Quarterly Overview

From July to August 2018, PEPY’s focus was on advanced and holistic development of students past basic skills. PEPY believes that in order for our programs to have maximum impact, we must empower students not just to succeed for themselves, but also to give back to their communities, country, and the environment, all with an awareness of their roles as global citizens.

Dream students were able to attend a study tour in order to get a practical idea of what going to university in Siem Reap city is like. Scholarship students implemented their Community Payback Projects, which focused on hygiene, the environment, and educational awareness and directly reached around 300 community members. Advanced lessons in ICT and English classes were reached by all Learning Center students so they could use the skills they have been developing for interesting projects such as video production, news article analysis, and penpal exchanges with foreigners.

Additionally, for three weeks in July, PEPY students had the wonderful opportunity to work with 7 teachers from our partners in Ireland (DPETNS, DCC, St. Francis CBS). During this time, they learned about mental and physical health, techniques to expand the imagination, music and art, business, and communications. Students had immensely positive feedback and enjoyed being able to experience the different teaching methods of the Irish teachers. They also reported improved English skills over the course of these three weeks.

Scholarship recruitment took place from July until August. PEPY’s dedicated recruitment committee spent hours vetting, interviewing, investigating, and deciding on 30 Scholarship students from Kralanh, Srei Snam, Kampong Leaeng, and Baray districts. While it was extremely hard to make this decision, PEPY is excited to welcome these inspiring and committed students to Siem Reap city next year. The committee noticed that the number of applicants has increased, and that applicants were noticeably more prepared than ever before; this is evidence of the long-term impact of PEPY’s programs in our target areas, as youth seem to be more aware of the value of education and better equipped to pursue opportunities to continue to university.
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.

Quarterly Overview

In total, 454 students from Kralanh and Srei Snam high schools were registered in Dream Management Class this year. This is our highest enrollment yet, which suggests that Dream class is well-known among the students and they are aware of the importance of having dreams. PEPY provided 47 topics over the year including: dream discovery, goal setting, good citizenship, financial literacy, interview techniques, scholarship application writing, life-values, time management, the art of working with people, and positive reinforcement. Both Dream Project Officers noted significant progress in students’ behaviors, namely communication and interpersonal skills, confidence, and organization. They also were exposed to 20 guest speakers who gave their advice for academic, personal, and professional success, 1 Skills Fair, and 3 Sharing Events.

Students were exposed to multiple opportunities to support their journeys to higher education. In total, 255 applications for various scholarship opportunities were made as a result of Dream Class support. Additionally, 2 exposure visits (one for each high school) were conducted for students with high Dream Class attendance. They visited PEPY’s Learning Center and other universities/training schools in the city, where they were able to experience the facilities, meet faculty, and ask questions.

Dream Officers conducted a student survey on Dream Management Project implementation. The results revealed that 90% of them showed high interest in at least 80% of Dream Class activities, notably those on teamwork, presentations, and group discussions. Additionally, 95% of regular students professed improvements in their self-development, especially in confidence to give presentations and open-mindedness to critical feedback. 95% of students indicated commitment to encourage their brothers, sisters, and friends join this class next year.
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

Although the project just initiated this academic year, its popularity is higher than expected. PEPY received a total of 329 applicants (175 from Kralanh and 154 from Srei Snam). By the end of the project, there were 246 students still enrolled.

A majority of the students did well in the mid-term test. They also had more confidence in speaking to foreigners. When the PEPY staff brings visitors, they often introduce themselves first and they are eager to speak. Through our observation, the teachers also have improved their teaching capacities by quite a lot by applying some of the feedback from PEPY staff.

Unfortunately, many students dropped out of the class near the end of the school year. Some dropped out because they are busy or no longer interested in attending the class. Although the overall performance of the teachers has improved, some of them still perform below PEPY’s expectations. However, in comparison to the school learning environment, their performance is considered to be good. Given the significant challenges, PEPY must reevaluate whether this project is worth investing in for another year, or if it is better to allocate funds to English at the Learning Center.
Scholarship Program

PEPY Empowering Youth provides university and vocational training scholarships for students from Kralanh and Srei Snom. 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

38 Scholarship students were recruited this year (24 females). This last quarter, they had many opportunities to get involved with their communities and organizations around Siem Reap. Scholarship students implemented the community payback project. There were 6 teams in total. Their projects focused on health care, education, arts and tree planting. They also had the opportunity to share their experiences of university and city life to Dream Class students, which allowed them to build their confidence and presentation skills. After having been in the Scholarship Program for 9 months, students reported high satisfaction with their support.

Monthly meetings were held regularly, and a variety of speakers from different backgrounds and professions came to speak with current and former students to give them advice and answer questions. Additionally, a CV and cover letter writing workshop was given to students, where they were able to make quality drafts to use in their job applications. P6 students will start looking for jobs in November in hopes of obtaining quality employment by May 2019.

16 former Scholarship students graduated this year from technical schools or universities.
Quarterly Overview

**English**

This year, the students have improved their speaking, listening, writing, reading and grammar skills dramatically. They are able to write their own CVs and cover letters in English for their future job hunting. Students’ improvement was largely measured through exam scores. The students also have demonstrated great confidence in communicating with foreign visitors in different exchange programs. The interactions with foreigners gave the students the opportunities to expose themselves to foreign cultures and they also can share their own culture. Giving the students the chance to put what they have learned into practice helps them to boost their confidence and increase their self-esteem.

The students have finished reading 15 English Bookworms and 25 Oxford Reading Tree books. These reading exercises allowed the students to develop their reading skills and expand their vocabulary. This is considered a great achievement because reading is not a common hobby in Cambodia; having good reading habits has changed the students’ approach to learning and they find it rewarding to be able to absorb knowledge from writers all around the world.

The teachers worked very hard to make sure the students have the best learning environment possible. They felt free to express themselves in the classroom and were encouraged to not be afraid of making mistakes. The classroom is interactive and students have enough time to develop English skills such as reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills. The students’ overall satisfaction is very high and they are very happy to learn English with their teachers.

**ICT**

This year, LC students have shown high understanding of ICT lessons. 100% of Learning Center students report confidence to work with computer programs and technologies such as using Microsoft word to produce formal letters and reports, and to do Google research to support their interests and university assignments. In more advanced classes on Photoshop and video editing, students also showed high interest and quite good understanding. 70% of students received above average scores on a graphic design assessment using Photoshop and were able to create quality video documentaries.

This year, thanks to a generous donation of secondhand laptops, students were able to take computers home with them to practice and complete university assignments. As a result, students were able to learn topics more quickly than last year; so not only did students demonstrate better understanding of lessons, but more lessons were covered overall.

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.
The curriculum has been revised and upgraded to meet current teaching standards, particularly those of ICT classes at different universities in Siem Reap. The lessons prepare the students to apply their skills in various employment settings such as administration, teaching, accounting, and marketing.

The ICT Teaching Assistant, Chhunnay, is a former scholarship student who was very outstanding in ICT class. He is also pursuing his bachelor’s degree at university. Although he did not have much teaching experience, he has constantly improved his teaching skills thanks to feedback from staff and students. PEPY is looking forward to another year with him in which he takes more responsibility over the ICT classroom.

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.