Quarterly Overview

This quarter, the main themes of PEPY activities were SDGs, global awareness and communication, and individual development. In March, 2 staff and 2 students spent 3 weeks with our partners in Ireland as part of an annual Cambodia-Ireland Exchange Program. Back in our Siem Reap office, teachers have been working to implement some key lessons of the SDGs in the classroom, as well as encouraging students to practice them in their everyday lives. A number of visits from exchange and tour groups have helped students to practice their English with native speakers and to learn more about the countries and cultures of visitors. Additionally, in emphasizing the importance of holistic support, PEPY has been working to improve the opportunities for students not just to improve themselves academically, but also physically, mentally, and creatively.

Recruitment for next academic year’s PEPY Scholarships began in the middle of May. In order to ensure support for as many students as possible, PEPY accordingly started running a Scholarship Fundraising Campaign, with the goal of raising $16,000 by June 29th.

Dream Class students have been focusing more deeply on planning for and utilizing the opportunities available to them. They were able to learn more about these opportunities during a Skills Fair and a Sharing Event this quarter. Scholarship students have started researching and planning for their Community Payback Projects, which has been influenced by their increased exposure to urgent issues of health and the environment. In the Learning Center, students are showing, on average, a good grasp of English and ICT skills, while those who need some extra support are being provided extra classes so they can catch up; and in Youth Empowerment class, students have exhibited increased confidence and interest in creative and physical activities such as Khmer dancing.

PEPY has also been focusing on capacity building, both of individual staff members and of the organization as a whole. In March, Program Manager Kimsru attended an Obama Foundation roundtable on community empowerment in Southeast Asia (where she got to meet the former president himself!). Additionally, Dream and Scholarship Officers joined a Training of Trainers workshop, organized by Child’s Dream (PEPY’s main supporter of the Dream Management Project), focused on maximizing interactivity in the classroom; the Communications Team attended a workshop on effective leadership and NGO sustainability by the SE Asia Foundation; and PEPY’s ICT Assistant went to an ICT Learning Forum on video/content development with Cooperation Committee for Cambodia.
Dream Management Project

Students’ dreams and potential are very important to us at PEPY Empowering Youth. Many of the students we work with have been exposed to a very limited spectrum of possible futures. We believe it is important for young people to dream big and to see how they can make their dreams a reality.

PEPY’s Dream Management Project, established in 2012 in Kralanh district, is specifically designed to help students pursue their dreams, build their confidence, and to facilitate greater access for an ever-increasing number of students to further their education. The project currently runs Weekly Classes, Skill Fairs, Sharing Events and Exploratory Visits to Siem Reap City. Participating in these activities enables students to network with employers and other key actors in and around their communities, and to inform themselves about what they may wish to do in the future.

With support from Child’s Dream Organization, the Dream Management Project was able to expand its target area to another new school called 28 January High School located in Srei Snam district this academic year, which is around 80 km from Siem Reap Province.

Quarterly Overview

During this period, 21 total topics were administered to all grades, including lessons on nonviolent communication, community impact, basic research, young leadership, ASEAN membership, how to complete applications, and interview techniques. Dream Project Officers regularly followed up with students to monitor how they were using these lessons in their daily activities. 22 additional students joined Dream Classes during this quarter, meaning the total number of students attending Dream Classes is 419.

2 events were held this quarter: 1 Skills Fair, which exposed 400 participants to career and academic opportunities in Siem Reap, and 1 Sharing Event, for which 3 guest speakers shared useful information about their professional successes and 2 Dream students shared about their successful studying tips. These events allowed students to see practical examples of some of the options available to them if they continue their studies, and to get advice on strategies to obtain these kinds of jobs and opportunities. Participant surveys show overwhelmingly positive feedback, with 99% recommending to continue providing these events in the future.

122 applications for 2018-19 PEPY Scholarships from Dream students have been received so far. In addition, 9 Dream students have made it to the interview stage for 2 different scholarship opportunities that were introduced last quarter. 1 student was admitted into a training program at a bakery, and other students are being assisted with other scholarship applications.

During this quarter, there were 11 public holidays, and in the time between holidays, motivation to attend school was low. Therefore, Dream Class attendance rates dropped to 67%. To mitigate this, Dream Officers met with 47 students to discuss the importance of staying engaged in school. On the other hand, 12 home visits for the most active students to ensure their parents’ commitment to support them as much as possible in continuing their education. Dream Officers also dedicated some of their time to meeting with students to discuss their concerns about studying, home life, and planning their futures.
High School English Project

The High School English Project is a program for our Dream Management students which aims to supplement their public English classes with lessons that focus on their practical, critical use of the language. PEPY provides both financial and capacity-building support to public teachers, who administer these extra classes. The aim of the program is to prepare Srei Snom and Kralanh high school students’ English for employment, university, or PEPY’s Learning Center.

Quarterly Overview

High school students were taught essential English skills to supplement the English public school curricula. They learned about articles, vocabulary, prepositions, usage of present and past tenses, and compound nouns. In addition, teachers gave them articles to read on topics like passion and planning for the future, so that students could improve their reading skills practically.

After a mid-term assessment, students showed moderate progress in English since the beginning of the year. Part of the reason why progress was moderate is due to low attendance during the holiday season and difficulties in coordination with high school teachers. Therefore, PEPY will work on encouraging consistent attendance and communicate more clearly with teachers.

Exam Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>80-100</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-80</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-40</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scholarship Program

PEPY Empowering Youth provides university and vocational training scholarships for students from Kralanh and Srei Snom (as well as students from 2 pilot areas in Baray and Kampong Leaeng districts). Recipients are supported with tuition fees, study supplies, a bicycle, use of a computer, a living allowance, and access to health care. Scholarship students also attend the Learning Center for additional training.

Quarterly Overview

This quarter, Promotion 6 Scholarship students had many great opportunities to expand their capacity and knowledge. They participated in the Skills Fair and Sharing Event alongside Dream students, where they were able to learn more about the expectations and opportunities available in Siem Reap’s labor market. Additionally, they got to practice their English skills and increase global awareness during a 4-day exchange program with high school students from New York City. 6 teams of Promotion 6 students began the initial stages of their Community Payback Projects, for which they researched issues related to education, health, environment, music, and arts in rural communities of Kralanh and Srei Snam and started brainstorming ideas to address these issues. Other outside activities that they attended included an all-female drum performance, a presentation on the importance of music in education (both at the Heritage Hub), the USA Education Fair and Barcamp Angkor 2018 (focus on technology, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy).

Due to the generosity of some of our supporters and Purple Mango Wellness Centre, current students started receiving dental care. In total, 32 students received examinations and cleanings, and some will return to resolve continuing dental issues. PEPY is also currently exploring the possibility of providing mental health support to students.

In addition to monthly alumni meetings, former and current Scholarship students got to come together at the annual staff party in April to celebrate Khmer New Year. Attendees shared success stories, provided updates on their activities, highlighting the long-term impacts of PEPY Scholarships. One notable achievement highlighted is that 4 promotion 3 (2014) students who studied Accounting at Vanda Institute received their bachelor’s degrees in March.

In May, the scholarship recruitment process began, for which PEPY staff announced scholarship opportunities to schools in our target areas (Kralanh and Srei Snom) as well as in our pilot areas (Triel and Kampong Leaeng High Schools). 342 students attended the announcement ceremonies and received application forms. The Scholarship Fundraising Campaign also started in May in order to fund these students for next academic year. PEPY hopes to support at least 30 students, but this will depend on how many funds are raised.
Learning Center Project

With employers increasingly highlighting the need for soft skills, PEPY’s Learning Center aims to increase the employability skills of scholarship students through the provision of English and ICT classes and soft skills training through Youth Empowerment classes. Students are also connected to new ideas and potential career opportunities by means of inspirational speakers, career mentorship, internships, and volunteers. To build their creativity and physical health, they are also offered music, art, writing, yoga, and football classes.

Quarterly Overview

35 Scholarship and non-Scholarship students are now attending the Learning Center; this is 8 students fewer than last quarter, because these individuals either got jobs to support themselves or changed their university schedules.

English

Active and student-centered learning have continued to be integrated into PEPY’s English curriculum this quarter. For example, students participated in questioning, scenarios, and role plays as part of Soury’s (PEPY’s English teacher) emphasis on communication in March. To improve their speaking and listening skills, she records students in order to build their confidence and pronunciation. In addition, students have had many opportunities to improve their English with multiple visits from international school tour groups.

The Oxford Bookworm Series, deployed at the beginning of March, has shown to be very successful in motivating students outside of class and improving reading skills. Students select a book every Monday, retain to read it for a week, then exchange a week later. The daily use of Dolch sight words also improved reading capacities.

Student assessments show positive progress over the last quarter for most groups. While the level 2 class’s scores remained about the same at around 80% score average, level 1 (from 73% average in March to 81% average in May) and level 3 (from 80% to 91% averages) increased their overall English abilities quite significantly. PEPY staff plans to provide extra support to 5 students whose English levels are below average starting in June.

Topics learned this quarter:

- English songs
- Describing home materials
- Clothes: what are you wearing today?
- Grammar: There is/ There are, prepositions (in, on, under, at, between, though, around, over, below...)
- Life and emotions
- Writing: Khmer New Year activities, Directions, Family
- Directions
- Story telling
Information and Communication Technology Project

Topics learned this quarter:

- Encrypting and protecting Excel files
- Sorting and filtering data
- Conditional formatting
- MS Word: review of advanced topics (table of contents and linking text)
- Data validation

In ICT class, students learned more advanced topics, especially in Excel, such as encrypting files and using conditional formatting. At the end of the second quarter, the average of the result show that more than 90% of students got high scores. The other 10% represents students who are no longer attending classes at the Learning Center. Therefore, all continuing students have demonstrated solid understanding of the topics covered in ICT class this quarter.

The main challenge continued to be centered on maintenance of computers, which are getting old and therefore causing issues for class fluidity. However, PEPY will soon be able to mitigate this problem thanks to the generous support of donors through GoPhilanthropic, who are financing new laptops and computer equipment. Now, students will have quality technology to learn on during class, and will also be able to take computers home and have more time to practice (currently, most computers are desktops).

Youth Empowerment

Leadership, global citizenship, and SDGs were common themes in Youth Empowerment class this quarter. Some of the lessons students were taught included Pyramid 2030 Thinking and Strategizing for SDG Progress, Project Management, and Leadership Skills. In Library Class, students read about environmentalism, emotional awareness, building inner peace, and productivity.

To build confidence and presentation skills, students facilitated classes on their own. This quarter, students chose the following topics to teach: First Aid, Decision-making, and Problem-solving. Communications skills were also increased after many visits from international tour groups and one exchange program. YE facilitators have noted remarkable progress in communications skills and confidence among all students.

Students also got to attend Khmer dance classes at the Heritage Hub every Thursday this quarter, which they really enjoyed. In addition, they also continued their football, music, and yoga classes with Azahar Foundation. After increasing the frequency of yoga classes, PEPY has decided continue doing so due to positive feedback from students.

Topics learned this quarter: