

Project Update

Enhancing the Lives of People with Intellectual Disabilities, Cambodia



Children living with intellectual disabilities are provided with specialised support to assist them to develop life skills and access educational opportunities.



02 8918 4109



PO Box 193, North Sydney 2059



support@jesuitmission.org.au



www.jesuitmission.org.au

Overview

In Cambodia, especially in rural areas, many people with an intellectual disability face severe discrimination and stigma. Jesuit Mission works in partnership with local organisation, Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO), to implement the 'Enhancing the Life of People with Intellectual Disabilities' program.

Operating across nine districts in Battambang, Kompong Chhnang, Kandal and Banteay Meanchey Provinces the multifaceted program works with many stakeholders to create better outcomes for people living with disability.

This program ensures people with intellectual disabilities and their families can access the help they need to overcome barriers in everyday life; participate actively in their community and, ultimately, live a full life. The program provides vocational training, improvements to housing, access to healthcare and education services, and raises awareness of the rights of a person living with a disability.

With the support of Pilgrims100 **3220** benefited including **460 children** living with intellectual disabilities and/or autism.



Specialised educators teaching formation skills. Parental participation in care and education is also an important component of the program.

How is your gift making a difference?

- **A total 3220 people benefited** including 536 living with a disability.
- **460 children** living with intellectual disabilities and/or autism.
- **37% are female.** Other participants include family members, care workers and teachers.
- **72 people** living with a disability who received vocational training, can now generate an income to support their families
- **106 of school aged students** with intellectual disabilities and autism have been mainstreamed into Public School.
- **18 integrative classes** have been provided to **172 participants**
- **61% of participants** have access to free health care services,
- **Home-Based care** and education provided to **364 participants**, which also supports families to assist participants with future independence goals.
- 42 families received support for **housing improvements**.
- Physiotherapy treatments provided to **96 participants**, including educating parents in at home treatments.
- **51% of participants** have improved shown as direct result of Physiotherapy treatments.
- **147 students** received a nutritious meal each day in the Kampong Chhnang and Battambang provinces.
- **21 new families** have benefited from improved sanitation and/or access to clean water with **14 new families** in the Battambang province receiving water purifiers.
- Food relief provided to **145 families** experiencing short-term food shortages or those who have been impacted by natural disasters.
- Quarterly meetings were held throughout the year to **support parents and families** of participants, providing education, understanding basic rights of people with disabilities (PwD) and discussions on the role and responsibilities of families in ensuring that the dignity of PwD is upheld.



Thank you, Pilgrims 100, for your support

Thanks to the support of Pilgrims 100, the "Enhancing the Life of People with Intellectual Disabilities" program has made a significant impact across nine Cambodian districts. Your gift directly benefited **3,220 people**, including **460 children** living with intellectual disabilities and/or autism.

Your support has been instrumental in helping Jesuit Mission and Karuna Battambang Organisation (KBO) provide essential services, raise awareness, and empower individuals with disabilities to live full, dignified lives.

Hear Shrey's story

Shrey *

17-year-old Shrey is from a small village in Kampong Chhnang province. She lives with her parents and twin sister. Despite her twin being unaffected, Shrey lives with intellectual and physical disabilities. Her parents, Hai and Ka, are subsistence farmers. When the girls were younger the family frequently had insufficient food to eat.

Shrey's developmental issues became apparent when she was 15 months old. Unlike her sister, **Shrey couldn't roll, crawl, or walk by the age of three. She spent most of her time in bed.**

Her parent's strong beliefs in karma and past life actions led them to neglect modern medical advice. They initially relied on traditional treatments, which worsened her condition.



In 2012, at the age of five, Shrey began receiving services from the Karuna Battambang Organisation. Her mother observed that Shrey's body was unusually tight and inflexible. Special needs teachers identified her physical and emotional challenges, including difficulty walking. She also had social interaction issues crying every time she met new people. The community-based rehabilitation centres (CBR) provided crucial support, helping Shrey improve her self-care skills and social interactions. Despite initial struggles, with consistent care and support Shrey's condition gradually improved.

Her parents began to understand the importance of proper care and rehabilitation. This shift in perspective allowed Shrey to receive the necessary support to improve her quality of life.

At school, Shrey faced significant challenges. **Her classmates initially refused to call her by her name, referring to her by her disability instead.** Efforts were made to educate her classmates about her condition and promote inclusivity. **Over time, her classmates' attitudes changed, and they began to call her by her name and include her in activities.** This shift greatly improved Shrey's confidence and social interactions.



Shrey is happy now she is included in class activities and addressed by her name.

She has made significant progress in her physical abilities and social interactions. Shrey is enjoying grade 10 at her local High School.

Thanks to your generosity children living with disabilities have the opportunity for a better future. Through education and awareness programs the stigma directed towards people living with disability is reducing, enabling them to live a life with dignity. Shrey's story is a testament to the power of community support and the impact of proper care and rehabilitation. Thank you for your support.

**name has been changed*