

## Education for All: Study Case World Bank-Cambodia Scholarship for Education

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### **Abstrak:**

Pendekatan konsep lingkaran kemiskinan dipakai untuk memahami pentingnya program dukungan finansial untuk pendidikan dan korelasinya dengan pengentasan kemiskinan. Siswa yang lulus pendidikan dasar memiliki persentase yang tinggi di Kamboja. Namun angkanya menurun drastis pada tingkat penerimaan di pendidikan menengah dan bagi siswa yang masuk ke pendidikan menengah masih terancam tidak dapat melanjutkan pendidikan hingga lulus karena masalah ekonomi. Metode kualitatif dengan teknik studi kasus digunakan tidak hanya untuk menunjukkan manfaat program beasiswa di Kamboja, tapi juga area yang tidak dapat dijangkau oleh program serupa. Hasil riset menunjukkan bahwa program dukungan finansial dalam bentuk beasiswa mungkin berdampak untuk mengurangi beban keuangan keluarga dan mencegah siswa untuk tidak menyelesaikan pendidikan. Meskipun mungkin siswa tetap dapat bersekolah, namun program beasiswa tidak menjamin adanya pendidikan yang berkualitas

**Kata-Kata Kunci:** Lingkaran kemiskinan, beasiswa, pendidikan dasar dan menengah, kualitas pendidikan, pendidikan untuk semua

### **Abstract:**

The percentage of students who completed primary education in Cambodia is high. Yet, the number slumped in secondary education enrollment, and there is still a high risk of being dropped out due to financial issues. Cooperating with the World Bank under the EFA program, Cambodia provided scholarships to boost the secondary education enrollment and completion rate. This qualitative research conducted with the study case method tries not only to point out the impact of scholarship in Cambodia to enrollment and completion rate, but also area which the program unable to develop, the quality of education. The findings highlighted that financial support, in the form of scholarship, might be able to reduce the financial burden of education on the household and prevent students from not finishing secondary school. Even though scholarships can increase student's chances of finishing secondary school, they cannot deal with the issue of quality education.

**Keywords:** Poverty cycle, scholarship, primary and secondary education, quality education, education for all

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## Introduction

**E**ducation is one of the most important drivers for ending poverty, boosting shared prosperity, and improving health, gender equality, peace, and stability. Guaranteeing the human right to primary education means little unless schooling leads to learning for all children and youth. Growth, development, and poverty reduction depend on the knowledge and skills that young people acquire (World Bank, n.d.-b). Poverty and education are often linked in two directions: poor people often do not have access to an adequate education, and those with access to an adequate education are often confined to poverty. Then, it leads to what is known as the poverty cycle, a condition where destitution passes across the generation because of inadequate schooling and then to poorly paid employment (Oxford Press, n.d.).

In general, the world system nowadays has found that the probability of finding a job increases with higher levels of education and that salaries are even higher for people with higher levels of education (Ali & Jalal, 2018). Therefore, it is not exaggerated if, based on the logic above, adequate education has the capability to overcome the poverty cycle. Nevertheless, poverty generates complex and multi-dimensional issues around education, so it is necessary to understand poverty first to find a way for education to deal with obstacles because of destitution.

Moreover, primary and secondary education has to be accessible to all. The social ladders exist, and both stages, primary and secondary school, provide an individual with basic knowledge on climbing it. Primary education is a powerful lever for poverty alleviation and social and economic growth (Nielsen, 2006). Providing graduates with the tools to take charge of their lives and make informed choices, enabling them to contribute to a democratic polity, increasing earning potential and social mobility, improving personal and family health and nutrition (especially for women), and enabling women to control their fertility, are among its most significant advantages. In secondary schools, the curriculum and content are specialized to prepare adolescents for life choices, transition to work, and engagement in society; this means the curriculum and content are subject to change as the needs of society shift (UNICEF, 2020).

Hence, stakeholder has a big responsibility to ensure education accessibility for all. Setting a solid education foundation at each stage is essential to building quality human resources. Therefore, scholarship might be the answer

to providing education accessibility when the obstacles are most likely correlated to the absence of financial support. Scholarship can ease the financial burden of education for families with low financial backgrounds. However, whether scholarship can ensure quality education is a different issue that the paper will elaborate on in further discussion.

The qualitative case study of the scholarship program conducted by the World Bank and the Cambodian Government is used to help explore the impact of scholarship from the financial point of view of students lacking financial support. Cambodia's education is free, yet associated expenses like uniforms, textbooks, and notebooks are not covered. This places an extra financial strain on impoverished families, often hindering their children's ability to pursue their education further. Primary education in Cambodia boasts high completion rates, with approximately 80 percent of girls and boys successfully finishing this level. However, the transition to secondary school presents a significant challenge as enrollment rates plummet. Moreover, those who do manage to enroll in secondary school face a substantial risk of discontinuing their education prematurely (World Bank, 2013).

As a bridge, the poverty cycle will be used to understand the impact of the financial burden of education for people below the welfare standard, and it will also help the writer elaborate on the connection between poverty and low-level education. Various data sources from the World Bank and Cambodia policy documents related to education for all agendas, statistics, figures, and official websites from various world actors concerned about education for all have been used to provide multiple perspectives. In the end, the outcome of the policy and practice analysis in how far the impact of scholarship programs on providing education for all can be recognized.

### **Poverty Cycle and Low-Level Education**

There are two types of points of view in understanding poverty: absolute poverty and relative poverty (Berg, 2008). Absolute poverty refers to the absence of adequate resources that hampers learning in developing countries due to poor nutrition, poor health, poor home conditions (lack of books, lighting, or places to study), and poorly educated parents, automatically affecting how they educate their children. Thus, the relative poverty perspective emphasizes the exclusion of the poor in the rich country from the educational mainstream. Either one of

the perspectives will affect people with low incomes not only in accessibility to education but also in reducing motivation and their ability to gain full benefit from education.

The poor condition of a student's home background is the main factor influencing educational outcomes. The impact of limited financial resources cannot be isolated from other home background variables, such as parents' educational attainment, because poverty exhibits strong correlations with a range of other variables. Due to household finance issues, children are considered productive economic actors and must contribute to serving food on the table. In comparison, it is essential to maintain a suitable environment for the children to be concerned and fully absorb the learning process. The condition where children have to provide financial support for the household actively sets a high opportunity cost on education—supported by the fact that education is considered a secondary need when facing hunger issues. In the worst condition, the best scenario is that older brothers drop out to support the younger to access education financially. It is not practical to deal with poverty, and the condition will trigger another domino effect of the poverty cycle within the family.

Worsened by the high financial costs of schooling, education becomes less affordable for poor households to provide education for the children. Such financial costs include not only school fees but also other direct costs such as the costs of transport, school uniforms, and school books. In addition to financial costs, there are also non-financial costs, such as the opportunity cost of sending children to school (Berg, 2008). As an outcome, poor pupils' school attendance may decrease or even drop out among the absolute poor in developing countries. Early school dropouts are more likely to experience unemployment, poverty, early marriage, and pregnancy. Poverty, gender, handicap, family disasters, war, violence, and the perception of a low return on investment in school are some of the reasons contributing to dropout rates.

In order to give young people the proper opportunities to solidify their fundamental knowledge and skills and equip them with the necessary skills to obtain employment, become business owners and entrepreneurs, or engage in other productive work, alternative learning opportunities that consider these causes of high dropout rates must be developed (United Nations, n.d.). Dropping out itself is regarded as marginalization from the school community. Any form of exclusion affects the poor student's ability to gain full benefits from education

or to translate the benefits of education into remunerative employment (Berg, 2008). The exclusion because of poverty will directly affect the motivation to participate and to do well in education, and poor student, at this point, has started the cycle of poverty all over again for the next generations. Therefore, it is essential to guarantee their participation and completion in primary and secondary education as the initial step to prevent being trapped in the poverty cycle.

Both primary and secondary are intercorrelated and essential to be fully achieved by the student to break out from the poverty cycle. In very minimum outcomes, students who finished primary and secondary education are expected to have a better mindset to prepare future generations for basic education needs. Ensuring accessibility and removing financial barriers with cash incentives or scholarships will help to raise the completion rate. It is essential to aim for low dropout rates while formulating further education development to pursue the most effective quality improvement.

### **World Bank and Education for All (EFA)**

Education is the basic building block of every society. It is the best investment countries can make to build prosperous, healthy, and equitable societies. Education is a right and a passport to human development that opens doors and expands opportunities and freedoms (United Nations, n.d.). In general, the government is responsible for maintaining the accessibility and quality of the education sector for the citizens within, yet an underdeveloped and developing country's political instability and financial issues may hamper the program development.

The lack of primary education investment is fatal to tackling poverty because young people require foundational solid skills to ensure lifelong learning. Therefore, education development frequently needs specialized assistance from external actors or favorable economic conditions to combat poverty in the early phases.

In 1990, the initiative of Education for All emerged with the mission to bring the benefits of education to "every citizen in every society." To realize this aim, a broad coalition of national governments, civil society groups, and development agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank (World Bank, 2014). At the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000, governments from 164

countries, together with representatives of regional groups, international organizations, donor agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), and civil society, adopted a Framework for Action to deliver Education for All (EFA) commitments.

The Dakar Framework comprised six goals and their associated targets to be achieved by 2015 and 12 strategies to which all stakeholders would contribute (UNESCO, 2015). The goals of EFA can be considered as the world's effort to provide early childhood care and education as well as ensure the universality of primary education, which promotes gender equality, and improve adult literacy in order to grant the youth and adults life skills with sophisticated quality education.

The 12 strategies designed to support members pursuing the goals of EFA encourage significant investment in primary education as a resolution to eliminate poverty. The engagement of civil society, accountability in governance and management, and teacher welfare are required for education development, especially in conditions of conflict and instability. Moreover, EFA also calls upon an act to combat HIV and AIDS as part of a safe, healthy, inclusive, and equitable resourced educational environment strategy. Building all EFA's strategies' tools and systems from scratch will undoubtedly consume time. Hence, EFA addresses the members to begin with existing mechanisms and utilize information and communication technology to monitor the progress and develop the education program.

As one of the main actors leading EFA, the World Bank helps countries achieve their education goals through finance and knowledge services in analytic work, policy advice, and technical assistance (World Bank, 2014). The Bank established Learning for All to respond to the EFA mission as the follow-up. The strategy encourages countries to "invest early" to ensure lifelong learning for the youth, "invest smartly" in interventions and reforms proven to result in learning gains, and "invest for all" children and youth, including girls and marginalized and disadvantaged groups (World Bank, n.d.-b). By addressing policy advice, technical support, and knowledge of what works in education, the World Bank expects improvement in educational quality and learning outcomes, primary school access and equity, dropout and retention rates of girls, and their learning outcomes and promoting early childhood development.

Furthermore, to elaborate on the importance of finishing primary and secondary school, during the EFA program period, the World Bank focused the investment on primary education based on the finding in the 1980s that primary education relatively had a high return. The Bank's policy goals for increasing primary education funding have been straightforward and impressively consistent: universal primary school completion, equitable access for girls and other disadvantaged groups, and enhanced student learning outcomes.

The evaluation's results demonstrate an increase in World Bank funding for primary education since 1990. Since then, nearly 90% of the Bank's \$14 million portfolio for primary education has been committed. Throughout the same time frame, the share of loans for primary education given to the least developed nations has more than doubled, going from 26% to 54%. The amount of capital on primary education showed the commitment of the Bank to ensure children obtain basic education. The significant investment in primary education affects the amount in other sectors, yet tertiary and secondary education has remained steady. (Nielsen, 2006). However, in the later years, revisiting investment policy and investing in secondary education is also vital due to the extension of primary education and human capital development to fully achieve MDGs (Lewin, 2008).

To sum up, EFA was established to tackle the enrolment ratio of children at the primary education level. Based on the latest finding on the high return of primary education investment, the World Bank has become the leading actor in encouraging a massive wave of investment in primary education as part of an action to eliminate poverty and human capital development.

### **Cambodia Commitments and Challenges to EFA**

School in Cambodia is free, but uniforms, textbooks, and notebooks are not. The additional financial burden for low-income families can make it hard for children to continue in school (World Bank, 2013a). On broader measures of human poverty, Cambodia does not fare well compared to other Asian nations, and the progress toward EDA is slow. For instance, a score of 42.5% is given using the UNDP Cambodia Human Poverty Index (HPI). The average score for developing nations in Southeast Asia and the Pacific is 25%. Poor performance in primary school completion, access to health and sanitation services, and child nutrition significantly contribute to Cambodia's low HPI (EFA, 2003). A primary

goal in lowering the rate of human poverty is undoubtedly better access to primary education services in underdeveloped rural communities.

In 1995, the mid-decade review of EFA progress and Cambodia's Education for All 2000 Assessment Country Report showed several findings regarding Cambodia's progress on EFA. The progress is slow due to general disadvantages in providing education, especially for students in remote areas. Mass media education programs for improved living, literacy, and non-formal education do not get enough attention. Only urban areas offer technical and vocational education (EFA, 2003). Primary education is typically of poor quality and is not widely available. Due to the findings, EFA planning needs to be located within a broader sectoral reform program, including policies and strategies for post-basic education, and ensure that Government financing of primary and lower secondary education is protected. The reform programs address critical features: assuring equitable to quality primary education, pro-poor education financing policy, enabling growing lower secondary education opportunities and strengthening capacity building to decentralize education services (EFA, 2003).

After the mid-decade review, the Cambodian government had generally succeeded in increasing primary school enrollment for poor communes. The enrollment number of students from low-income families rose from 300,000 in 1999 to 423,000 in 2001. Moreover, in 1999, the enrolment share of the poorest communes was 14.4% compared to 22.5% for the wealthiest communes. The share of the poorest commune had risen to 16.7% in 2001, while the share of the wealthiest commune had decreased to 20.2%. The same trend of increase in the number of poor pupils enrolment appeared in lower secondary schools as well. Between 1999 and 2001, the growth in secondary enrolment in the poorest communes increased from 11% to 38 %, while the wealthiest communes increased from 3.7% to 21%. The impact is most significant in Grade 7. In 2001, the poorest communes saw 32% growth in enrolment, compared with only 12% for the wealthiest communes (EFA, 2003).

Quintile	1999	2000	2001
Q1 (poorest)	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%
Q2	10.7%	11.9%	12.4%
Q3	11.1%	12.0%	12.5%
Q4	15.4%	17.3%	17.6%
Q5 (richest)	61.4%	57.4%	55.9%

*Table 1: Upper Secondary Enrolment Share by Quintile*



*Source: Education Sector Performance Report, 2000, p. 20 retrieved from Royal Government Of Cambodia Education for All National Plan 2003-2015*

In the last two years, between 1999-2001, the number of students enrolled in 7-9 grades has risen from 5.5% to 6.0% in the poorest communes, but it has remained at around 36% in the wealthiest communes. Despite the increasing number of enrollments in poor communes, the condition in 7-9 grades showed that the wealthiest communes outweighed the number of students with low-income family backgrounds in the school. These over-represented conditions by the wealthiest communes are even more severe in grades 10-12 and simultaneously strengthen an indication of inequality. As shown in Table 1, according to the 2001 statistics, 56% of students from the wealthiest quintile enrolled, while just 1.5% of students from the poorest quintile did so. A similar under-representation of the second and third poorest quintiles in upper secondary grades occurs with only 12% of those in these quintiles (EFA, 2003). To tackle these inequalities to access grades 7-12, complementary strategies need to be enacted, including targeted facilities development, especially on secondary school facilities due to the absence of a secondary school in many parts of the country, and scholarships/incentives for people with low incomes, girls, and minorities, grades 7 through 12.

In 1999, a survey showed a correlation between vulnerability in food security and education participation and attainment. For example, in around 550 vulnerable communes, the literacy rate for 10- 14-year-olds was around 63% compared to a national average of 68%. The proportion of people never attending school from these vulnerable communes was 50% compared to a national average of 45% (EFA, 2003). The data addresses three key priority concerns. First, expanding access to education services significantly lowers secondary provisions. Secondly, reducing financial obstacles to accessing primary and secondary education. Lastly, it examines equitable resource allocation practices with the inclusion of affirmative poverty indexing in government spending on services related to primary education. The priorities targeted school feeding programs, particularly those for upper primary and lower secondary grades, could result in better school enrolment and retention for poor students.

Thus, finalized in 2001-2003, the long-term EFA plan is informed by the government's broader Poverty Reduction Strategic Plan (PRSP) / The National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) and second Socio-Economic Development

Plan (SEDPII). The long-term EFA plan is also integrated with the current medium-term Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) formulated by the government in 2001, with plans and programs covering the period 2001-2006 (EFA, 2003). The primary goal in the education sector is to lower the financial obstacles to universal access to high-quality primary education through a combination of institutional changes (such as the elimination of informal payments) and various poverty-focused interventions (e.g., incentives for people experiencing poverty and ethnic minority groups and girls to attend school).

The government will primarily ensure full access to Basic Education so that children from the poorest families can fully participate in nine years of high-quality education. They were developing targeted incentive strategies to reduce dropout rates among students in grades 1 to 9 through subsidies/scholarships for the poorest students. Moreover, to deal with facility availability, increased use of local materials, and improved utilization of existing infrastructure outside the school (such as pagodas) to increase access and capacity for new students. By ensuring that children and teachers attend every day, absences are noted, and immediate action is taken to prevent children from feeling unable to keep up, current repetition rates and the possibility of dropout can be minimized.

Therefore, the Cambodian Government committed that in 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality. The goals are set to be achieved from 2002 through 2015 with six objectives: Universal enrollment of 6-years children, universal access to and completion of primary education or equivalent by 2010, universal access to and completion of lower education or equivalent by 2010, enhanced efficiency of formal schooling, sustainable levels of public financing of primary education, and universal achievement of measurable learning outcomes, exceptionally functional literacy numeracy and life skills (EFA, 2003).

### **An Evaluation of the World Bank Scholarship Program in Cambodia**

The Cambodian government's National Poverty Reduction Strategy (NPRS) and Education Strategic Plan 2004-08 (ESP) plan to ensure that nine years of high-quality primary education are available to everyone by 2010 and to

promote equal educational opportunities. There have been significant improvements in the past five years in the education sector in Cambodia, particularly in terms of primary net enrollment gains, the introduction of program-based budgeting, and the development of a sound pro-poor policy framework. Nevertheless, several challenges remain exist. There are several key issues, including (a) disparities in education participation rates between income groups and genders, (b) inefficient and inferior quality education service delivery at primary and secondary school levels, (c) weak local management capacity, and (d) ineffective education finance disbursements (World Bank, n.d.-a). Therefore, to address the remaining issues, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) has adopted a rolling Education Sector Program (ESSP) and included it in The National Poverty Reduction Strategy.

In general, the EFA long-term program is integrated with the medium-term Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) (EFA, 2003). In the prior explanation of 2001, Cambodia formulated the long-term EFA plan with plans and programs covering the period 2001-2006. The ESSP aims for some of the 2015 EFA targets. One of the priorities is to support the Cambodian government in providing primary education to grade 9 for all children of school age.

The mission of the ESSP of the World Bank for Cambodia is to help the Borrower carry out the ESSP objectives to increase access to educational services by addressing supply, demand, quality, and efficiency constraints, with a particular focus on the underprivileged and disadvantaged communes (World Bank, n.d.). A key sector indicator of the project will be student enrollment, schooling progress, and educational quality improvements, including a percentage of the students who are enrolled in grade 1, a percentage of those who are enrolled in net schooling, a percentage of students who repeat and drop out, gender parity, primary completion rates, transition rates from primary to lower secondary education, student achievement levels, and student: teacher ratios.

The project consists of 3 components. First, by providing lower secondary schools in communes with a focus on those with the highest poverty rates, the proposed activity would complement the ESSP 2004–2008 Education Facilities Development Program. An effective strategy to promote universal primary education is the provision of scholarships to underprivileged children, particularly underprivileged girls and children from ethnic minorities. This

strategy is operationalized in the ESSP 2004–2008 under the Secondary Scholarships for the Poor Program. Secondly, it will concentrate on strategic interventions centered on decentralized quality improvement to encourage right-age enrollment, foster promotion of students in lower primary, increase retention of students in upper primary, facilitate transition to lower secondary education, and improve student learning. Thirdly, it will cope with implementing additional selected interventions under the ESSP, which IDA will agree upon during project implementation (World Bank, n.d.).

In 2005, the Cambodian government, supported by the World Bank, launched a scholarship program for poor students to finish secondary school as the follow-up action to engage EFA in the main objectives. The program builds from the similar financial support experience given by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (World Bank, 2013b). The program gives the family of girls in school an annual cash "scholarship" during the first three years of secondary school, 7 to 9 grades. The program, which covered the 2003-2006 school years, may be considered a successful project based on the finding that it raised school attendance rates by 20 to 30 percentage points.

Based on that experience, a government program supported by the World Bank's Cambodia Education Sector Support Project was designed to test the optimal scholarship amount and measure its effectiveness and impact on children. The Cambodia-World Bank Scholarship was provided for the 2005-2010 school year, with the poorest receiving \$60 per year and the others receiving \$45. The project is to approach the issues of school enrolment in secondary schools. The percentage of boys and girls who complete primary education in Cambodia is high, around 80%, but secondary school enrollment falls off significantly (World Bank, 2013a). Even though school in Cambodia is free, textbooks, notebooks, and uniforms are not. It made poor students more fragile to unfinished their primary education; even those enrolled run a significant danger of not finishing. A government initiative in Cambodia gave underprivileged pupils scholarships to increase school enrolment and attendance.

This scholarship program targeted 100 lower secondary schools that did not participate in other scholarships, focusing on schools in low-income areas and where non-enrollment was high. All 6th-grade students at feeder elementary schools filled out scholarship applications. Questions focused on the household condition, from the number of family members in the house to water access and

household durables ownership. In addition to analyzing the answers, data from Cambodia's nationwide household survey was utilized to generate a dropout risk score. The grant is offered for 3,800 students and provided when 6th-grade students enter 7th grade and is renewable for the 8th and 9th grades with conditions on enrollment, attendance, and satisfactory grade progress.

During the program's first year, a researcher surveyed 3225 applicants (about 60% of whom had received a scholarship) and came out with several findings (World Bank, 2013b). First, students who did not receive scholarships enrolled at 60% by the end of 7th grade; students who received scholarships enrolled at 80%. Secondly, two-thirds of recipients were girls because they were considered more fragile against dropping out than boys. Nevertheless, the study showed that scholarship has the same effect on encouraging either boys or girls. Moreover, the amount of grants, either \$45 or \$65, showed a similar impact on the enrollment rate. Thirdly, even how the money was used was not mentioned. The family spent an average of \$10 more on schooling-related expenses, such as books or other educational materials. Fourth, students who obtained the scholarship were about ten percentage points less likely to engage in paid work compared with those who did not receive the money (Filmer & Schady, 2009).

Even though the scholarship positively impacts poor students' enrollment and attendance rate, it does not necessarily mean an excellent study outcome. It means the scholarship not only helps economically poor student's attendance but also help poor student with weak academic performance. The program found that students who enrolled in 7th grade despite being turned down for a scholarship were likelier to drop out of school before 8th grade if they had low test scores. Scholarship students, in contrast, stayed in school even if they had similarly poor test results in 7th grade (World Bank, 2013b). The level of academic performance is more likely linked to school and education quality, including but not limited to teacher's capability, learning tools, syllabi, infrastructure, etc.

Therefore, scholarship cannot be considered the ultimate pill of all illnesses, but scholarship has a positive impact on easing and reducing some of the significant obstacles students face to smoothly accessing education. Even if it is by nature that each individual's academic performance is different, it does not mean the stakeholder cannot do anything with it. The government has to increase the quality of education to elevate the minimum standard of education, which

will indirectly impact not only students with excellent academic performance but also those who are not.

Teachers are one of the vital instruments and facilitations to indicate whether education is quality or not. Improving the teacher's ability to deliver courses, analyzing the syllabi for improvement or update, and sensitivity to science development are essential for the teaching process. Therefore, dedicated programs to increase teachers are vital, but they must be differentiated based on the field or school level. For primary and secondary school teachers, certifications, such as a paper to prove the decency of a teaching agent, a seminar for syllabi preparation, and an annual academic evaluation, are essential but cannot be considered the main ones.

Primary and secondary teachers also should have international experience. It is essential to open up their horizon towards education and give them chances to observe domestic education from an external point of view to absorb positive additions to their home base. Therefore, an international visitation or training program with international education expertise is vital for higher education lecturers and primary and secondary teachers. Moreover, welfare is another vital aspect. People generally cannot do their best in the workplace while their mind is at their dining table. Primary and secondary teachers in developing countries are paid less than higher education teaching agents. This is because primary and secondary school teachers most likely have lower education degrees than university-level teachers. Hence, it is not fair and morally correct to decide on wage level only based on the teacher's degree level since the nature of occupation is similar for educators regardless of the education level.

## Conclusion

To sum up, the grants increase school enrollment among high-risk students. Children receiving the scholarship were more likely to stay in school. The evaluation also showed that a \$45 scholarship was equally effective as a \$60 scholarship. The financial support policy for students with low economic backgrounds effectively prevents the dropout rate of poor students. Thus, financial support in the scholarship scheme, conducted by the cooperation of the Cambodian government and World Bank as a commitment to EFA, effectively reduces the opportunity cost of education. Scholarship recipients were less likely

to work for pay while attending school, and their families spent more on education-related items, such as books. Moreover, there was no evidence that their younger siblings were being pulled out of school to work, which means that, at a glance, the scholarship can prevent a severe domino effect on the poverty cycle for students with poor economic backgrounds.

The evidence convinced the government to apply the scholarship project to the scholarship's national scholarship program. However, student scholarship, by nature, seems to have no relevance with school quality, which positively affects the awardees' academic performance, yet it has proven effective in reducing the dropout ratio by diminishing education expenses. Although financial support may help poor students stay in school, scholarships cannot ensure improvement in academic performance. The teacher quality should share the same amount of focus to build better education.

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