

External Mid-Term Evaluation

"Improving Child Rights and Enhancing Education for Children (ICREEC)"

ABBREVIATION

CC	Commune Council
CCWC	Commune Council for woman and Children
ChC	Child Club
CFS	Child Friendly School
CLC-A	child learning centered approach
CR/ CP	Child Rights/ Child Protection
DCWC	District Council for Woman and Children
DOE	District Office of Education Youth and Sport
DTMT	District Technical Monitoring Team
KHEN	Khmer NGO for Education
MoEYS	Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
POE	Provincial Office of Education
SSC	School Support Committee

Executive Summary extracted from document Mid Project Evaluation "Improving Child Rights and Enhancing Education for Children" prepared by Consultants Nuy Bora and Ouk Sothira in Battambang, Cambodia, in July 2016.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This study is commissioned to evaluate the One Mid-line Assessment of the Project No 1566 “Improving Child Rights and Enhancing Education for Children (ICREEC)” implemented by KHEN, as Educo’s project partner in 25 target schools (14 state primary schools, 7 community primary schools and 4 preschools) within 5 school clusters in Samlout (SL) district, Battambang province. The project has overall objective as ‘For children and their communities in the outreach areas of Battambang, to value, participate in and actively support & advocate for education and other Child Rights. The purpose of this consultancy is to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its expected results and generate lessons on the experiences of the project. The results of this evaluation will also help formulate a redesign of a new project and partnership arrangements. It assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project. It was conducted in late April 2016, used a mixture of methods and information sources, including a document review, interviews with local actors (school directors, teachers, SSC, SC, parents, CC) and focus group discussion and key individual interviews with beneficiaries from 4 clusters covering 17 primary schools as summarized in Table 2 and local partners (PoE, DoE).

KEY FINDINGS

Relevance:

The choice local partners, in particular the POE/ DOE and DCWC as KHEN’s partners in providing capacity building and monitoring with technical support to local actor including school directors, teachers, SC, SSC is highly relevant because it is aligned with their respective mandate in improving educational standard and promoting CR/ CP. Some training to local actors is highly relevant if they could be adapted to pre-training assessment with more practical oriented at target schools and communities and followed by action taken post training. The establishment of SSC is more relevant if gender could be promoted among each committee and its roles and responsibilities are aligned with the guiding from the MoEYS. Although the project design and log-frame are available, but all result indicators are not attached to the definition and some of them are not realistic and consistency with specific objectives as summarized in Table 5. The indicators of result 5.1 and 5.2 are not consistency with the specific objective 5 related to ‘build KHEN’s capacity in applying RBA’. In addition, the part of institutional development of KHEN was not included in the log-frame.

Effectiveness:

Almost indicators of results and specific objectives 1, 2 and 5 related to enrolment rate and promotion of eligible, are achieved or on track to achieve by the majority of schools during the mid-project period, except the indicators of Result and specific objective 3 and 4 related to school management, functioning of SSC and safe learning environment. Although the teaching technique through CLC-A is highly satisfied among students (100%) and teachers (43%), and could promote promotion rate over the expected results but there was no any consideration for special intervention to help slow learners whom were found about 62% of retained students (Average score 52% and below average 10%). In addition, the lack of guiding on how to calculate the enrolment rate of eligible children and lack of household mapping to identify out of school children led to missing this data and during the period. School management assessment is not indicating any progress due to lack of periodic self-assessment by school directors and monitoring

support by DTMT during the course. SSC at 11 target schools could not well function due to lack of promoting gender, lack of support to life skills and developing household map for promoting school enrolment. On the other hand, the wide range of roles and responsibilities of SSC might cause to low performance achievement.

Efficiency:

- The competency and performance of POE/ DOE as KHEN's local partners was seen as training providers and inspectors (monitoring follow up) with technical support to local actors in particular school directors and teachers. POE/ DOE in collaboration with KHEN, could provide a wide range of training, monitoring and technical support to local actors in particular to teachers, school directors. The training would be highly efficient if POE/ DOE could upgrade their competency in providing training with more practical oriented at schools and communities post training. Although POE/ DOE's field monitoring report was available but it more beneficial to have feedback with specific objective and target schools to ensure action follow up post monitoring. The assessment of school management and functioning of SSC could not conduct in some schools due to lack of guiding on the assessment of two schools (primary school and preschool) having the same director or SSC. The SSC self-assessment tool developed by KHEN and DOE indicates too many roles and responsibilities of SSC that did not help them to understand about their 7 key roles and responsibilities according to the MoEYS guideline. The tool also absences of roles and responsibilities of SSC in monitoring and holding monthly/ semester/ yearly meetings to discuss on attendance and absenteeism of school director, teachers and students for contributing to the improvement of school management and governance. Although the CR/ CP awareness and promotion were improved, but only 3 communities were reported free of violence and child abused was reported at all target schools. In addition, the schools and communes' CP system standard and KHEN's RBA organization show some inconsistency in practice due to absence of defining glossaries and guidelines. The partnership between POE/ DOE and KHEN is more advantage if the accountability in sharing field monitoring report of POE/ DOE is promoted.

-The competency and performance of KHEN as project implementer was seen a lot of effort in promoting local ownership and high-level participation of POE/ DOE in the project log-frame development. However, it is more beneficial if KHEN could consider the followings:

- o To get involve project team together with local partners and actors to review and update the result indicators that were not clearly defined and understood as well as to define the concept framework on schools and communes' CP system standard and KHEN's RBA.
- o To maintain periodic reports with more focus on result indicators rather than just activities and based on the database system (DBS).

Sustainability:

The project demonstrates a mixed approach in ensuring the sustainability of its outcomes of the RBA by the competency of local actors as DB in direct in the provision of CFS services integrating CR/CP promotion as well as the competency of ChC and children as RH to demand their rights. It also includes the outcomes of the support from local partners in fulfilling their mandates as training providers, inspectors, and technical supporters to local actors. It is therefore more advantage if the capacity of POE/ DOE could be upgraded in providing training to local actors with more practical oriented post training and maintain regular monitoring of DTMT using report template in according to the new reform of school inspection

guiding by the MoEYS. The collaboration between SSC, teachers and CCWC in conducting awareness raising and promoting CR/ CP, was highly advantage in promoting ownership of CCWC in fulfilling its mandate. Although the readiness assessment developed by KHEN is available, but it is advantage for KHEN to apply the tool during the mid-term of the project to enable KHEN have appropriate work plan to support each target school, this would be considered as a great tools for KHEN itself to withdraw from the target schools. It would be more beneficial to have a clear phase of withdrawal strategy to be agreed with local actors and partners since the beginning of the project.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT PROJECT PHASE

The followings are the key recommendations derived from the key findings and conclusion:

- a) KHEN should define its withdrawal strategy to be agreed together with local actors and partners at the mid-term project. It ensures local actors and partners to be aware and prepare its readiness to be withdraw through different phases (building up, consolidation, and phase over). The existing readiness assessment tool could be used to assess in each phase of withdrawal strategy to be able to decide the position of KHEN in supporting to the actual situation of each target school.
- b) Training to local actors should be based on the TNA, and aligned with the withdrawal strategy, RBA and CP system standard with more practical oriented at target schools and communities post training.
- c) Project log-frame should be revised for the next mid-term project phase and should be in both Khmer and English version and participated by all stakeholders at different level: join decision by field project team and local partners; be consulted at local actor's level; be informed at communities (parents) level. The log-frame should follow the EC standard including glossaries for all key result indicators, guiding of CP system standard, concept of RBA organization, institutional development and consistent to the withdrawal strategy plan of KHEN and sustainable development plan of local partners and actors.
- d) Communication channel between KHEN with local actors and partners should be reinforced the accountability of local partners and actors in providing the report with consideration of decentralization policy within the MoEYS.
- e) DTMT inspection, monitoring, follow up and technical support should be reinforced by maintaining regular monitoring with notice 3 days giving to schools and in consistency with the new policy of MoEYS on school inspection. The monitoring report should be available at the end of the visit within the same day using existing template of MoEYS. It is more significant to revise and replace the section "Suggestion" by "Join decision action follow up". The monitoring report should be available in soft copy and accessible at the website of both KHEN. OK
- f) The field monitoring by KHEN's project and program teams should be redefined in consistency with different phases of KHEN's withdrawal strategy with practical field monitoring report. The periodic report (monthly, quarterly and annually) at program level should be maintained and based on the database system (DBS) developed and recorded at project level. These periodic reports and database should be accessible in the website of KHEN.
- g) School governance, management and fundraising should be part of school development plan should be participated by communities/ parents (be consulted) director, teachers, ChC, SSC (join decision). School planning and budgeting should be coached not limit to the availability of PB and fund support from KHEN,

but should be addressed to the needs of CFS and CR/ CP awareness and promotion. Transparency of all incomes and expenditures on school activities among all stakeholders and feedback mechanism from teachers, SC, SSC and parents on school achievements and performance contribute to good governance and efficiency fundraising.

h) SSC's roles and responsibilities should be revised and based on the 7 key roles and responsibilities guided by MoEYS, in particular SSC' roles in monitoring and holding monthly/ semester/ yearly meetings to discuss on attendance and absenteeism of school director, teachers and students for contributing to the improvement of school management and governance. It is significant to identify these key roles to enable encourage SSC to successfully perform their tasks in each phase of withdrawal strategy and to avoid providing a wide range of activities to this volunteer team resulting to low performance assessment at the end of each period.

i) Monitoring and technical support from school directors and TGL should be reinforced to encourage teachers applying teaching and learning method by using CLC-A and followed by a report using the format from the MoEYS. School database should be available in soft copy and accessible at POE and KHEN's website. School DBS should be developed and maintained both out of school children and in school children as suggested in Annex 2 and Annex 3.

j) School management Team should consult with DOE, CCWC, communities and parents to identify appropriate intervention to support slow learners. The community after school tutoring (CAST) for slow learners facilitated by volunteer outstanding students (VOS) is recommended to share with SIPAR's experience.