



**Educational
Support to
Children of
Underserved
Populations
(ESCUP)**



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Site Exchanges and Study Tours



ESCUP partners include:

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I. Introduction

- Due to the partnership established between the MoEYS, UNICEF AND KAPE as well the work of Save the Children, Norway (who have a representative on the CFS Steering Committee of the MoEYS), a wide network of child friendly schools now exists in Cambodia. Many other NGOs such as Mlup Bytan and Samakum Krousar Yeung are animating education projects with close links to the child friendly school philosophy. This short module seeks to assist CFS animators in facilitating activities that enable both students and teachers to become more aware of activities taking place in other schools. It seeks to forge links between students of different schools as well as forge links between teachers of those schools involved in CFS activities.



Orientation for a visiting school cluster in another province

II. Objectives

- Students in different schools build links with each other through participating in a pen-pal program.
- Teachers develop a greater understanding of the many various elements that contribute to a child friendly school through participating in organized exchange visits to share ideas and experiences.

III. Resources Required

- CFS evaluation tool: Form B
- Handout: Suggestions on writing letters to our pen-pals
- Poster paper
- Markers
- Cellotape
- Envelopes
- Letters from students in another school (if available)

IV. Duration

- It is suggested that a session of perhaps 3 hours should take place for teachers or members of the community in order to prepare for a visit to another school. The duration of the actual visit may of course vary. A follow up session (also of perhaps 3 hours) may be organized after the visit to reflect on what was seen and discussed during the visit.

- An orientation for teachers on enabling children to write pen-pal letters may take place for one hour during a technical meeting. The teacher could devote one Khmer language lesson to guiding children in writing the initial letter. Once a habit of writing letters is established (complemented by an efficient delivery system) it is suggested that children are encouraged to become self-directed in maintaining correspondence.

V. Procedure

Preparation session for visits to other schools

- The actual logistics of the visit will depend largely on geographical and transport consideration (and is not a focus of this module). However, it is important that participants in a visit to other schools consider the issues within their own school that they hope to improve on as a result of the visit.
- It is suggested that a CFS animator begin the session by simply asking “*what do you expect to see or learn through the visit?*” Ideas should be recorded on the blackboard.
- The animator may then wish to introduce other issues and elements that make up a child friendly school. He may also wish to sharpen the participants' own observation powers. A useful way of achieving both of these goals at the same time is to ask participants to participate in a self-appraisal of the child friendliness of their own school. The facilitator should ask participants to divide into small groups of three people. Form B of the CFS evaluation instrument should be distributed to each group. Each group should be given a little over one hour to complete the form. Participants should not feel compelled to complete the form sitting in the same room but may move around and seek information as appropriate.

(**Note:** If the purpose of the visit is purely to study technical and pedagogical issues, the animator should use **Form A**)

- Each group should then identify what they feel are weaknesses within their own school. The CFS animator should encourage the participants to investigate these issues in the school they are about to visit.

(**Note:** The animator should not allow participants to use this form in the school they are visiting for fear that the host school feels that it is being evaluated by the visiting school.)

- After the visit has taken place, the participants should return to the list of weaknesses. Can they identify solutions? What resources do they need to put these solutions in place? When can work begin? Who is responsible for coordinating the work?
- The animator should also ask participants whether the visit highlighted other weaknesses in their own school previously not identified. Alternatively, were there other interesting activities that could be copied or adapted to their own school?

Building links between schools through a pen-pal program for students

- The CFS animator should briefly explain that there are many other schools participating in the CFS program. Children should be encouraged to write letters to a second school. District officials can organize delivery of these letters to other

districts and schools at meetings involving officials from other districts within a province. Animating agencies can organize delivery of letters to other provinces.

- The animator should emphasize that one of the goals of this activity is to encourage a child's own curiosity about other places and people as well as provide an outlet for their creativity in a very practical way. The animator should briefly brainstorm the unique features of different areas to highlight the benefit of children being able to exchange information with each other.
- The animator could suggest to teachers that children could at first write letters as a group together. The animator should distribute the following handout to teachers as a tool to assist them in guiding children in writing a letter for the first time.

Writing letters to our pen-pal friends

- ⌚ What will we write about this time?
- ⌚ First, lets remember to ask about our pen-pal friends' health and tell them how we are!
- ⌚ Finished – O.K., lets pick some of the following information to tell our friends:
 - our names
 - where we live
 - how long we have been friends
 - the place we are writing this letter
 - what our parents do
 - the name of our school
 - the size of our school
 - the name of our teacher
 - the location of our school
 - the things in our school (library, RC, playground)
 - things we sometimes do after school (IPM, life-skills activities, borrowing library books, playing football, playing volleyball, playing traditional games, chores to help our parents)
 - something funny that happened
 - interesting places some of the people in our group have visited
- ⌚ Nearly forgot – we should answer the questions they asked us in their last letter. Lets read their letter again!
- ⌚ What might we ask our pen-pal friends in the other school?
 - is your school in the town or the countryside?
 - how do you travel to school?
 - did someone help you write the last letter?
 - has anyone in your group ever visited Phnom Penh?
- ⌚ How will we finish our letter? Lets say goodbye and ask them to write back soon. Maybe we can put a nice drawing or picture in the envelope.
- ⌚ Lets make sure everyone in our group has signed the letter