



Harnessing technology for youth learning and safety

Young secondary-school students read a learning module about hygiene and hand washing

World Education Cambodia has been working in Prey Veng province since 2002 to reduce the vulnerability of youth to trafficking, exploitation and abuse. Over that time it has worked alongside schools, nonformal education facilitators, education officials, and Child Protection Committees to support youth to stay in school or enrol in nonformal education classes and build the skills and knowledge that can help vulnerable youth achieve better learning outcomes and protect themselves from exploitation.

The need continues to be great. With seasonal farming that is made even more difficult due to chronic droughts and floods, World Education's target areas in Prey Veng suffer from severe food insecurity, have among the highest migration rates of the entire country, and some of the lowest education achievement rates. Ever increasing numbers of youth are leaving their villages in search of whatever work they can find. They are traveling to Phnom Penh and other provinces within Cambodia or cross Cambodia's porous borders to Thailand, and further afield, most often using illegal, irregular and highly risky migration channels. Without sufficient education levels, skills, knowledge and support networks these youth are extremely vulnerable to

forced labor, abuse and exploitation, including labor and sex trafficking.

In such a context, World Education has been seeking ways to deepen and expand the impact of its *Youth on the Move* program in Prey Veng, and increasingly it is discovering the power of technology.

From simple sessions teaching youth to use mobile phones, or providing youth groups with cameras and tablets, to establishing full-blown school computer labs and village-based computer centers and courses in Information Communications Technology - World Education has seen youth engagement with learning soar, richer learning outcomes and safer behaviours among the youth who do go on to migrate in search of work.

Just recently, World Education's development of the first ever Khmer language website for migrant youth or youth considering migration has meant an even bigger presence of technology in our youth work in Prey Veng. The website <http://aims.worlded.org> contains simple lessons to teach youth how to migrate safely. These cover topics such as legal migration, necessary documents, preparations to make, pay and contracts,



Youth educators conducting 'house-to-house' sessions to show communities World Education's new safe migration website and phone line, and to share key messages about how to migrate safely



Youth at one of World Education's village-based computer centers



Youth learning how to use mobile phones – a skill that our impact studies have shown is highly valued by migrant youth later on

workplace safety, health, saving money, drugs and alcohol, and relationships. Every lesson includes audio recordings of the text for youth who cannot read well and the website is coupled with an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone line youth can call to access the same information.

Youth on the Move has used these new resources to great effect in Prey Veng. By providing Internet access to four computer labs as well as village-based labs, nearly 2,000 youth in Prey Veng have been given access to the Internet for the first time. A total of 116 youth peer educators have been trained who have in turn taught nearly 1,000 youth how to use the Internet safely, as well as how to use the new AIMS website and IVR phone line.

Overall, the key has not been technology itself, but the integration of technology into broader program interventions to deepen learning impact.

For example, as well as learning core computer skills, youth at World Education's village-based computer centers also learn how to use the Internet, and how to use the new safe migration website. They then benefited from facilitated sessions that used the contents of the ten learning modules on the website – such as preparations to make before migrating, how to choose a reliable recruitment company, and living with new people.

Similarly, using laptops and tablets, peer educators in the last year have reached 3,879 people with village sessions that used the content of both the new website and IVR phone line to reinforce their session's core messages with information about legal migration and how to stay safe.

The successful integration of technology into *Youth on the Move* has been possible through the recent support of donors including the Dream Blue Foundation, the Oak Foundation and the Alcatel-Lucent Foundation.



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For more information about Youth on the Move, please contact Estelle Day at estelle_day@worlded.org