

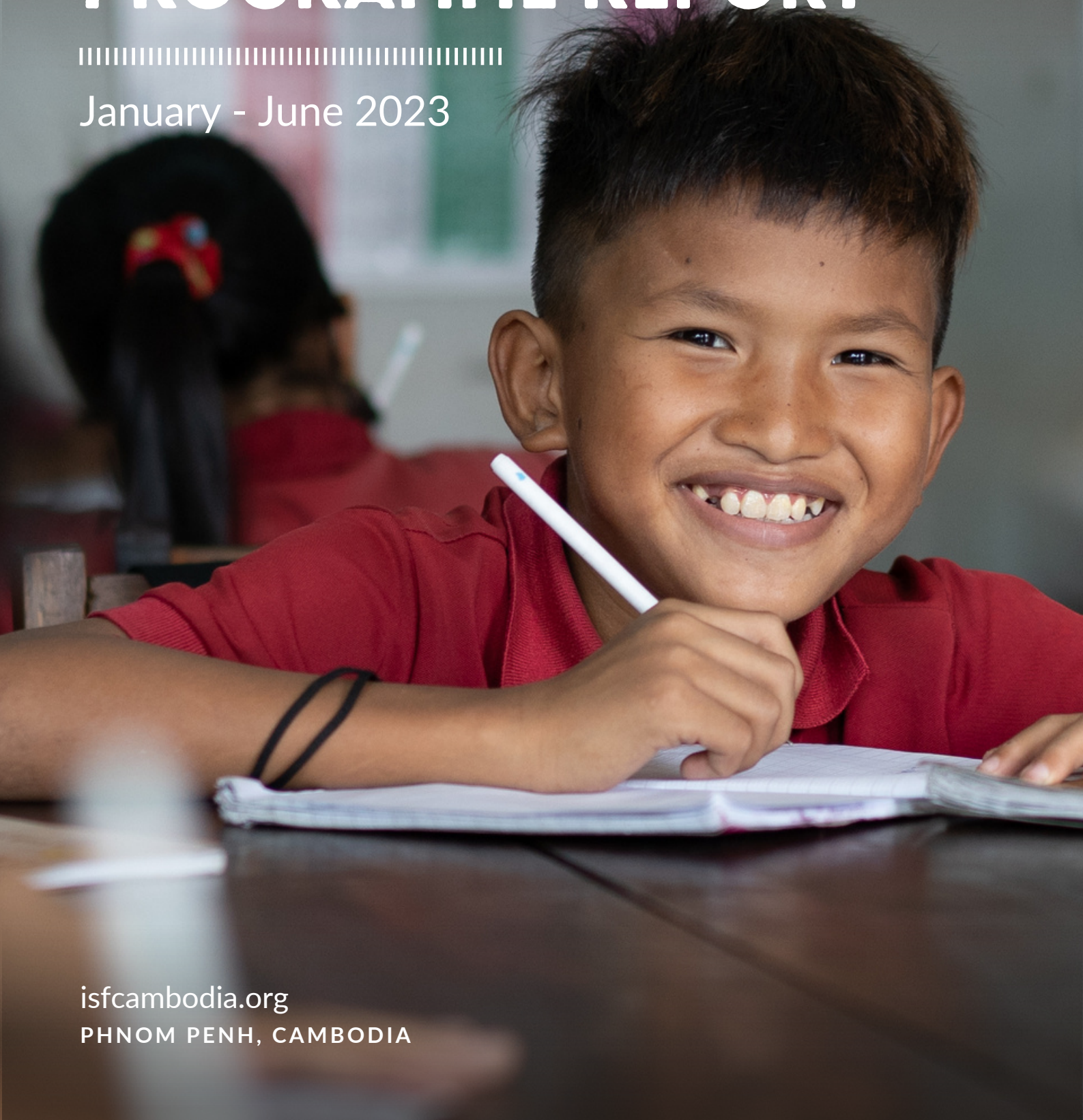


ISF Cambodia

# EDUCATION PROGRAMME REPORT



January - June 2023



[isfcambodia.org](http://isfcambodia.org)

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

# ISF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In Cambodia, extreme poverty affects 49% of children (UNICEF, 2022). Access to quality education is critical in breaking the generational cycle of poverty these children are facing. ISF's Education Programme works to overcome barriers to education that may stop a child going to school, and provides families and communities with the support they need, so students have the best possible chance of completing their studies. With your support, we are providing a foundation for lifelong learning for children and a much-needed pathway out of poverty.



**691**

ISF students in primary, secondary, higher education, and employment



**47%**

Female students



**99%**

Students believe they can finish school and go onto university or find gainful employment

**"EDUCATION HAS UNLOCKED SO MANY DOORS IN MY LIFE. I HAVE DISCOVERED MY POTENTIAL AND LEARNED THAT MY BACKGROUND DOES NOT DEFINE ME AND MY FUTURE"**

*ISF student Reaksa (names of children under 18 years old has been changed)*



## CATCH-UP CLASSES

ISF's Catch-up Education Programme is supporting 139 children aged 8-11 years old who previously were unable to attend school due to poverty. Students are learning two years of public-education in one, covering the full national curriculum as well as English, IT, tablet based learning, and weekly sports activities.

Many families of ISF students earn less than \$3 a day. To address barriers to success for children and help them learn effectively, our holistic approach also supports students with two nutritious meals daily, uniforms, stationary, bicycles, and family support. Each year, we receive around 500 applications from families who are desperate to break the cycle of poverty through this support, showing the extensive need in the impoverished communities we work in. In January, 50 students enrolled in our programme, of which 30 children had never attended school before. A recent ISF survey highlighted that for children who were not selected to attend ISF, 39% never went to school as their families could not afford it. This reinforces the transformational difference the unwavering holistic support of ISF makes.



139

Catch-up students, of which  
50% are female



95%

Of catch-up students attend  
class regularly



97%

Of catch-up students passed  
their recent exam

## RACHANA'S JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION

Ten-year-old Rachana\* embarked on a life-changing journey when she joined ISF's Education Programme in 2022. Growing up in poverty in one of the poorest urban communities in Phnom Penh, Rachana had never attended school before. Her future seemed uncertain until ISF stepped in.

Introduced to ISF programmes through community outreach efforts and recommendations from her neighbours, she joined grade 1 at ISF Chbar Ampov Education Centre. ISF provided Rachana with everything she needed to study, as well as daily meals, and healthcare. However, the impact extended far beyond tangible support. Engaging and dedicated teachers created an inspiring learning environment, igniting Rachana's passion for education. She excelled academically, ranking among the top two students in her class. With time, Rachana went from being shy and apprehensive to beaming with confidence and self-esteem. The supportive environment cultivated by ISF enabled her to form meaningful friendships and interact comfortably with teachers. Today, Rachana takes pride in her personal growth and academic accomplishments. Rachana's favourite subject, Khmer, has strengthened her reading and writing skills, sparking a deep passion for the language. Rachana also finds joy in Khmer dance, physical education, and exploring the library – all activities that not only bring happiness but also alleviate the pressures of daily life.

Rachana aspires to become a nurse in the future. She dreams of helping underprivileged children like herself by providing essential medical care and creating opportunities for a brighter future. Through your support, Rachana not only experienced academic growth but also gained confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of purpose. Your commitment to education has paved the way for a better life, not only for Rachana but for many others like her.

*\*Name of children under 18 years old have been changed.*



## STATE SCHOOL SUPPORT

ISF is currently supporting 475 students to study at primary and secondary schools, as well as our partner the Academy of Careers and Technology (ACT). All these students have completed our Catch-up Education Programme and have been enrolled into public schools where we continue supporting them with everything they need to give them the best possible chance of completing their education.

A number of students who are often absent from school, lack the motivation to study, or are currently not in Phnom Penh resulted in 14% of high school students not passing their recent semester exams. ISF is offering extra classes and student study clubs, and working with public school teachers to monitor attendance, ahead of exam retakes next semester. Cambodia's hosting of the 2023 Southeast Asia Games in May has also delayed exams for students in primary school until August.



475

ISF state  
school students



93%

Of state school  
students attend  
class regularly



98%

ACT students  
passed their  
semester exam



93%

Of students feel  
confident in their  
academic abilities



100%

Of students believe ISF  
lessons will be useful  
in the future

Our aim is to provide every student with the best possible chance to complete their education. However, we understand that every student's situation is different. Since January, seven students who no longer want to continue studying or those who need to work to help support their families' have moved to ISF's Employment Support where their journey to find gainful employment has begun.

In addition, seven students have dropped out of school due to financial hardship. While we are sad that their educational journey has ended, a recent ISF study shows that **even if our students do not manage to complete their secondary education, they earn on average 46% more than non-ISF students** who often end up in low-paid, unskilled jobs. Our team will remain available to support these students with career or emotional counselling as needed.

1%

ISF dropout rate  
compared to the  
national average  
of 13.5%

# #1

English and ICT classes are considered ISF's most important projects, alongside our libraries

# 100%

Of state school students believe English and ICT classes will be useful in their future

# 24%

Increase in state school student's attendance to English language classes

## ENGLISH PROGRAMME

ISF's English classes are a top choice among 139 catch-up students and 286 state school students who are eager to reach their full potential by learning the world's most widely spoken language. Catch-up students are very engaged with lessons, with 95% of students attending classes regularly and 92% of students passing their semester exam in April. We have also seen a significant improvement in the attendance of state school students with 94% students regularly attending classes – a 24% increase from last year.

**"KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES IS THE DOORWAY TO WISDOMS",**  
ISF student Bunlong\*

## COMPUTER CLASSES

Computer classes are also fundamental for our students to gain the necessary skills needed in higher education and employment. All our catch-up students are relishing the chance to build their computer skills, with 97% of students both attending classes regularly and passing their semester exam in June. 75% of state school students also passed their semester exams.

ISF is still seeing state school students struggle with their rigorous academic schedules, which is having an impact on their ability to attend extra classes. We want every student to have the opportunity to learn the essential skills of English and IT. We are therefore continuing to look for ways to modify our class schedules to avoid conflicts with state schools while working with public school teachers to follow up with students regularly missing classes.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Education should not be confined to textbooks and classrooms. ISF offers a range of extracurricular activities to our students including weekly sports activities, such as PE, yoga, football, and Khmer dance. For our older students, ISF's Life Skills Project is empowering students with essential skills and experiences to succeed beyond the school gate. 100 students take part in this innovative project that uses project-based learning to focus on skill development, as well as environmental and sustainability initiatives. Since January, activities have included offering the students a chance to delve into film production and journalism writing, get green-fingered in our Farmers and Gardeners project, and test their project management skills in a tower building challenge.

*\*Name of children under 18 years old have been changed.*



# UNFORGETTABLE JOURNEYS ABROAD



Four ISF students were given a unique opportunity to represent Tottenham Hotspur as mascots during a Premier League match. This trip not only marked their first time traveling abroad but also allowed them to fulfill a lifelong dream of stepping onto a professional football pitch. From their humble beginnings of playing with makeshift equipment on waste ground, these students' journey is a testament to their hard work and dedication. In addition to their mascot duties, they had the chance to explore the UK and experience new foods and fun activities.



In another event, 24 female students and football players from ISF and partner schools/organisations participated in the AIA-Spurs Football Camp in Koh Samui, Thailand. They received top-notch training from coaches of the Tottenham Hotspur Elite Development team, covering various football skills and topics such as nutrition and mental wellbeing. The camp provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for these young players to showcase their talent internationally, boosting their confidence and self-belief. Coming from backgrounds of extreme poverty, this experience was not only a chance for personal growth but also a cultural exchange. For many, this journey marked their first time leaving their country, opening up a world of possibilities they had never dreamed of before.



## HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES

Families cannot prioritise a child's education if they have no access to healthcare. ISF's holistic approach to our Education Programme ensures that students and their families have free access to health and wellbeing services so they are healthy and able to make the most of their education.



**1,484**

Treatments provided by ISF nurses



**420**

Patients treated by ISF nurses



**400**

Referrals to speciality care facilities



**50**

Children receiving vaccinations



**73**

Families supported by ISF's counsellor

**95%**

Patients enhanced their health and wellbeing after using ISF's healthcare

**99%**

Students say their mental and physical wellbeing has improved since joining ISF



**3,409**

Monthly family food packages



**39,285**

Kilos of rice



**3,289**

Kilos each of salt and sugar



**5,299**

Bottles of fish sauce and soy sauce



**14**

Students being treated for malnourishment



**55**

Students pursuing higher education



**1**

Student graduated from his associate degree



**18**

Students receiving Employment Support



**100%**

Students think ISF was instrumental to securing and maintaining a job

## **PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY**

### **HIGHER EDUCATION AND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT**

ISF's support does not stop when a student graduates. We give students a pathway to employment and independent living by enabling them to complete higher education, and build the knowledge and skills they need to find gainful employment.

Before starting ISF, many students thought their dreams of one day attending university was unreachable. With their hard work, motivation, and ISF's holistic support, this dream has become a reality for 55 students who graduated from high school and are currently enrolled at university. These students are studying Bachelor's or Associate Degrees, including Civil Engineering, IT, Accounting, Hotel and Tourism, and Japanese. Students continue receiving holistic support from ISF so they can study. We also empower them to become independent, develop essential skills needed in the workplace, and financially support themselves by identifying suitable job opportunities. Four students would like to go to university next year and are in counselling with our team to understand their options, skills, and interests.

For graduated students who did not want to study at university, and those who decided to stop their education, we offer Employment Support. This support enables young adults to access career counselling, goal setting, life skills training, vocational training, on-the-job training, internships, and job placements to make sure students can attain gainful employment to achieve their dreams. Currently, one employment student is studying vocational training and ten students are working full-time. Our team are also working with the seven students who have recently moved from the Employment Programme to place them in jobs that will meet their needs, whether that is full-time work or vocational training.

Since 2006, 110 ISF STUDENTS HAVE FOUND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT and are able to support themselves and their families.

ISF university graduates are earning on average more than double the wages of non-ISF students and ISF students who did not go to university are earning on average \$100 more a month. From spending their early years scavenging, to catching up with and completing their educational journey, these students highlight the life-changing impact your support has made, lifting people and communities out of poverty.





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