

HIV & AIDS in the Education Sector in Cambodia

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Royal Government of Cambodia.
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.
Interdepartmental Committee for HIV & AIDS (ICHA)

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**Facts, Figures and Notes on the National
Response**

**Fact
Sheet: 1
2007**

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Introduction

As in many other South East Asian countries, HIV/AIDS is a major concern for Cambodia.

This ICHA Fact Sheet (#1) aims at briefly describing who the Ministry is responding to the *HIV & AIDS* epidemic and highlights some of the key lessons we learned and wish to share with colleagues.

While the country has recovered from the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979) and from the tragedy of losing up to 3 million children, women and men in the “killing fields”, Cambodia is still engaged towards mobilizing resources to rebuild and strengthen its society, including through providing adequate education and health services to its population.

Despite the fact that the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate has dropped from 2.1% (2002) to 0.9% (2007), Cambodia prevalence rate is still among the highest in the region. More worrying, the economic growth of the country, the population migration and the new consumer behaviors that the economic development is generating are increasingly putting the young Cambodian population at risk.

As a key actor of the “National Response to HIV/AIDS”, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has been implementing since 1999 an HIV/AIDS programme that aims at protecting and preventing students, the out-of-school Cambodian youth and the MoEYS labour force from being infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Developing policies, setting systems, mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the Education sector, integrating HIV/AIDS in the national curriculum, training pre- and in-service teachers and education officers are therefore among the top priorities of the Ministry’s Interdepartmental Committee on HIV/AIDS (ICHA).

Thanks to the support of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), UN Agencies and other development partners, ICHA is now, considerably strengthened and recognized for its experience in “mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the education sector”. I am therefore grateful to Mr. Patrick Duong, the DFID/UNDP Advisor to the Ministry and the ICHA Secretariat, for having prepared these series of fact sheets which primarily aims at giving an overview on the Ministry’s HIV/AIDS programme and share information and practices.

His Excellency, Im Sethy
Secretary of State
Chairperson of ICHA
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector in Cambodia

1. Cambodia Profile:

Cambodia is situated in the Southeast Asia neighboring Vietnam to the east, Thailand and Laos to the north, Thailand to the west and a short coastline to the south. It has an area of 181,035 square kilometers and a population of approximately 13 million (Census in 1998: 11.4 million, of which there are almost 6 million female), spread out over 24 provinces with the capital Phnom Penh situated in the mid-south of the country. Almost 85 percent of the population live in the rural areas earning their living from agricultural industries, like rice farming, market vegetable, fishing and a handful of them earn from agro-industry.



Primary school children in Siam Reap where a HIV/AIDS awareness programme is implemented.

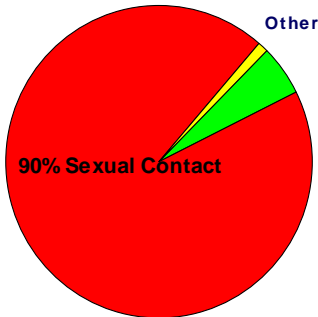
2. HIV/AIDS Data on Cambodia:

(Data from the National Aids Authority (NAA) and the Ministry of Health, NCHADS, 2005)

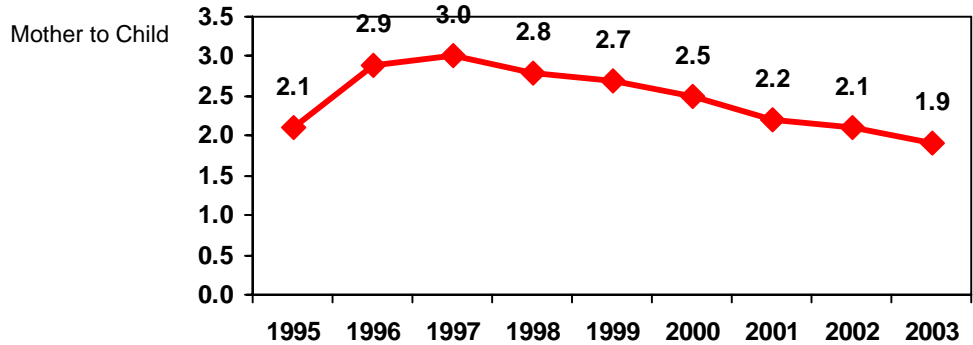
Cambodia has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the region, yet its decade-long response to HIV and AIDS has been comparatively strong and effective. In the years since HIV was first detected in Cambodia, many thousands of people have died of AIDS-related illnesses and many more have been emotionally and financially affected. Yet, there are successes within this story. Prevention campaigns amongst selected high-risk populations have proven highly effective. Cambodia is now one of the few countries in the world that has demonstrably reversed the HIV/AIDS epidemic, as shown in the declining prevalence rate among adults, reduced by a third. Between 1997 and 2003 the prevalence of HIV in the adult population fell from 3.0% to 1.9%. (Note: The rate has dropped to 0.9-2007).

(NAA, 2006).

HIV Transmission mechanisms



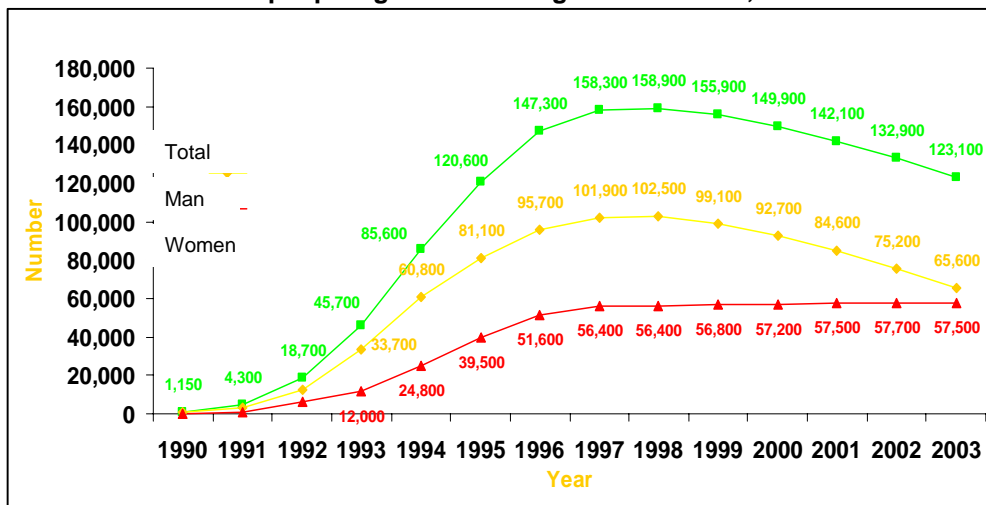
Estimated HIV Prevalence (in %)* among adults aged 15-49, 1995-2003 (* from the modeled number of PLHA)



3. Why is HIV/AIDS such an important problem in Cambodia?

- Cambodia is still recovering from a tragic history when it lost millions of its people and most of its intellectuals,
- It is still the country with one of the highest prevalent HIV/AIDS rate in the region (0.9%),
- 50% of the population is less than 20 years old,
- The Cambodia society is moving from a traditional society to a consumer society with new risks and temptations,
- 123,100 Cambodian are living with HIV/AIDS (7,300 are less than 14 years old),
- About 30% of the population over 15 years old is illiterate and a large part of the population does not have access to information on HIV/AIDS (57% of the girls over 15 years old are illiterate),
- Depending on the season, there are between 10,000 to 23,000 street children in Phnom Penh (15% of whom could be HIV Positive),
- About 58% of the girls drop out of school after grade 5 (57% for the boys).

Estimated number of people aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS, 1990-2003:



4. HIV/AIDS is a priority for the Royal Government of Cambodia:

HIV/AIDS does not only affect the health of individuals but also seriously undermines and threatens the fabric and institutions of families, communities, and nations. In this respect, HIV/AIDS is increasingly viewed in terms of its impact on national and international development and its potential for increasing poverty.

HIV/AIDS is therefore a key priority¹ for the Government of Cambodia and for its Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS). In view of the recent tragic history of Cambodia, the country must today, continue to concentrate its efforts on rebuilding the society and ensuring proper education and health services to its population².

In this context, the resources mobilized for HIV/AIDS directly contribute to development and poverty reduction strategies with a direct impact on other MDGs (Poverty, Gender, Child mortality, etc).



Cambodian female secondary students participating in a peer education programme.

Article 3 of the National Law on HIV/AIDS, states the MoEYS responsibilities:

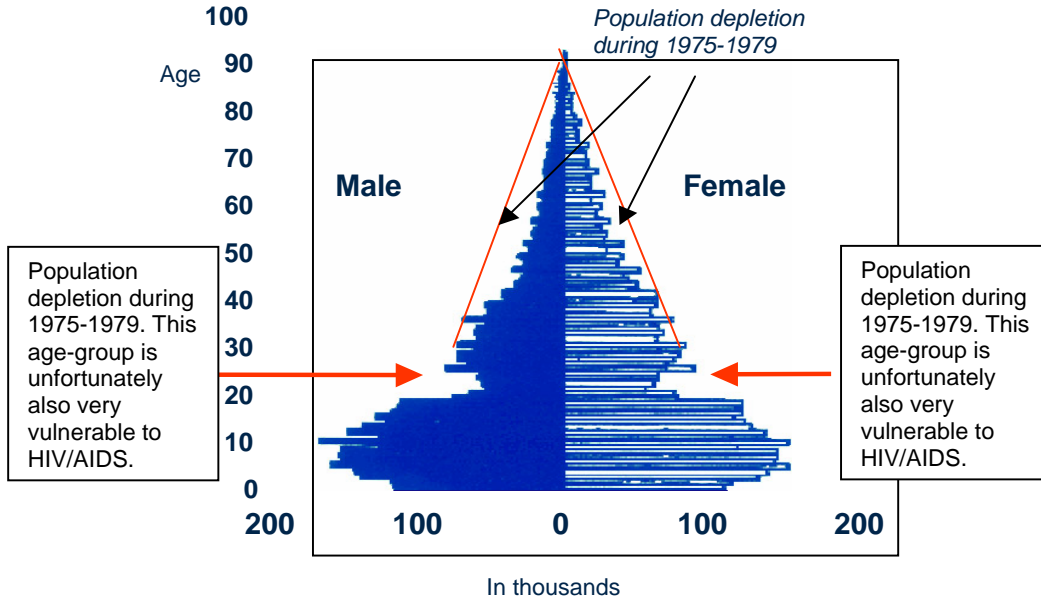
- Integrate HIV/AIDS education in the school curriculum;
- Provide preventive education program for in and Out-of-School Youth;
- Train teachers as resource persons;
- Cooperate with the civil society and NGOs.

¹ Cambodian Law on HIV/AIDS and National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2006-2010)

² Ref: Cambodian MDGs, PRSP and the Rectangular Strategy of the Royal Government.

Population Impact (NAA, October 2001)

This diagram shows the HIV/AIDS vulnerability of the already considerably affected 20-30 age-group.



The overall goals of the Cambodian National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2006–2010:

- To reduce new infections of HIV;
- To provide care and support to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS;
- To alleviate the socio-economic and human impact of AIDS on the individual, family, community, and society.

An HIV/AIDS poster distributed in Cambodian primary and secondary schools.



5. HIV/AIDS and the Education Sector:

The Cambodian education sector remains fragile and needs to be strengthened (during the Khmer Rouge regime most of Cambodian teachers were killed and the schools destroyed). On the other hand, with an extremely large young population, the Cambodian youth (students and out-of-school youth) is increasingly exposed to HIV/AIDS and to new social and contemporary temptations and risks³.



A Participatory Process Evaluation to assess the different sources of information on HIV/AIDS.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) is responsible for providing education services for the entire country to over 3,500,000 students. As one of the largest civilian Ministry of Cambodia, the MoEYS is administrating half of the Cambodian civil servants (120,000 staff) and over 6,000 public schools. Given the latest Cambodian prevalent rate, 2,000 MoEYS employees (teaching and non-teaching staff) could be HIV positive.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has in this context decided to implement a HIV/AIDS preventive education programme⁴ to deliver HIV/AIDS education in public schools as well as reaching out to the most vulnerable children who do not yet have access to regular education. In addition, the Ministry is increasingly mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector and in 15 of its own departments (see following pages).

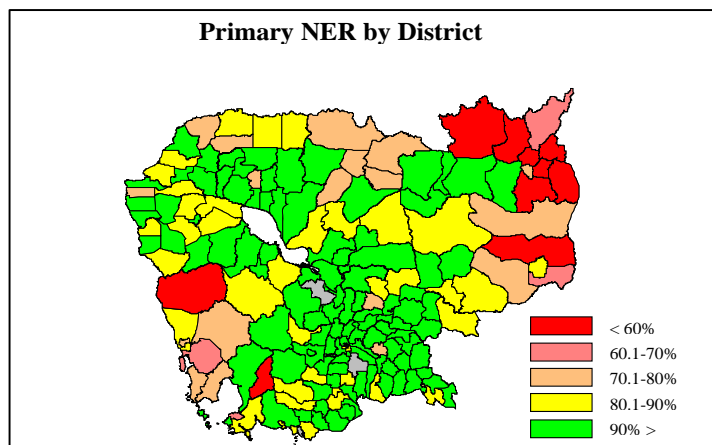
³ Ref: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, MoEYS and UNICEF, 2005.

⁴ The National Law on HIV/AIDS mentions in its Article 3 that MoEYS is responsible for:

- Integrating HIV/AIDS education in the school curriculum;
- Focusing on In and Out-of-School Youth;
- Training Teachers as resource persons;
- Cooperating with the civil society and NGOs.

MoEYS General policy:

- To universalize 9 years of basic education and developing opportunities for functional literacy.
- To modernize and improve the quality of education through effective reforms
- To link education and training with the labour market and the society
- To rehabilitate and develop the youth and Sport sub-sectors.



Still 180,000 primary school-age children (60% of girls) are out-of-school

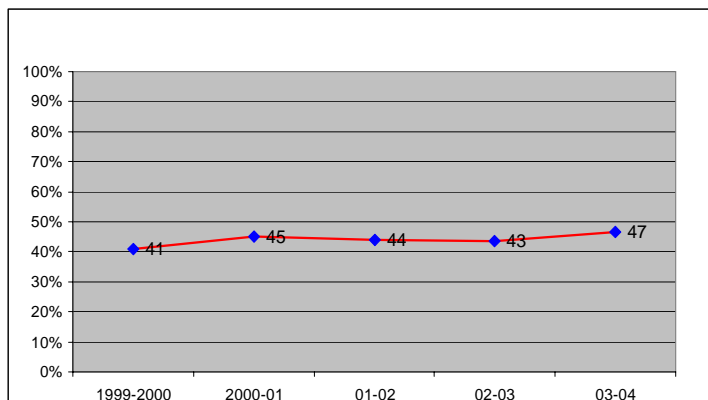
(MoEYS, EMIS, 2005)

6. Why is it important for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to fight HIV/AIDS?

- The Ministry is responsible for providing education to the Cambodian youth (formal and non-formal education),
- The Ministry is the main governmental institution that can implement a youth Preventive education programme at the national level,
- The Ministry has the responsibility to protect and preserve its labor force (120,000 teachers/staff) from being infected by HIV,
- The HIV/AIDS programme gives the opportunity to develop new management tools, new teaching methodologies and to address sensitive topics such as reproductive health and drug abuses.

Less than half of children complete the 6-year primary cycle

(MoEYS, EMIS, 2005)



Overarching Policies of the Education Sector (from ESP 2006–2010):

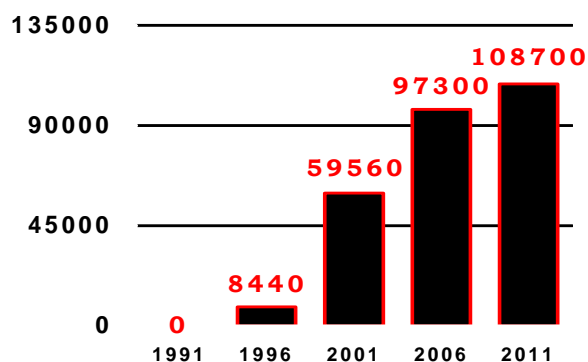
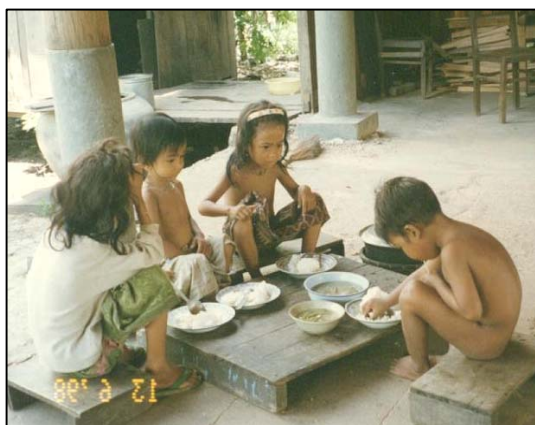
The MoEYS vision is to establish and develop human resources of the very highest quality and ethics in order to develop a knowledge-based society within Cambodia.

The MoEYS mission: In order to achieve the above vision, MoEYS has the mission of leading, managing and developing the Education, Youth and Sport sector in Cambodia in responding to the socio-economic and cultural development need.

The Ministry's long-term mission is to ensure that all Cambodian children and youth have equal opportunity to access to quality education consistent with the Constitution and the Royal Government's commitment to the U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child, regardless of social status, geography, ethnicity, religion, language, gender and physical form. The Ministry envisages a time when graduates from all its institutions will meet international and regional standards and will be competitive in the job markets worldwide and act as engines for social and economic development in Cambodia. An overarching objective of the MoEYS is to place the holistic development of Cambodia's effective young people for all sectors. In addition, the Ministry intends to engender a sense of national and civic pride, high standards of morals and ethics and a strong belief in being responsible for the country and the citizens.

7. What are the consequences for the Cambodian Education Sector if HIV/AIDS infections increase?

- The enrolment rates will fall (girls being more affected),
- The number of trained and skilled teachers will decrease,
- Drop outs will increase as children will need to take care of families,
- The financial resources allocated to the Education Sector might be redirected to cover health and care support (and quality of education decrease).



Estimated number of children becoming orphans due to AIDS (NCHADS, 2005)

8. How is the Ministry organized to respond to HIV/AIDS?

The Ministry has established the Interdepartmental Committee on HIV/AIDS (ICHA) as a coordination structure to mainstream HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector. The Committee is chaired by the MoEYS Secretary of State and comprises 15 Departments and Institutes. The Ministry HIV has an HIV Strategic Plan (2008-2012) and recently developed a Workplace Policy on HIV.

Its annual budget is approximately USD 2,3 million (in 2007). ICHA receives its main support from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and from UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNDP and other development agencies (see box below). From 2008, the Ministry's HIV programme will further be strengthened with support of the World Bank, the European Union and the ADB. ICHA closely cooperates with international and local NGOs and coordinates its programme activities with the National AIDS Authority (NAA), other line Ministries and the Donor community.



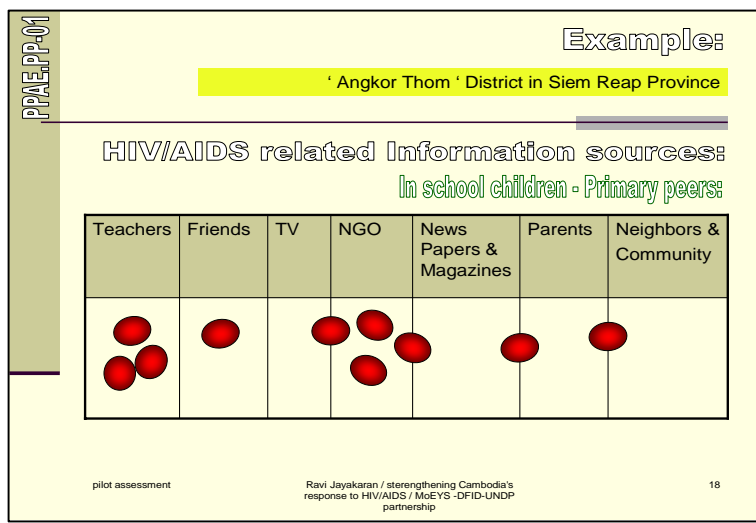
HIV/AIDS Textbooks and IEC tools produced by MoEYS-ICHA



Strengthening Cambodia's Response to HIV/AIDS (SCRH) is a 5-year multi-sectoral programme developed and funded by **DFID** (and managed by UNDP) to support the efforts of the Royal Government of Cambodia in preventing and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS. The SCRH Program supports the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), the National AIDS Authority (**NAA**), the National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STDs (**NCHADS**), and the **BBC World Service Trust**. A budget of **USD 5 million** is allocated to MoEYS which also receives the assistance of an international **Advisor**. (Note the programme ended in December 2007)

9. ICHA's top objectives:

- Develop policies and systems to increase the Ministry's capacity to respond to HIV/AIDS and reduce its impact on the Education sector,
- Nation-wide preventive education programme for Cambodian students and out-of-school youth (approx. 6 million),
- Train and raise awareness of MoEYS employees on prevention,
- Reduce stigma and discrimination (include support to vulnerable children),
- Progressively address sensitive topics and issues (Reproductive health, Drugs, Street children⁵),
- Develop curriculum, manuals and train teachers on how to teach HIV/AIDS (and other related topics) in public schools and non-formal educational settings.



Sources of information on HIV/AIDS (Primary students)
One red seed = 10%

(Extract from the Participatory Process Assessment & Evaluation (Ten Seeds Technique) used by MoEYS, 2006)

Actors of "Taste of Life" a famous TV series on HIV/AIDS produced in Cambodia with the support of DFID and the BBC WST.



⁵ Depending on the season, there are between 10,000 to 23,000 Street Children in Phnom Penh (15% of them could be HIV Positive and 80% using drugs).

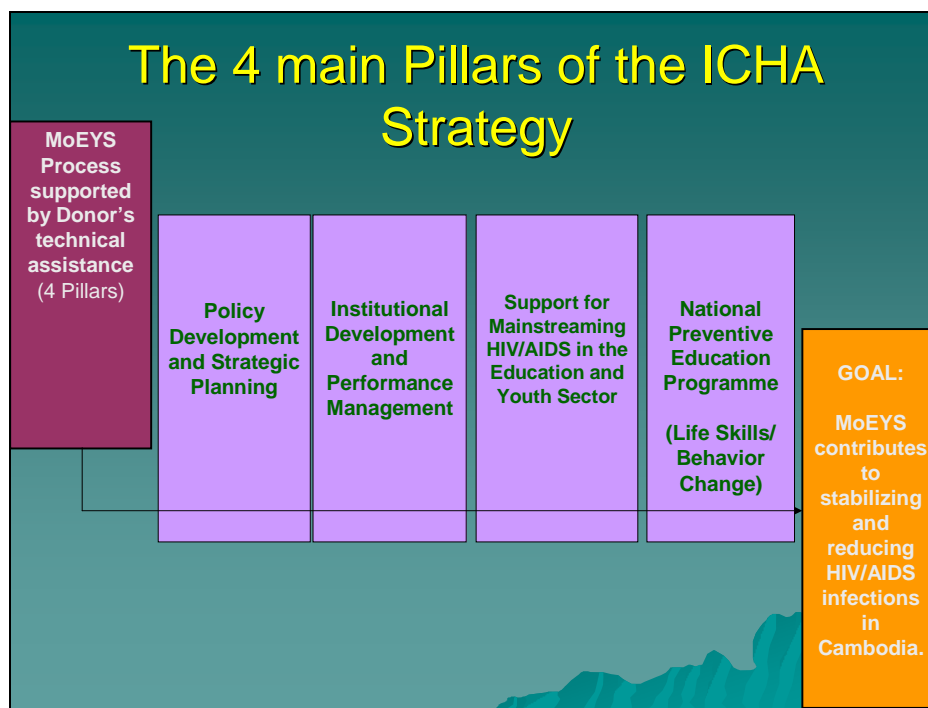
Example of Mainstreaming Activities in Cambodia:

- Develop and implement an **HIV/AIDS Strategy** in support to the National HIV/AIDS Strategy of the Royal Government,
- MoEYS is the first Cambodian Ministry to adopt a **HIV Workplace Policy**.
- Strengthen the Ministry's **capacity to plan, implement and monitor** HIV/AIDS programmes,
- Enhance the Ministry's capacity to **manage funds**, procure goods and services, encourage staff performance and cooperate with NGOs and other key partners,
- Integrate HIV/AIDS (and other related topics such as Reproductive health and drugs) in the **National curriculum** and in the **Education Strategic Plans**,
- Integrate **HIV/AIDS in the annual work plans** and objectives of MoEYS Departments at the central and local levels,
- Develop comprehensive **HIV/AIDS Curriculum, Manuals and IEC tools** (developed locally in respect of the socio-cultural norms of Cambodia),
- **Train Pre- and In-Service teachers** on HIV/AIDS and encourage them to integrate HIV/AIDS in the regular classes,
- Develop HIV/AIDS education programs for **Out-of-School youth**,
- Raise awareness of MoEYS teaching and non-teaching **staff**,
- Develop **Sport and Youth** HIV/AIDS awareness activities,
- Produce **TV and Radio spots**.



An HIV/AIDS refresher course organized (in a pagoda) by contracted NGOs for Provincial and District Education Officers.

10. The 4 Pillars of the Ministry's HIV/AIDS Strategy:



- **Pillar 1:** Policy Development and Strategic Planning: The objective of this first component is to ensure that HIV/AIDS (and other related topics) remains a priority for the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and that relevant strategies and goals are set up.
- **Pillar 2:** Under second pillar, institutional development, capacity building and training activities are organized to strengthen the Ministry's capacity to plan, implement and monitor HIV/AIDS programmes. Financial management, Procurement, Human resource management and Merit-based incentive schemes are also addressed under this component.
- **Pillar 3:** This third component aims at mainstreaming HIV/AIDS across the MoEYS. It mainly focuses on integrating HIV/AIDS in the national curriculum, training pre and in-service teachers, developing curriculum and IECs, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation.
- **Pillar 4:** This last pillar supports the planning and implementation of the National "Life Skills for HIV/AIDS Education Programme" that targets the Cambodian youth (In-School and Out-of-School Youth, approximately 6 million).

11. Overview of “Policy Development and Strategic planning”:

HIV/AIDS is a key priority for the Royal Government of Cambodia and for its Ministry of Education Youth and Sport. Education and Health are therefore essential pillars of the Government strategic development plans (eg: CMDG, Rectangular Strategy and the National Strategic Plan for Poverty Reduction). The national response to HIV/AIDS is outlined in the National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS 2006-2010 (NSPII). The National Strategic Plan was developed with broad participation from government and development partners, including the MoEYS. Targets sets in the NSPII are also reflected in the overarching national development goals outlined in the National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010 and the Public Investment Programme (PIP), established to meet the Cambodian Millennium Development Goals (CMDGs). The Ministry recently adopted its 2008-2012 HIV Strategic Plan and developed an HIV Workplace Policy.



An HIV/AIDS training for Secondary Peer educators.

In this context, one of the main responsibilities of ICHA is to assist the Ministry in planning, designing and coordinating HIV/AIDS strategies and policies that contribute to the national HIV/AIDS response and to the Government’s objectives related to access and quality of education (see previous pages). As a result, HIV/AIDS has since 2001 been referred to as a key cross-cutting priority in the Education Strategic Plans (2001-2005 and 2006-2010) and in the annual Education Sector Support Programme (ESSPs). At the Curriculum level, HIV/AIDS is now integrated as a regular topic in primary, secondary schools and in non-formal education settings and is part of the pre and in-service teacher’s training programmes. Finally (see next page), ICHA is mainstreaming HIV/AIDS activities in Departmental programmes and work plans.

12. Overview of the “National Preventive Education Programme (Life Skills and Behavior Changes)”:

As earlier mentioned, one of the main MoEYS priority is to provide HIV/AIDS education to the in- and out-of-school Cambodian youth. The Ministry has therefore designed and is currently implementing a national “Life Skills for HIV/AIDS Education Programme” that aims at teaching

(classroom teaching and peer education) the necessary information, knowledge and skills for the Cambodian youth to prevent and protect themselves from being infected by HIV/AIDS. The programme also addresses stigma and discriminations as well as other HIV/AIDS related topics such as reproductive health and drug abuses. The programme is designed in respect of the socio-cultural norms of Cambodia and tailored to the age and skills of the beneficiaries.



Cambodian secondary male students are priority groups for the Ministry's HIV/AIDS Programme.

The “Life Skills for HIV/AIDS Education Programme” is implemented by contracted NGOs, in primary, secondary schools, as well as in communes and villages with out-of-school youth and community representatives. In addition a specific programme is designed to address the Street Children of Phnom Penh who are increasingly at high risk. From 2008 the MoEYS has decided to integrate this programme as part of the MoEYS the Local Life Skills Policy which is mainly supported by the national budget.

13. Overview of “Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS activities”:

In addition to the Behavior Change component, the Ministry considers that mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the Education Sector is essential to sustain HIV/AIDS education programmes and activities. The Ministry therefore established, in 1999, the Interdepartmental Committee on HIV/AIDS, ICHA (see Part I) to develop HIV/AIDS policies and coordinate the HIV/AIDS activities of the 15 MoEYS Departments and Institutes. Strategic plans, Annual work plans, Curriculum development, Pre and In-Service teacher trainings, IEC developments, Production of TV/Radio spots and organization of special HIV/AIDS youth and sports actions are among the mainstreaming activities carried out by the Ministry, at the central, provincial and district levels. In addition, MoEYS staffs participate in a range of awareness programmes (including the UNDP Leadership for Development Programme).

14. Overview of “Institutional Development and Capacity Building”:

Institutional development and Capacity building is another key priority for ICHA. This component is considered as the “backbone” of ICHA to ensure that the Ministry has the capacity, systems and skills to plan, implement and monitor its HIV/AIDS programme. With the support of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies, the Ministry has conducted a functional task analysis to reorganize its Interdepartmental Committee for HIV/AIDS (ICHA) and is implementing (with the assistance of DFID) an Output Based Incentive (OBI) scheme (see below) that aims at increasing staff performance and encouraging changes in working methods.

Financial management and Procurement regulations were also introduced to strengthen the Ministry’s capacity to manage donor budgets and to allocate funds to departments. Regular capacity building and training activities are also provided to the Ministry staff at the central and local levels.



A special training session for female pre-service teachers.

15. Overview on “Monitoring and Evaluation”:

As a key cross-cutting issue, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is entirely integrated in the HIV/AIDS Ministry’s programme. The MoEYS M&E system addresses both Process and Impact(s).

The Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, has opted for a combination of quantitative and qualitative/participatory approaches. This dual system allows focusing on implementation and quality of processes/operations, as well as on end results. In addition, while a centralized system was required in the early phase, the Ministry is now moving towards greater decentralization and involvement of local authorities. Cooperation with local actors (community leaders, pagodas, youth groups, etc) and NGOs is therefore essential.

16. Overview on the “Output Based Incentive” scheme (OBI):

The MoEYS, with the support of DFID has introduced an Output Based Incentive Scheme (OBI) that aims at improving staff performances, change working methods as well as prevents MoEYS civil servants from resigning for other better remunerated activities.

The principal objectives of the MoEYS scheme are to:

- Encourage the effective implementation of the MoEYS HIV/AIDS programme
- Stimulate new ways of working that recognize the need for good performance
- Reward those who deliver outputs according to the level at which these are achieved

The scheme provides performance incentives to three groups of staff within the MoEYS who have responsibility for delivering the HIV/AIDS programme overseen by the Ministry’s Interdepartmental Committee for HIV/AIDS. For each group of staff there is a separate set of performance indicators against which a score is given according to the extent to which these have been met. This score determines the level of payment to be made. Levels of payment are also linked to the proportion of time that individual members of staff spend on ICHA-related duties and to their seniority.



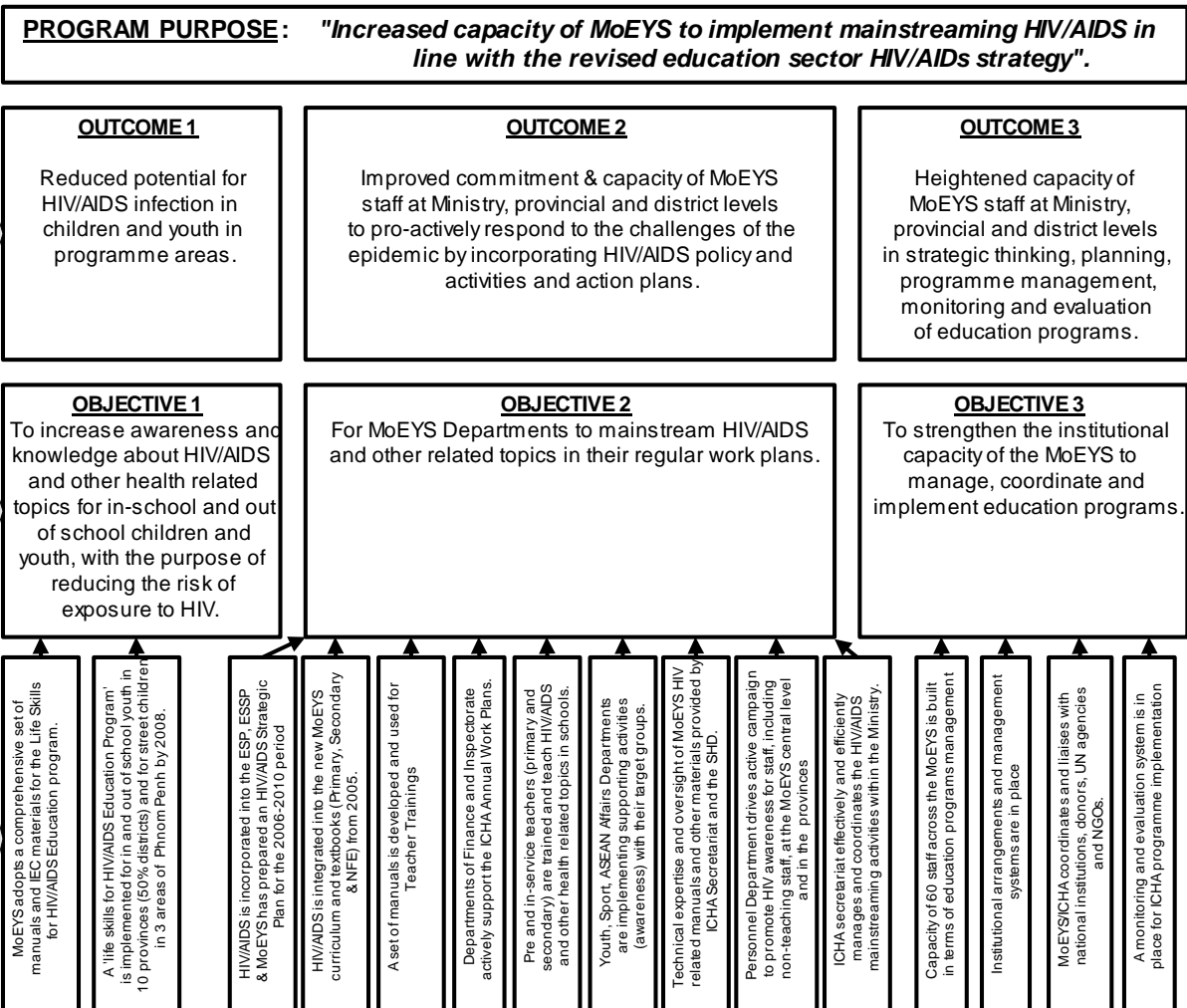
HIV/AIDS activities organized by MoEYS staff with community and village leaders.

17. What has the Ministry recently achieved?

- Adopted its HIV Strategic Plan (2008-2012)
- The new Curriculum Framework now integrates HIV/AIDS topics in grade 6, 7, 8 and 9,
- A Life Skills policy is developed,
- A HIV Workplace Policy is developed
- HIV/AIDS are part of the new Students Performance Minimum Standards,
- HIV/AIDS is integrated in the National Examination plans,

- All pre-service teachers attend a 5-day training on HIV/AIDS,
- In-service teachers are progressively trained on HIV/AIDS,
- HIV/AIDS Manuals and IEC tools are developed,
- The “Life Skills for HIV/AIDS Education Programme” is launched in 7 provinces,
- The Ministry is reaching out to Out-of-school youth and to Street Children,
- HIV/AIDS related topics (such as Reproductive Health, drugs) are integrated in the programme,
- Cambodia is one of the 4 Countries selected for a first round of activities with the “UN Global Initiative for HIV/AIDS Education”.
- The DFID Monitoring and Advisory Team has suggested that the model and experience of MoEYS in the area of HIV/AIDS be used for other line Ministries or in other countries (Output to Purpose Review mission, October 2005).

PROGRAMME'S LOGFRAME:



The statement at this level describes the "long-term outcome" that the program is seeking to achieve, or the "result"

The statement at this level describes how the "long-term outcome" above will be achieved, the work that will be undertaken to get the result wanted.

These statements at this level describe actual things that have been done that will lead to the achievement of objective above.

Main abbreviations used:

BTC: Belgium Technical Cooperation
CBE: Cambodian Basic Education (USAID/RTI Project)
DGAT: Director General for Administration and Finance
DGE: Director General for Education
DoE: District Office for Education
DoF: Department of Finance
DPE: Department of Primary Education
DSE: Department of Secondary Education
ESP: Education Strategy Plan
ESSP: Education Sector Support Programme
ICHA: Interdepartmental Committee for HIV/AIDS
IEC: Information, Education and Communication
LDP: Leadership Development Programme
MAT: Monitoring and Advisory Team (DFID)
MoEYS: Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation
NFE: Department of non-formal education
NIE: National Institute of Education
OBI: Output Incentive Scheme
OVC: Orphans and vulnerable children
PAB: Performance Assessment Board
PB: Policy Board
PoE: Provincial Office for Education
PPAE; Participatory Process Assessment and Evaluation
PRD: Department of Pedagogical Research
RGoC: Royal Government of Cambodia
RH: Reproductive health
SC: Steering Committee meeting
SCRH: Strengthening Cambodia's Response to HIV/AIDS Programme
SHD: Department of School Health
ST-TA: Short term Technical Advisor
TA: Technical Advisor
TTD: Department of Teacher Training