



“Education
can help
me become
anything
I want”

Srey Neang's dreams of becoming a teacher are now within her reach

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A dream come true

How EAC and its partners in Cambodia are helping children fulfil their wishes

By the time Srey Neang turned six, she could hardly wait to begin school. She wanted to be a teacher. But Neang, who lives in a small village in southern Cambodia, has parents who did not readily appreciate the value of education in their context. “When I saw my friends going to school I was sad that I could not join them,” Neang says. At home, her older sister would try to teach her simple lessons. Still, it was no substitute for a quality education.

Two years later, some Damnok Toek volunteers working with the Cambodian Consortium for Out of School Children (CCOSC) project, which helps vulnerable children access education, found Neang. They visited her home and spoke to her parents who relented and agreed to educate their daughter. Finally, Neang would have a chance to go to school for the first time.

She is now catching up on her class 2 studies at the Neak

Loeung Drop-In Center, a temporary-learning space where children are educated from classes 1 to 3. Neang attends enthusiastically and still wants to be a teacher, but is now considering other options too, such as training to be a doctor. “Education can help me become anything I want,” she says.

Today, Cambodia is home to more than 90,000 out of school children (OOSC) who miss out on their education, due to reasons beyond their control, such as poverty, ethnic discrimination, geographic isolation or lack of parental support. However, through the CCOSC joint project with Educate A Child (EAC) and Aide et Action (AEA), thousands of children are fulfilling their dreams.

Thanks to the EAC-AEA partnership project, more than 57,000 Cambodian OOSC will be able to enrol and participate in a full course of primary education. So far, more than 42,000

children have accessed an education due to this initiative. Some 20,000 have obtained scholarships and learning materials.

Neang’s teacher,

Nhem Saroeuth, says despite missing years of school, Neang has shown real aptitude. “She’s always smiling and ranks at the top of her class in Khmer language and maths. She has a great attitude,” Saroeuth says. “With an education, a person can go from a bad situation to doing something truly remarkable.” *Srey Neang’s name has been changed to protect her identity*