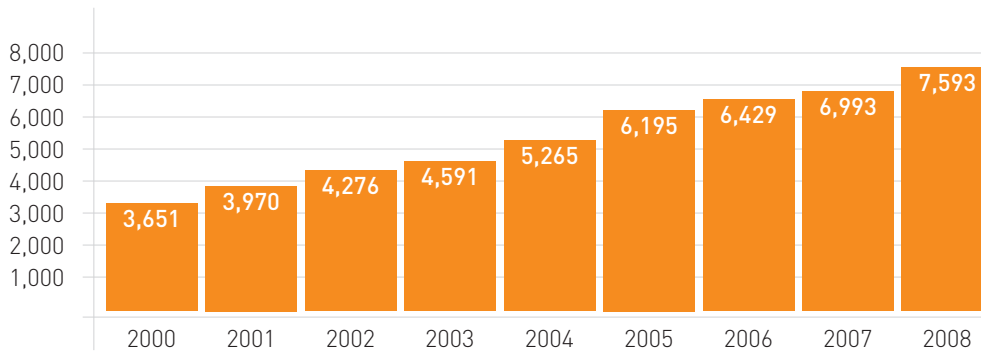


Figure 4 Growth in GDP since 2000

To put education spending into this context, Figure 5 shows RGC spending on education as a proportion of GDP since 2000. After a falling trend in the first half of the decade, there has been a steady increase.

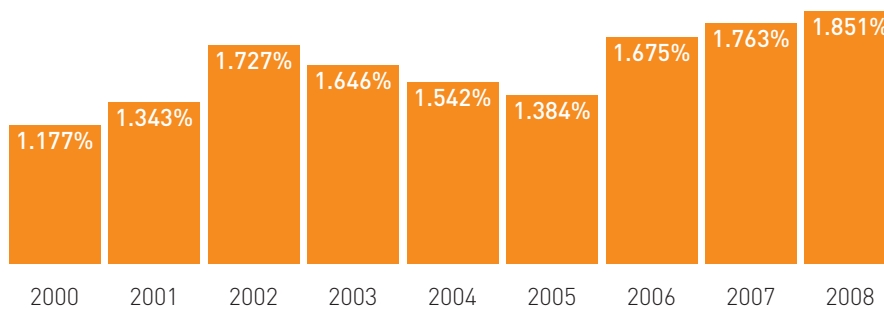


Figure 5 Education spending as a percentage of GDP

Concurrent with the growth in GDP has been a steady rate of growth in population, as shown in Figure 6 (numbers are in millions).

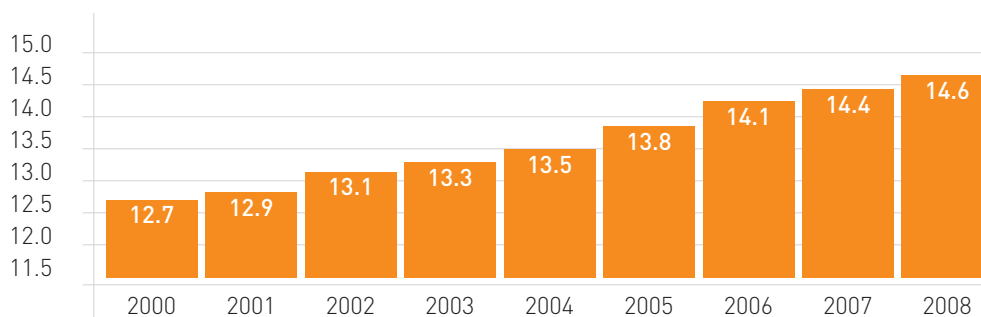


Figure 6 Population growth since 2000

Since 2000, total population growth has been in the region of 15 per cent, while GDP growth has considerably outstripped it at over 100 per cent. Because of this, GDP per capita has also shown steady improvement, although it remains very low by global standards. Furthermore, there are considerable disparities across the country, as shown in Table 8.

34 See www.mef.gov.kh/statistics (accessed 30 June 2008).

Table 8 GDP per capita by region (US\$)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Whole country	288	308	326	345	389	448	456	487	519
Plain region	310	332	362	382	432	486			
Tonle Sap lake region	244	265	262	278	297	339			
Coastal region	421	404	424	464	495	547			
Plateau and mountain region	241	249	255	269	274	312			

Although no regional breakdown is available after 2005, it is noteworthy that the remote areas encompassed in the plateau and mountain regions of Cambodia consistently lag behind the other parts of the country. These are areas in which education also faces some of its most serious challenges.

RGC BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

When analysing budgets and expenditures, a distinction is made between *capital* and *recurrent* expenditures. *Capital* expenditures measure the value of purchases of fixed assets, that is those assets that are used repeatedly for more than a year. *Capital* expenditures include outlays on construction, renovation and major repair of buildings, and new or replacement equipment. *Recurrent* expenditures are expenditures on goods and services consumed within the current year that need to be made recurrently and cover items such as wages, salaries, travel costs, allowances and pensions. Minor expenditures on small items of equipment, below a certain cost threshold, are also reported as *recurrent* spending. Teachers' salaries form an element of *recurrent* budgets and expenditures.

RGC expenditure is based on two principal sources of income: its own generated revenue and the contributions of external development partners (or donors). This expenditure is spread across some 36 main ministries, centres and agencies: education falls within the remit of MoEYS. The breakdown of planned recurrent expenditure for 2008, by government department, is shown in Figure 7.

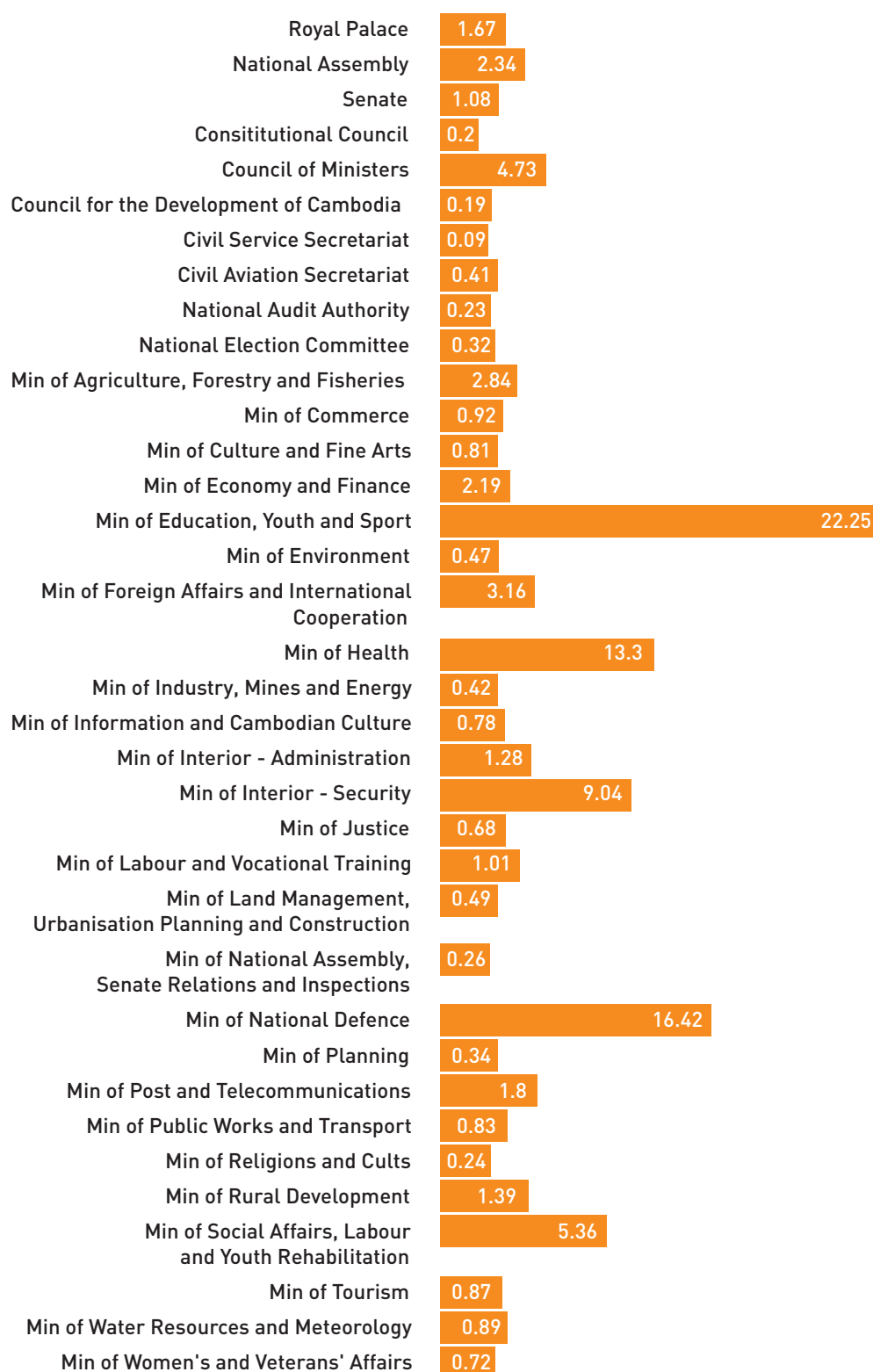


Figure 7 2008 Budget allocation by department

If the 2008 budget is implemented according to plan, MoEYS will receive the highest budget allocation of any single department at 22.25 per cent.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Education funding in Cambodia has experienced real and sustained long-term growth. Annual increases in MoEYS budget are shown in Figure 8, with a comparison to the annual rate of inflation.

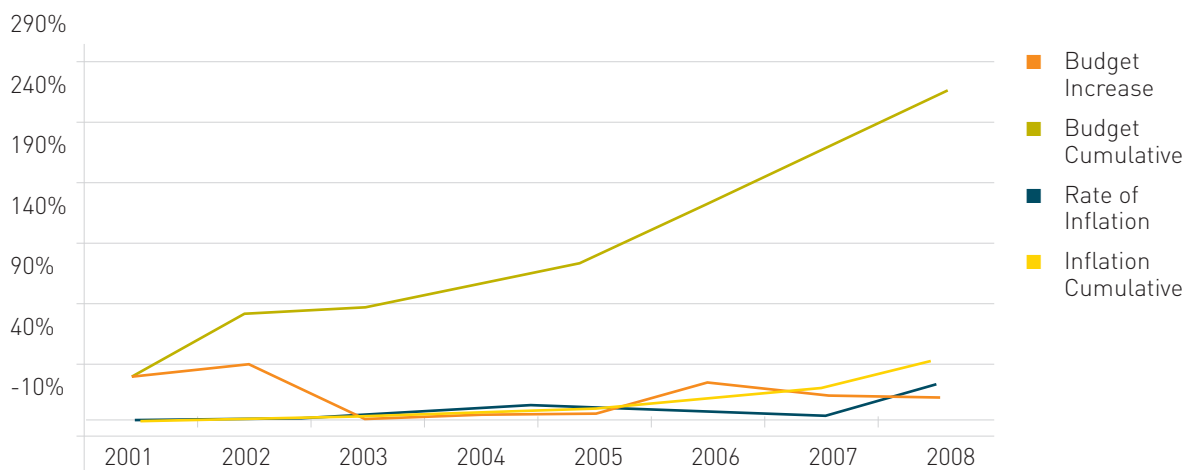


Figure 8 MoEYS budget increases

Notwithstanding increased actual rates of inflation in 2007 and 2008,³⁵ MoEYS budget increases have kept well ahead of inflation over the course of the decade. However, many areas within the current education system still require immediate assistance, including building classrooms, teacher training, inspection and educational materials. Cambodian education is supported by American, Australian and European programmes (often through tied aid or loan schemes) such as the European Union, UNICEF, Save the Children Norway (SCN), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and many non-governmental organisations. The government also receives assistance from the ADB and the World Bank for loans to finance much of the current needs. In response to the problem identified at Dakar, that lack of funding could prevent countries from realising Education for All goals, the World Bank launched the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) to raise funds for primary schooling in a number of countries, and Cambodia received US\$57 million from the FTI for the period 2007–2009.

The aspects of the government’s Education Strategic Plan to be financed by the FTI Catalytic Fund under MoEYS’ Education Sector Support Scale-Up Action Programme (ESSUAP) include:

- assuring equitable access to early childhood and primary educational services through the reduction of cost barriers to schooling and targeted facilities development
- improving the quality and efficiency of services through greater decentralisation of school management, enhanced teacher professional development and provision of instructional materials
- strengthening institutional capacity to administer educational services and implement quality control mechanisms.

35 Data is taken from the latest published MoEF figures, except for inflation rates for 2007 and 2008, which are based on credible Cambodian and world press figures (the RGC has not yet published its own figures at the time of going to press). See the section on teachers’ salaries on page 23 of this report for the effect current inflation rates are having on their pay.

As can be seen in Table 9, the largest allocation is for capital expenditure on buildings.

Table 9 MoEYS capital expenditure

Component 1	Early childhood education expansion	US\$4.7M
1.1	ECE facilities expansion	US\$2.6M
1.2	Home- and community-based ECE expansion	US\$1.2M
1.3	ECE development policy and capacity-building	US\$0.9M
Component 2	Improving primary education access and quality	US\$50.7M
2.1	Expanding primary education facilities	US\$40.0M
2.2	Stimulating demand for education	US\$1.9M
2.3	Support to child-friendly schooling	US\$6.3M
2.4	School improvement grants	US\$1.5M
2.5	Instructional materials provision	US\$1.0M
Component 3	Institutional development and capacity-building	US\$2.0M
3.1	District offices of education facilities expansion	US\$0.9M
3.2	Financial management, procurement and programme management capacity-building	US\$1.1M

The programme will be implemented at the national, provincial, district and school levels over a period of three-and-a-half calendar years (July 2008–2011). MoEYS will assume overall responsibility for coordination and implementation of the programme, including procurement, disbursement and financial management.

Estimates of the total proportion of education expenditure that is funded by donors vary. In terms of capital expenditure, both the Ministry of Planning (MoP) and MoEF give clear details on the totals and dispositions of donor funding and, for 2008, the contribution made by donors to total capital expenditure is forecast to be 61.5 per cent. In contrast, no details for donor contributions to recurrent education expenditure appear to be available from any authoritative source, despite that fact that non-RGC money is known to be going to support school operations.³⁶

Allocations for MoEYS in US\$ from the RGC budgets for 2007 and 2008 are shown in Table 10.

Table 10 RGC education budgets, 2007 and 2008

	RECURRENT	CAPITAL	TOTAL
2007 Actual Budget	133,171,000	71,218,000	204,389,000
2008 Budget Law	151,707,000	77,541,000	229,248,000

According to the NGO Forum on Cambodia,³⁷ actual expenditure in 2007 varied slightly from the budget. Recurrent spending, at US\$144,832,000, was eight per cent over budget, whereas capital expenditure, at US\$66,910,000, was six per cent under. Nevertheless, total actual recurrent expenditure equated to US\$42.76 per student - based on MoEYS' reported total student numbers of 3,387,310 in 2006/7 (MoEYS 2006: 58).

36 This refers to NGO money in particular. For example, Schools for Children in Cambodia (SCC) has funded salary supplements for teachers in Siem Reap since 2002. However, it is not clear how much of the development partner money spent on recurrent costs, if any, is processed through the RGC budget.

37 Analysis of the Implementation of the 2007 Budget and the 2008 Budget Law, January 2008.

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