



**CARERE/SEILA
Non-Formal Education
End of Project Evaluation Report
RAT/EDU/0001**



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Banlung, Ratanakiri
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**UNDP/UNOPS
CARERE
Ratanakiri**

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Background	3
RAT/EDU/0001	4
Objectives of the project	4
Methodology and Evaluation Team	4
Objectives of the Evaluation	4
Schedule for final evaluation of NFE sub-project 2000	5
Evaluation Teams and villages visited	5
Planned Outputs/ Actual Outputs	7
Qualitative Findings	8
NFE Students	8
NFE Teachers	9
District and Commune Facilitators	10
VDC, Village and Commune Chiefs	10
PRDC NFE Working Group	11
Quantitative Findings	11
General Findings	11
NFE Students	12

NFE Teachers	12
District and Commune Facilitators	12
Sustainability	12
Conclusions	13
Impacts of the NFE Project	13
Sustainability	13
Materials Development	13
Monitoring and Evaluation	14
Integration	14
Cultural Aspects	14
Gender	15
Technical Support	15
Recommendations	15
Materials Development	15
Capacity Building	15
Appendixes	17
Questionnaire for VVT's and Commune Facilitators	18
Questionnaire for NFE Students	19
Questionnaire for VDC, Village Chief and Commune Chief	20
Guidelines for Conducting Project Evaluation Interviews	21
NFE Progress Tests June 2000	22

Introduction

The formal education system in Ratanakiri is severely under-equipped in terms of resources, materials and human capacity. This has resulted in a wide spread lack of access to quality education throughout the province. These factors impact largely on the indigenous highland communities in the province. Additionally, teachers who have been assigned to schools outside of the provincial capital of Banlung are unable to support him or herself on their government salary. Without additional support from the communities they work in or from their own families, they are unable to fulfil their role as teachers. Additionally, the livelihood is sometimes vastly different from their own, as the highland communities are not culturally and ethnically Khmer. Of the schools that are active, they are characterised by a high student repetition rate, with teachers often lacking the capacity to teach all grades at primary level, thus they teach the same level over and over. This inevitably leads to high drop out rates, especially in the more remote areas. Furthermore, the formal education system also fails to address the real life needs of the highland communities.

Non-formal education is seen as a means of filling these gaps in the formal education system for highlander communities. The formal education curriculum is academic, emphasising Khmer language and culture, science and mathematics. There is little or no provision for the teaching of practical skills relevant to the livelihood of indigenous communities. Therefore highlander families see little relevance in sending their children to school, especially girls, as school does not prepare them for future roles in their society. Thus, educational levels amongst highlander communities in Ratanakiri are significantly lower than those in the low land provinces, particularly for girls and women.

The CAREERE Non-Formal Education (NFE) project was established with the goal of addressing the real needs of villagers, and developing human resources at the village and commune level. Teachers are selected from villages and trained to teach in their own communities, and the curriculum developed is designed to reflect the day-to-day needs and issues of villagers. NFE takes a fundamentally different approach from the formal education system in that learners are seen as active participants in their learning, as opposed to passive recipients. The need for basic education is becoming an increasing priority for highlander communities as economic and social change impact upon their livelihoods. Written and spoken Khmer and the ability to communicate with government authorities and development agencies are seen as critical in ensuring participation in future discussion on change within the province that affects highlander communities.

With land and natural resources being encroached upon and threatened, NFE is seen as a tool to equip both adults and future generations of highlanders to cope with the transition to a market economy, and other important development issues such as increasing the quality of health, greater food security and an awareness of human rights. The NFE curriculum aims to teach Khmer literacy by using materials that are topical and reflective of the needs of the villagers. It is hoped therefore that the knowledge gained by the learners will lead to improvements in the living situation for villagers as well as provide opportunities for their own empowerment as their traditional way of life is further threatened.

As NFE cannot address the needs of all age groups in the village, the project targets the age group of 15 years and older in accordance with the national NFE policy. The classes are limited to 25 students per class, with 1 and some times 2 classes per village (dependent upon needs and levels of education in the village). Those that are not eligible to attend classes and receive learning materials (books, pens, paper etc) usually observe the NFE classes, thus constituting a group of unofficial learners.

Background

In late 1995, the Department of Education, Youth and Sport in co-operation with the then CAREERE Education Advisor, formulated an action research proposal for the pilot NFE

programme. This approach was adopted to allow the Department of Education to learn through implementation and improve the programme as issues came to light. In December 1995 a pilot NFE project was initiated in 10 pilot sites, in 6 districts. A further 10 villages were added in 1997 for a total of 20 villages. The Provincial Education's Office of Non-Formal Education was responsible for implementing the project with representatives from other departments. This project encountered many obstacles, the first being the low capacity of the assembled team. As a result, a project was formulated in which the team could not implement. Other issues added to the situation resulting in the project lacking capacity, enthusiasm, poor monitoring of supplies and village level implementation activities, low quality teacher training and the use of inappropriate learning materials within the Ratanakiri context.

In June 1997, an evaluation of the pilot project was conducted in which many problems were identified and recommendations put forward. The most important of the recommendations was to move the project away from the Provincial Department of Education, to the Provincial Rural Development Committee (PRDC). The new PRDC NFE team was seen as an opportunity to incorporate other sectoral staff into the project, thus forging links with other departments engaged in development activities at village level.

RAT/EDU/0001

This project has been a continuation of the previous CAREERE NFE projects. There remains an interdepartmental make up to the group, with regular monitoring of classes at village level, and provision of materials, key activities in the annual work plan. The planning, management, implementation and evaluation of the project by the group is adequate, but with room for improvement. For the incoming NFE Advisor, the challenge has been to adapt the implementation of the project away from a didactic teacher centred style, to a more participatory, learner centred and driven project.

Additionally, the project sought to highlight the important role of culture in community education and development. The concept appeared unfamiliar and possibly unrelated to the overall aims of NFE. As a result efforts at provincial and village level to initiate cultural discussion and documentation has not taken root. The participation of women in education has been an area of success with an increasing number of female teachers in the project, including in Borkeo district, an all female NFE class.

Next year the project has a new set of guiding principles and implementation strategy. The CNRM project and CAREERE will continue to provide technical support to the project in the form of an NFE Advisor and NFE Assistant. In 2000, the total budget for the project was: \$33. 376.50.

Objectives of the project

The project aims to:

- Increase standard and level of education at grass roots level in order to empower villagers, and to improve the living standard of villagers through education.
- To increase dialogue between provincial, district, commune and village level.

Methodology and Evaluation Team

Objective of Evaluation

The evaluation of subproject RAT/EDU/000 has 3 objectives:

- To measure planned outputs against actual outputs
- To assess the effectiveness, quality and impact of project activities, and project sustainability.
- To identify strengths and weaknesses in the project, in order to enhance future projects.

The evaluation team consisted of 13 people, 1 M&E person from the PRDC, 2 CAREERE NFE staff members, and 10 members of the PRDC NFE Working Group. The evaluation team began by discussing an evaluation schedule and timetable.

<u>Schedule for final evaluation of NFE sub-project 2000</u>		
4-8/12/00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review NFE project for 2000 • Review purpose of conducting an evaluation • Review the objective to be evaluated • Select evaluation methodology to be used 	<input type="checkbox"/> NFE W/G
11-15/12/2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct random selection of villages to be evaluated • Prepare M&E tools to be used • Review NFE reports and observation forms • Divide NFE evaluation team into groups for field study 	<input type="checkbox"/> NFE W/G
8-13/1/2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct field study 	<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Teams
15-24/1/2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse all evaluation information gathered • Prepare draft report • Prepare NFE evaluation workshop 	<input type="checkbox"/> NFE W/G
30-31/1/2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold NFE evaluation workshop 	<input type="checkbox"/> NFE W/G and participants
1-2/2/2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise writing of NFE evaluation report 	<input type="checkbox"/> NFE Advisor and NFE Assistant <input type="checkbox"/> 2 NFE staff

Evaluation Teams and villages visited

Evaluation Teams	District and Communes	Villages	Date visited	Respondents
<p><u>Group 1</u></p> <p>Huot Mengkorng</p> <p>Justin McCaul</p> <p>Chea Tourn</p> <p>Hy Yen</p> <p>Som Ong</p> <p>Nob Wway</p> <p>Ray Mar</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">District</p> <p>Borkeo</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communes</p> <p>TingChak Lamingh</p>	<p>Toy</p> <p>Luyt</p> <p>Trom</p> <p>Nyorgn¹</p>	<p>9-10/1/01</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students per village • 5 (1 female) VVT • 4 Village Chiefs/VDC • 2 Commune Chiefs
	<p style="text-align: center;">District</p> <p>Oyadao</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communes</p> <p>Som Thom Sesan Pok Nai Yatung</p>	<p>SomTrac</p> <p>Chah</p> <p>Pok Thom</p> <p>Lom</p> <p>Thien</p> <p>Piak</p>	<p>11-13/1/01</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students per village • 8 (2 female) VVT • 6 Village Chiefs/VDC • 3 Commune Chiefs

¹ Nyrogn village has 2 classes in the same village at different levels, therefore a total of 10 students were interviewed in this village.

Group 2 Som Sophea Chan Kamkhouer Fuy Bunma Som Art Tun Yun Tun Chenda	District Lumphat	Deylo	9-12/1/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students per village • 5 VVT's • 5 Village Chief/VDC • 3 Commune Chief
	Communes Chet Ut Dom Labang 1 Labang 2	Samkar Katung Katieng 1 Karchung		
	District Vonsai	Tavong	9-11/1/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students per village • 2 VVT's • 2 Village Chiefs/VDC • 1 Commune Chief
	Commune Phom Kok	Sapol		
	District Banlung	Sil	9-10/1/01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 students per village • 2 VVT's • 2 Village Chief/VDC • 1 Commune Chief
	Commune Yak Loam	Phnom		

Planned Outputs	Actual Outputs
<p>Output 1 600 NFE students (288 female) in 34 old NFE villages receive post-literacy/vocational training, 586 (268 female) will continue to learn Book 2 and 3, and 67 VVT's (17 female) and 29 VVTA's (15 female) will be strengthened.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.1 Training: VVT's and VVTA's will be trained in how to use post-literacy level teaching materials developed by NFE working group in two 5 day training workshops (total: 10 days) at district and provincial level.</p>	<p>Training for post literacy level VVT's and VVTA's was delivered twice throughout the year, once at provincial level and the other in Oyadao, at district level.</p>
<p>Activity 1.2 Distribution of teaching and learning materials: An initial distribution of materials in January 2000, with additional distribution in response to immediate needs.</p>	<p>This activity was late due to a delay in receiving project funds.</p>
<p>Activity 1.3 Distribution of documents for 34 village libraries: Distribution of documents and materials in February 2000 followed by a second distribution in July 2000.</p>	<p>This activity was late due to delay in receiving project funds. The follow up distribution was delivered on time.</p>
<p>Activity 1.4 Refresher training for VVT's and VVTA's in teaching methodologies: 43 VVT's and VVTA's will receive training in April 2000. Curriculum will be based on needs identified by NFE working group and district facilitators through monitoring visits.</p>	<p>Training workshop on teaching methodology was held in May 2000.</p>
<p>Activity 1.5 Monitoring NFE activities: All NFE classes will be monitored twice a month, 1 by provincial staff and district facilitator together, and 1 district facilitator. Observation forms will be completed during each visit by provincial staff and district facilitators.</p>	<p>The PRDC NFE Working Group achieved this output in all but one month in which a busy workload prevented a field visit. All visits were done with the respective district facilitators.</p>
<p>Activity 1.6 Developing additional NFE learning and teaching materials for teachers and students: Development of teaching and learning materials will be an ongoing process responding to the needs of the community. The NFE working group, through cooperating with all sectors will develop materials that are relevant to the needs of communities.</p>	<p>The PRDC NFE Working Group produced 2 sets of materials for NFE libraries throughout the year. The materials covered the range of topics included in the NFE curriculum; gender, health, environment, agriculture and animal health.</p>
<p>Activity 1.7 Training workshop for VVT's and VVTA's on supplement materials: Training workshop for VVT's and VVTA's on supplement materials will be held at provincial level. The aim of the workshop will be to increase the capacity of teachers to develop supplement teaching materials, how to use the materials and new teaching methodologies.</p>	<p>A training workshop on how to develop materials through creative writing was held at the provincial level with the participation of NFE VVT's and members of NTFP's Indigenous Youth Initiative. The workshop was lead by a member of NTFP and facilitated by the NFE Working Group.</p>
<p>Activity 1.8 Refresher training for VVT's and VVTA's on increasing general knowledge: Refresher training will be held in April 2000 with the aim of strengthening the ability and confidence of VVT's and VVTA's.</p>	
<p>Activity 1.9 Opening of 25 classes (Book 2 and 3) in existing NFE target villages.</p>	<p>Classes were opened in Oyadao, Lumphat and Yak Loam districts throughout the year.</p>
<p>Activity 1.10 Distribution of teaching and learning materials for VVT's and 600 NFE students in January 2000 by NFE working group.</p>	<p>This activity was late due to a delay in receiving project funds, however materials were distributed in March 2000.</p>
<p>Activity 1.11 Distribution of documents and materials for 10 new village libraries (Book 2 and 3) in Vonsai (5) and Oyadao (5). Monitoring NFE classes, village libraries and post-literacy level students.</p>	<p>Members of the PRDC NFE Working Group responsible for these districts helped with the distribution of documents in these area's.</p>

Activity 1.12 Final Evaluation of project: The end of project evaluation will be conducted by the NFE Advisor with the participation of NFE working group and CARERE M&E Assistant. Information will be presented over 2 days in Evaluation Workshop with the final report to be written by the NFE working group.	Evaluation of the project took place in December-January under the guidance of the NFE Advisor and Assistant, with the help of an M&E focal person from PRDC.
Output 2: 150 villagers (90 female) in 6 new NFE target villages, receive literacy training and 12 village volunteer teachers receive training in monitoring, increase educational knowledge, development of teaching materials and be able to conduct lessons.	
Activity 2.1 Appraise 6 new villages and select 12 new VVT's.	New villages in Borkeo district were appraised in March 2000.
Activity 2.2 Train 12 new VVT's on methodology Book 1.	New VVT's were trained on methodology in March 2000.
Activity 2.3 Open 6 new classes in Borkeo district.	New classes were opened in Borkeo district in March/April 2000.
Activity 2.4 Distribution of teaching and learning materials for 6 new NFE classes.	New classes received materials in March 2000.
Activity 2.5 Refresher training for VVT's and District Facilitators in facilitation skills.	This workshops was delivered in September 2000 as part of a Refresher training workshop in Oyadao district.
Activity 2.6 Workshop on how to develop teaching materials and library management	Workshops and training on library management skills and how to develop teaching materials were held in Borkeo and Vonsai districts during the year.
Activity 2.7 Opening of 6 new village libraries	A total of 6 new libraries were opened in Borkeo district as part of NFE expansion during the year.
Activity 2.8 Monitoring of NFE classes	In all but 1 month during the year, members of the NFE Working Group monitored NFE classes.
Output 3 Build capacity of 13 PRDC NFE Working Group members (4 female), 5 district facilitators, 10 commune facilitators (3 female) and 16 active VVT's in evaluation and monitoring, and problem solving.	
Activity 3.1 Workshop outside province for members of PRDC NFE Working Group	Key members in the NFE Working Group did attend Ministry and other workshops and meetings in Phnom Penh during the year.
Activity 3.2 Exposure study tour outside the province for members of PRDC NFE Working Group	The constraint of time and money prevented any member of the NFE team from participating in any learning activities outside the province.
Activity 3.3 Training for district and commune facilitators in facilitation and monitoring skills	Commune and district facilitators attended a workshop on facilitation skills, in addition to regular assistance when visited in the field by members of the NFE Working Group.

Qualitative Findings

NFE Students

All information in the evaluation report was gathered through individual or group interviews with respondents. For NFE learners, their knowledge on topics in the NFE curriculum was also tested. Under headings for NFE students, NFE teachers, District and Commune Facilitators and VDC and Village and Commune Chiefs, the results of the evaluation are summarised.

- Throughout the evaluation, most students displayed a moderate to high level of literacy skills. However, amongst female students it was noticed that the ability to speak Khmer fluently was lower than amongst male students – especially those at Book 1 and 2 levels.

Students also displayed a moderate level of capacity with regards to performing basic numeracy.

- ❑ During the evaluation there was a high level of understanding of the content in NFE lessons, displayed by the majority of students. This was for both male and female students. As one female student in Borkeo district explained, even though her Khmer literacy skills are still low, she is able to understand the lessons because much of the information is explained using their traditional language in classes.
- ❑ Students also expressed a high level of motivation to learn in NFE classes. They understand the important role education plays in their lives and of the village. Additionally, some students felt very positive towards the other students in their class as they all felt a shared sense of learning.
- ❑ Students agreed that the curriculum used in NFE classes, addresses the needs of the villagers everyday lives. A female student in Borkeo district said this was because villagers have input in to the curriculum. A male Village Volunteer Teacher, again in Borkeo, wished to see more environmental and human rights information in the NFE curriculum as these issues were very important to the people in his village/commune.
- ❑ The majority of students interviewed during the evaluation said they tried hard to attend NFE classes as often as possible by making time in their days. Again students said they understood NFE was important, as it is an opportunity to learn and gain information. Also the classes were enjoyable, so it was also a fun activity to participate in.
- ❑ Students when questioned about their teacher's expressed during interviews a high level of satisfaction with the ability of their teachers and the quality of their teaching. One female student in Borkeo district said she liked her teacher because he was patient with the learners and did not get angry. However, some students explained that they did not have a lot of confidence in teachers whose capacity was low. In some villages in which there are 2 teachers, students all want to attend classes with the strong teacher and not the weak teacher. The weak teacher was not disliked, but rather encouraged to learn more.

NFE Teachers

- ❑ When questioned and asked to explain what was easy or difficult about their job, many teachers explained that when students attend classes regularly, this makes their job easy and more enjoyable. A difficulty for some teachers was in understanding the content of some lessons and the methodology to be used. Some of the teachers interviewed wanted more training on methodology and lesson content.
- ❑ Teachers also felt that the support and assistance of the Provincial level NFE group was welcome because it helps to make their job easier. A male teacher in Oyadao explained how a member of the NFE team helped to solve a problem between the teacher and the VDC by acting as a facilitator during the discussion. Another teacher in Lumphat district explained how a member of the NFE team helped to get a battery repaired for his classroom.
- ❑ The evaluation did reveal a degree of jealousy amongst government paid teachers working in villages and the NFE VVT's who receive no financial support (apart from DSA for attending training workshops) from the project. This was causing some conflict and prompting some NFE teachers to ask why they were not receiving money for teaching.
- ❑ In addition to the above mentioned issue, some NFE teachers explained that they are unhappy that some teachers, and not all teachers, are invited to training workshops, and that some teachers attend more workshops than others. While their desire to build their teaching capacity is a concern in this matter, they have pointed out that the teachers who attend workshops receive money for doing so. Therefore the more workshops you attend, the more money you receive. Teachers felt this was unfair.
- ❑ Teachers and Commune Facilitators in some villages explained that members of their VDC were active in encouraging students to attend NFE classes.
- ❑ All teachers interviewed agreed that learning and teaching materials and other resources were provided by the Provincial team, to the villages on time and when they needed them.

- ❑ The capacity of teachers in some villages is quite good in terms of teaching ability and understanding of lesson content and methodology. However, the evaluation did highlight the still high level of dependency of teachers and commune facilitators on the Provincial NFE team to help problem solve for the communities. Additionally, the NFE team views this tendency as a positive factor – the villagers adhering to the 'NFE structure'. If ownership of project activities is to take root, this dependency will need to be addressed.
- ❑ In the more remote areas, the ability of teachers remains very low. The cause of such a problem may be to do with a lack of contact with outsiders and the opportunity to practice language and other skills learnt in NFE.
- ❑ Some teachers told of how they have little confidence in their commune and district facilitators because they had such little contact with them. For some district and commune facilitators, lack of transport is a key problem. In Vonsai and Borkeo, the district facilitator's have no moto or bicycle. Additionally for district facilitators in Oyadao and Lumphat, they are also responsible for monitoring formal education in the area. This impinges on the time available to monitor and facilitate in NFE villages. Moves to strengthen the ability of Commune Facilitators to conduct the majority of monitoring activities are an obvious alternative.
- ❑ There is also a problem with some of the VVT's using NFE supplied resources in their own households. This is particularly prevalent with batteries, lights and cupboards used for the village libraries. This issue appears to cause disunity between teacher, students and other members of the village. There is a need to correct this practice and explain to those involved that materials and resources are for the benefit of the whole NFE class and village.

District and Commune Facilitators

- ❑ All commune facilitators interviewed during the evaluation expressed enthusiasm for the benefits NFE has for their villages and commune. All explained that they were active as much as possible in monitoring NFE activities and problem solving where and when necessary. For some commune facilitators in Borkeo district monitoring activities were a problem because they had yet to receive bicycles from the project. (At the time of writing, this had been addressed through the delivery of bicycles to facilitators and teachers in the district).
- ❑ Some district facilitators were criticised by teachers and commune facilitators for not being very active. In one particular case, the district facilitator has already been cautioned for similar behaviour previously. As such complaints can disrupt the overall objectives of the project, steps to seek a suitable replacement have been considered. The positive factor with the commune level facilitators is that most began as teachers, so are more aware of the need to assist teachers as much as possible.
- ❑ Commune facilitators interviewed all received training about monitoring and evaluation, report writing, role and responsibility and problem solving from the Provincial NFE team during the year.
- ❑ Strong commune facilitators are able to assist teachers with improving their teaching methodology. However, some facilitators still need their capacities improved. Some commune facilitators are not very active which causes problems at village and commune level.
- ❑ District facilitators explained during interviews that they received training on the roles and responsibilities of their position in the NFE project. Overall, the capacity of the district facilitators is quite good.

VDC, Village and Commune Chiefs

- ❑ When questioned about their involvement in NFE activities, members of the VDC, as well as village and commune chiefs expressed strong support for NFE classes in their villages. Almost all were active in encouraging students to continue learning. One VDC representative explained that education was an important consideration when developing Village Development Plans.

- ❑ The VDC's and commune chiefs explained that they understood education was an important consideration for the development of Commune level development plans and that they want NFE to be able to continue in the village, if the NFE project is to finish. By this they meant that they want teachers and students to be skilled enough to conduct classes without the assistance of an NFE project.
- ❑ The VDC, village and commune chiefs in most interviews said that they encourage students to use village libraries and to discuss amongst themselves the information they have learnt and also to support VVT's by helping in their fields when they needed it.
- ❑ Village and Commune chiefs and members of the VDC explained that they are also supportive of assisting female students who are not as strong as male students. Some explained that they ask strong students to spend time with these learners to help build their capacity, and to encourage female learners to be active in NFE classes.
- ❑ A member of a VDC said he would like to see more integration amongst village focal persons with the NFE project. This includes village environment, health and agriculture persons. He believes the NFE project should have more practical skills as part of villager learning, not just the classroom.

PRDC NFE Working Group

The provincial NFE team are capable of planning, implementing, managing and evaluating the NFE project, however, there still remains a great deal of room for improvement in these key areas. The training of teachers on teaching methodology is strong in the group, with a number of the staff being capable and experienced in this area. Additionally, for some members of the team, they now have 2-3 years experience with the project so there is a substantial pool of knowledge in the project.

While this has given these members a great deal of knowledge about issues affecting the project, it has been difficult to get the team to adopt new strategies or approaches to education as some staff feel they are already 'successful enough'. Additionally, the strong emphasis on teaching literacy by many in the group means there is little time devoted to more 'non-formal education' activities that build up villager's ability to think critically and act independently outside of the classroom. Next year will be a challenge for the group as the principles of participation and ownership are key themes in the implementation strategy. This will hopefully lead to a less rigid style of education to one that is truly non-formal.

The year was quite a difficult one for the group as a general sense of disunity amongst the team had an impact on the effectiveness of project activities. The group did achieve basic outcomes (see Planned and Actual Outputs) but efforts to further improve the project were at times not evident. Also staff of the project seems to have settled into a comfortable routine that is reflected in a training schedule and content that has been used since the project began. Additionally, the expansion of the project in many areas now takes up much time in administration. The time left for developing materials, alternative teaching strategies this year was limited. As such, a rethink of the implementation strategy by the group and where best to focus efforts will be needed next year.

Quantitative Findings

General

- ❑ NFE classes total 56 and are spread through 42 villages in 10 communes and 5 districts with an approximate total of 1400 (500 female) students.
- ❑ 6 classes with a total of 241 (112 female) learners are studying at Book 1 level.
- ❑ 30 classes with a total of 780 (284 female) learners are studying Book 2 and 3.
- ❑ 20 classes with a total of 397 (109 female) learners are studying at post literacy level.
- ❑ There were 2 examination periods during the year – in June and November. The examinations were for the different learner levels and encompassed the areas of; gender, health, environment, agriculture, and basic numeracy and literacy.

NFE Students

- ❑ A total of 100 learners were interviewed and tested on knowledge of gender, health, environment and agriculture during the evaluation. Additionally, through KAP analysis, interviewers noted the level of comprehension and ability to speak Khmer amongst learners.
- ❑ Of the learners at Book 1-3 level, the evaluation showed a trend in which female learners scored well on the health (28%) and gender (24%) related questions, while for male learners, they generally scored better on environment and agriculture questions. This pattern may seem unsurprising given the roles men and women have in their societies.
- ❑ For learners at post literacy level, a similar pattern was evident, although a high percentage of women scored well on knowledge about the environment (56%), while in other areas – including gender, men (20%) as well as women (28%) scored relatively equally.

NFE Teachers

- ❑ There are in total 73 NFE teachers – Book 1 level there are 7, Book 2&3 – 40 teachers, while at post literacy level there are 26 teachers. A total of 33 VVT's and commune facilitators were interviewed during the evaluation.
- ❑ All teachers at all levels received 2 training workshops on teaching methodology during the year. Also, some VVT's were provided with training on facilitation skills throughout the year.
- ❑ A total of 10 villages now have 2 VVT's which are teaching classes of differing levels to accommodate the learning levels of the students in the village.

District and Commune Facilitators

- ❑ The NFE Project has 13 (3 female) commune facilitators. The evaluation revealed that the capacity of most commune facilitators was still in need of improvement – especially the female facilitators. Of the 3 female facilitators, only 1 facilitator was identified as being strong.
- ❑ The project has 5 district facilitators who visit all villages in their district 2 times per month – once with NFE team members, and once by themselves. As finding in the qualitative section reveal, some facilitators are not able to visit villages regularly.
- ❑ District and Commune facilitators received training on 1 training workshop on facilitation and problem solving skills, in addition to ongoing training in these key areas during monthly monitoring visits by the NFE team.

Sustainability

The issue of sustainability is a difficult topic as the NFE Working Group are less than convinced that villagers can manage parts of the program by themselves. The concept is understood and supported, but efforts to increase the level of responsibility and the practical role of villagers is met with some resistance by the group. Additionally, the skills to be totally responsible for the NFE program, still requires further development and attention at village level. What is now happening is a continuation of the 'passive student/ dominant teacher'-learning paradigm, a process that is counter productive to community empowerment and development. Steps to increase the active participation of villagers will need to become a much more prominent feature in the next project as participation and ownership of activities are given a higher priority. The following points are issues in future sustainability of the project:

- ❑ The motivation of students to attend classes remains very high. Many students regard NFE as being very important for them and their village while as a social gathering it is a fun event to participate in.
- ❑ Members of the VDC and village and commune chiefs are encouraging students to attend NFE classes, thus providing much needed support to the efforts of the VVT's and the program in general. This is essential in keeping NFE an important activity in village development.

- ❑ The evaluation revealed a still high level of dependency by the majority of teachers on the Provincial level to problem solve for communities. The NFE team view this dependency as a positive indicator that villagers are adhering to the 'NFE structure'. However, deeper analysis would suggest this dependency may hinder sustainability.
- ❑ There is increasing dissatisfaction amongst some village teachers over invitations to training workshops. The training workshops are viewed as opportunities to receive DSA payments, thus a chance to supplement incomes. A more equitable and considered decision-making process regarding invitations to trainings needs to be applied.
- ❑ One VDC member interviewed in Oyadao district expressed a desire to see NFE continue in his village even if the NFE project stops. He wants teachers and students in the village to be responsible for their own learning. This attitude is very positive in terms of sustainability and taking greater control of education decision-making at the village level.

Conclusions

Impacts of the NFE Project

Despite limitations in capacity amongst VVT's, transport and time constraints for facilitators, and the increasing workload of the provincial staff, the results of the evaluation indicate the NFE project is indeed having an impact on the lives of students, teachers and villagers. Most students could confidently answer questions relating to what they had learnt in NFE classes while many of the past practices that have been known to cause problems with health, are now clearly understood and people are taking the necessary steps to prevent these causing disease. The VDC members interviewed were also positive about the role NFE was playing in the development of their village. Observation by NFE staff members of villages indicated many of the villagers are trying to maintain a clean village environment, as well as building pigpens etc to keep animals fenced off from the village. As one student explained, he lets his pigs roam free during the day because he does not have enough money to keep them fed, but at night he puts them in the pig pen so that they do not soil the village too much.

In terms of literacy, men still remain stronger than women in terms of overall numbers and ability to speak, read and write Khmer. This also due to a greater participation of men in NFE classes. However, some women still like to use the village libraries as a place to look at pictures and listen to others read books, even if they themselves are unable to read. General knowledge is good, even amongst those learners whose Khmer speaking skills still need improvement. As one example in the evaluation findings highlights, this is because lessons are also explained using traditional languages, so the meaning is understood.

Sustainability

The project can still improve the level of sustainability in the project. The approach to villagers is still very top down from the NFE Working Group towards students, teachers and commune level facilitators. There exists at present a tendency for NFE staff to problem solve on behalf of the villagers, and for villagers to participate in this situation. This situation means it is quite difficult for villagers to develop a sense of ownership over the project, a necessary ingredient in sustainability. However, as the evaluation highlighted, the levels of enthusiasm for education amongst villagers are the strongest factor in the success of a sustainable project.

Materials Development

Materials development through the year was limited to purchasing or photocopying other primary materials, with no emphasis on the project developing materials. The lack of involvement of villagers in the materials development process also means they rely on the provincial office to develop all materials. The production of materials is a key function of the group that has not really been developed or ingrained in the activities of the project. The NFE Working Group will need to devote more time to developing materials themselves as opposed to purchasing materials from Phnom Penh, as budgets become increasingly under strain due to expansion of the project.

Additionally, this issue is also critical for the future sustainability of the project at the village level and increased skills and knowledge capacity of villagers. By working with teachers and students on materials development, villagers will be able to learn the theory behind developing materials, in addition to having the practical skills necessary for such an activity. With the project now entering its sixth year, subjects and topics in materials development will need to diversify. The area of culture is one such area that can be used to generate materials.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The NFE Working Group monitored classes in the field once a month for a one-week period. The whole group provides feedback in a staff meeting after returning from the field. With an increasing number of villages to monitor and report on, the NFE team will need to strengthen their information gathering and recording skills. At present much information is hand written and stored on shelves. Also, there is no one person with a clear responsibility for maintaining up to date data on the NFE project. The evaluation highlighted a lack of understanding on the use of statistical data for the project. However, the acquisition of a new computer and the updating of existing computers ensure the office now has the resources needed to maintain a database on NFE activities. Training on the skills required for a database, and the uses of data, is a key activity for further development amongst the group.

Another issue is that at present, staff with the project is already stretched in terms of monitoring and evaluating all active villages during the month. In addition to the logistics of travel, the team is required to assist with teacher training, problem solving at the village, commune and district levels, up dating statistics and undertaking research for materials development. For some staff in the larger districts such as Oyadao or those with classes widely dispersed such as Vonsai, these activities are quite time consuming. An alternative to our current system of monitoring and evaluation, and the focus of such visits, may be needed.

Integration

This year integration did not become a central part of the project's activities. There were no sectoral collaborations with other departments and no materials development activities to share information and ideas. While staff understand the benefits of integration, relating it to actual activities has been difficult. Even at the village level, NFE still operates without any consultation with other departments. However, other departments did not approach the group for assistance with lesson content and learning materials.

The concept of sectoral integration is a real asset in the NFE project, but needs further work if it is to fully achieve its intended goal. While the group and the project do use information from a number of sources and departments that are relevant to the needs of villagers, the process in acquiring the information needs attention. A number of issues have impeded the full development of this activity and these include; a continued unfamiliarity with linking with departments and activities outside of the NFE office; a still limited knowledge on the development of learning materials; and lack of any regular meeting to incorporate the plans of other sectors into NFE activities. The constraint of time is by far the biggest factor stopping this activity from developing further. Moves to make small links with other department and NGO's will be a priority in the next project.

Cultural Aspect

The ability of the group to work cross culturally with highland villagers has room for improvement. This year the group received three training workshops on culture. Various issues were discussed including culture in development, documenting culture and cultural diversity. Most of the group displayed a very good degree of knowledge on the issue of culture itself, however cultural sensitivity and integrating cultural diversity into activities remains difficult for the group. The integration of culture into the NFE curriculum will hopefully assist with the development of a more non-formal style education, in addition to greater insight into the issues of cultural diversity itself.

Gender

The success of an all women NFE class in Borkeo district highlights an opportunity to further increase the involvement of female villagers in NFE activities. Additionally, strong female teachers in classes in Lumphat district and Borkeo are providing positive role models for other female learners. However, the issue of shyness and lack of confidence can still inhibit some women from participating in classes.

As the results of the evaluation highlight, the level of knowledge on gender issues amongst female learners was quite high, indicating possibly an opportunity to provide classes that address female concerns and issues.

Technical Support

The project has used a 'primer' based approach to adult literacy for a number of years now. While the results of such an approach to education have been so far successful here in Ratanakiri, a less formalised and structured approach to literacy should now be attempted. This would require the assistance of a suitably qualified person with an education and literacy background to help develop a long term plan for the project. Additionally, members of the Working Group would benefit from additional training and discussion on the differences between a formal and non-formal approach to education, and adult literacy.

Generally, the group still need assistance with the day to day tasks of planning, implementing and managing the NFE project. While key staff such as the Director and Deputy Director have strong skills in these areas, the remainder of the staff still lack capacity to plan, manage and implement activities on their own. The NFE Advisor will concentrate more on the development of materials that incorporate culture in the upcoming project and establishing links with other departments and projects.

Recommendations

Materials Development

The development of materials for NFE classes should now move to a process of increasing the participation of villagers themselves. This will require a shift in the present implementation strategy of the project in which field visits become opportunities to brainstorm ideas and activities to include in materials development. This type of approach to NFE and materials development would be best placed amongst post literacy level classes. Assisting with the development of materials may consolidate the lessons learnt during pre literacy training.

The NFE Working Group itself will need to make stronger efforts in establishing and maintaining links with other departments and development agencies. As mentioned previously, the benefits for villagers and the project will increase with more informative learning materials that are reflective of other sectoral activities at the village level.

Capacity Building

The capacity building of teachers still requires attention at the village level. Improvements are happening, but for some teachers reaching post literacy level, there are difficulties in understanding some of the content in the lessons. The development of an alternative teaching methodology that is less technical the 7 step methodology, is one activity that may be adopted next year, to help teachers with a low capacity acquire the skills to become a teacher.

Commune and district level facilitators is a critical area in which further capacity building will help to alleviate the time constraints the NFE Working Group currently face with problem solving and monitoring and evaluating. By building up the skills and knowledge of facilitators – especially at commune level – in teacher training and monitoring and evaluating, the responsibility for such activities will become a priority for these members of the project. This will also assist with increasing the level of ownership at village and commune level. Emphasis needs to be placed on

shifting responsibility away from the provincial level, and more towards the village and commune level.

The NFE Working Group requires further capacity building in the knowledge area of non-formal education techniques, and increasing the participation of villagers in materials development and implementing and monitoring activities. Basic planning, management, implementation and monitoring and evaluating skills already exist amongst members of the group. As the project acquires a new implementation strategy for the upcoming project, it may be time for the NFE Group to do likewise.

Long term planning with community and individual development at the centre of activities, is still a concept that will need further explanation to staff. Their efforts to improve the educational ability of villagers is well intentioned – indeed staff are committed to helping indigenous communities, but needs to be manifest in strategies and activities directed towards the empowerment of people, not just an increase in their ability to read and write. Also, developing the groups' understanding and use of culture and creative expression could also be an area for training and discussion.

As mentioned above, a new emphasis on the maintenance of a reliable database of NFE activities and outputs will also be an area of priority in future capacity building exercises. This may be tied with an effort to improve the level of general computer skills in the group. The expansion of NFE activities means an increase in the amount of information the project is generating. This will need to be documented and monitored if such data is to be utilised by the project. The group will also need to explore further the area of non-formal education theory and techniques to widen their notions of education. As much of the villagers lives are spent outside the classroom, activities that take place in real life environments may have more impact and relevance.

Appendixes

Questionnaire for VVT's and Commune Facilitators

Date:
Name:
Role:
Sex:
Age:
Ethnicity:

Village:
Commune:
District:

1. Please explain what you find easy and what you find difficult in your job and VVT? Why is this?
2. Who do you most regularly contact when you are having difficulties? Why?
3. Are you able to problem solve quickly by your self? Please give an example.
4. What did provincial and district level staff assist you with this year? Please give an example.
5. Is your commune facilitator active in monitoring classes each month? **(For VVT's only)**
6. What did he or she do to assist you? Please give an example.
7. Are VVT's in your commune active during each month? Please give an example. **(For Commune Facilitators only)**
8. What training did you receive this year? **(Evaluators are to rate respondents ability using KAP analysis)**
 - 4 step methodology
 - 7 step methodology
 - post-literacy level
 - library management
 - culture
 - creative writing
9. Did you receive enough learning and teaching materials this year? Please explain what you received and when.
10. Are there any difficulties in your relationship with provincial and district level staff? If so, why?
11. Do you feel the NFE curriculum addresses the needs of your village? Please explain why.
12. Are NFE classes held regularly in your village? Please explain.
13. Do your NFE students regularly attend classes during each month? Please explain.
14. At what level are you currently teaching?
15. Do you find teaching at this level difficult or easy? Please explain. **(Evaluators are to rate respondents using KAP analysis)**
16. Were you able to develop any learning materials this year? Please explain why?
17. What are the difficulties for monitoring NFE classes in your commune? Please give examples. **(For Commune Facilitators only)**
18. Are there any difficulties in communicating from village level to provincial level? Please give examples.
19. Do you have any suggestions or comments to improve the role of Commune Facilitator? Please explain.
20. Are the learning and teaching materials in your village well maintained? Please explain. **(Evaluators to observe village libraries and classes)**
21. Did any other sectors participate in NFE classes this year and disseminate information? If yes, what sectors? What did they do?
22. Did your VDC and community provide support to NFE activities this year? Please explain.
23. Do you have any suggestions or comments?

Questionnaire for NFE Students

Date:
Name:
Sex:
Age:
Ethnicity:

Village:
Commune:
District:

1. Please give an example of something you have learnt in NFE classes?
2. Do you feel NFE lessons have important information for you and your village? Please explain why?
3. Have you ever borrowed a book from the village library? How often do you borrow and why?
4. Do you feel the village library is useful for you and your village? Please explain why?
5. Do you feel the NFE curriculum addresses the needs of your village? Please explain why?
6. At what level are you currently learning?
7. How long have you been studying?

(Evaluators to rate respondents on Q's 8,9 using KAP analysis)

8. Please give an example of knowledge you have gained in:
 - agriculture
 - health
 - environment
 - gender
9. Please explain how you practice knowledge related to:
 - agriculture
 - health
 - environment
 - gender
10. How often do you attend NFE classes? Please explain why?
11. Do you have any suggestions or comments?

Questionnaire for VDC, Village Chief and Commune Chief

Date:

Name:

Role:

Sex:

Age:

Ethnicity:

Village:

Commune:

District:

1. Have you ever borrowed book from the village library? How often?
2. Do you feel the library is useful for your village? Why?
3. Do you think NFE is important in the development of your village and/or commune? Please explain why.
4. Do you feel the NFE curriculum addresses the needs of your village? Please explain why?
5. Have you seen any changes with NFE students in your village? Please give an example.
6. Do you know how often are NFE classes held in your village? Please explain why.
7. Do you know how often students attend NFE classes? Please explain why.
8. Did any other sectors come to participate in NFE classes and disseminate information in your village this year? If yes, what sectors and what did they do?
9. Do you feel you received enough information about NFE activities from provincial NFE staff and District Facilitators? Please explain why.
10. What did your VDC and other community members do to support NFE activities in your village/ commune this year? Please give an example.
11. Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Guidelines for Conducting Project Evaluation Interviews

General

1. Explain clearly to the interviewees the objective of the evaluation. Stress that it is important that they provide **truthful answers**. There are no right or wrong answers. Our purpose is to gather information that will allow our office to provide better NFE activities to all villagers.
2. In all interviews, speak clearly and provide any clarification if the respondents do not understand. If a problem with understanding a question persists, move on to the next.
3. Follow the order of the preset questions.
4. Do not interrupt the respondent when they are giving their answer.

Interviews

- Conduct interviews with Commune Facilitators, VVT's, VDC's, Village elders and NFE students.
- Be sure to accurately record who attended the interviews (2 VDC's, 1 elder, 1 district facilitator etc).
- Be sure that 1 person **does not** answer all the questions. Ask other people for their comments.
- After people have provided their answer, read it back to verify what it is that they have said.
- Interview 5 NFE students. Make sure those selected represent an equal proportion of students e.g. do not allow the teacher to select all the good students. Also ensure there is an equal number of men and women in the interviews.
- At the end of the questions, ask those interviewed if there is anything else to add.

Ensure the interviews are informal and not intimidating for the people. At the end of interviews thank all the participants for their time.

NFE Progress Tests June 2000

District	Commune	Village	Date	No. Of Students		Students in Exam		No. passed exam		% passed	No. failed exam		% failed	Grade/ level	
				Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female		Total	Female			
Banlung	Yak Loam	Chree	22/6/00	37	13	22	8	17	4	77.27%	5	4	22.70%	1	
		Lon	23/6/00	20	17	6	5	5	4	83.33%	1	1	16.66%	3	
		Sil	24/6/00	19	9	12	8	11	7	91.66%	1	1	8.33%	3	
		Lapo	25/6/00	20	17	9	7	9	7	100%	0	0	0	2	
Total				96	56	49	28	42	22		7	6			
Lumphat	Chy ut Dom	Ohkan	22/6/00	25	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
		Pum Thmey	23/6/00	23	20	12	10	12	10	100%	0	0	0	3	
		Daylo	24/6/00	24	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	post-lit.	
		Samkar	25/6/00	12	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
		Srey Chook	25/6/00	25	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
		Lumphat	26/6/00	25	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	
		Labang 1	Katieng 1	26/6/00	25	12	11	3	10	2	90.91%	1	1	10%	3
		Labang 2	Karcheing	22/6/00	30	15	16	3	16	3	100%	0	0	0	3
			Katieng 2	23/6/00	23	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
		Total				212	130	39	16	38	15		1	1	
Borkeo	Tingchak	Panol	26/6/00	43	8	9	2	9	2	100%	0	0	0	1	
		Toey 1	24/6/00	29	29	13	13	13	13	100%	0	0	0	1	
		Toey 2	25/6/00	32	32	20	20	20	20	100%	0	0	0	1	
		Kob 1	26/6/00	20	0	6	0	6	0	100%	0	0	0	1	
		Kob 2	26/6/00	32	18	19	6	18	5	94.73%	1	0	5.25%	1	
		Luet	25/6/00	29	0	13	2	12	1	92.30%	1	1	7.69%	1	
		Lamingh	Trom	24/6/00	25	0	16	0	16	0	100%	0	0	0	1
			Sue	23/6/00	39	0	26	2	24	2	93.30	2	0	7.69%	1
			Ngon	22/6/00	29	10	21	7	17	3	80.95%	4	0	10.05	1
Total				278	97	143	52	135	46		8	1			

Vonsai	Phnom Chok	Karlie Sapoun	4/7/00	25	10	19	4	18	3	90.91%	1	1	10%	2
		Karlie Tarwong	5/7/00	16	3	13	3	13	3	100%	0	0	0	2
		Kok Lao	6/7/00	26	13	6	2	5	2	90.91%	1	1	10%	2
		Kok Prao	7/7/00	20	8	10	2	10	2	100%	0	0	0	2
		Tiem Kroam	8/7/00	25	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Total				112	48	48	11	46	10		2	2		
Oyadao	Som Thom	Som Kanning	28/6/00	25	6	16	4	16	4	100%	0	0	0	3
		Trok Chak	27/6/00	25	13	19	13	19	13	100%	0	0	0	3
		Trom Thmey	27/6/00	48	15	16	4	14	4	33.33%	2	0	41.67	3
	Pok Ngey	Pok Poe	23/6/00	37	9	25	5	20	5	100%	0	0	0	3
		Lom	24/6/00	32	6	15	4	14	5	43.75%	1	0	27.78	3
		Pok Dthoh	25/6/00	36	3	12	3	12	3	100%	0	0	0	3
		Pok Thom	25/6/00	51	25	16	3	16	3	100%	0	0	0	3
	Yah Tong	Ten	22/6/00	25	23	17	15	17	15	100%	0	0	0	3
		Piak	22/6/00	23	6	14	5	9	3	56%	5	2	20%	3
Total				302	106	150	56	137	55		8	2		
Grand Total				1000	437	429	163	398	148		26	12		