

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL



Save the Children

IKEA Foundation



## THE PROBLEM

More than half of all people with disabilities in Cambodia are under the age of twenty, which is not surprising, given Cambodia's youthful population. A national survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) in 2010 reported that over 10% of children aged 2-9 years have an impairment (especially in cognition, hearing, and speech), but this figure is thought to be widely under-reported, due in part to the fact that children's impairments are frequently not recognized or treated.

There are numerous barriers to education for children with disabilities, especially those who are poor and those living in rural areas. Children with disabilities are often stigmatized and therefore may not be encouraged or expected to go to school, participate or learn – a discriminatory attitude which is far from unusual in a society where many people believe that disabilities are a form of karmic retribution for crimes committed in a previous life. Additional barriers include physical and communication obstacles, and discriminatory attitudes

that stigmatise disabled people, and discourage them from utilising services. Local authorities, as well as service providers, lack knowledge about disability rights and issues, and about practical ways to include disabled people in their regular delivery of services, or in policy making processes. All of these barriers increase the risk of social isolation and exclusion for disabled children.

## OUR RESPONSE

To address these challenges, Save the Children, in partnership with the IKEA Foundation, the Provincial Office of Education and our local NGO partner Opérations Enfants du Cambodge, are implementing a three-year project to support children's access to education and prevent them from dropping out of school – particularly children with disabilities, those living in extreme poverty and girls. By working towards environments in which all children can be educated side by side, inclusive classrooms can provide children with the chance to truly accept and learn from each other. Studies show that inclusion is “more cost effective, and academically and socially effective, than segregated

schooling”[1]. The project targets children with disabilities and those who suffer exclusion in a manner similar to people with disabilities.

We are supporting a violence free and non-discriminatory learning environment in our eight target schools by building the capacity of the Children's Councils and training teachers in using positive discipline in their daily teaching methods. We are mobilizing support



[1] UNICEF, *Position Paper on Education for Children with Disabilities*, 2012.

from Core Parents, School Support Committees and Commune Committees for Women and Children to follow up with children's learning at school and at home. Teachers in the target schools are also being trained on how to provide extra support to children with particular learning needs.

In addition, we are also supporting the Provincial and District Office of Education to build their capacity around monitoring and implementation of non-violent discipline methods, inclusive education and the Quality Learning Environment Framework in schools. At the national level, we are leading a coalition of experts in inclusive education to develop national guidelines on positive discipline and inclusive education to be used and rolled out by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The Inclusive Education for All project supports more than 3,000 children aged 6 – 14 years to access and thrive in primary education. We also support children with physical impairments to receive rehabilitation support, provide children with scholarships, study materials and means of transport to encourage them

to attend school, succeed and develop Personalised Support Plans for all the marginalized children who participate in the project. Through working closely with School Support Committees, the project specifically increases school access for girls, who often face greater barriers in accessing education than boys.

## **PARTNERS**

Funded by the IKEA Foundation, Save the Children is implementing the project in partnership with Opérations Enfants du Cambodge, a local NGO with expertise in community mobilization and inclusive education. We are working closely with schools,

communities and children themselves to implement and monitor project activities. We are also making strides with our collaborators at the national level through working closely with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport's Special Education Department and other NGO partners to develop and roll out enhanced practical guidelines and teaching materials for children with learning disabilities.

## **TIMEFRAME**

January 2016 - December 2018





**Save the Children**

Save the Children in partnership with  
the IKEA Foundation.

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