

# **Contract Teachers in Cambodia**

by

**Richard Geeves**

World Education/Cambodia

**Kurt Bredenberg**

Kampuchean Action for Primary Education – KAPE

## **Abstract**

Contract Teachers were a prominent feature in Cambodian rural primary schools from 1996-1997 until 2001-2002. At their peak they comprised 9% of the total teaching force in primary schools. Contract Teachers were introduced as an emergency strategy to cope with the unanticipated shortages of teachers which resulted from uni-dimensional administrative and educational policies and the expansion of education into former conflict areas. Continuing to appoint Contract Teachers also enabled the MOEYS to address chronic teacher shortages in many rural and remote areas characterized by a widening "gap" between the number of primary teachers and classes. Although popular at a local level because of the opportunities for livelihoods they created and because they introduced some flexibility in staffing, Contract Teacher numbers were heavily cut back in 2001-2002 and again in 2002-2003, as a result of decisions made at national level. The use of Contract Teachers had raised awkward questions about teacher quality and educational efficiency. Contract Teachers had also been targeted by some MOEYS officials in corrupt schemes which gained widespread publicity.

To address continuing teacher shortages in Cambodia the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has come to rely heavily on the strategy of double-shift teaching. Many rural schools now depend on teachers who, in theory, carry out two four-hour blocks of face-to-face teaching each day. The Contract Teachers who remain after the cuts of 2001-02 and 2002-03 are concentrated in former conflict and remote areas, primarily because these are the places in which the MoEYS has had most difficulty implementing its policies of re-deploying experienced teachers, or deploying neophyte teachers, to remote schools, despite offering a variety of incentives. Another strategy, of matching places in teacher education institutions with students, especially women, from areas suffering teacher shortages, offers better prospects for addressing the issue in the long term. It does not rely on special financial incentives to attract and retain teachers from other areas and promotes accountability between school and community.

The MoEYS currently aims to provide fully certified teachers to all primary schools in the country. Focusing on developing local teachers (including teachers on contracts - especially in ethnic minority schools) may prove a pragmatic complimentary strategy. In an under-resourced education system, local teachers already have the socio-economic support in place to remain in the area and they also facilitate community involvement in education. In many of the more remote areas, where children speak ethnic minority languages, the locally-hired teachers can bring vernacular instruction and culturally relevant content into the classroom. Development could take the form of offering on-the-job training to local people to retain them in schools as para-professionals or assisting them to gain full teacher status through participation in teacher education.

**Phnom Penh  
November 2004**

## Contents

<b>1. Background – education in Cambodia</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1. Study Rationale and Methodological Considerations	3
1.2. Background to the education (school) system	3
1.3. Evolution of teaching service	4
1.4. Current profile of the teaching service	6
<b>2. Contract Teachers and the issue of teacher shortage</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1. The origin and nature of teacher shortages in Cambodia	8
2.2. Contract teachers as an interim strategy for addressing teacher shortages	10
<b>3. The post-reform context: alternative strategies to address teacher shortages</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1. Reducing non-teaching staff by redeployment	12
3.2. Redeployment of certified teachers and other incentives	13
3.3. Double Shifting	14
3.4. Other allowances and incentives	16
3.5. Selective entry into Provincial Teacher Training Centres	16
3.6. Increasing pupil-class ratios	18
<b>4. The status and management of Contract Teachers in Cambodia</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1. The distribution and effect of Contract Teachers on Teacher Shortages, 1997-2003	18
4.2. Management arrangements relating to Contract Teachers	20
4.3. Problems of Corruption	21
4.4. Quality and effectiveness issues	22
4.5. The special case of teachers and schools in remote ethnic minority communities	23
<b>5. Conclusion: Contract Teachers and their future in primary education in Cambodia</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1. Mainstream Provinces with Isolated, Remote Communities: The need for local teachers and the effectiveness of education reform strategies	24
5.2. Remote Provinces with Ethnic Minorities and Former Conflict Areas: MoEYS policies in areas of teacher shortage where Contract Teachers are still significant	25
Notes	27
References	29
Contact details	31

### Attachments

1. Contract Teachers Table 1
2. Contract Teachers Table 2

### Tables and Figures

<i>Map</i>	Cambodia - 24 Provinces/Municipalities and main re-integration and remote areas	5
<i>Tables</i>		
Table 1.1	Changes in Primary School staff by demographic category	6
Table 1.2	Current Education levels of Primary School Teachers	8
Table 2.1	Graduates of Provincial Teacher Training Centres, 1996-2004	8
Table 2.2	Numbers of Contract Teachers by Province 1996-97 to 2003-04	10
Table 3.1	PTTC intakes and graduands from 9+2 stream, 1997-2003	17
Table 3.2	Students in teacher education institutions, 2000-01 to 2002-03	18
Table 4.1	Proportion of Teacher Shortages Addressed by Contract Teachers, 1997-2003	19
Table 4.2	Relative numbers of Contract and Certified Teachers in selected provinces, 1997-2003	19
Table 4.3	Contract Teachers as a percentage of primary teachers in selected provinces, 1997-2003	20
<i>Figures</i>		
Figure 1.1	Changes in Gender Parity among Primary School Teachers, 1993-2002	7
Figure 2.1	Changes in Teacher Shortages by Demographic region, 1997-2003	9
Figure 2.2	Summary of Policy Evolution Affecting Teacher Shortages in Cambodia	12
Figure 3.1	Numbers of non-teaching staff relative to teaching staff in primary schools	13

## **1. Background**

### ***1.1. Study Rationale and Methodological Considerations***

The present paper was commissioned by the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) as part of a broader study on the impact of Contract Teachers on the quality, equity, and efficiency of the education systems in which they are used. The analysis provided in this particular document is one of three country monographs that attempts to illustrate how contract teachers have affected, for better or worse, the provision of education service in Cambodia's formal education sector and how the peculiarities of the country context have impacted on the overall evolution of the strategy. The study in particular examines the success of the Contract Teacher Strategy in Cambodia in relation to other interventions, what the problems were, and why all of these strategies have evolved in the direction that they have. Data collection methodologies used in the study relied primarily on secondary data sources and interviews with key informants both in and out of government. Some very limited primary data collection activities were also undertaken during the course of the study, consisting mainly of a small-scale attitudinal survey of about 80 primary school principals in selected localities. Secondary data sources covered a range of publications including government reports, statistical yearbooks, and circulars as well as newspaper articles, agency publications, and project reports.

### ***1.2. The Cambodian Education System***

Since 1996 the formal education system in Cambodia has followed a 6-3-3 structure with the first 9 years comprising the basic education cycle. Between the years 1979 and 1996, when the country was trying to put the educational system back together again following its virtual destruction under the Khmer Rouge (1975-79), the structure of general education changed 3 times (4-3-3 to 5-3-3 to 6-3-3). Under Article 68 of the 1993 National Constitution all citizens are guaranteed free access to a basic education although making this a reality is still some years away. Public education is co-educational with mixed sex groupings in most classrooms.

The Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) manages education throughout the country. The main responsibility for schools rests with the Directorate-General of Education and its Departments of Early Childhood Education (ECE), Primary Education, Secondary Education, Pedagogical Research (curriculum) and Teacher Training. Responsibility for policy development and curriculum is still highly centralized despite an official rhetoric of decentralization. There are twenty-four Provinces and Municipalities in Cambodia and each has a Provincial/Municipal Office of Education (POE), which exercises control over schools within the province, including teacher appointments and deployments (see *Map*, p.5). There are eighteen Provincial Teacher Training Centers (PTTCs) across the country, which prepare student teachers for the teaching service in schools. Within provinces, District Offices of Education (DOEs) exercise direct supervision of primary schools (secondary schools are overseen at provincial level). The 185 DOEs vary greatly in size and resources from large offices overseeing more than 50 schools to very small one or two person offices with only a few small schools to supervise. In the more populous, lowland areas, groups of neighbouring schools meet together for administrative and professional exchange under a school cluster structure. Clusters were established in Cambodia in 1993 in order to facilitate efforts to share resources and foster capacity building. At the end of the 2003-2004 academic year there were 939 Clusters comprising 6,063 primary schools across the country.

Schooling in Cambodia continues to be an overwhelmingly public sector activity. Many of the private primary schools that exist in the country are operated by minority groups within the population (such as Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cham), or are designed to serve the international community. Most recently, there has been a proliferation of private primary schools in the capital city as an alternative to the generally low quality of education provided by the public schools. These schools, however, are generally the domain of a growing, but still small, urban middle class. For the majority of Cambodian

children state schools provide the only opportunity for an education. In 2003-04, there were 59 271 personnel in the state-run primary sector with 49 603 classified as permanent teaching staff.<sup>1</sup>

The most important change in the education system in recent years has been the introduction of comprehensive planning under the Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP). The Ministry describes it as an education reform process undertaken with a sector wide approach (SWAp) to planning. The ESP is a rolling five year plan first developed by the MoEYS for the period 2001-2005. The ESSP is an accompanying operational plan which sets out in detail how the government will work in partnership with donors and NGOs to achieve the aims of the ESP. The production of the ESSP each year is a Ministry-Donor-NGO process which involves an assessment of progress, a review of the Ministry's plan for the next twelve months and a commitment to joint action. The Ministry's program is organized into a number of discrete components which are collectively known as the Priority Action Program (PAP).<sup>2</sup> The PAP is actually a funding mechanism for these components, delivering funds for interventions designed to promote equity, quality, and efficiency of education as part of a decentralized, pro-poor approach, consistent with the Government's broader social and economic development agenda. From implementation in ten provinces in 2000-01, PAP went nationwide in 2001-02. There are in all twelve PAP programs covering a wide range of interventions.<sup>3</sup>

The ESP-ESSP provide a focus for planning aimed at moving the education system away from the fragmented, heavily donor-driven interventions operating under different project implementation units which had characterized education assistance to Cambodia during the 1990s. A catchphrase often used to describe this shift is *from donorship to ownership*. Reforms have included the provision of operating budgets to schools, the abolition of registration fees, and special incentives to the poor to attend school (e.g. scholarships). Although there have been significant achievements, especially a surge in enrolment, the impact of the reform process has been limited in many areas. It has had little success in resolving chronic problems such as late and partial disbursement of budgeted funds and the quality of provincial and local management. Its heavy emphasis on achieving quantitative impacts and demonstrating efficiencies and cost effectiveness has also been criticized for pushing attention to issues of quality to one side. In spite of these flaws, the ESP-ESSP initiative represents a break with the past, a willingness to acknowledge the realities of an under-resourced education system, and the inequities which accompany it, and an acceptance of the need for greater accountability. It also represents a real step towards greater self-sufficiency for the Cambodian educational system.

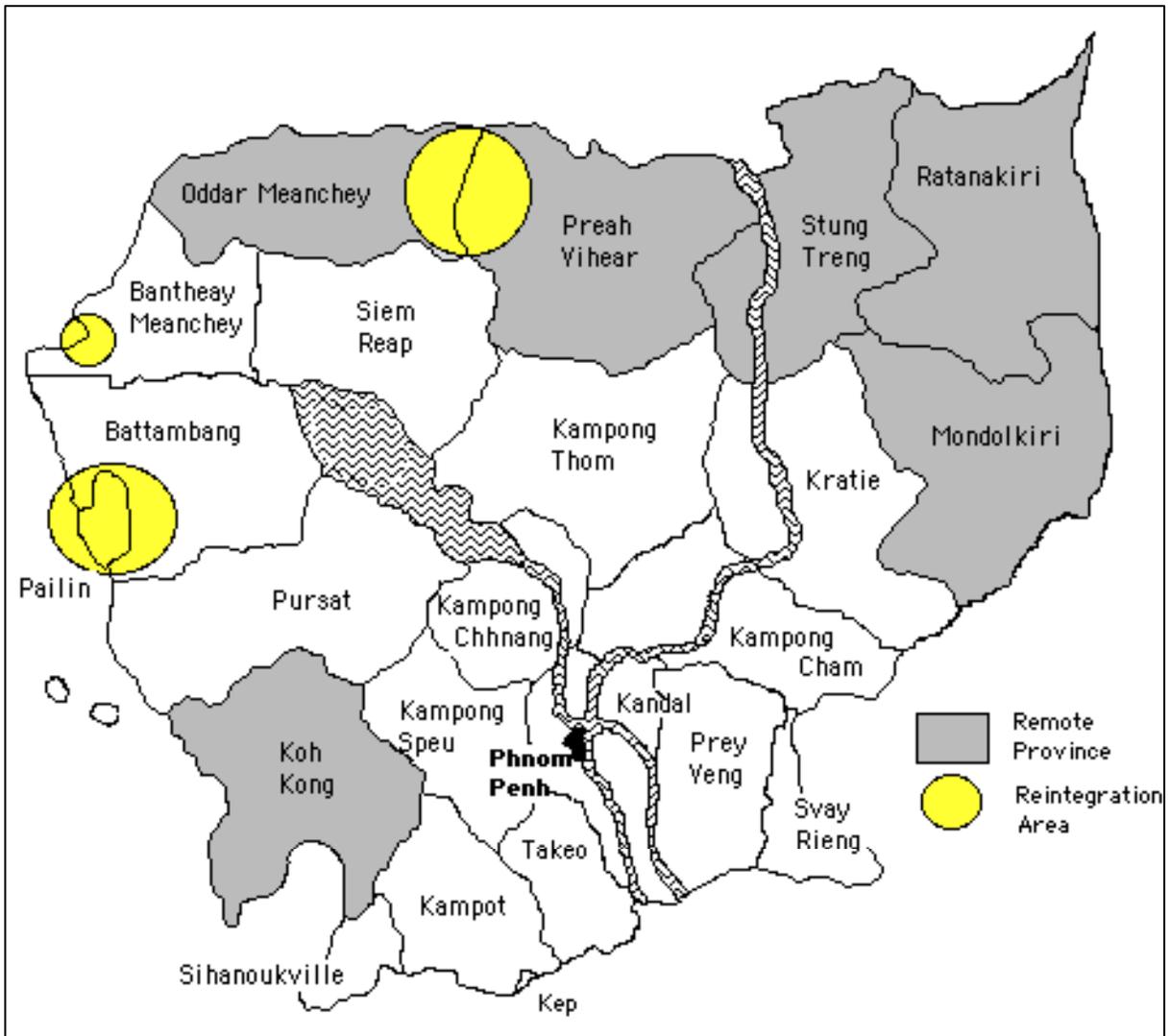
Perhaps the most important outcome of the reform has been the dramatic growth in primary school enrolments, particularly in rural areas. Primary school enrolment increased from 2.4 million in 2000 to a peak enrolment of 2.75 million in 2004. This trend not only reflects normal population growth but actual improvements in access, partly through higher levels of participation in areas where schools are already accessible and partly through the building of new schools in areas never served before. Ministry figures also show that net enrolment rate (NER) has risen from 83.8% to 90.1% since the year 2000. The expansion in enrolment at primary level has also had significant implications for teacher supply, pupil class ratio (PCR) and intake requirements at teacher training institutions, all of which are yet to be fully addressed. Enrolment at lower secondary school level, however, has changed only marginally from 17 % to 21%, reflecting rigidities in both available supply, failure to enforce reform provisions that seek to abolish unofficial fees, and increasing opportunity costs for students (Bredenberg 2003: 1).

### ***1.3. Evolution of the Teaching Service***

Following the re-opening of schools in 1979, the Cambodian government faced the necessity of recruiting thousands of teachers from a population whose educated members had been targeted by the previous regime. Many pre-1975 teachers had either been killed, had emigrated, or were seeking shelter in refugee camps on the Thai border. As a result, the government relied on an appointment

system whereby any literate person could be recruited as a teacher at the discretion of local authorities. Such individuals underwent crash in-services and were immediately posted to improvised classrooms throughout the countryside. These teachers were known as *kru jat-tang* or appointed teachers. For much of the 1980s, these teachers formed the backbone of the teaching corps. However, as the urgent need for teachers abated and teacher training centres began to satisfy the staffing needs of primary schools, the direct appointment system was discontinued during the mid-1990s.

*Map of Cambodia showing 24 Provinces/Municipalities, and main reintegration and remote areas<sup>4</sup>*



The need for local teacher appointment slackened as sufficient numbers of teachers were put in place and the government began to consider longer term investments in the teaching force. Accordingly, massive in-service training programs were initiated in all provinces during the early 1990s that would eventually lead to wide scale certification of many of the *kru jat-tang*. This move was partly technical, designed to improve standards in classrooms, but most of the content of these up-grading courses was aimed at lifting the teachers' own general educational level rather than on developing pedagogical skills. The campaign also had a significant political motive as the former communist party moved to win favor with teachers by facilitating their formal absorption into the civil service through their

certification as teachers. These efforts became particularly intense in the run-up to the first democratic elections brokered by the international community in mid 1993. Teachers who completed this inservicing became known as *kru bompenh-rubamon*, or equivalency certified teachers.

As the process of *ad hoc* appointments rapidly expanded the teaching force during the 1980s, the government also re-established teacher training facilities in many locations. These Provincial Teacher Training Centres (PTTCs) were strategically established for primary teacher trainees at provincial and municipal level to facilitate local recruitment and posting to primary schools. Eventually, eighteen such facilities were established. Six Regional Teacher Training Centres (RTTCs) were also established for the training of Lower Secondary School teachers with one centre serving two to four different provinces. These innovations marked an important change from the pre-war regime in which primary and secondary school teachers were trained in national facilities at central level and posted to the provinces. Initially, primary school teacher trainees required only seven years of basic education to enter PTTCs and complete one year of pre-service training (7+1). Over the years, entry levels and the duration of pre-service teacher education at these institutions was gradually upgraded from 7+1 to 8+2, then to 11+2 in 1994 before arriving at 12+2 in 1998, which is the current standard.<sup>5</sup> Teachers graduating from TTCs are known as *kru bondoh-bondal* or pedagogically trained teachers. They tend to be the best educated primary teachers and the most familiar with the child-centred, activity-based approaches endorsed by the MoEYS since 1996.<sup>6</sup>

The provincially and regionally based TTCs were also important in that most student teachers from rural areas did not have to travel too far outside their home provinces, with the attendant costs, to be trained. Although the MOEYS received advice in the early 1990s that they should consolidate the eighteen TTCs along the same lines as the six RTTCs, mainly for reasons of cost effectiveness, the Ministry chose not to do so (Duggan, 1994: 3, 18-9). This proved an important decision as subsequent teacher shortages, outlined below, would have been exacerbated had two-thirds of the PTTCs been closed down and a higher proportion of student teachers drawn from major population centers.

During the late 1990s, severe teacher shortages again began to characterize the educational system. These shortages had been predicted in 1994, and by 1997 were described as “critical” (Duggan 1994: 1, f/n 1; TTD 1997: 22). That year the gap between the number of classes and the available number of teachers was 2,161 or about 5.0 % of the entire teaching corps at primary level. This had risen to 11.1% by 1998 and to 16.5% by 1999. To bridge this gap, the government re-introduced a practice of direct appointment of teachers in 1997; they became known as *kru kij-sanaya* or contract teachers. They were recruited by local School Directors and paid by the state (following a lengthy approval process) under a fixed contract of one year. Contract Teachers were drawn from several populations. One major category consisted of former teachers who had recently been retired as part of a broad effort to enforce retirement regulations of the civil service. Other important recruiting sources were young people who had studied to Grade 12 but had not passed the national Grade 12 examination. In remote areas such teachers had often to be recruited from people with primary or lower secondary educational backgrounds. Teachers recruited under these conditions, then, formed the last major category of teachers to make up the Cambodian teaching force.

#### ***1.4. Current profile of the Teaching Service***

**Demographic Characteristics:** As noted above, the vast majority of teachers in Cambodia work in rural primary schools. Of the 49,603 working teachers in 2003-04, 76% were working in rural areas compared with 21.1% in urban areas and only 2.8% in remote areas. The number of rural teachers has also been increasing most rapidly with a reported change of 28.7% reported during the period 1997-2004 compared with declines in the number of urban teachers of 9.0% and 44.1% among remote teachers (see **Table 1.1**). The apparently dramatic decrease in remote teacher numbers between 1998-99 and 1999-00 was actually due to a reclassification of some remote areas as rural, reflecting the conflict

resolution of the late 1990s in which insecure areas that had been controlled by the Khmer Rouge came under firm government control. Improved security conditions facilitated the development of infrastructure leading to the reclassification of many areas from remote to rural.

**Table 1.1: Changes in Primary School Teaching Staff by Demographic Category**

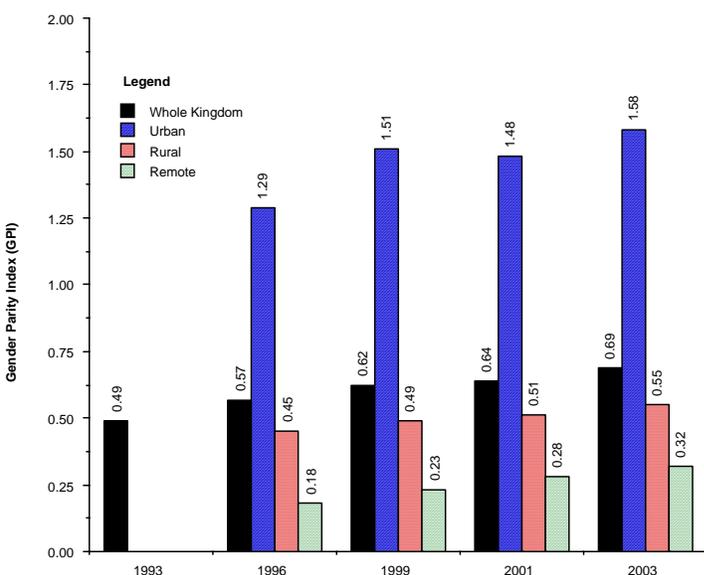
Year	Whole Kingdom	Urban	Rural	Remote
1997-98	43,282	11,519	29,307	2,456
1998-99	43,530	11,775	29,266	2,489
1999-00	43,751	9,207	33,777	767
2000-01	45,152	9,605	34,628	919
2001-02	47,654	10,325	36,343	986
2002-03	48,433	10,301	36,940	1,192
2003-04	49,603	10,483	37,746	1,374
Change since 1997	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>- 9.0%</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>- 44.1%</b>

Source: Education Statistics and Indicators, MoEYS (EMIS)

**Pupil Teacher Ratio:** The overall number of primary school teachers has increased by 14.6 % during the period 1997-2003. This compares with increases in enrolment of 36.6% and 34.2% in the number of classes during the same period. Given this pace of enrolment growth against the increase in teaching staff, Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTR) have been increasing steadily since 1997 as the teaching force moved from a state of equilibrium in the early 1990s to one of severe shortages in the later part of the decade. In this respect, PTR increased from 46.5 : 1 in 1997 to 56.8 : 1 in 2001 before leveling off to 56.7 : 1 in the following year. Increases in PTR have been most dramatic in rural and remote schools where government reported them to be 60.2 : 1 and 63.4 : 1, respectively in 2002. In addition, it should be remembered that national PTR levels tend to mask regional variations throughout the country, which reach as high as 95:1 in some provinces.

**Gender Balance:** Of the 49,603 primary school teachers reported to be in service by government in 2003/4, 29,405 or 59% are men. National gender parity levels among primary school teachers have increased by about 41% since 1993 (**Figure 1.1**). Much of this increase, however, is accounted for by the fact that the country was starting from a very low base. In this respect, gender parity indices (GPI)

**Figure 1.1: Change in Gender Parity among Primary School Teachers, 1993-2003**



were 0.49 in 1993, increasing to 0.69 by 2003. Nevertheless, GPI remains perilously low in rural and especially remote areas while in urban schools the reverse trend is apparent. GPI levels in urban areas exceed 1.0 due in part to recruitment procedures that favor urban dwelling females since gender parity levels at secondary level tend to be much higher among urban students. As will be more fully explained below, a policy introduced by the government in the late 1990s to raise educational standards at Teacher Training Colleges from 10 to 12 years of basic education inadvertently exacerbated the tendency of recruitment policies to constrict the number of female candidates from rural and remote areas where there are few upper secondary

schools. This, combined with inefficient teacher deployment practices and a tendency by society to see urban female teachers as “vulnerable” in insecure rural areas, has led to inflated numbers of women teachers in urban schools.

**Educational Background:** The vast majority of primary school teachers have post-primary educations. Government reports that only 3,521 or 7.1% did not study further than primary school (*Table 1.2*). However, a disproportionate number of these teachers are concentrated in remote areas where they comprise approximately 42% of all teachers. About 70% of primary school teachers have studied to the lower secondary school level, compared with 23.0% with upper secondary school educations, and a mere 0.2% with university level educations. Government also reports that most teachers have received some form of pedagogical training; only 1,718 or 3.5% have not received such training. These statistics, however, do not specify categories or levels of such training, such as those who studied at teacher training centres and those who have received only in-service training.

*Table 1.2: Education levels of Primary School Teachers, 2003*

Location	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Graduate	Without ped. training
Urban	445	6 723	3 226	89	229
Rural	2,495	27,188	8,051	12	1,394
Remote	581	651	142	0	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,521</b>	<b>34,562</b>	<b>11,419</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1,718</b>

Source: EMIS 2003-04

## 2. Contract Teachers and the Issue of Teacher Shortages

### 2.1. The origin and nature of teacher shortages in Cambodia

As a result of local teacher appointment practices and TTC intakes, which were based on district quotas<sup>7</sup>, the teaching force achieved equilibrium during the early 1990s. That is, teacher supply more or less matched needs, with teacher shortages generally the exception rather than the norm in most places. Accordingly, PTTC intakes were much lower during this period in comparison with the rest of the decade (see *Table 2.1*) (TTD 2004: 11).

*Table 2.1: Graduates of Provincial Teacher Training Centres, 1996-2004 (decline years in gray tone)*

Year	1994-5	1995-6	1996-7	1997-8	1998-9	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Graduates	912	981	1 141	1 306	867	1 023	1 880	1 754	1 544	1 139	1 380

Source: TTD, 2004 : 11

Policy-led changes, however, broke this nexus in the late 1990s. One of these changes reflected an agreement between the two power-sharing political parties in 1996 to distribute political patronage in the form of teacher positions through a procedure that had to appear to be impartial. The procedure agreed upon to distribute such patronage was to enforce a provision for mandatory retirement at the age of 55 (and 50 for women) which had existed since 1979, regardless of political affiliation. This policy forced many teachers to leave the teaching service over a very short period of time. Unfortunately, many of the positions in the countryside that were vacated by the forcibly retired, locally recruited teachers had little appeal to patronage recipients and went unfilled.<sup>8</sup> As a result, PTR levels in the countryside rose sharply. The age of retirement was soon lifted to 60 but, combined with inefficient and routinely corrupt teacher deployment practices, PTR levels in rural and remote areas never recovered their previous levels. Indeed, with the jump in enrolments caused by the education reform program in 2000, they have become even worse and are not expected to improve for several years.

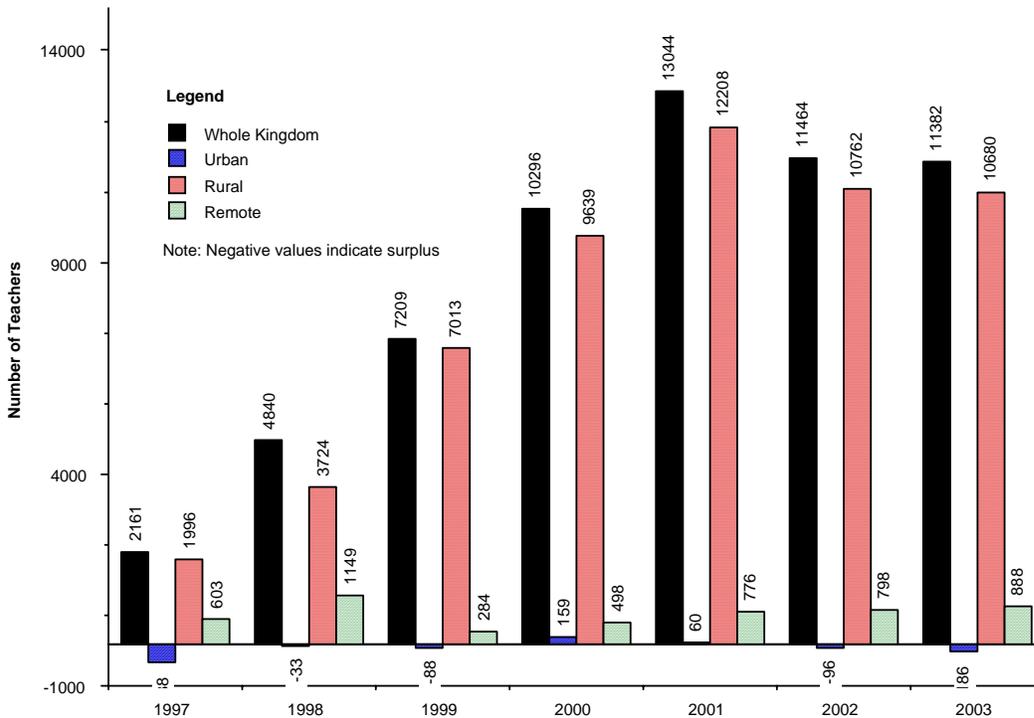
Another key policy change that contributed to situations of chronic teacher shortage was the decision by the MoEYS to raise entry requirements in PTTCs to 11 years of basic education in 1994. This

move, though superficially defensible on quality improvement grounds, proved to be based on a uni-dimensional analysis of the context. The change to 11 and then to 12 years of basic education was intended to raise educational standards but underestimated the effect on recruitment. In combination with the renewed enforcement of retirement policy, it also served to exacerbate teacher shortages in the countryside. This was because the requirement of twelve years of formal education for admission to PTTCs meant that very few candidates could be recruited from rural areas, most of which lacked secondary school facilities. Even if there was a lower secondary school within a radius of 15 km of rural population centers, upper secondary schools were far less common.<sup>9</sup> This had the effect of limiting candidate recruitment to urban and semi-urban areas with very negative ramifications for posting graduates to rural and remote areas where they are most needed. While teacher salaries remained consistently low (as they have been now since the early 1990s), it was difficult for any teacher to go to work in such areas without the support of an extended family, existing housing, land for subsistence farming and gardening and so on.<sup>10</sup>

A final factor that upset the equilibrium between the number of classes and the number of teachers was the gradual cessation of conflict in Cambodia following elections in 1993. Although the last remnants of an insurgency associated with the Khmer Rouge remained active until 1998, much of the country steadily returned to government control. As this re-integration of formerly insecure areas gathered momentum, the number of schools also increased, boosting class numbers and the need for teachers. The inability of the system to keep pace with these events contributed to a growing teacher shortage that eventually led to the re-introduction of locally appointed teachers and other emergency measures.

Teacher shortages, calculated as the difference between the total number of teaching staff and the total number of classes, have been rising steadily since 1997 (see *Figure 2.1*). The gap between the number of classes and teachers is currently estimated at 11,382 for the whole kingdom. This figure represents a remarkable 23% of the entire teaching force. These shortages peaked in 2001 and then eased slightly in the following years. They nevertheless remain profound, particularly in rural areas where they accounted for 27.4% of all rural teachers in 2001 and 28.3% in 2003. Shortages do not exist in urban

**Figure 2.1:** Changes in Teacher Shortages by Demographic Region, 1997-2003



Source: EMIS, 1997-2003

areas where slight surpluses of teachers were reported in every year except 2000 and 2001. The main reasons for this appear to be that urban areas have been supplying a disproportionate number of PTTC entrants and that teachers prefer to work in towns and cities because of the greater opportunities they offer, both for private teaching or other income generating work and for upgrading their own teaching and personal education. Although teacher shortages do not appear to be very great in relative terms in remote areas, they are even more serious when looked at as a proportion of the entire teaching force serving these schools – in 2003, teacher shortages comprised approximately 65% of the teaching force in remote areas.

### **2.2. Contract teachers as an interim strategy for addressing teacher shortages**

Contract Teachers first appeared in MoEYS statistics in 1997-1998. Numbers fluctuated during the following four years before falling sharply in most of the twenty-four provinces and municipalities across the country in 2001-02 and falling again in 2002-03 (see **Table 2.2**). Movements in some provinces, however, defied national trends. Part of the explanation for this relates to the political evolution of Cambodia in the 1990s and decisions that were made to bring together factions with histories of bitter rivalry and open conflict. Other factors, however, also emerge. These include features which have long characterized government in the country, particularly the influence of patronage systems and a tolerance, oftentimes an expectation, that public office would be used for rent seeking. It is in this context that the MOEYS embarked on its educational reform process and in which expediency, efficiency and quality have jostled for prominence, often with unexpected results.

**Table 2.2: Numbers of Contract Teachers by Province/Demographic Area 1996-97 to 2003-04**

<b>Province</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>
Banteay Meanchey	113	474	199	398	540	223	118
Battambang	391	707	352	391	357	113	166
Kg Cham	732	942	560	750	644	64	79
Kg Chhnang	14	45	24	55	135	0	0
Kg Speu	130	248	421	347	538	88	99
Kg Thom	12	63	140	267	148	8	0
Kampot	116	238	103	114	110	4	4
Kandal	121	164	217	125	107	4	3
Kep	24	42	0	16	22	0	0
Koh Kong	24	56	67	70	109	86	54
Kratie	7	23	13	36	38	5	4
Mondul Kiri	11	10	8	9	32	15	5
Otdar Meanchey	--	--	36	154	322	187	99
Pailin	0	0	0	2	36	0	0
Phnom Penh	5	5	4	3	0	6	0
Preah Vihear	10	19	8	8	31	0	38
Prey Veng	81	115	92	100	137	13	3
Pursat	14	39	33	120	110	3	11
Ratanak Kiri	16	32	29	40	87	95	78
Siemreap	311	487	313	480	505	363	388
Sihanoukville	48	92	62	12	29	0	0
Stung Treng	6	20	36	39	49	2	0
Svay Rieng	84	46	47	33	57	7	3
Takeo	66	268	103	115	71	7	0
<b>Whole Kingdom</b>	<b>2 366</b>	<b>4 135</b>	<b>2 867</b>	<b>3 684</b>	<b>4 214</b>	<b>1 292</b>	<b>1 152</b>
Urban	293	517	146	159	233	56	28
Rural	1 656	2 771	2 604	3 254	3 485	907	865
Remote	387	847	117	271	496	329	259

Note : Otdar Meanchey Province brought under government control from 1998

Source : EMIS 1997-2003

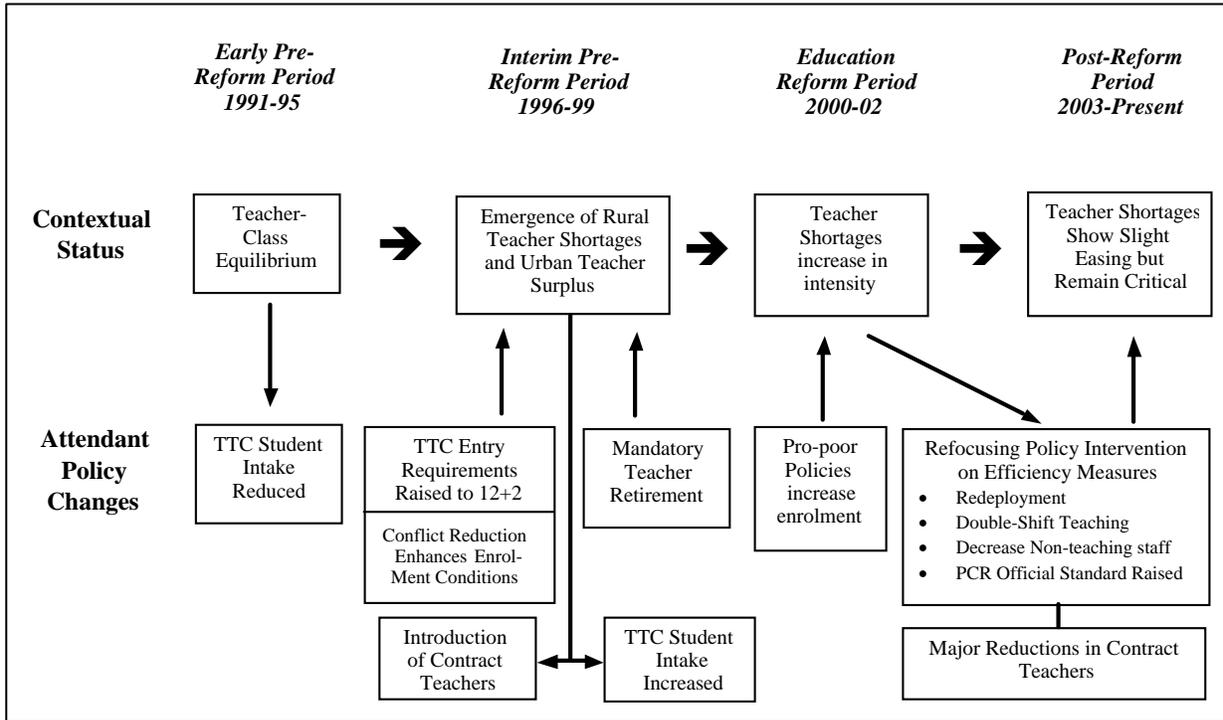
The impact on teacher supply of enforcing the retirement provisions and raising entry requirements for PTTCs has already been discussed. Another factor that can be clearly seen in the statistical returns is the expansion of the national government's control into former Khmer Rouge base areas and contested areas, from 1996-97 onwards. The settlement with the Ieng Sary faction based in Pailin in 1996 and the re-establishment of government control over the Province of Otdar Meanchey following the death of Pol Pot and the capture of Ta Mok in 1998 were the two most dramatic events. Other former Khmer Rouge communities in remote areas of Kompong Speu, Kompong Chhnang, Pursat and Siem Reap were also re-integrated. People in a number of districts in Siem Reap Province, who had long lived with insecurity and in which schooling had been confined to the main towns, were also expressing strong interest in rejoining the state education system. These small communities were eager to participate in developing schools and did so through community construction projects and the identification, and payment, of local volunteer teachers.<sup>11</sup>

Contract teachers proved a useful mechanism for the MOEYS to respond to these political developments, especially in the case of re-integration areas. In those areas, of course, there were very few retired teachers available for employment and the formal educational levels of the population were low. Teachers employed on contract were the mainstay of the teaching service in these areas in the early years of re-integration. Some of the contract teachers were people from the locality who had experience in programs for children organized under the Khmer Rouge, although these could scarcely be described as 'education'. These recruits had low levels of personal, formal education and no pedagogical training. Many others were young people attracted to the former conflict areas from distant provinces by the prospect of cheap land and other economic opportunities. Contract teachers in schools in Anlong Veng District of Otdar Meanchey in 2000-2001, for example, included a number of young men from Takeo, a lowland province in the south of the country, long under government control. Many of the recruits in this group had High School Diplomas (successful completion of Grade 9) and one or two had matriculated from Upper Secondary Schools with a Baccalaureat.<sup>12</sup>

Co-incidentally, reviews of the education sector were pointing to the extreme disparities of school access between lowland and remote provinces, anomalies which were also highlighted by the MoEYS participation in the EFA process. This was an issue which, although recognized before, had been given low priority because of other, urgent needs. Contract Teachers were also a useful device for addressing this problem and, in 2004, are still the Ministry's main strategy for the staffing of remote area schools.

In the following three to four years, however, the "gap" which had opened up between the number of teachers and the number of classes in the mid-1990s continued to widen. The initial factors leading to the gap have already been discussed at length, namely changes in PTTC recruitment policies, mandatory retirement, and enhanced enrolment conditions resulting from conflict resolution. A new factor, however, began to intensify the gap. It was related to the nationwide educational reform process with a pro-poor focus launched in 2000-01. The process was immediately successful in boosting primary school enrolment, retention and promotion rates and reducing repetition. Contract teacher numbers continued to rise as a response to these pressures and to a fresh emphasis on EFA after Dakar. Contract teacher numbers reached their highest levels in 2001. Then, over the next two years, they fell dramatically. The reductions in the number of contract teachers since 2001 were brought about by a decision at national level to re-orient policy interventions towards greater efficiency in the use of existing resources. These measures included more effective deployment of personnel, double shifting, increases in class size, and other interventions. The rationale for the spectacular change in direction included concerns about the internal efficiency of the teaching service, teacher quality, and corruption. The interaction between teacher shortages and the evolution of policy context in Cambodia are summarized in *Figure 2.2*.

Figure 2.2: Summary of Policy Evolution Affecting Teacher Shortages in Cambodia



### 3. The Post-reform Context: Alternative Strategies to Address Teacher Shortages

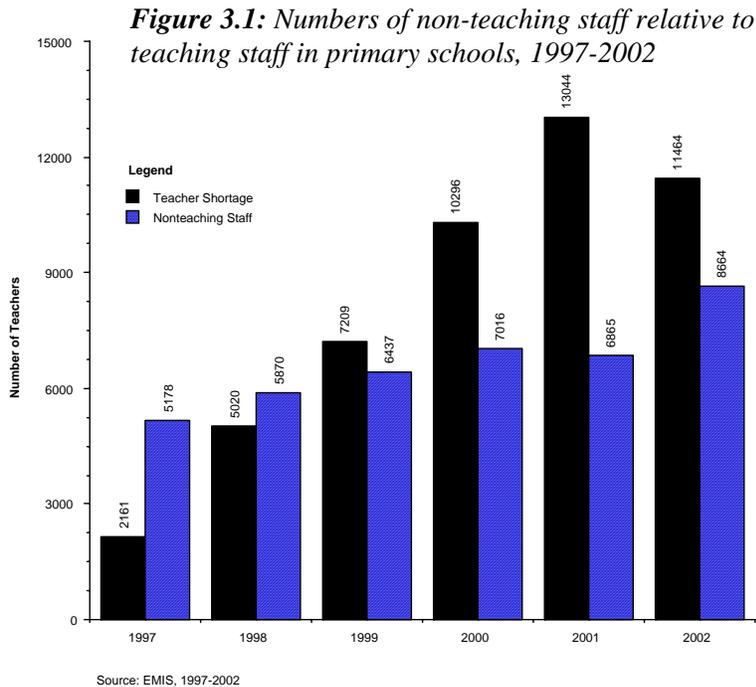
Since the late 1990s the MoEYS has attempted to deal with the teacher gap in a number of ways. Contract Teachers were an initial pragmatic response but the device was abandoned after 2001, except in specific geographical areas, which could not be dealt with in any other way. The main new strategies the MoEYS has adopted to address the issue have included (1) the re-deployment of non-teaching staff into teaching positions, (2) the re-deployment of certified teachers from areas of surplus into areas of need as well as the deployment of new PTTC graduates into areas of need, (3) double shifting of teachers, (4) allowances for remote and difficult postings, (5) special region-specific teacher recruitment measures and (6) increasing PCR standards. Various additional allowances and incentives have been approved to promote these solutions; some have already been applied and additional measures are currently under discussion. A more forward-looking response has been the introduction of a special entry stream into PTTCs for student teachers from under-served areas. Indeed, various planning documents have already foreshadowed the possibility of restoring authority to provincial officials to adjust PTTC entry to take into account the real needs of districts within their provinces and make pre-service places available to those prepared to return to work in schools in under-served communes.

#### 3.1. Reducing non-teaching staff by redeployment

The first strategy for meeting the teacher supply issue was the re-deployment of MoEYS personnel from non-teaching positions into the classroom.<sup>13</sup> The Education Strategic Plan (ESP) 2001-2015 outlined the policy and stated that additional allowances for classroom teachers (*a prime pedagogique*) would be used as an incentive for staff to move out of non-teaching positions. A similar strategy had been announced in the mid 1990s but the opportunity to use salary increases as an incentive for teachers had been lost when the payment of the *prime* was approved for all personnel (see Ayres: 171). The MoEYS did restrict the pay increases of 2000 to classroom teachers only and there was anecdotal evidence that it had had some success. By 2002 the MoEYS was stating that it would "properly implement" staff deployment and re-deployment measures so that the proportion of non-teaching staff

would stand at less than 15% of school-based personnel (compared to 22% in 1999-2000). The latest official figures show non-teaching staff (in primary schools) at 9 668, some 19.5% of the teaching staff of 49 603. In the ESP Review (ESPR) of 2003 the Ministry noted that it had “advanced plans for the redeployment of 2 226 non-teaching staff to full status in small primary and secondary schools . . .”. The ESPR of 2004 stated only that 1500 teachers had been redeployed in 2003 (ESP 2001-05: 21; ESSP 2002-06: 20-21; ESPR 2003: 55 and ESPR 2004: 13-14).

EMIS returns show that the strategy of re-deploying non-teaching staff back to the classrooms has not been as successful as hoped. **Figure 3.1** reveals that the overall numbers of non-teaching staff have not declined in absolute terms over the past five years; in fact, there has been a slight increase. The ESSP Review in 2002 downplayed this by saying that non-teaching staff had remained constant at 11,000 while teacher numbers had increased from 66,000 to 70,000. The ESP-ESSP documentation has not



yet given a figure for the number of non-teaching staff actually re-deployed, nor summary details of the type of schools that have contributed to or benefited from redeployment. A possible reason for the difficulty in achieving higher levels of re-deployment may be that a substantial proportion of non-teaching staff are Principals and Deputy Principals. On one hand, the MoEYS is attempting to boost their profile through expanding their duty statements and paying them bonuses while on the other hand increasing the pressure on them to be drawn back into classroom teaching to help address teacher shortages.

### 3.2. *Redeployment of certified teachers and other incentives*

The ESP 2001-05 also stated that there would be extensive redeployment of teachers from over-staffed schools to under-staffed schools and that redeployment and remote area allowances would be offered as incentives. The ESPR 2002, in the course of discussing variations in pupil teacher ratios (which were very high in some remote areas) noted that, "The explanation for these patterns is the difficult[y] in deploying staff to schools in rural and remote areas. In 2002, this problem will be addressed through the introduction of remote school allowances for teachers and/or redeployment of teaching and non-teaching staff to under-served schools, through better regulated and more efficient staffing guidelines." (ESP 2001-05: 20 and ESPR 2002:10-11)

In the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) of 2002-06 the MoEYS noted that staff surpluses continued in some areas despite the problems in others. It declared that the Ministry's Personnel Department would take the lead in dealing with the problem of teacher shortage. They would:

- assign teachers to difficult and remote areas and encourage them in those areas
- encourage women, the disabled and minority groups living in the remote areas to volunteer to work in order to meet the needs of the education sector

- settle the issue of slow inclusion into payrolls for newly graduated teachers
- "deploy teachers in conformity to the needs of each region and replace less qualified contract teachers with young teachers who have just graduated from Teacher Training Schools throughout the country"

The document also talked about a transparent assignment system, equity in assigning school staff in accordance with guidelines and reiterated the Ministry's commitment to redeployment with financial incentives and retraining and moving non-teachers into teaching positions and people from schools with surplus staff to schools lacking teachers. It also raised the possibility of teacher housing in remote areas. (ESSP 2002-06: 20-22,58)

That redeployment has proved problematic is not surprising. The history of payment of incentives for teacher re-location in Cambodia has been characterized by both a reluctance to participate and a reluctance to stay in the new schools and communities. An early pilot, by Save the Children Norway in 1993-94, offered PTTC graduates US \$100 at the beginning of the teaching year, \$10 each month and an additional \$100 at the end of the year. Three of the twenty participants, who married locally, stayed beyond the end of the first year, but the rest left afterwards. An MoEYS-EU Project (PASEC) subsequently developed a scheme which offered US \$500 for those accepting a transfer out of the province, \$300 out of their district (but within their province) and \$100 to another school within their District. There was no official final report on this initiative but anecdotal evidence suggested it had little success. A subsequent review of these initiatives concluded that the incentives offered, though substantial, were apparently not enough.<sup>14</sup>

The ESPR 2003 stated that it had "advanced plans" for the redeployment of 4 435 teachers to different schools. The subsequent ESPR of August 2004, reported that 1 474 teachers had been redeployed in 2003 and that this had been mainly within communes or between neighbouring communes. The report continued with a list of lessons learned including the incentives (in the form of one off payments of between US \$75-375) had been insufficient to promote redeployment, that non-financial considerations such as the availability of support from the family, housing and access to land for subsistence and income generation dissuaded teachers from re-deploying and that "deployment of newly trained teachers to remote and difficult postings where schools under-staffed may be more effective and sustainable because the resettlement constraints are lessened." The report spoke of the Ministry's awareness of the "unique challenges" in remote and border areas and that it was "taking measures to improve the management of existing resources (e.g. ensuring timely delivery of books, providing on-site teacher development) and strengthen coordination between districts and remote schools. MoEYS strategies for remote and border areas will be implemented from 2004 onwards and focus on issues identified." One of these strategies was the provision of remote area teacher housing, either government funded or financed by long term, low interest loans to teachers. (ESPR 2003 : 55; ESPR 2004: 32)

In summary, it appears that, while there has been some movement from areas of surplus to areas of high demand, redeployment has not yet had the impact projected in the ESP 2001-05, despite the substantial budgetary provision. About 1 500 redeployments have occurred and most of these have been either between schools in the same commune or between schools in the same District. There have also been reports that, when teachers did not agree to move despite the offer of incentives, sanctions had been applied. (Knight 2004: 17)<sup>15</sup>

### **3.3. Double Shifting**

The growth in the numbers of contract teachers ran counter to a major theme of the education reform process begun in 2000-2001: "to increase the efficiency and quality of the education system". A prime target in the drive for efficiency was reducing school-based non-teaching positions. Introducing large

numbers of contract teachers into the service was seen as aggravating rather than addressing the problem of efficiency. It also ran counter to the key strategy of increasing efficiency by providing incentives to existing teachers to take on additional or enhanced duties, usually in the form of double shift teaching or multi-grade teaching. The availability of contract teachers to fill the gap was a disincentive to Principals and teachers to organize double-shift teaching. Removing a substantial number of contract teachers meant that double-shift teaching was no longer an option in many areas but a necessity.

In the 1990s, most Cambodian primary school teachers worked a single shift, either between 0700 and 1100 in the morning or between 1300 and 1700 in the afternoon. Double-shift teaching means a teacher working with two different classes in the morning and the afternoon or a total of eight hours of face-to-face teaching each day. Although some teachers choose to accept a double-shift workload it is generally not viewed as an attractive proposition. In some cases this is because teachers are not able to pursue alternative income generating or sustenance activities (often rice farming in rural areas) but the most common source of resistance is that they are only paid for their second shift at the end of the academic year and that this payment is often further delayed or reduced. This has meant that much double shift teaching is done reluctantly, or because it is perceived as an order, with obvious implications for teaching quality and teacher morale. The President of the Cambodian Independent Teachers Association (CITA) has consistently maintained that teachers "...should have the right to accept or reject a new post requested by the Ministry..." and asserted that teachers had been pressured to take on additional workloads or be transferred (see Cambodia Daily 6 September 2004).

Lengthy waits for payment have blighted the education system for years. It is also a problem for teachers working in multi-grade classes (who receive a 60% loading); teachers receiving allowances for difficult and remote postings; and for neophyte teachers who are currently paid half salary in their first year of work and receive this at the end of the year. Late payment of regular salaries is also routine, usually around two to three months (see NGO 2002: 31). When payment is prompt, teacher response is immediate. It was reported from Takeo in 1998-99 by the MoEYS' Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP) that, when double shift teaching allowances were paid monthly by the project, there was no lack of teachers volunteering to participate. It is important to add, however, that the number of teachers paid by EQIP for working a second shift was not as high a proportion of total teachers in their schools as is the current level in many schools and that they were allowed to teach the same grade twice, thus reducing the need for additional preparation and planning. (EQIP 1999: 4)

When contract teacher numbers were still high there had been some support from donors and NGOs for working with them to improve their contribution rather than trying to organize double shifts or re-deploying teachers into the affected schools. The rationale for this course was straightforward: "Consider means to train contract teachers (as opposed to paying certified teachers to teach double shifts) since these individuals are already indigenous to areas suffering from teacher shortages." Another reason for working with contract teachers was a concern that "[i]ndigenous recruitment of teachers in remote areas may not occur fast enough to offset the impermanent and unsustainable nature of re-deployment measures". Double-shifting may also give rise to practices with serious implications for the quality of learning and teaching. In this regard, an appraisal report notes, "The use of certified teachers to teach double shifts may lead to an increase in the number of individuals "off" payroll (i.e. double shift teachers paying others to teach for them)." (ESSP Appraisal Report 2002: 56-57)

Double-shift teaching, however, quickly became the main strategy through which MoEYS addressed the teacher gap. It had begun before the education reforms – there were 2 300 teachers working double shifts as early as 1997 – but numbers swelled after 2000-01 (TTD 1997: 23). With the dramatic cuts to Contract Teacher numbers, pupil-teacher ratios began to rise, from 53:1 to 57:1 between 2001 and 2003. The ESPR of 2002 commented that: "In order to minimize adverse effects on quality, class sizes have been contained at around 44 pupils per class through expansion of double-shift arrangements and

double shift allowances for teachers. Double shift primary schools have increased from 4 000 to 4 600 in the past year." The following year, class sizes had risen slightly (to 45-46 to 1) and the percentage of schools using double shifts from 76% to 78.5%. No figure for the numbers of teachers working double shifts was given in the most recent ESPR (ESPR 2002: 10; ESPR 2003: 22, 43).

As double shift teaching became an unpopular necessity in rural schools, teachers experimented with different ways of circumventing the requirements. Strategies included combining two classes of the same grade level into one large class run in one four hour morning or afternoon session. When this became known, the MoEYS countered by introducing a regulation forbidding teachers from teaching a second shift at the same grade level as their first shift. Some teachers then split the morning or afternoon sessions into two parts and held two, two-hour daily classes for each of the two grades they taught. Alternatively they sub-contracted the teaching of one of the two classes to someone else (thus reintroducing a *de facto* contract teacher but one who was completely unaccountable).

Although double shift teaching represents a neat solution on paper to the lack of teachers until the problem can be solved by increasing the numbers of certified teachers graduating from PTTCs<sup>16</sup>, the effect on teacher morale and the quality of teaching and learning is well known. Some teachers have attempted to organize work bans and strikes in opposition to double shift teaching<sup>17</sup>. Teacher morale, already low because of salary levels and the inability of the MoEYS to meet basic obligations (including payment of salary on time, lengthy delays in the payment of double shift and multi-grade allowances and for teaching in vacation time remedial classes) has been further undermined by the requirement to work double shifts. Preparation and planning for daily teaching, never a strong point within the Cambodian system even for single shift teachers, is unlikely to be carried out for two grades by teachers working the theoretical eight hours of face to face teaching each day<sup>18</sup>.

### **3.4 Other allowances and incentives**

There have been other allowances and incentives introduced in an attempt to recognize performance and boost teacher retention in areas of chronic teacher shortage. A substantial performance incentive for School Principals is paid in one annual lump sum, although this is open to Principals from all areas, including town schools. Two other, more closely targeted incentives are paid to teachers. These are an allowance for difficult postings (50 000 riel/US \$12.50) and a higher allowance for remote postings (60 000 riel/US \$15). The remote allowances are reserved for teachers in the 390 primary schools in the 29 Districts formally identified as *remote*. There are now 15 300 teachers receiving these allowances (ESPR 2004 : 13). Even with these allowances, however, the monthly income of a teacher is at about the same level as a semi-skilled factory worker and still considerably short of most estimates of what constitutes a living wage in Cambodia.

Incentives promise a more cost effective intervention than the small, across the board pay increases that were granted in the past, largely irrespective of performance and circumstances. Incentives have been designed to address specific areas of need (for example, chronically under-staffed schools) and are also aimed at rewarding individual performance. This is not easily done through adjustments to the regular salary structure, which is very flat and tied to general civil service conditions. But the practice depends on an administrative machinery, which has so often proven slow and unreliable and which has a history of undermining its own credibility when policies are announced and expectations raised, only to remain largely unfulfilled.

### **3.5 Selective entry into Provincial Teacher Training Centers**

After the problems experienced in the well-intentioned attempt to improve teacher quality by raising entry standards to 11+2/12+2 in the 1990s, there has been much discussion about how teacher education institutions can become more locally responsive in matching teacher supply to demand. The main

issues have been the lack of entrants to PTTCs from rural and remote areas where teacher shortages are chronic, especially from ethnic minority areas, and the lack of women student teachers.

The Ministry proposed, in the ESP 2001-05, to address these issues in a number of ways. Firstly they introduced a provision that graduates of Grade 9 (Diploma level) from a number of specified areas be allowed entry into PTTCs. This provision was aimed at districts and provinces where access and opportunities to study at Upper Secondary level were limited or not available, mainly remote, border and reconciliation areas. Similar measures had been in force in the past with a range of admission requirements when the normal pre-requisite was Grade 7 or 8.<sup>19</sup> Secondly they proposed decentralizing the system of determining the make-up of PTTC intakes to provincial level where officials were better informed about teacher needs. These plans were summarized in the ESSP 2002-06 as aiming to secure “an adequate supply of teachers from remote and ethnic minority areas, through active recruitment from these areas, special incentives and flexibility in entry requirements, modes of delivery and program duration” (ESP 2001-05: 22; ESSP 2002-06: 36). Since these measures were adopted, there have been four intakes of student teachers with Grade 9 qualifications and the policy continues in force.<sup>20</sup>

Entrants into PTTCs from Grade 9 in 2003 made up 15.3% of the student teacher population while women comprised 37% overall and 31% of the Grade 9 entrants. Grade 9 entrants are streamed; complete a different program from Grade 12 entrants; and sit different exams although some elements are the same (for example, practicum). The final teaching qualification is claimed to be equivalent to a 12+2 graduate but 9+2 graduates do not appear to be counted as having “received certificates” in statistics compiled by the TTD. TTD officials say that the survival and graduation rates for Grade 9 entrants are high (*see Table 3.1*). These rates are similar to those of student teachers with the Baccalaureat but the Ministry has no data about comparative performance of the two groups when they take up teaching duties in schools.<sup>21</sup>

**Table 3.1** *Remote Province PTTC intakes and graduands from 9 + 2 stream, 1997-2003*

Province	1997-1999		1998-2000		1999-2001		2000-2002		2001-03		2002	2003
	enter	grad	enter	grad	enter	grad	enter	grad	enter	grad	enter	enter
BTB/Pailin	-	-	9	9	20	20	20	20	50	46	60	30
Kampot/KEP	-	-	16	16	29	28	0	0	40	39	30	30
Koh Kong	27	27	54	54	30	30	60	59	30	29	60	90
Preah Vihear	63	63	63	63	36	36	100	97	80	73	60	60
Ratanakiri	11	11	17	17	25	23	30	28	40	40	60	60
Siem Reap	-	-	-	-	27	27	16	14	122	121	102	100
Mondulkiri	21	21	9	9	19	17	34	34	35	35	30	30
Stung Treng	51	50	75	75	40	38	66	64	50	49	61	60
Total	173	172	243	243	226	219	326	316	447	432	433	460

Source : EMIS 1997-98 to 2003-04

The ESPR of 2003 and 2004, after noting that a large proportion of teaching staff in remote areas have only a primary education qualification, state that numbers of student teachers from remote areas are increasing. The documents claimed that more than 1500 student teachers (or 25% of the national total) would be recruited each year from remote areas “with the understanding of initial teacher postings to these areas after training”. The number of students from genuinely remote areas (with attendant teacher shortages) may not be as high as claimed but it is certainly significant - the number of places for students from remote areas, eligible for entry at Grade 9 level, is 330 out of a total intake of 1 400.<sup>22</sup>

The MoEYS documentation on ‘remote’ entrants into PTTCs does not appear to discriminate between entry with 12 years of basic education and 9-year qualifications. This is significant because teacher shortages at primary level have never been a serious problem in town schools, even in towns in remote

areas, and most of those entering in the 12+2 stream from these areas have been from towns. There is also a history of illegally filling PTTC places (on payment of an unofficial fee) set aside for remote area student teachers with high school graduates from other, more populous provinces who were unable to get into their home PTTCs. A table included in PAP Departmental Progress Reports compiled for the ESPR 2003, for example, does not take such factors into account when presenting the following data in *Table 3.2* on the impact of targeting of student teachers from remote areas:

**Table 3.2:** Students in teacher education institutions, 2000-01 to 2002-03

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
Students in (P)TTCs	2,981	1,353	3,001	1,299	3,045	1,133
Students in RTTCs	1,890	736	1,136	492	1,275	484
Students in FoP	249	80	253	84	344	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,120</b>	<b>2,169</b>	<b>4,390</b>	<b>1,875</b>	<b>4,664</b>	<b>1,738</b>
Students from Remote Areas across All Institutions	--	--	1,286	349	1,534	430
As a % of Total Enrolment	--	--	29%	19%	33%	25%

Notes PTTC – Provincial (Primary) Teacher Training Centres  
RTTC – Regional (Lower Secondary) Teacher Training centres  
FoP – Faculty of Pedagogy, national Upper Secondary teacher training institution  
Source: PAP Departmental Progress Reports, 2003 :20

Although concessional entry to PTTCs at Gr. 9 level is currently offered only to candidates from the six most remote Provinces, the MoEYS has also been approached by NGOs suggesting it be extended to specific Districts in other Provinces, which suffer from chronic teacher shortages, especially of women teachers. It was linked to the outcomes of an education activity that has been successful in retaining disadvantaged rural girls in lower secondary school to Grade 9 level but who are unable to study at Upper Secondary level due to lack of access and poverty.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.6. Increasing PCR Standards

A final strategy embraced by Ministry planners to address teacher shortages related to a decision to increase the Pupil Class Ratio standard used in all Cambodian classrooms from 45:1 to 50:1. This measure, adopted in 2002, is highly consistent with many of the recent policy interventions aimed at increasing the economic efficiency of the educational system. According to its proponents, the successful adoption of this policy enabled the system to get more for less; that is, to use fewer teachers to staff more classrooms. The implementation of this policy, however, has not always been popular with local educational officials who feel that it legitimizes an attitude of complacency towards burgeoning class sizes, which even when the policy was 45:1, had been more the rule than the exception in many rural and also urban schools. The policy also brings a potentially fatal contradiction to the spirit of educational reform, which embraces *quality* as well as efficiency. In the opinion of many educational officials in technical departments at central level, the 50:1 PCR standard is not compatible with quality goals and has in fact become a serious obstacle to achieving them, particularly in new quality initiatives such as Child Friendly Schools, which require lower PCR levels for effective implementation.

## 4. The Status and Management of Contract Teachers in Cambodia

### 4.1. The distribution and effect of Contract Teachers on Teacher Shortages, 1997-2003

The MoEYS approved the appointment of contract teachers in every Province and Municipality in Cambodia during the years 1997-2002. It is obvious from *Table 2.2* that contract teachers were not much used in major population centers and that their presence was most significant in rural and remote areas. At their height in 2001, they comprised about 9% of the entire teaching force. Soon after, their numbers started to decline rapidly so that by 2003, the proportion was only 2%. In spite of major re-

ductions in the recruitment and fielding of contract teachers, they still have a significant presence in the provinces of Banteay Meanchey and Battambang (former conflict areas), Koh Kong and Pursat (remote schools), Ratanakiri (remote and ethnic minority schools), as well as Otdar Meanchey and Siem Reap (former conflict areas into which MoEYS has expanded only since 1999).

There can be no denying, however, that the use of contract teachers was an effective strategy in addressing teacher shortages in Cambodia, particularly in the late 1990s when they were the government's primary line of defense in combating the problem. As shown in **Table 4.1**, the use of contract teachers addressed 85% or more of the teacher-class gap during the first two years of their employ (i.e., 1997 and 1998). The fact that the number of contract teachers actually exceeded the teacher gap in 1997 was a feature of their use that helped to contribute to the eventual demise of local teacher appointments as an effective strategy to address teacher shortages. That is, the use of locally appointed teachers was a practice rife for corruption at the local level and led to inflated requests for teachers as well as the emergence of many *ghost* teachers on staff rolls (see below). Although the number of contract teachers on government payrolls actually peaked in 2001, they were having a more muted effect on teacher shortages by the beginning of the new decade, due largely to the explosion in enrolments that occurred as a result of pro-poor educational reforms described earlier. To be sure, resistance from the Ministry of Economics and Finance and the scarcity of resources had already resulted in fluctuating numbers of contract teachers from 1999 onwards. By 2003, the use of contract teachers was barely meeting 10% of the gap, reflecting not only expanded enrolments but also a shift in government strategy towards economic efficiency measures (redeployment, double shifting, etc.) described earlier.

**Table 4.1:** *Proportion of Teacher Shortages Addressed by Contract Teachers, 1997-2003*

Year	Estimated Teacher Shortage	Number of Contract Teachers	Proportion of Gap Filled by Contract Teachers
1997	2,161	2,336	108%
1998	4,840	4,135	85%
1999	7,209	2,867	40%
2000	10,296	3,684	36%
2001	13,044	4,214	32%
2002	11,464	1,292	11%
2003	11,382	1,152	10%

Source: EMIS, 1997-2003

**Table 4.2:** *Relative Numbers of Contract and Certified Teachers in Selected Provinces, 1997-03*

Province	1997-98		1998-99		1999-00		2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04	
	T	CT	T	CT	T	CT	T	CT	T	CT	T	CT	T	CT
Koh Kong	258	24	258	56	248	67	282	70	292	109	341	86	367	54
OMC	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	282	36	330	154	324	322	365	187	469	99
Ratanakiri	203	16	216	32	224	29	222	40	212	87	231	95	272	78
Sm. Reap	2,239	311	2,264	487	2,167	313	2,232	480	2,289	505	2,215	363	2,286	388
Kg. Cham	6,120	732	5,936	942	5,912	560	6,002	750	6,208	644	6,105	64	6,050	79

Note: T=Teacher; CT=Contract Teacher; Non-remote province indicated in gray tone.

Source: EMIS, 1997-2003

As noted above, provinces with remote and reconciliation areas resisted trends towards contract teacher reductions. This is highly apparent from **Table 4.2**, which compares contract teacher numbers in a large, typical mainstream province (Kampong Cham) with provinces that have special remote/reconciliation status. According to government statistics, contract Teacher numbers in this non-remote province declined from 732 in 1997 to 79 in 2003. In combination with mortality, retirement, and resignations, this mainstream province has barely been able to maintain its teaching force at cur-

rent levels, to say nothing of the effect of a roll back in the number of contract teachers from 2002 onwards. Such reductions contrast with increases or the status quo in the remote provinces. Given the fact that human resources are largely non-existent in many remote provinces, the *more for less* approach of economic efficiency advocates has had limited efficacy or even relevance. That is, such an approach only works when there is something to stretch. In the absence of such pre-conditions, the use of contract teachers remains one of the few viable alternatives to provide educational services to the local population. As a result, contract teachers were, and still are, highly effective in addressing teacher shortages in these areas. Indeed, without them, schooling would not be available to many Cambodian children. Despite the system of incentives and other allowances, for example, it is still not possible for certified teachers to be posted to, and remain teaching in, isolated schools in a province such as Ratanakiri. Similarly, in the first years of re-integration and reconciliation in Otdar Meanchey (OMC), the opening of schools was a vital sign of the re-assertion of national government influence. Indeed, contract teachers comprised 100% of teachers in 2001 (*see Table 4.3*). The re-opening of schools in the province, therefore, could not have been achieved without the employment of Contract Teachers.

**Table 4.3:** *Contract Teachers as a percentage of primary teachers in selected Provinces, 1997-03*

<b>Province</b>	<b>1997-98</b>	<b>1998-99</b>	<b>1999-00</b>	<b>2000-01</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>
Koh Kong	9%	22%	27%	25%	37%	25%	15%
OMC	n.a.	n.a.	13%	47%	100%	51%	21%
Ratanakiri	8%	15%	13%	18%	18%	41%	29%
Siem Reap	14%	22%	14%	22%	22%	16%	17%
Kg. Cham	12%	16%	9%	12%	10%	1.5%	1.3%

Note: Non-remote province indicated in gray tone.

Source: EMIS, 1997-2003

In other areas, before the cuts of 2001-02 and 2002-03, contract teachers helped preserve a survival structure, which rural teachers had developed by combining work at school for half a day with income-generating work or subsistence farming during the remainder of the day. After the demobilization of many contract teachers and the relative failure of the strategies of redeployment to address the teacher gap, double shift teaching became a necessity for the Ministry and many teachers moved, in theory, from a four hour teaching day to an eight hour day. Had double-shift teaching been better remunerated, it may have had some potential for helping teachers move towards work as full-time, professional educators. The actual result, however, has been an arrangement that teachers are more or less obliged to accept. Unlike the use of contract teachers, double shift teaching is a strategy that has led to demoralization of the teaching corps and various undermining devices to bring about a more reasonable workload in line with real income.

#### **4.2. Management arrangements relating to Contract Teachers**

The administrative ritual for the appointment of contract teachers begins as the registration period preceding the start of the school year winds down, usually in late September. It is at this time that School Principals have some idea of how many children will be attending school in the coming academic year. Enrolment figures are assessed in relation to recently increased PCR standards and the number of teachers on staff. Based on these assessments, Principals determine the number of teachers by which they are short. These numbers are then conveyed to the District Office of Education, which in turn conveys them to the Personnel Office at the Provincial Office of Education. Following confirmation of teacher needs, the province compiles the requests from all districts and then sends them on to the MOEYS in Phnom Penh, which then conveys them for consideration by the Civil Service Commission and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Following extended discussions between the various players at central level, approved (and usually reduced) allocations of contract teachers are sent back down the line to Ministry, province, district, and school. By this time it is usually December or even January of

an academic year that begins in October. When they receive the official approval, Principals can appoint contract teachers from the local community. They make their selections according to official criteria such as individuals who are former, retired teachers or who have finished 12 years of basic education (8 or 9 years in many rural areas, less in remote areas).<sup>24</sup>

The above process illustrates one of the most extraordinary episodes of *bureaucracy versus reality* in the Cambodian educational system for it is painfully clear to all that schools are not coping with student numbers during the three month period when contract teacher allocations are being processed. A small survey of School Principals disclose a number of *ad hoc* responses to teacher shortages during this deliberative period at the beginning of the school year. These include doubling up classes, reducing hours of instruction (e.g., one teacher teaches two classes of two hours each), or in some cases turning students away until contract teachers can be hired. School Principals dare not hire contract teachers at the beginning of the school year on their own for fear that approvals may not be forthcoming in the numbers requested in which case the Principal would be responsible for payment.

Contract teachers currently receive a salary of about 100,000 riels per month, which is the equivalent of US\$25. Contract teachers are not paid regularly on a monthly basis but rather receive payment in quarterly chunks 9-12 months after they perform the work. This means that the final quarterly payment is received 9-12 months after the close of the academic year in which they worked or up to two years since they began work under the contract.<sup>25</sup> The monthly monetary allocation for contract teachers is equivalent to the same monthly rate as a regular teacher with no dependents, irrespective of whether they have them or not. Despite the delayed payment schedule, the system appears able to find recruits for contract teaching each year, although all bemoan their circumstances. One of the most common complaints among contract teachers when they were first employed as in the late 1990s was that provincial officials did not pay them in full for time worked. Although this complaint is heard less often at the present time, it was then common for payments to be cut for various “unofficial fees” including travel costs for officials who deliver the funds, processing costs, and other non-transparent fees.

#### **4.3. Problems of Corruption**

An additional, major factor leading to drastic reductions in the numbers of contract teachers relates to the opportunities for corruption that the appointment system afforded. In some instances, there were highly publicized cases of such corruption, which made their way into the national media, leading to intense embarrassment within the MoEYS. As described earlier, contract teacher appointments involved conveying requests from the local level to Provincial Offices of Education and eventually to Phnom Penh at the beginning of the school year. The national level would then approve a certain number of these requests several months later. The main opportunities for corruption appear to have been:

- Opportunities to deduct unofficial fees from contract teachers payments
- Opportunities to offer fast-track or special entry into the teaching service for contract teachers (which involved the payment of a large fee)<sup>26</sup> – a high level of interest amongst contract teachers to gain permanent teaching positions created fertile ground for such schemes
- Opportunities for payments for re-deployment from undesirable to more desirable areas and the possibility of filling gaps with contract teachers<sup>27</sup>
- Opportunities to inflate teacher numbers with ghost contract teachers who were on payroll lists but who did not exist

Personnel issues involving deployment and promotion are always sensitive within the MoEYS and have long been the subject for allegations of corrupt practices. Occasionally such practices are mentioned in official documentation<sup>28</sup> but generally a polite silence is maintained. Contract teachers were the subject of a major corruption scandal in early 2003, which did not remain underground. The

scheme involved MoEYS officials approaching Contract Teachers with documents signed and stamped by high level MoEYS executives purporting to offer inclusion on the list of permanent MoEYS teachers if they passed an examination. Those involved claimed that a payment, in the order of US \$500-800, could be made which would secure passage through the exam and registration. The scheme came to the attention of the Cambodian Independent Teachers Association (CITA), several NGOs (and through them, the NGO Education Partnership) and became sufficiently notorious to be the subject of a statement by the Prime Minister in March 2003. Prime Minister Hun Sen was quoted as saying that the fraud may have had "thousands of victims" and that the total amount of money involved was around US \$500 000. He also said that officials would repay the money fraudulently obtained. One Director of Education from a Province in which some 700 teachers were defrauded, was quoted as saying that he did not know of the scheme but would investigate and that any perpetrators would be punished according to the law. The only sanction that followed was the subsequent demotion of one senior provincial official and a DoE director; there were no prosecutions. The PoE Director said later that officials were returning the payments although the CITA subsequently disputed his claim.<sup>29</sup>

#### **4.4. Quality and effectiveness issues**

One of the arguments used against contract teachers was that they were generally low quality and ineffective teachers. While there can be little argument with the general proposition that replacing contract teachers with graduates of PTTCs is highly desirable, there are some important qualifications to make. The first is that many of the contract teachers hired in large numbers in lowland areas were retired teachers. Others, with no teaching background, had generally completed basic education (Grade 9) and a small number had studied at higher levels. Thirdly, in some remote areas, such as Otdar Meanchey, the contract teachers recruited casually could be young migrants from other provinces with levels of personal education which far exceeded those of the few permanent Ministry teachers available who were often former *kru jat-tang*. In the case of Lim Tong Primary School in Otdar Meanchey, cited previously, all the teachers were contract teachers as was the acting School Principal (although this was not allowed in theory). They were all migrants from Takeo and all had been educated to Diploma level at high school and two had a Baccalaureat. All were interested in the possibility of receiving formal teacher education, which would enable them to take up teaching as a career. Fourthly, many of the contract teachers hired in very remote areas were ethnic minority people. While having limited formal education themselves, they were able to work effectively with non-Khmer speaking children in their own languages. Finally, because contract teachers were from the locality, they were known to children and their parents and much more accountable to them than re-deployed certified teachers coming from outside.

Contract teachers are not eligible to attend MOEYS in-service or other training programs. This was noted with reference to the Textbook Orientation Program, a major in-service training exercise organized on a Cluster basis from 1996-2001, in which teachers were introduced to the new textbook and teacher manual for their grade at the rate of one grade per year beginning with Grade 1 in 1996-97. The ESSP Appraisal Report commented that it was a missed opportunity that contract teachers, "who are making up a greater proportion of the teaching service especially in remote rural and mountainous areas [are not currently included in TOP] . . . The notional allocation of ten days per year may not be enough for contract teachers who have had no teacher education. Some system of credits for completion of in-service or on the job training should be considered." The Appraisal Report went on to suggest that some cumulative in-service credits, and credits for on the job part-time studies should be considered for contract teachers, perhaps related to a simple set of qualification levels (ESSP Appraisal 2002: 47, 49). A similar recommendation was made in an attachment to an evaluation of a large, NGO-managed support program to schools in the Anlong Veng and Tropeing Prasat Districts of Otdar Meanchey where it was noted that contract teachers were the mainstay of the teaching force in primary schools (Ovington 2003: 44-46)<sup>30</sup>.

#### **4.5. The special case of teachers and schools in remote, ethnic minority areas**

Schools in ethnic minority communities in remote areas in Cambodia have continued to rely on contract teachers because it has proved so difficult to identify mainstream, certified teachers prepared to go to relocate there. Those certified teachers who do work at these schools find themselves culturally isolated, unable to communicate in the languages of the children, and lacking specific preparation for multi-grade or Khmer as a Second Language (KSL) situations.

Ratanakiri Province in northeast Cambodia provides a good case study of the role and status of contract teachers in a remote province. The POE in Ratanakiri has only very recently been able to identify and post newly qualified teachers into many of the small schools in which contract teachers work. The older, certified teachers who are currently working in these schools were appointed years ago and have low levels of personal education and pedagogical training. In 2003-04, there were 78 contract teachers working in such locations, or about 30% of the teachers working in primary schools in the province. This figure has decreased to 50 in the new academic year (2004-2005) with the arrival of significant numbers of qualified Khmer-speaking graduates from the PTTC in Stung Treng. In contrast, many of the contract teachers appointed to small rural schools in the Province are ethnic minority people. The ability of these contract teachers to speak one or more of the minority languages, as well as Khmer, is clearly an educational asset, although the main criterion for selection is the level of personal education. POE officials observe that contract teachers are poorly motivated, partly because of their lack of training and partly because they are paid only ten months salary a year and that this comes twelve months in arrears.

Progress in recruiting and retaining more ethnic minority student teachers in formal teacher training courses has been slow, particularly for women. Attempts to develop a more sympathetic living and teaching environment by using the Stung Treng PTTC as a regional center for student teachers from the north east have not been very successful. As noted above, virtually all of the remote region recruits, including those from Ratanakiri, have been Khmer rather than from local ethnic groups.<sup>31</sup> Some of these recruits have actually been non-residents who have negotiated their way into the quota. Furthermore, the teacher education course at the Stung Treng PTTC does not prepare student teachers in any specific way to work in small, isolated and often multi-grade situations amongst minority language speakers.

Such factors have prompted the MoEYS to experiment with bi-lingual approaches to both adult and formal primary education. These experiments depend upon partnerships with NGOs for their viability as Ministry officials and teachers have little experience in this field. CARE International's Highland Children's Education Project (HCEP) in Ratanakiri is the most visible pilot in formal primary education. The project has taken the contract teacher concept and modified it to fit the special needs of ethnic minority populations. The project is also notable for the way it has adapted the contract teacher concept to fit the special needs of the ethnic minority populations and as a strategy to improve access to education. CARE has worked with three Tampuan and three Kreung-speaking communities since 2001 to develop six community schools with Grades 1-3. School Boards oversee the schools in each village and are responsible for school construction and maintenance, teacher selection and management and student attendance. CARE provides support in the form of teacher training, curriculum development and the production of instructional materials through a project team based in the Ratanakiri POE. Teacher candidates are usually already bilingual but receive special training in how to implement the program's bi-lingual curriculum. Community School teachers are paid by CARE at the same level as Ministry contract teachers. There are currently 36 teachers in training, 16 of them in a third intake, which commenced in August 2004. The project team includes non-Cambodian staff in managerial and technical roles but most of the day to day running and resourcing of the community schools is in the hands of national staff, over half of whom are from ethnic minority communities.

An inter-departmental committee of the MoEYS (from General Education, TTD and PRD) reviewed and approved the design of HCEP and project staff have maintained close links, especially with the Pedagogical Research Dept, since it commenced in 2001. Strong Ministry support has resulted partly from monitoring visits to the community schools where provincial MoEYS officials have seen clear evidence of learning by students who had never previously attended school. The officials were particularly impressed that students in Community Schools had achieved reading and writing skills far superior to typical outcomes in Khmer-speaking MoEYS primary schools. The HCEP has also been successful in demonstrating that villagers can take an active role in promoting formal education in their communities, a goal which has proved very difficult for the MoEYS to achieve in mainstream schools.

The HCEP has not only provided a useful model for Ministry-NGO collaboration in education but also an effective way to use quasi-contract teacher strategies in areas with special needs, i.e., in ethnic minority communities. It has also offered insights for policy makers on staffing and teacher education for such areas. These insights include

- The importance of children acquiring initial literacy in their vernacular language
- The necessity of having native speakers in classrooms, especially in early primary years
- The teaching of Khmer as a second language to children with another first language
- The importance of local input into curriculum development and the training of a materials development unit with the necessary cultural, linguistic and technical knowledge and skills
- The importance of local input into school management

If a teacher education facility is established in Ratanakiri, one of its initial tasks could be working with current ethnic minority contract teachers to upgrade their skills. According to individual capacity and interest, this could be done with a view to eventual certification as teachers or to carry out a para-professional role in assisting a certified Khmer-speaking teacher or working as one of a group with the supervision and support of a certified teacher.<sup>32</sup> Another priority could be to present vacation time in-service courses for certified primary teachers working in village schools focusing on multi-grade, KSL and team teaching skills.

## **5. Conclusion: Contract Teachers and their future in primary education in Cambodia**

### ***5.1 Mainstream Provinces with Isolated, Remote Communities: The need for local teachers and the effectiveness of education reform strategies***

The high water mark for contract teachers in Cambodia, at least in terms of numbers, was 2000-2001. At that time, when they were an important component of the teaching force in rural and remote areas, the possibility of working to upgrade them seemed a sensible option. Participants in the ESSP Appraisal in 2001, for example, felt that there had been a:

*Failure to recognize the value of contract teachers: while addressing the need to improve quality, the program does not recognize the value of contract teachers as a more flexible mechanism through which to promote indigenous recruitment of teachers and provide adequate teacher supply in remote areas. Instead, the program focuses on using currently certified teachers to teach double shifts. Likewise, the program does not address the problem of delays in the approval process for hiring contract teachers, which results in the overcrowded classrooms during the first 2-3 months of each school year due to the lack of teachers.*

ESSP Appraisal Report, June 2001: 55

But by the ESSP Review of 2002 it was clear that the MoEYS had decided that it did not want contract teachers except where it had no choice. This was evident from the comprehensive cuts to contract teacher numbers in mostly Khmer-speaking rural areas, the tolerance of a widening teacher gap, con-

tinuing efforts to make redeployment policies work and the heavy dependence on double-shift teaching.

MoEYS planning documents in the reform era have consistently argued that the immediate solution to the problems of teacher shortage in mainstream, Khmer speaking areas lies in improved management, higher incentives for redeployment and a commitment to getting fully certified teachers into schools, working double-shifts if necessary. The most recent incentive under consideration is that of building teacher houses in difficult areas with a recommendation being given to the Ministry that low interest, long term loans to teachers might be the most effective and efficient way of getting these houses built. With the release of the ESPR 2004 came the first official recognition that such policies have not been as successful as forecast:

- *Despite one-off re-deployment payments between Riels 300,000 and 1.5 million (US\$ 75-373), the incentive is insufficient to ensure re-deployment of staff*
- *As with many resettlement programs, it is problematic to provide appropriate levels and kinds of incentives that will encourage staff and their families to relocate to a new area, including issues of separation from family, availability of land for food production and income generation and non-availability of housing in the new location.*
- *Deployment of newly trained teachers to remote and difficult postings where schools are under-staffed may be a more effective and sustainable because the resettlement constraints are lessened.*

ESPR 2004: 32

If redeployment incentives are not the answer and double shift teaching undermines quality (as well as teacher morale under the current arrangements for payment), then the most promising strategy appears to be targeted entry into PTTCs. This would involve decisions being made at Provincial and District level about needs, setting quotas and identifying suitable candidates (especially women) with Grade 9 qualifications. Although this applies at present only to candidates from six of the most disadvantaged provinces/municipalities that are classified as 'remote', there is discussion about extending the practice to mainstream provinces with isolated remote areas to assist severely stressed districts bridge the teacher gap and reduce the dependency on double-shifting. Such a policy could be applied according to need and be planned and implemented at Provincial level, in line with the principles of decentralization set out in both the ESP and the TTD's own current Masterplan (TTD 2002: 20-26). It would offer some relief after two years (when the first graduates enter the teaching force) and then provide an ongoing strategy for anticipating and dealing with issues of teacher supply. As physical and economic barriers to access in disadvantaged areas are overcome, entry standards could gradually move upwards towards the 12+2 national norm.

### ***5.2 Remote Provinces with Ethnic Minorities and Former Conflict Areas: MoEYS policies in areas of teacher shortage where contract teachers are still significant***

A handful of Provinces survived the heavy cuts of 2002-2003 with contract teacher numbers reduced but still at significant levels. These Provinces (Koh Kong, Mondulhiri, Otdar Meanchey, Ratanakiri and parts of Kompong Speu, Pursat and Siem Reap) are those which are officially considered "remote" by the MoEYS and in which deployment or redeployment has proved problematic.<sup>33</sup> These fall very roughly into two broad categories : those areas in which the number of certified teachers is low due to factors of geography, history and access (primarily the reintegration areas), but which are largely Khmer-speaking, and those in which ethnic minority peoples make up a large part of the population.

Real progress in bridging the teacher gap in reintegration areas which are predominantly Khmer-speaking should begin in the current academic year 2004-2005 with significant numbers of student teachers from these areas graduating from PTTCs.<sup>34</sup> If access to Lower Secondary education expands and students can continue to enter PTTCs with Grade 9 qualifications then a sustainable solution will

be achieved quite quickly. In the interim, the MoEYS will have to continue to use contract teachers in areas where all certified teachers are already teaching double-shifts. That there is a price to pay, however, is evident from the anecdotal evidence that the continued use of contract teachers, without reform of the arrangements under which they are appointed and paid, leads to very large classes at the beginning of the year and even to closure.<sup>35</sup>

MoEYS documents are starting to acknowledge that the broad national strategies are not working in remote provinces where rates of participation were far below those of national norms, particularly in ethnic minority areas:

*This argues for development of specific strategies to address the unique access constraints in ethnic minority areas (eg bilingual curricula and programs, scholarships, training of ethnic minority teachers).*

ESPR 2002: 21

The same document went on to propose targeted secondary school facilities and scholarships/incentives for ethnic minority students. It set out the Ministry's objective in 2002-2003 as *to formulate a set of specific education interventions in ethnic minority areas, including measures to train and retain local teachers in primary and secondary schools, and prepare specific teacher support materials. As a first step, school in ethnic minority areas will benefit from the incentives program for teachers in remote areas in 2002.*

ESPR 2002: 22

Additional studies were also proposed in the progress reports of 2003 and 2004 but, to date, these studies have yet to be published.

Long term solutions to the provision of EFA in these remote provinces, which address the personnel problems, the educational issues and the rights of ethnic minority children, may have to look to more flexible strategies. Such strategies should be informed by local experiences and aspirations. They may well involve maintaining contract teaching arrangements as a basis for the participation of ethnic minority teachers until formal arrangements can be made for their upgrading or their participation in formal education can be institutionalized under some form of special recognition.

---

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all education statistics are taken from the annual Education Statistics and Indicators, published by the EMIS office of the MoEYS each year in August which present data for the school year beginning the previous October.

<sup>2</sup> The PAP mechanism was also set up in three other social sector Ministries to better resource and deliver social services as part of a “peace dividend” following the reconciliation and re-integration of all Khmer Rouge elements post 1998.

<sup>3</sup> The PAPs are : 1. Education service efficiency and performance 2. Primary education quality and efficiency 3. Secondary education quality and efficiency 4. TVET quality and efficiency 5. Improving the quality and efficiency of higher education 6. Continuous teacher development 7. Sustainable provision of core instructional materials 8. Expansion of NFE 9. In-schools AIDS awareness 10. Youth and Sport development and AIDS awareness 11. Strengthened monitoring systems 12. Scholarships/incentives for equitable access

<sup>4</sup> The MoEYS defines ‘remote’ as located in isolated areas where communication with and transportation to the schools is difficult and where population density is less than 10 people per square kilometer (EMIS, 2003-04 : iv). The MoEYS classifies 29 Districts as “remote” (Fayaud 2003 : 3). Some PEOs, however, have their own, different working definitions based on additional factors such as isolation due to poor roads, flooding, seasonal inaccessibility and so on.

<sup>5</sup> Grade 11 was the highest grade until the introduction of the 6+3+3 structure in 1996-97. After 1994 entrants were required to have passed at Upper Secondary level (Baccalaureat) – this meant that some TTCs were unable to fill their allocated entry quotas. After 1998 entrants were required to have completed Upper Secondary education but not necessarily to have passed the final exams.

<sup>6</sup> Current data reveals that of a total national primary school teaching force of 46 000, there are some 4 000 with a primary school level of personal education. Proportions in some provinces are, of course, higher, e.g. Siem Reap 373 of 2 286, Ratanakiri 127 of 272, Stung Treng 164 of 464 and others very low e.g. Takeo 43 of 3 718, Kandal 196 of 4 832. Many others have a Secondary equivalency qualification through participation in upgrading courses in the 1980s and 1990s although their own attendance at school as children may have been completed (or interrupted) at a much lower level.

<sup>7</sup> The TTD formerly informed provinces annually of the raw number of places for new entrants at PTTC and each PEO and its DEOs then discussed how these places should be allocated district by district according to need. When this practice ceased, the places allocated were filled on the basis of the results of a PTTC entry exam, irrespective of district of origin. The current ESP (2004-2008) seems to be supporting a return to the original practice as part of a general trend towards decentralization. a direction certainly consistent with, though no explicitly stated in, the TTD Masterplan of 2002.

<sup>8</sup> The Teacher Education Strategic Plan written at the time makes the connection between the emergence of Contract Teachers and government retirement policy but has a different explanation without a political dimension. It states that the requirement for retirement at 55 was suspended “because of the critical teacher supply situation in 1996” and allowed over-age teachers to keep on working but in the position of Contract Teacher. This device reduced the demand for teachers by 2 000 (the number due for retirement”). It noted that “MOEYS will therefore shift in 1997 to a policy of flexible retirement based on areas of critical shortage in teacher supply and in some cases make re-deployment a condition of suspension of retirement.” TTD 1997 : 22

<sup>9</sup> In 1994 there were only 89 Upper Secondary Schools in Cambodia, 125 in 1998 and there are currently 212. Most of them are in urban areas or larger rural towns. There are Lower Secondary Schools now in all but 12 Districts in the country.

<sup>10</sup> This is now generally recognized - see, for example, the statement in ESPR 2004 : 32 quoted in this paper at p.14

<sup>11</sup> See Schools of Hope, 2003, p. 21. Over 100 local volunteer teachers were approved, en masse, for appointment as Contract Teachers by MoEYS Secretary of State Im Sethy after a visit to Anlong Veng District in late 2001.

<sup>12</sup> Lim Tong Primary School in Anlong Veng District, Otdar Meanchey Province in 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Non-teaching staff in primary schools are mainly in the positions of Principal (of schools with more than 7 classes), Deputy Principal (of schools with more than 11 classes), Secretary and Librarian As teacher shortages became more severe, school staff with management responsibilities came under increasing pressure to take up a teaching load as well as carrying out administrative functions with consequences for their work in areas such as teacher supervision, community liaison as well as on administrative tasks. This also applies to existing provisions for the supervision of Annex Schools which are usually

---

supervised by a Deputy Principal/senior teacher – this is not possible if workloads are increased to include additional teaching or double shift teaching responsibilities. (see Explanatory Notes on Table 1, EMIS 2003-04 : iii).

<sup>14</sup> Redd Barna, Primary School Quality Improvement Program, Fourth Quarterly Progress Report, Kampong Cham Province, December, 1994.

<sup>15</sup> Knight and MacLeod, *Integration of Teachers' Voices into Education For All in Cambodia*, 2004, p. 17. The authors add that “In line with international standards and accepted practices, the process for deployment decisions should be well-defined and governed with emphasis on transparency of procedures and objectivity in decisions. Such issues belong in discussions with teacher organizations about terms and conditions of employment . . .”

<sup>16</sup> Projecting how long it will take for primary teacher graduates from PTTCs at the current rate to fill the teacher gap is difficult. There is much uncertainty surrounding the new focus on Lower Secondary School teacher training and whether primary teachers may be re-trained for work in LSS. There is also the ongoing problem of how to persuade certified teachers to go to and remain in problem areas. Targets for extending the school day, if pursued, will apply additional pressure (see ESPR 2004 : 11).

<sup>17</sup> There were, for example, attempts to organize a ban on double shift teaching in Batheay District, Kompong Cham, after the number of Contract Teachers was reduced from 109 in 2001-02 to 7 in 2002-03.

<sup>18</sup> Double shift teaching theoretically involves a minimum of 8 hours per day 5 days a week (all face to face teaching) + 4 hours each Thursday morning (for professional development) or 44 hours per week. Comparisons of workload and levels of remuneration between teachers and other regulated Cambodian workers are not favourable to teachers, particularly as the second shift payments are held back for a year or more. (See NGO 2002 : 11 for a table of occupations/incomes which shows garment factory workers and some hotel staff are earning US \$ 45 per month, roughly equivalent to double-shift teaching).

<sup>19</sup> Many models were used including 3+1, 4+1, 5+3 and 8+1; see Bunroeun, p. 21

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Circular 2275 of 9 August 2004 from Minister to POEs on the Recruitment of Primary and Pre-School Teachers (1 400 Primary and 100 Pre-School) enabling recruitment of students for teacher education with a lower secondary degree or equivalent from the provinces of Stung Treng, Preah Vihear, Rattanakiri, Mondulakiri, Koh Kong, Otdar Meanchey and Pailin (“northeastern and remote provinces”)

<sup>21</sup> Interview with Mr. Lien Yi Toh, Chief of Pre-Service, TTD, MoEYS, 6 October 2004

<sup>22</sup> The other 1170 places for the remaining provinces were to go to candidates with an upper secondary qualification or equivalent or completion of Grade 12 (Circular 2275 of 9 August 2004, above). Some of these may be from relatively “remote” provinces but from towns, where teacher shortages are not a problem, rather than from the countryside.

<sup>23</sup> Letter of UNICEF, Kampuchean Action for Primary Education, CARE and World Education to Secretary of State Im Sethy of the MoEYS, 20 September 2004 (draft).

<sup>24</sup> In a small-scale survey of the Principals of 83 schools in a large province (Kg Cham) which has historically used large numbers of contract teachers, 83% of respondents reported that the contract teachers they employed had finished lower secondary school, 5% reported that their contract teachers had finished upper secondary and only 2% recruited teachers with only primary school backgrounds. 10% of respondents did not know.

<sup>25</sup> Practice reported in Kg Cham 2003-04; 88% of a sample of 83 rural School Principals surveyed reported contract teachers had received no pay on the completion of their contracts and had to wait into the following year.

<sup>26</sup> This was the scheme which was eventually exposed in the Khmer language press and the *Cambodia Daily* in 2002 and which led to a statement by the Prime Minister condemning the practice and calling for disciplinary measures against officials involved. At least one provincial official was transferred as a result. The case involved the use of an official stamp belonging to a high level national MoEYS official, a stamp which was subsequently alleged to have been stolen, to fake official documents supporting the scam.

<sup>27</sup> Definitive data on illegal payments for transfers is difficult to collect but anecdotal evidence suggests the transfers between rural schools can require payments of around \$50 and from rural areas into provincial towns around \$500. Transfers into Phnom Penh are the most sought after and up to \$3 000 has been asked for transfers into the city's Lower Secondary Schools.



---

ESPR 2003	MoEYS, <u>Education Sector Performance Report</u> , May 2003
ESSP 2003 Departments	MoEYS, <u>ESSP Review 2003 Departmental Review Report</u> , May 2003
PAP Reports 2003	MoEYS, <u>PAP Departmental Progress Reports 2003</u> , May 2003
ESP 2004-08 (Notes)	MoEYS, <u>Education Strategic Plan 2004/08: Strategic Briefing Notes and Papers for ESP Policy and Technical Taskforces</u> , May 2004
ESPR 2004	MoEYS, <u>Education Sector Performance Report</u> , August 2004

### **(3) Other MoEYS**

EQIP 1999	<u>EQIP Progress Report – Second Quarter October-December 1998</u> , Jan. 1999
TTD 1997	<u>Teaching Service Development 1997-2002 Strategic Plan</u> , Phnom Penh, May 1997
MoEYS 1999	MoEYS, <u>Education Personnel Management Issues, Seminar Report &amp; Key Findings &amp; Recommendations</u> , November 1999
TTD 2001	<u>Master Plan for the Development of Teacher Education 2001-2005</u> , November 2000
TTD 2004	<u>Teacher Training Statistics at all Levels of Learning for Pre-School, Primary, Lower Secondary/Basic Education, Trainers, Primary and Secondary Inspectors and Maitres Formateurs</u> , Phnom Penh, 2004

### **Other references**

D. Ayres, Anatomy of a crisis : Education, Development and the State in Cambodia 1953-1998, Bangkok, 2003

K. Bredenberg, Cambodia Secondary Education Study : Education Demand in the Basic Education Sector and Strategies for Enhancement, World Bank, Phnom Penh, September 2003

Nath Bunroeun, Teacher Training Systems in Cambodia, Phnom Penh, 1999

Cambodia Daily, "Officials Ordered to Return Teachers' Money", 26 March 2003; "Officials Say Teachers' Bribes Will Be Returned", 1 April 2003; "Battle on School Grounds" and "Now and Then : An Aspiring Teacher and a Retired Teacher Compare Notes", Education [supplement], 6 September 2004, pp.1, 3 and 14

CARE International, "Draft Concept Paper for Highland Children's Education Project" , Phnom Penh, August 2000

CARE International, Highland Children's Education Project Baseline Study, Phnom Penh, 2003

CARE International (HCEP), School Board Assembly Meeting on 4-5 October 2004, Banlung, Ratanakiri

S. Duggan,

P. Fayaud, Remote Schools Teacher Development, UNICEF/World Education/Cambodia, May 2003

KAPE (Kampuchean Action for Primary Education), "Final Progress Report : Girls Education Initiative", Kompong Cham, Cambodia, 2001

L. King and S. Schielman, "Cambodia: Highland Children's Education Project (HCEP), CARE International in Cambodia", in The Challenge of Indigenous Education : Practice and Perspectives, UNESCO, 2004, pp. 113-122

K. Knight and K. MacLeod, Integration of Teachers' Voices into Education For All in Cambodia: Teacher status, social dialogue and the education sector, PACT, Cambodia, January 2004

NGO Education Partnership, NGO Report for ESSP Review, May 2003

NGO Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Monitoring Committee, Cambodia NGO Parallel Report Under International Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights, (Phnom Penh) August 2002

G. Ovington, R. Geeves, Y. Horie, Hor Sokhak, Schools of Hope : New Partnerships in Education in Former Conflict Areas of Cambodia, Save the Children Norway, Phnom Penh, 2003

Ron Watt, "The Highland Children's Education Project, Cambodia and the Remote Area Teacher Education Program, Australia - Some Connections" in Papers of the Sixth Socio-Cultural Research Congress on Cambodia, 18-20 November 2003, RUPP, 2004

Ron Watt, "Teacher Education in Cambodia's Remote Areas : the Highland Children's Education Project" in The Journal of Cambodian Studies, Volume 1 Number 1 (Education Issue), University of Cambodia, January 2004

### **Interviews**

---

Vin McNamara	Education Consultant, (Phnom Penh, September 2004)
Lien Yi Toh	Chief of Office of Pedagogical Research and Planning, Teacher Training Dept, MOEYS (Phnom Penh, 6 October 2004)
Thong Boran	Director of Personnel Dept., MOEYS (Phnom Penh, October 2004)
Nath Bunroeun	Under Secretary of State, MOEYS, (Phnom Penh, 6 October 2004, 8 October 2004)

### **Contact details**

---

**Kurt Bredenberg,**  
Education Adviser,  
Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE),  
PO Box 1621, Phnom Penh,  
Cambodia.

Tel. 855 12 963 353

Email [kurtkape@yahoo.com](mailto:kurtkape@yahoo.com) or [kape.cambodia@online.com.kh](mailto:kape.cambodia@online.com.kh)

**Richard Geeves,**  
Education Specialist,  
World Education/Cambodia,  
P.O. Box 74 Phnom Penh,  
Cambodia.

Tel. 855 23 216 854

Email [geeves@online.com.kh](mailto:geeves@online.com.kh)