

EVALUATION
OF
M'LOP TAPANG'S
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

June 2019

CONTENTS

1	Purpose of the Evaluation	5
2	Methodology	5
3	The Context to M'Lop Tapang's Work With Children In Its Non-Formal Education Programme.	6
4	Evaluation Findings and Related Recommendations.	7
4.1	ARE POOR, DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN ABLE TO ACCESS MT's SERVICES ESPECIALLY THE NFE PROGRAMME?	7
4.1.1	Routes into M'Lop Tapang.	7
4.1.2	Are children's other needs - as well as their educational needs – assessed and action taken to meet those needs appropriately when they are referred to the school of the NFE programme?	8
4.1.3	MT Education Services: NFE or BTS?	8
4.1.4	NFE: which grade?	9
4.2	IS MT's NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME A HEALTHY, SAFE PLACE IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE?	9
4.2.1	A Healthy School?	9
4.2.2	A Safe School?	9
4.2.2.1	Bullying by other children.	
4.2.2.2	Discipline and punishments of children at school.	
4.2.2.3	Internet safety at MT's NFE school.	
4.2.2.4	Child protection from physical and sexual abuse.	
4.3	IS TEACHING EFFECTIVE AND CHILD-CENTRED IN MT's NFE PROGRAMME?	12
4.3.1	Class size.	12
4.3.2	Curricula.	13
4.3.3	Exams and monthly testing.	13
4.3.4	Recruiting and building the capacity of teachers.	13
4.3.5	Relationships of teachers with children and teaching methods used.	14
4.3.6	Absentee children and drop-outs.	14
4.3.7	Extracurricular classes (Sports, Arts, Computer classes).	15
4.4	HOW DO MT's SOCIAL WORK SERVICES SUPPORT THE NFE PROGRAMME TO EDUCATE CHILDREN?	16
4.4.1	Essential material services.	17
4.4.2	The Outreach team's work with children who attend NFE.	17
4.4.2.1	Social work with each individual child.	
4.4.2.2	Size of social workers' caseloads:	
4.4.2.3	Monitoring attendance, absence and the number of children dropping out of school.	
4.4.2.4	Preventing drop-outs.	
4.4.2.5	Standard of case management	
4.5	ARE THE CHILDREN WHO ATTEND THE NFE PROGRAMME GRADE SCHOOL ENABLED TO GRADUATE TO AND CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION AT STATE SCHOOLS?	21
4.5.1	What are the outcomes for children who attend NFE? How many graduate to state schools?	21
4.5.2	Criteria and process for transferring children from NFE to BTS and a state school.	21
4.5.3	Transfer of cases from Outreach and NFE teams to the BTS team.	23
4.5.4	Support provided by BTS to former NFE students to enable them to maintain their attendance at state school.	23
4.6	TO WHAT EXTENT ARE PARENTS/FAMILIES AND CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF THE NFE PROGRAMME?	24
4.6.1	Parents	24
4.6.2	Youth representation and personal development.	26
4.7	DO DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN – FOR EXAMPLE GIRLS AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO MT's NFE PROGRAMME?	27
4.7.1	MT's Special Needs School.	27
4.7.1.1	The Special Needs School.	
4.7.1.2	Staff capacity	
4.7.1.3	Integration/inclusion in the NFE school and Extra-curricular activities.	
4.7.1.4	Impact on the abilities of CWD.	
4.7.1.5	Parents' Involvement and Learning.	
4.7.2	Girls' access to the NFE programme and gender equality at school.	29
4.7.2.1	Beliefs about gender.	
4.7.2.2	Gender equality for children in practice?	
4.8	HOW DOES MT's M&E SYSTEM CAPTURE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AND	30

	SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AND THE OUTCOMES OF THOSE SERVICES?	
5	Conclusion	32
6	Summary of Recommendations	33
	ANNEXES	
	Annex 1: Consultant Agreement	39
	Annex 2: Evaluation Main Issues and Questions Interview Guide.	40
	Annex 3: Interview Informed Consent Form	48
	Annex 4: MoEYS Child Friendly School Six Dimensions	49

1. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

M'LoP Tapang (MT) has in the past focused its attention when evaluating its effectiveness, on its core child protection work. More recently MT has decided to evaluate the other services it provides children, one a year. The purpose of the Evaluation of the Non-Formal Education programme was to -

- Obtain feedback from beneficiaries and families about the MT's Non-Formal Education school and the impact of the school on their lives.
- Document strengths and weaknesses of the NFE school.
- Make practical recommendations including changes to the programme to meet students' future education needs

2. METHODOLOGY

The methods utilised to conduct the Evaluation were –

- i) A literature review -
 - M'LoP Tapang reports and documents.
 - MoEYS & UNICEF reports on the implementation of Child Friendly School National Policy in Cambodia and Guidance documents.
- ii) Twenty-one semi-structured interviews with –
 - A group of six Grade 4 NFE students (50% girls)
 - A group of six Grade 5/6 NFE students (50% girls).
 - A group of six children graduated to state school with Back to School (BTS) team recently (50% girls).
 - A group of four former NFE students, currently with BTS, members of the youth 'Happy Bird' group and Students Representatives (one girl).
 - A group of three children who had previously dropped out of NFE but recently returned (two girls).
 - Five families represented by one mother and father couple and four mothers.
 - A group of four NFE Grades 1 and 2 teachers.
 - A group of three Grade 4 and Grades 5/6 teachers and an English teacher.
 - Extra-curricular classes - Sports Team Leader.
 - Extra-curricular classes - Arts Team Leader.
 - Co-Directors and Senior Technical Advisor.
 - NFE Programme Manager (PM) and Team Leader (TL)
 - Back to School (BTS) team PM and TL.
 - Outreach team PM and TL and one social worker.
 - Former Social Work Technical Advisor.
 - Child Protection PM.
 - Child Safe TL and computer teacher.
 - Special Needs school PM.
 - Senior Counsellor.
 - Senior Technical Advisor (on the M&E system).
 - Kampong Som Provincial Department of Education (PoEYS) Deputy Director.

See Annex 2 for the Interview Guide – main issues and questions.
- iii) The evaluator discussed many of the main issues which had emerged with MT senior managers before drafting the report. Feedback provided by senior management has been incorporated into this final report.

ETHICS: The Evaluator read and signed MT's Child Protection and Visitor policies. Children, youth and parents who were invited to interview received an explanation of the purpose of the interviews, the fact that information they provided by answering questions would be valued and used without breaking their individual confidentiality. All beneficiaries interviewed decided to remain in the interview and signed 'informed consent' formsⁱ.

LIMITATIONS: Limitations in the Evaluation methods are mostly linked to the short period of time of one week in which interviewing and observations could occur. Time available for each group or individual interview was between one and two hours. There was time to read only one example of a case file. There was no time to observe classes.

The Evaluator did not learn about the kindergarten class and its connection to other services. One of MT's core strengths is the broad and interdependent services it provides to children. Thus to understand one service – education – it is necessary to learn about other interconnected services too: not only NFE but also the Outreach social work team, the Back to School team as well as the Special Needs school, Child Protection team and so on. The time was insufficient to achieve depth as well as breadth.

The Evaluator was unable to interview local teachers and School Directors employed by the Provincial Department of Education who are involved with MT through the NFE annual exams and through the BTS programme. The Deputy Director was the only official interviewed. He had only very general knowledge of both MT and the Ministry of Education's own Child Friendly Schools policy and its local implementation.

3. THE CONTEXT TO M'LOP TAPANG'S WORK WITH CHILDREN IN ITS NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

POVERTY: By all measures poverty has reduced in the last two years in Cambodia. However inequalities have grown and a large portion of the population live one setback away from poverty. The level of debt is high and growing. The 2018 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index which measures against Living Standards, Health and Education reported in 2018 that 35% of the population live in poverty and 21% are on the edge of poverty. M'Lop Tapang's own research revealed that parents view MT's free health services as an important way to free-up money to pay for other basic needs like rent or food. Poverty affects education in many ways: teenage children are likely to be seen as a source of vital income to their family and told to leave school – or want to leave school for that reason. The officially 'free' state education system is riddled with informal and hidden costs for transport to school and to pay low-paid teachers for handouts, grades, extra lessons and snacks.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: A 2016 report on the implementation of the Ministry of Education's Child Friendly Schools policyⁱⁱ revealed that little had been successfully implemented except for improved enrolment of children in primary grades. The report described the continuing prevalence of traditional rote-learning in classrooms. New teachers are taught about student-centred methods by lecture in Teacher-training Centres. Children in these Evaluation interviews reported various kinds of violence from other children and from teachers. Poor children are discriminated against and tend to be disliked by teachers because they are unable to pay 'fees'. Poor parents are more likely than others to have received a low level of education themselves and some understandably do not see its use for their children. Adults who become teachers are unlikely to have received an education which gives a broad knowledge base and promotes creativity and critical thinking.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHILDREN AND ADULTS: Research reveals that there is a high level of tolerance for physical and verbal/emotional abuse of childrenⁱⁱⁱ at home and in schools. Parents and teachers tend to relate to children by giving 'advice' rather than two-way conversation and expect high levels of obedience. Research reveals that children say that they would like adults to explain their reasons when they tell children what to do and to show more warmth^{iv}. M'Lop Tapang's child-centred ethos requires a move away from cultural norms for the adults involved – staff, managers and parents.

CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE' IN SIHANOUKVILLE: 'Until recently we lived in Heaven. Now we live in Hell,' (Member of MT staff, describing the enormous changes to her town in the last two years).

MT has developed a Strategic Plan to respond to the massive socio-economic and environmental crisis following the initiation of the Belt and Road Initiative in Sihanoukville. Local Authorities reported at the end of 2018 that the Chinese population has risen by 75, 000. MT reports nearly 90 new casinos already open and rents increased by 5-10 times in 2018^{vi}. Roads are destroyed, huge piles of refuse build up along the side of every street, sewage flows into the sea. Recently two children of migrant workers, left for one day without adult supervision, were murdered and a seven-storey new building collapsed killing 28 of the construction workers who were sleeping in it.

Every aspect of M'Lop Tapang's work is affected: salaries - especially those of junior staff - are no longer enough for the increased cost of living. Other costs have increased, for example \$50,000 to repair buildings after last year's serious flooding which resulted from the on-going environmental degradation. Many of the families who used MT services have been forced to move to the cheaper suburbs from their old homes and workplaces in the town centre, many internal migrants come to work in building sites and bring their children with them to live in cramped,

dangerous conditions on site with no schooling, young people are attracted by jobs in casinos and clubs where there is a high risk of exploitation and abuse.

(+) MT had already started to implement their Strategic Plan when the Evaluation was conducted. Staff salaries under \$300pcm and junior managers' have been increased and will be increased more in the future. The social work Outreach team has started work to find out-of-school children living in construction sites, many of whom now attend NFE school and a part time Chinese national has been employed to act as an Interpreter so that MT can communicate with Chinese owners.

RECOMMENDATION: The scale of the changes facing Sihanoukville cannot be overstated. Therefore the overriding recommendation is that M'LopTapang continues to meet this new reality flexibly in order to maintain its essential services – including education services – for poor and disadvantaged children who live in the area. If M'Lop Tapang and the NFE school are able to focus on programme improvements too, then consider the other recommendations given in this report.

4. EVALUATION FINDINGS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

The eight headings under which the findings of the Evaluation have been grouped have been connected to MoEYS' Child Friendly Schools' (CFS) six dimensions^{vii} wherever those dimensions are relevant. The CFS dimensions describe the standards that a school should aim for. MT's Education Programme Managers are already familiar with the CFS policy and six dimensions.

Strengths and Weaknesses are denoted in the text as (+) and (-). Occasionally a sign (?-) is used to show that the Evaluator considers there may be an important issue but does not have enough information to be certain. Occasionally findings are described as Opportunities. Recommendations are given following the findings which they relate to and are also repeated in a Summary of Recommendations in section 6.

DESCRIPTION OF MT'S NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

School-age children entering MT who are not at school already can be referred to either of two programmes to get education services: Back to School - which supports children at local state schools – or the Non-Formal Education programme which runs classes to help poor and multiply-disadvantaged children catch up on missed education so that they can enter or re-enter the public school system at an appropriate grade for their age. This school works with large numbers of children (430 in 2018) and teaches classes from kindergarten to a class of combined grades 5 and 6. A Co-Director thought that the average period of time a child spends in the grade school of the NFE programme before moving on to public school is 2.5 years. A third option for children with disabilities which has recently become independent from the main NFE programme, is the Special Needs School.

The NFE programme also includes extracurricular sports, arts and computer classes which are open to any child-client at MT.

The NFE team is lead by a Programme Manager and a Team Leader with administrative staff and eleven teachers.

4.1 ARE DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN OF POOR FAMILIES IN SIHANOUKVILLE ABLE TO ACCESS MT'S SERVICES PARTICULARLY THE NFE PROGRAMME?

Child Friendly Schools Dimension1: All children have access to schooling.

4.1.1 Routes into M'Lop Tapang.

(+) MT is proactive in searching for children who need its services. The social work Outreach – and other – teams provide multiple entrance points for children to access MT's services. MT has recently responded to the enormous socio-economic changes in Sihanoukville by creating a special team to map and visit construction sites where many children stay with parents who have migrated for work.

The Outreach Team of generalist social workers provides the main routes by which children can access MT's services: the mobile library visits eight sites in Sihanoukville weekly, including new areas which poor families have retreated to following the increased rents of the Belt and Road investments to the city. In 2018 the team initiated a programme of visiting construction sites to find children who live with their migrant parents on or

near those sites. “Social workers go round all the sites with IEC materials which describe MT and the services it provides and our Hotline number. We then return to the sites where we saw the most children in the first visit to make a first general Assessment of each child. Then social workers return for a third full assessment of each child and their family” (Outreach Team PM). The PM explained that the Chinese owners were not an obstacle and sometimes express their appreciation that someone is showing interest in the children who live on site. The Local Authorities connected to social services and to education have not been helpful. The Child Protection team runs a 24-hour Hotline. MT’s other services and Local Authorities also refer children to Education Services.

(+) Some parents showed determination to get education services from MT for their children. Three out of the five sets of parents interviewed described how they discovered MT services – for example because neighbours’ children received them – and took determined action to meet MT staff themselves to ask to be considered for services too, or called the Hotline multiple times or found where the office was and called in.

(-) Some children may get left out.

The former Social Work Technical Advisor (TA) experienced the loss of some children from MT and NFE school when their situations were not sufficiently assessed or when families presented too many obstacles to the busy team. The TA believed the reasons for this are that social workers’ caseloads are too heavy, managers cannot monitor them in detail and not all social workers have the necessary basic skills. One parent who was interviewed described calling the Hotline twice, then searching for the MT centre and visiting it in person when after one month there was no response to her calls from MT. (See section 4.4 on MT’s social work support to the NFE school).

RECOMMENDATION.

Following the collapse of the seven-storey building this July the Government has undertaken to start to implement various regulations around construction as well as to repair roads and clear up rubbish. This might be a good time to approach municipal Social Services and/or Education to encourage them to take part in and support visits to construction sites to identify children who are not attending school and help them enrol (or to attend MT’s NFE school).

4.1.2 Are children’s other needs – as well as their educational needs – assessed and action taken to meet those needs appropriately, when they are referred to the grade school of the NFE programme?

A poor child who needs support to attend school is likely to have other needs too, for health care or food or protection from violence or neglect or support to parents for income generation. If the education service was provided in isolation from other services the education service would be less likely to succeed. MT’s provision of multiple services within the organisation is crucial. Children need to be assessed when they first enter MT to identify what they need and to tailor MT’s services to meet those needs. See section 4.4 on MT’s social work support to the NFE school.

4.1.3 MT Education Services: NFE or BTS?

In the past the majority of new children to MT would be helped to attend state schools via the BTS program and a smaller number of children who needed more support would enter MT’s NFE school to prepare them for public schooling. In 2018 this changed with 82 new children entering BTS compared to 163 new children entering the NFE program. The Evaluator did not find the cause of this change.

(+) Outreach assess whether a child can go directly via BTS to public school or needs to attend NFE first. MT pay as much attention to psychosocial and economic obstacles to attending school as academic ones when making this decision.

Staff explained that if a child has never attended school, or has missed many grades or is afraid of school or is very poor or who has difficulties in getting to a state school then they will be referred to NFE.

(-) There is a lack of critical review of the Outreach team’s referrals by NFE. The NFE PM explained that the criteria for sending children to NFE were Outreach team’s criteria not NFE’s. The BTS PM similarly and partly jokingly said that, ‘We have no right, we just receive (referrals of children) from Outreach. The NFE PM does not read the Outreach Assessments of children referred to NFE. ‘I think the social worker will tell me if we need to know anything’.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Teams need to work more cooperatively. Outreach has the main responsibility to decide whether a child meets the criteria to attend NFE. However NFE also has responsibility to critically review Outreach team's decisions and advocate for changes if this is best for the child. Replace the notion of which team has 'rights' to make decisions, with the concept of shared responsibility to apply criteria for the best interests of each child, with one team having the main responsibility to make the decision but always open to and expecting review by the other teams.
2. Pass on Outreach files to NFE to read. OSCaR's unified database will make this easier. However the information it contains should be read, absorbed and used by the NFE team.

These recommendations are similar to those made by the former Social Work Advisor to reduce competition between teams, increase cooperation and plan cases and program development together more.

4.1.4 NFE: which grade?

- (+) Teachers and the NFE PM felt that the current system of placing children in an appropriate grade works well: The administration staff asks each new child to read from a text book of the grade they last attended. Teachers said that they can move the child to another grade if s/he seems to be more or less capable.
- (-) The test is conducted by someone with no teaching or other testing experience. It tests only the ability to read or recognise letters (not numeracy for example). The PM felt that 'it is not so important so administration staff can do it'.

RECOMMENDATION: Review the method for assessing which grade a child should be placed in. Staff feel that the current system does not misplace many children so build on it. Consider whether the results of the current test provide enough information for the teacher about their new student's academic capacity. Should tests of numeracy be added appropriate to different grades? Are the results of the test recorded? Are their staff with professional teaching experience who could conduct the tests (the PM or TL ?).

4.2 IS MT'S NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME A HEALTHY, SAFE PLACE IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE?

Child Friendly School's Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Protection of Children.

4.2.1 A Healthy School?

- (+) Children who go to school at NFE are aware of and appreciate the ways that MT supports their good health at school every day. They said –
'It's hygienic here', 'There are toilets with water', 'There are separate toilets for girls and boys!' 'There's safe clean water (to drink) here,' 'We have delicious, free food here every day', 'There's a hospital here'.

4.2.2 A Safe School?

- (+) MT provides a free school and thus free child care to parents who may otherwise be forced to leave children unsupervised all day long in order to work. This is the case particularly for the many new migrant workers to Sihanoukville who must bring their children with them. Children of migrant parents have great difficulty enrolling into a new school in Sihanoukville because they do not have the right documents. Parents do not have extended family nearby who can care for children, so they face the choice of bringing the children to construction sites with them or leaving them in a rental room alone. Recently two children in such a situation were murdered. MT provides safe all-day child care, five days a week.
 - (+) Children easily and enthusiastically listed the many ways that MT and their teachers made them feel safe at school. They said –
 - 'The teachers even travel with us to make sure we are safe (in the school trucks)', 'I had to cross the busy street to get to my old school. I don't have to here', 'The MT staff put a metal bar down when we go outside to get the truck home, to separate us from the street',
 - 'Teachers protect us from drugs and smoking in here'.
 - 'When a child is missing the MT staff even go to look for her/him!'
- Children voiced their appreciation for the active caring they experience from MT staff. They often compared this safe experience to their experience at public schools. Their answers to the question showed that the level of care shown by MT is many degrees greater than what the children's experience has led them to expect. They see the teachers (and others) genuinely caring for them, so they trust MT and they value this safety.

4.2.2.1 Bullying by other children.

When thinking about their own feelings of safety in the interviews, children raised stories of bullying by other children at school.

(+) Children dared report the bullying they suffered to teachers, they trusted that their teachers would believe them and take action against bullies.

'He was forcing me to give him (something). I told the teacher. She asked him what he was doing and why. He didn't come to school for three days afterwards. I think it's because he was scared after the teacher told him off. Now he's stopped the bullying'. 'The boy bullied me on the truck. I told the teacher and she stopped him. But he started again when she had gone'.

(-/?) Many grade 5/6 children explained that they would intervene to stop bullying if they saw other younger children in lower grades being bullied. They seemed not to report these incidents – and their interventions – to teachers, so it appears that there is no oversight of this behaviour. In comparison the older Student Representatives – who talked of facilitating resolutions to conflicts between other students – have a public and elected role to intervene and to model positive behaviour. They discuss their interventions with teachers and MT staff. The actions of the grade 5/6 children are not accountable, transparent or supervised in the same way.

4.2.2.2 Discipline and punishments of children at school.

At the start of interviewing the Evaluator had not drawn up specific questions about methods of discipline used by NFE. However when children answered her questions on safety and on what they liked and did not like at school, the children themselves raised the topic of punishments. The Evaluator then adapted her interviews to ask other children and teachers about the discipline methods used and what interviewees thought was acceptable and not acceptable and why.

(+) Children were aware and appreciated that physical punishment by adults are not acceptable at MT and that they can expect to be protected from such violence. 'If a teacher here beat a child, the other teachers would protect us (not the teacher)!' 'Teachers here don't shout', 'Teachers don't ask for money and hit us...it doesn't happen here', 'I like learning here. Teachers are not mean and don't hit us'. 'Teachers here encourage poor children.' Many children raised the fact that teachers in state schools commonly use physical punishments and threats as well as verbal cruelty. They compared MT very favourably to this experience.

(-) Sometimes children's comparisons to state schools revealed that MT's own standards of discipline, although better than state schools, could be improved. 'MT teachers just blame you if you do something wrong. In the government school they hit you,' (a child who had returned to state school with BTS recently after attending the MT school). Like other children he clearly feels that 'blaming' is not as serious as the physical violence he and others experience and live in fear of at school. He appreciated that MT school is free of physical violence. However 'blaming' can also be abusive.

Teachers and children listed different kinds of punishments used by MT teachers: Cleaning walls, washing dishes, cleaning the toilets, cleaning the windows, forbidden from getting the snack from once to a long period like a month, re-write lessons, jump up and down as high as you can five times (in sport), sent home and not allowed to come to school for a period of time.

(-) Some punishments were felt to be too severe and/or unjust by children (and some teachers). They are not methods that modern 'Positive Discipline' would promote and they undermine children's safety. 'A grade 4 girl came to school not wearing her uniform properly because she was too young to know how to clean it well herself and her mum didn't do it. She had to clean all the walls in the classroom' (a grade 5/6 child). One teacher forbade a child from having the snack for one month. One teacher described how a child was sent home and suspended from school after many other attempts at discipline had failed and after discussion about what action should be taken with the child's social worker. The teachers themselves then realised that this punishment put the child in a dangerous situation at home on their own and that suspension would lead to forgetting what they had learned at school already. The teachers decided to change the punishment.

Teachers and MT staff, like the children, are naturally affected by social norms in which violence and blaming are generally accepted methods of discipline. Teachers have to deal with a level of frustration when children are distracted, noisy and not obedient. One grade 5/6 boy said, 'Sometimes the children are very rude (to the teacher)!'

However it crosses the boundaries of care and safety to send children home, to refuse snacks for a long period to children who may be hungry and to hold young children responsible when it is beyond their capacity (keeping their own uniforms washed and ironed). 'Blaming' can mean many things but sometimes can include verbal cruelty which humiliates or frightens children. Teachers need to learn a new way of viewing these problems and new techniques. MT has looked for such training before but not found anything which was effective. Recent training on children's difficult behaviours from TPO was too theoretical, facilitated by adults who do not use those methods with children and could not help MT teachers apply the ideas in practice in the classroom.

MT has many strengths which provide an opportunity – given the right training and supervision – for improving methods of discipline, for example -

- Children's appreciation of the protection they experience at MT school: the fact that physical punishment is clearly not allowed and children know this. The relationship MT has with children is generally trusting and strong.
- Children demonstrated a strong sense of what is just. The grade5/6 children also showed some critical thinking on the issue e.g. 'Washing dishes isn't really fair. It's better if the punishment is connected to my learning – like having to repeat the lesson.' MT's policy on discipline should fit with children's understanding of what is just.
- Some teachers acts as positive role models and demonstrate critical thinking on the kind of relationship between children and teachers which can provide a foundation for improved, effective, just discipline, for example –
 - 'I was unhappy in my first three months being a teacher. The children didn't do what I asked. Then I realised the problem was I assumed they'd just follow my expectations, while I did not respond to their needs. If you follow what children need then things go smoothly'.
 - 'A punishment should be in the moment then finished and make sense (to the child) and if possible reinforce learning or the activity you are doing',
 - 'We realised the child was not safe at home and would just forget everything if not allowed to come to school, and it's against child rights' (teacher reflecting on having punished a child by sending them home).
 - The Programme Manager said that staff meetings already include discussion about how to deal with specific children's difficult behaviours.

RECOMMENDATION.

Develop a combined training and coaching/supervision process which lasts 6-12months for NFE teachers and their managers.

- The purpose of the training is to enable NFE to build knowledge and skills for ways to manage children in the classroom and use 'Positive Discipline' methods to change difficult behaviours.
- The purpose of the coaching/supervision element is to ensure that ideas introduced and discussed in training are used by teachers with children. Teachers will have the opportunity to discuss one-to-one with an experienced facilitator and bring back difficulties and successes as 'case studies' to discuss again in bigger groups in training sessions over a period of time. NFE managers can sit in on coaching/supervision sessions and learn step by step how to facilitate these.
- Hire a facilitator who uses these methods in their own personal and/or professional life with children successfully. (Consider MT's former Social Work TA together who could facilitate with MT's Senior Counsellor and NFE PM).
- Adopt the five basic steps of 'Positive Discipline' as the framework: i) teachers (and social workers?) identify their long term goals for the child(ren) ii) provide warmth and consistent structure/rules iii) have empathy – understand how the child thinks and feels, understand the causes of their difficult behaviour, iv) when the child behaves in a difficult way use problem solving methods with the child v) respond to difficult behaviour with positive discipline.
- Utilise the experience of MT's teachers and children including what is documented in this report: the methods of discipline that children (and teachers) have found acceptable (and not acceptable) after critical reflection. Connect to MT's Child Protection policy and child rights.
- Utilise experience in Cambodia in the training design and sessions. For example invite social workers from First Step Cambodia who can present real-life case studies of change to the very difficult behaviour of child-clients (for example children with sexually harmful behaviour) using positive discipline methods (empathy, honesty, problem solving together, setting goals and follow-up, with positive reinforcement when the child takes steps towards success, not being judgmental or lecturing etc). Other organisations including MT itself may be able to present such real situations and use practitioners who already trust and are experienced in using these methods.

- A similar recommendation has been made for parenting classes based on Positive discipline in section 4.6.1 on parents' involvement with their children and children's schooling.

4.2.2.3 Internet safety at MT's NFE school.

MT staff explained that the majority of children who attend NFE are too poor to own smart phones – but like all children are fascinated by them and crowd round when one child brings in such a device.

(+) MT blocks children's access to the internet while attending school. It also restricts access for most staff.

- MT recognises that children (and adults) can become addicted to social media. The school is a place where children are guided to experience face-to-face learning and relationships. Teachers and other staff are supported to model this behaviour by having their access to the internet restricted too.
- All children attend classes to learn to use computer programmes (Excel, Word etc). Sometimes this includes supervised access to the internet.

(+) Every child at MT attends a one and a half hour long presentation on how to protect themselves on the internet. Refresher classes are held every three months.

The Child Safe programme gives a presentation to demonstrate that children and youth are placing themselves in danger of sexual exploitation and bullying when they act on Facebook or Instagram as if they are in a private place, 'when in fact it's more like doing something in front of everyone at the market,' (Child Safe staff). It provides case studies of men who have groomed and extorted money from children in Cambodia. Children are shown how to use a two-step verification to keep their accounts private and warned to always log out. The Child Safe staff explained that children, 'look shocked and pay attention'. They often ask him how to deal with internet problems.

(+) MT has recently partnered with APLE, Terres des Hommes and MoSVY to research children's experience of the Internet. Results of the research will assist MT to update its own protection of children and contribute to other organisations' improved policies and programs.

4.2.2.4 Child Protection from Physical and Sexual Abuse.

MT has a well-trusted senior counsellor whose office is on the school site and a Child Protection team which is involved with all cases of child sexual or physical abuse referred into MT and follows legal cases through. MT has a well-written, clear and practical Child Protection Policy which all staff and managers are tested on annually. In interview many staff referred to the 'strict' policy.

Managers described two serious child protection cases that had occurred to children who attend the NFE school in the last few years. In one a teacher noticed that one girl in her class was unusually withdrawn and quiet so reported the situation to the senior counsellor. The girl already knew and trusted the counsellor. She described her situation to the counsellor. MT then took action to ensure that the abuse was halted and the girl made safe. In the second case a group of students reported to the counsellor that a member of MT staff had sexually harassed their friend. After a speedy investigation the staff member was sacked.

(+) Children and teachers dare report abuse or suspicions of abuse to MT because they trust MT will implement the Child Protection Policy.

(+) Children and staff recognise that if a child behaves in an unusual way that behaviour may be a sign of abuse, so they report this behaviour in order to get the child help.

(+) A trusted, well-known counsellor, who children feel safe to approach directly and to express themselves to, has her office located at the school.

(+) MT follows through on its Child Protection policy, prioritises children's safety above adults' status and power, ensures children are safe after a report of abuse and removes abusive staff from their posts quickly after a prompt investigation.

This level of child protection put into practice is a rare and a precious achievement in Cambodia and in the world in general.

4.3 IS TEACHING EFFECTIVE AND CHILD-CENTRED IN THE NFE PROGRAMME?

Child Friendly School dimension 2: Effective teaching and learning.

4.3.1 Class size in the Grade school.

Ratios of children to teachers which allow teachers to pay attention to all children individually make for better quality teaching.

(+) The largest class size is 35 children (grade 1 or 2). Higher grades have 20-26 children in a class. These ratios are reasonable.

(-) However because teachers of grades 1 and 2 teach two classes a day some teachers have as many as 70 children they are responsible for. The teachers of those classes are still new and relatively inexperienced. Teachers made the point that they could pay more attention to and assess each child individually if they had fewer children in a class.

RECOMMENDATION: increase the number of teachers and reducing the class size of the lower grades 1 and 2.

4.3.2 Curricula.

(+) MT follows the MoEYS curricula designed to help children 'catch-up' with the academic standard that suits their age so that they can join the state school. The MoEYS text books are adapted and made more attractive via teachers' own lesson-plans and training materials. Time is put aside in the schedule for teachers to make materials. Teachers develop an annual plan to deliver the curricula and report monthly on their progress.

Topics included in the curricula - Budgeting: The Grade 5/6 teacher mentioned that she informally discusses 'budgeting' with her students, some of whom as a result built up savings. Although the grade is still primary school, the children were between 13 and 15 – at an age which needs to learn how to use money well.

RECOMMENDATION: Build on the teacher's work. Adapt the training materials on budgeting from the '7 Tips to a Successful Future' used in MT's Vocational Training programme and connect to what Grade 5/6 children are learning in maths and other classes. Pilot to find out if children are interested, understand and can apply the lessons.

4.3.3 Exams and monthly testing.

(+) MT partnered with MoEYS to develop exams which test children at the end of each semester. Passing these exams allows a child to rise one grade at MT school or to be assessed for their readiness to graduate to state school in a grade that suits their age.

(+) Children are also tested every month. Teachers explained that if assessment shows that a child is far behind they suggest that the child attend classes intensively for a while – attending the same class morning and afternoon.

4.3.4 Recruiting and building the capacity of teachers.

(+) MT has attracted a number of teachers who have stayed for many years and are committed to MT methods and principles.

(-) Professionals are not trained on their subject: MT teachers have attended University and some have degrees in management and accounting. None have degrees in Pedagogy or any other child-related subject. MT has made efforts to employ new teachers with degrees in Pedagogy from Ministry of Education teacher training centres. However all such teachers must work at government schools and could only work part time at MT with the half-day they were available often changing which made employment at MT impossible.

(+) MT internal capacity building of teachers is appreciated by the teachers who say that they can apply it to real work in the classroom.

- One teacher said that she attended 'Child Rights First Aid' training from the Child Protection team and training from the Drug-use team and felt that she could apply the knowledge to her work with children. Previously all teachers had attended basic social work training facilitated by the Outreach team managers. This had lapsed but will start again soon.
- Teachers were enthusiastic about the teacher training they received from the Provincial Department of Education on topics like the preparation of lesson plans, for three days a year. They especially liked the time they were given to demonstrate and get feedback.
- Teachers were most enthusiastic about the opportunity to watch more experienced teachers teach and to demonstrate teaching a lesson themselves and get feedback from colleagues at MT for 1.5 hours a month. Teachers said that they felt nervous about demonstrating but believed that this was a practical way to learn, 'I am new so I was shaking and had (feedback about) many weaknesses! But it's a good way to learn'.
- New teachers appreciated the attention of the Team Leader in his role as their Supervisor because he approached them to say that they need to acquire more skills and suggested they observe more-experienced colleagues to learn from them.

(-) However these relatively new teachers were left to arrange observations to watch more experienced colleagues themselves. They felt that they did not dare do so because, 'I do not have a close enough relationship with the older teachers (to ask if I can observe them)'.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Increase the time available for newer teachers to both observe and ask questions of more-experienced teachers and to demonstrate their teaching to supervisors and capable senior colleagues who can provide constructive feedback.

1. A framework and process for supervision should be established with clear roles and responsibilities for supervisors and supervisees, connected to probationary periods and Job Descriptions. Possibly the Family Care First Supervision process which the former Social Work TA and PM introduced to the Outreach team might provide a useful framework which could be adapted.
2. Supervisors should assess each (new) teacher's strengths and weaknesses, set goals with each teacher and then take the responsibility to develop a schedule of observations and demonstrations with new and experienced teachers to give authority and structure to the arrangement, and to ensure that it is productive. Opportunities for professional development should not depend on teachers arranging them themselves and on their personal relationships with other staff.
3. If this is not already the case, teachers (and maybe social workers) could learn a system for providing constructive, descriptive (rather than evaluative) practical and honest feedback. (The GIZ/MoWA Young People's Toolkit used by the senior counsellor with the Happy Bird group contains a lesson on this topic).

4.3.5 Relationships of teachers with children and teaching methods used.

- **Children were asked their opinions of the teaching at NFE school.**

(+) Children in interview, old enough to understand the question, were all positive: 'The teacher explains in detail and asks us questions and repeats things enough.' 'The teacher explains in detail, I can ask questions and they don't get angry and I don't have to pay money'. 'Teachers here work hard, like us'. (Children from grade5/6)

- **Teachers and managers were asked what they thought of modern methods versus traditional methods of teaching.**

(+) Teachers preferred the modern methods they use, 'Because it attracts children and makes them happy', 'because there are many different methods, so children don't get bored and can concentrate and learn'. The Program Manager believed that modern methods work well for older children but not for young children, 'because they cannot listen (follow instructions)'.

- **Teachers were asked what kind of assessment and planning they do for their classes.**

(+) Teachers make an annual plan for the whole class, and write monthly reports to the Program Manager to check their progress getting through the curriculum against the Plan and to raise issues like the difficult behaviour of some children.

(+) Children are assessed individually - following a MoEYS system - in terms of their scores at monthly tests on speaking, reading, writing and grammar as well as their attendance. This is reviewed monthly by the NFE Team Leader and along with the results of semester tests determines which children go up a grade.

- **Teachers were asked to describe the kind of difficulties children have in learning:**

(+) Teachers mainly described children's behaviour: 'distracted', 'noisy', 'play all the time', 'not open to the teacher's input.' There were some descriptions of the level of children's knowledge and their cognitive development (skill at thinking): 'weak thinking', 'some don't even know what the first letter of the alphabet is'.

(-) Teachers tended to describe children's capacities in terms of their difficult behaviour as it affects the teachers, from the teachers' own frustrated point of view, rather than from the point of view of the child or in terms of children's emotional, social or intellectual development.

- **Teachers were asked what kind of relationship they were trying to build with their students, what works well with children and what changes their 'difficult' behaviours.**

(+) After some discussion one of the Grade 1 and 2 new teachers gave a clear description of what she had found worked to help a child start to think differently and change their behaviour so that they are able to learn better. 'Children don't get enough attention from their families. When we start to pay attention to a child, they know this and start to change'.

- (+) Some teachers could describe trusting relationships with children. One teacher noted that a child had approached him voluntarily to talk about something the child had done and felt guilty about after refusing to talk to many other staff who had questioned him relentlessly. Other teachers told stories of occasions they had noticed individual children behaving differently from usual so that they asked the senior counsellor to talk to the child.
- (-) There were some examples of a lack of clarity around the characteristics of a professional role as a teacher and over reliance on traditional methods that are often ineffective. Some teachers described the relationship they wanted to build with their students as being, 'like a big sister, like parents, so we can give advice.....' Various stories showed that occasionally teachers (or other staff) might inadvertently pressurise children with exhortations that they tell the truth, stop being afraid etc. Teachers (and other staff) still rely uncritically on methods like 'giving advice,' a top-down method which is often ineffective. The description of their relationship with children as being, 'like a family' is meant as an expression of caring. However it would be useful for teachers (and social workers) to consider which aspects of family relationships are useful and appropriate for a professional caring relationship with children and which are not.

RECOMMENDATION. See section 4.2.2 recommendation for understanding children's behaviour better and using 'positive discipline' methods to build relationships with children and discipline them.

4.3.6 Absentee children and drop-outs.

See section on social work support 4.4.2.3 on Attendance, absence and prevention of drop out below.

4.3.7 Extracurricular classes.

- (+) The sports, arts and computer classes which all NFE- attending children are involved in, are crucial to the overall effectiveness of MT's education services. Traditionally non-academic subjects would not be prioritised in Cambodian schools. However these classes make NFE exciting and appealing to many new students and act as an incentive for attending the academic classes, act as a crucial continuing link for children with MT after they have graduated to state schools and increase children's skills, creativity and self-confidence in many ways.

- **Sport.**

- (+) All children get physical exercise classes three times a week. Additionally children can choose to join football three times a week or can join circus classes under the Arts program.
- (+) The Team leader understands that sport is attractive to children who are not used to the structure and discipline of academic classes, keeps them involved and gets them used to working in teams, 'It's a way that children with difficult behaviours, not used to school, can learn to join in. I also make it like a prize for going to the academic classes.' 'If I see a child wandering around outside the class I let them join in (the sport activity). It's better to let them join what they like doing rather than let them leave the school.'
- (+) The Team Leader finds many ways to arrange competitions between football teams both regionally and nationally which gives structure to the activity and keeps children motivated.
- (+) In 2018 MT conducted a survey of 100 children to find out what children thought of the sports classes and discovered that the vast majority report increased self-confidence and – for new children – an incentive to attend school. Children reported they 'feel healthier and stronger' (100%), 'more interested in coming to school' (100%), 'make new friends' (100%), 'feel better about themselves' (100%), 'learn I could do things I didn't think I could do before' (99%), 'keep busy and out of trouble (98%), 'learn how to be a leader' (43%).
- (+) MT has a girls' football team. There are no other girls' teams locally so, in the past, MT has arranged tournaments internally.
- (-?) The girls' team has reduced in size from 25 to 10 members over the last few years. The Sports Team Leader thought the team may have lost members because traditional attitudes about gender roles would make Cambodian girls, 'afraid the ball will hit them and, when they're teenagers, afraid that being outside will make their skin dark'. The TL was concerned that because of these attitudes he feels that sometimes he may inadvertently pressurise girls to join in by – for example – offering incentives, 'when really we want volunteers'. However the traditional gender roles and beliefs of the girls does not explain the reduction of numbers as gender norms were the same in Cambodia when there were 25 members as there are now with 10 members. There are other girls' football teams in Cambodia (e.g. Indochina Starfish in Phnom Penh) and beliefs about gender roles are gradually changing.

RECOMMENDATIONS: If this has not been done yet –

1. Find out why the numbers of girls in the football team have reduced from 25 to 10 in recent years e.g. does this follow a drop in overall student numbers? Is it true for boys' as well as girls' teams? If the reason for reduced numbers is specific to girls ask girls who have dropped out and girls who remain in the team what the reasons for drop out are. A neutral interviewer should be used who is simply interested and not applying pressure to rejoin. Probe under the surface: explanations that girls don't like playing under the sun because it makes them unattractive, do not explain the reduction in numbers as this gender belief was also true several years ago when there were greater numbers of girls in the team.
2. Consider whether MT can contact other organisations which have girls' teams in other cities to arrange friendly matches to give more structure and incentives to team members (e.g. Indochina Starfish in Phnom Penh).

- **Arts.**

- (+) All children attending NFE can choose to join outside sports activities or one of the arts activities (a few join both): music, dance, drawing or circus. MT Arts makes a promotion to new children who then have some time to select the activity that appeals to them. This is an unusual level of freedom of choice for poor children to have.
- (+) Children are always involved in structured activities which have a goal, working towards a show or performance or exhibition. The Arts teacher described how children move through stages from nervousness to self-confidence as they develop their skills by contributing to the concert by selecting the songs themselves, by rehearsing and then finally performing in front of other children, siblings, teachers and some parents.

- **Computer classes:** see section 4.2.2.3 above on Internet Safety).

Strengths and weaknesses of the Extra-curricular classes.

- (+) Continuing link to MT for BTS students: All the children interviewed who used to attend NFE and are now supported by BTS said they attended sport or arts classes at least once a week at MT. Children in grade 5/6 who were preparing to move back to state schools this year were already planning how to continue arts or sports activities after their move. They said that to continue to attend these classes was important because they could continue meeting MT teachers and MT school friends as well as to do the activity itself.
- (+) Children with disabilities from the Special Needs class have joined sports and arts classes since 2018. Both Arts and Sports Group Leaders explained that although the children cannot follow instructions and learn like the other children do, they have fun expressing themselves and having new experiences.
- (-) However the sports and arts teachers do not have specialised training to recognise the range of capacities and best ways to learn for children with different kinds of disabilities. Such training is not easily available in Cambodia and has not mainstreamed into subjects like sport and arts.
- (-) Teachers said that 'only some' parents come to concerts, exhibitions and sports events. When these events are at the same time as the major public holidays then parents are more likely to attend. Teachers believed that it would require incentives to persuade more parents to come - for example paying for transport - and that parents were generally not interested in what their children do at school. However in interview all the parents knew what grade their child was in and which subjects their children were learning at school and some knew what their child liked doing (section 4.8.1 on Parents). One father described how he had seen his child drawing at home one day (following MT's drawing classes), 'then he showed me the drawing! It was my own face!' He was surprised and proud.

RECOMMENDATION: Research globally shows that the involvement and interest in a child's education by parents is a major factor in the child's success at school. Performances and exhibitions provide an opportunity for parents to find out what children do at school and to demonstrate their pride in their children.

Perhaps MT could consider ways they could increase parent numbers by ensuring that parents know about the event, can attend because the event is held at times when most parents are least likely to be working, feel welcome, understand how their attendance is central to the event for their children and possibly even help with transport.

4.4 HOW DO MT'S SOCIAL WORK SERVICES SUPPORT THE NFE PROGRAMME TO EDUCATE CHILDREN?

Poor, disadvantaged children have other needs and problems than missed schooling, which will impact their ability to attend school and to learn well when they are at school. Therefore coordinated social services of various kinds which respond to a range of psychosocial, economic and physical needs of the child and their family are essential to support schooling.

The Evaluation had time to very briefly examine the social work services provided by the Back to School team which supports children after they transfer to state school from MT's NFE (see section 4.5 on BTS below) and the social work services provided by the Outreach team – which refers the majority of children in to the NFE school and which supports children and their families throughout their time there.

4.4.1 Essential material services.

- (+) Children, parents, teachers and other staff were all very aware of the importance of the material services which MT provides to children that enables them to attend school. Without these services most of the children could not attend school. Parents and children raised the difficulties they faced when they lose some of this support when children leave MT's NFE to return to state school.
- Children mentioned: having free transport to school, not having to pay the teacher, having free lunch and getting a new uniform and books regularly.
 - Parents described the small loans they had received for trash recycling and cake selling and other businesses, 'It gives us a chance to send our children to school'. They also mentioned getting food in emergencies and having help for basic repairs to the home. MT's own survey of parents using MT's free medical services in 2018, quoted parents explaining that if they had to pay for health care they would not be able to buy food. The costs of sending children to school are yet another demand on insufficient incomes which mean that the family must choose which basic needs to meet, food or school.
 - Teachers, managers and parents pointed out that having children attend a free school released a parent from child-care so that they could work and bring in much-needed additional income. School is an essential child-care service in all societies, which allows parents to work and children to be cared for and socialised in safety.

4.4.2 The Outreach team's work with children who attend NFE.

4.4.2.1 Social work with each individual child.

(+) Every child has a social worker for the time they attend NFE. All the children and parents interviewed knew their social worker and voiced appreciation for their social workers' many kinds of support and interventions.

Children described their social worker's job: 'She brought us fish and rice,' 'He cleaned my house. I was glad about that,' 'He tells our family not to drink and be violent!' 'I asked my social worker (BTS) and then she persuaded my mum that even though I'm a girl I should be able to continue at school (after Grade 9) because my mum's got the old fashioned idea about girls.....'

Parents expressed surprise and appreciation that the school and social workers monitored a child's absence from school, 'If my child misses school the social worker checks. She came to my work place once to tell me. I was sorry she couldn't get into the construction site and I didn't know (she was looking for me) but she phoned me later'.

4.4.2.2 Size of social workers' caseloads:

The PM explained that out of twenty five Outreach team social workers, six work with 300 NFE children under one Team Leader.

(-) The ratio of social workers to cases is 1/50. Discussion with other social workers in Cambodia over many years and many kinds of programme leads the Evaluator to believe that one social worker can work effectively with between 15 to 25 cases. It is likely with such a high caseload that crisis management will prevail, some emergency cases which attract attention will get more intensive attention but social workers will not be able to follow a basic case management process for the majority of children (see 'Case Management' below). MT estimated that 'less than ten children^{viii}' at NFE are identified as complex and challenging cases which get intensive social work input from a senior social worker. The PM stated that the team was now regularly closing cases of children who have left to clarify how many open cases really exist following the former Social Work TA's recommendation. It was not clear if that meant that the ratio is in fact better than 1/50 now and the number of children at the NFE school less than 300.

4.4.2.3 Monitoring attendance, absence and the number of children dropping out of school.

(-/?)
Drop out is a serious problem for the NFE school but the numbers are understandable given that the children are all high risk children who had previously never attended or dropped out from school.

The M&E system provides information about the outcomes for children who attend NFE. In 2018 a total of 430 children attended the NFE school. 79 children graduated and 96 children left the programme in other ways^{ix}. Some of those 96 dropped out of MT and education completely and some moved away from Sihanoukville with

their families with parents promising that their children would attend school in the new location. MT reported the drop-out rate in 2018 to be 16% of the total number of children^x, so 69 children dropped out of school in 2018. The numbers of children graduating (79) and children dropping out(69) are close. In comparison the average dropout rate for children in Primary School across the country is 8%^{xi}.

(-/?) Increasing levels of absence: The Programme Manager reported to the four-monthly management team meeting in May that for the first four months of 2019 absence had risen so that 100-130 children out of 300-350 children were absent for at least one day every month in that period. Approximately one third of the school's children are absent for at least one day every month. The Program Manager explained that children's absence was increasing. Reasons given were similar to reasons for absence in 2018 and 2017: being sick, oversleeping and missing the MT truck, visiting their home village with their family for a few days. So it is not clear what the reason for *increased* absence might be or if this trend will continue. Most children who were absent were absent for a few days only.

4.4.2.4 Preventing drop-outs.

- (+) The NFE and Outreach teams have criteria and a procedure for preventing drop out by responding quickly to a child's absence. The two teams coordinate to prevent drop outs: MT's speedy attention to every absence and discussion with the teacher, child and family about the reasons for absence and the importance of education most likely reduces dropouts. Children and parents mentioned this unexpected attention appreciatively, 'They even come and look for missing children' (Grade5/6 student), 'They phone with good or bad news. And they visited me at work when my child was absent,'(a parent).
- If a child is absent for more than three days the teachers inform the NFE Programme Manager. The Programme Manager provides a list of absent children to the Outreach team weekly. The social worker of the child takes action, looking for the child, visiting the family and problem solving with them.
 - Teachers sometimes ask a social worker to check on the child before three days absence. Teachers appreciated that social workers do this work.
 - A child is then de-registered if it is clear that they have dropped out e.g. if the family have left the area. Information about numbers of these dropouts are reported to NFE by Outreach every month and then reported to M&E.
 - The NFE school is flexible and will accept children back who have dropped out numerous times.
- (+) MT goes some way to understanding and tracking the main reasons for children being absent, leaving and dropping out. It is important to know trends in causes of dropout and to analyse these so that NFE and Outreach can strategise and look for appropriate ways to enable children in those situations to stay at or return to school.
- In 2018 MT M&E started to record the reasons for children leaving NFE in the M&E Excel sheet. Reasons were recorded for 75% of children who left. These reasons are classified under two categories: 'dropout' and 'leaving but intending to continue school elsewhere'.
 - The Outreach team are aware of new trends, for example - one that they are currently concerned about - that more youth are dropping out to work in the new Chinese-owned casinos. There was no information about NFE children dropping out for this reason but 16 children at state school with BTS in the last 12 months^{xii} were recorded in the M&E system as having dropped out to work in casinos.
 - The Outreach Programme Manager concluded that the most influential underlying factor which will keep children in school is parents' interest in education and their commitment. Without this parental investment a child is more likely to drop out when a family's situation changes or worsens and school is not prioritised. Global research into education confirms the importance of parents' involvement to children's success at school.
- (-) Some recorded 'reasons' for leaving NFE, given in the Excel M&E, do not actually explain why the child has left school e.g. 'stop and stay at home,' does not explain the reason for stopping and staying at home.
- (-) Other reasons given for dropping out, for example 'the child is working,' raise the question of what social work was done with the child and family to overcome the 'reason' for drop out.
- (-) Quality of social work: there were some examples of cases where more intensive social work would be likely to improve the situation.
- One child who had previously dropped out but returned recently explained that she had dropped out to work selling things on the beach to help her family. She had returned to MT to ask to come back to school after one year working but been told that she was no longer registered, so she continued working on the beach for

another two years until she met a MT social worker there who arranged for her to return to NFE. The child may have misunderstood what MT staff meant when she asked to return after one year. However it seems that an opportunity was lost at that point. Also in interview she expressed her dilemma, that she was glad to be back in school but also very anxious about her family's poverty, 'How will my mum pay the rent?' It was not clear if any assistance was planned to help this – and many other poor families – increase their incomes. 22 out of 1, 900 families received help to set up a small business in 2018^{xiii}.

- Another child who had dropped out, moved back to his home province and recently returned to Sihanoukville and the NFE school, recounted a story of his family, his history and reasons for dropping out which made no sense and was full of contradictions. He was most likely hiding his real reason for missing school. A professional assessment by a social worker would build trust over time with the boy and could find the real reasons for dropping out and might then be able to offer support which fits his real situation and prevents further drop out.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Improve prevention of dropouts: MoEYS recently published a new, practical, detailed good-practice guide^{xiv} for preventing dropouts which MT could review for useful ideas to strengthen their own systems.
(+) The NFE Programme Manager has already reviewed the Guidance. He stated that the Guidance had useful sections and describes work that MT does to some extent already but not completely. He noted that NFE and Outreach could improve their work by adopting some of the ideas in the section on identifying likely dropouts, teachers and social workers planning how to prevent dropout together and then checking progress on the success of their actions regularly.
The Evaluator suggests that NFE and Outreach now discuss together how to adapt parts of the MoEYS Guidance to strengthen the work of both teams to prevent drop outs.
2. Clarify a policy on what social workers are expected to do to build a trusting relationship with a child, establish the real situation of a child (their needs), discover the reasons for increasing absence or dropping out and plan ways to prevent that e.g. support to improve income generation.
3. Improve M&E on tracking trends and individual children who leave and dropout:
 - NFE, Outreach and M&E together brainstorm a list of common reasons that children leave school under two separate categories i) leaving but intending to continue education away from Sihanoukville ii) dropping out. The reasons must provide clear explanations for why a child is no longer attending the NFE school e.g. death; serious illness of child or family member; parents or other family members requiring the child to work; parents or other family member requiring the child to do domestic work at home every day and 'other'.
 - Integrate the list of possible reasons for leaving school in two categories into the new OSCaR system by way of dropdown menus (or their OSCaR equivalent). Extra space could be provided to explain more about the chosen option if wished.

4.4.2.5 Standard of case management.

A social work, case management system is necessary to match each individual child who enters MT to the multiple services made available by MT and to coordinate the delivery of those services for each child. The basic process of case management requires that for every child (and their family on whom they depend) there should be -

- A clear statement of the needs and problems identified for each child and their family, following an assessment against an agreed checklist of categories of needs e.g. safety, physical health/disability, basic needs, emotional health, education/work etc.
- A clear plan of activities for meeting every identified need/problem with available services.
- Implementation of the plan to meet identified needs
- Reviews of the results of those activities to check whether needs are being met as expected and goals reached. Adapt the plan and take other actions if the original plan is not successful.
- Closure when all needs have been reasonably met.
- Records of those assessments, identified needs, plans, work undertaken, reviews, new plans, closures etc so that the situation of each and every child at any point can be understood by anyone involved in helping the child in MT and so that information drawn from the experience of working with hundreds of cases over time can be used by teams, managers, Directors and donors to evaluate the outcomes of the work, to critically reflect on the program and so improve it.

- (+) MT Outreach Team has - over time and step by step - developed and improved a case management system which can tailor services to individual children and monitor them. For example MT -
- Recruited a specialist social worker as a Technical Advisor 2017-18.
 - Started using two new assessment forms - for the child and for the family – in 2017. These were introduced by the Social Work Technical Advisor to replace older forms. These forms allow assessment across most categories of needs and some planning of activities to meet the identified needs.
 - MT and the Outreach Team are currently adapting their systems to a new combined Case Management system and M&E database – OSCaR^{xv} which guides assessment, planning, implementation, review and closure for children’s needs against six domains. NFE and Outreach Programme Managers are in favour of this new system and aware of many of its benefits, as are senior management. Social workers have been trained in conducting the OSCaR assessment against six dimensions.
 - Outreach has a system of providing more intensive social work to a few urgent and complex cases where, for example, a child suffers violence or malnutrition – approximately 15 at one time. When the child’s situation has improved the case is sent on to the normal social work team. There are approximately 9 of these ‘red-cases’ at the time of the Evaluation amongst children at NFE.

However the Case Management system has some areas which – if strengthened – would improve outcomes for children at school considerably. Most of these points and the recommendations that follow them, reiterate points made by the Social Work Technical Advisor in her more detailed Case Management Assessment in 2018.

(-) Sometimes case files do not include important information about work done and decisions made by Outreach and other MT services which Outreach is coordinating. One example case file opened for a 7 year old child in 2011, had no clear identification of the needs which the social worker decided to work on, no plan, no information recorded about work done to combat her father’s violence or any other services the child received, no information about when she left the NFE school and what happened to her then. To get information about the child it was necessary to ask the social work team - who were knowledgeable - but different people remembered different things. For OSCaR to work in the future it will be necessary to put the data in.

(-) It is not clear whether all children have an assessment using the two Child and Family Assessment forms or not. Different interviewees had different opinions. The Co-Director stated that the OSCaR assessment will only be conducted for high-risk cases. In order to know whether a child is high-risk or not it is necessary to assess against all categories of need. The danger of an assumption that a child does not need a full assessment is that inevitably some children’s needs will remain hidden and the standards of care provided to MT’s child-clients will be inconsistent.

(-) There are no casework forms to guide social workers to make a plan to meet each identified need, or to critically review progress made (or not) as they implement the plan or to close a case when needs are met. Such forms could be integrated with the new OSCaR system of assessment and re-assessment against the six domains of needs.

(-) The making of critical decisions is not clearly organised. For example the decisions made by Outreach social workers to refer a child to NFE rather than BTS, or for a child to graduate to BTS from NFE or to de-register a child as a dropout from NFE do not have -

- Clear criteria against which those decisions should always be made. (Graduation to BTS and state school is a positive exception as the criteria are clear).
- Clear records of the decision and reason for it in the child’s file.
- A system to ensure that decisions made by social workers are always checked and agreed or questioned by managers. And that this is also recorded in the file.

Systems already exist but need to be further formalised in order to ensure that all children benefit consistently from the best social work MT can deliver.

(-) Not all social workers have the necessary skills to work constructively with each case. The former Technical Advisor stated that many social workers would benefit from training/coaching to learn the micro-skills necessary to – say – teach and encourage a parent step by step to learn to follow a schedule every morning to accomplish all the tasks they need to get children to school, as an alternative to ‘advising’ them what to do.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Follow the recommendations made by the former Social Work Technical Advisor.
2. In addition the Evaluator suggests that all children who attend NFE school are -
 - Assessed by an Outreach social worker against all categories of needs when the case is first opened. Families' needs are also included.
 - A plan is made about how to meet each identified need.
 - Each case is assessed for progress/outcomes at a minimum one time, when the child leaves NFE (or when MT's work with the child ends) thus providing a comparison so that MT can assess the impact that NFE and other MT services have on children.

This can be done by using the OSCaR Assessment against six domains at a minimum of two occasions – when the child's case is opened and when the child leaves NFE (or MT).

4.5 ARE THE CHILDREN WHO ATTEND MT'S NFE PROGRAMME GRADE SCHOOL ENABLED TO GRADUATE TO AND CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION AT STATE SCHOOLS?

Child Friendly Schools Dimension 1: All children have access to schooling.

M'Lop Tapang runs the 'Back to School' program to help children gain access to state schools and support them long term so that they do not drop out. The BTS program supports children who are new to MT and children who have spent some time 'catching up' with schooling in the NFE program. The BTS program works with large numbers of children : 1,189 children in 2018^{xvi}, in 17 schools (11 primary and 6 secondary) in central Sihanoukville. BTS also provides some support (uniforms and two visits to the children a year) to children who transfer to suburban schools outside Sihanoukville.

4.5.1 What are the outcomes for children who attend NFE? How many graduate to state schools?

In 2018^{xvii} from a total of 430 NFE children -

- 79 graduated to public school with BTS.
- 96 left NFE without graduating. MT reports^{xviii} that 16% of the total, dropped out of school (69 children). The remaining 27 non-graduate leavers moved away from Sihanoukville with parents telling MT social workers that they would register their child in a school in their new location.

(-) Less children graduate from NFE to BTS than leave NFE for all other reasons (e.g. dropping out and moving to a school elsewhere). Slightly more graduated than dropped out in 2018. However given that MT is working with very poor and unstable families who are often transient, then graduation of approx 18% of the total number of children in one year is understandable.

4.5.2 Criteria and process for transferring children from NFE to BTS and a state school:

- (+) MT has clear criteria which include non-academic criteria which must be met before children are transferred to state school from NFE. 'There are three criteria. They are, one: attendance at school must be good, two: pass monthly and semester exams, three; attitude – they are confident and can relate well enough with other children and their family can support them to attend state school' (NFE Programme Manager).
- (+) MT assesses children's and their parents' readiness for the child to move to state school and helps prepare them for the move. The assessment does not only depend on academic achievements but on the child's maturity and parents' capacity to support the child. The child's Outreach Team social worker discusses the possible move with the child and family, explaining that children need to move on to higher grades so that they can get jobs later and that they will get less support to attend school. The Outreach team closes the case and transfers it to the child's new social worker at the BTS team. Later that BTS social worker visits the family and explains that the support MT will provide is now more limited, focused only on the child, not the family and that health care services will stop.

At the behest of a donor several years ago, MT experimented with moving children to state school when they had passed exams without assessment of their psychosocial and economic capacities. As a result 40 children dropped out of their new state schools and returned to NFE (MT Senior Advisor). MT's assessment of psychosocial and economic capacity to move on from NFE to state school is necessary.

- (+) Children in grade 5/6 NFE, who expected to move to state school in October 2019 seemed to be prepared for the change to the extent that they had thought about it and discussed it with each other. They articulated some anxiety and some acceptance that the move was for good reasons, 'I don't want to go, MT should have higher grades for us to go to', 'Yes, but we need to go to higher grades so we can get jobs later,' 'And we need to get to

know children outside of M'Lop Tapang', 'The teachers will beat and shout and not explain, MT should have higher grades'. One child expressed her unhappiness at the idea that when she moved to state school she (or her family) would sometimes have to choose between buying food and paying for exam handouts. Another child said, 'If you don't pay for snacks they might cut your grades'. The grade 5/6 children had strong feelings that this was unjust and started to articulate their ideas about it, 'It wouldn't stop me trying hard though', and 'It's wrong....I'm not sure why...'. (Parents on the other hand were clear when interviewed, that their children's efforts should determine grades not the payment of money.)

What kind of experiences do former NFE students have after their graduation to state schools?

Children talked about their experiences at NFE and then at state school –

- 'I was scared I'd miss the MT truck home when I moved to state school. But the social worker helped me catch it. Now (years later) it's normal at the government school and I can cope'.
- 'Teachers at government school seem angry all the time'.
- 'I have to pay teachers for snacks to get extra lessons'.
- 'You have to keep your eyes down when you walk along the corridor so none of the *'Bongthom'* can catch your eye and provoke fighting'.
- 'If you accidentally brush against another boy they'll hit you. I stay in the classroom with a few friends at break to stay safe'. He explained that there are no teachers watching out to protect children at break times and that he would not ask teachers for help.
- 'MT staff say 'Get on like a family' but that doesn't work at government school'.

One 18 year old MT Student Representative told his story: 'I dropped out of school at 10 because school was so bad. Three years later I wanted to go back but my mum thought it would be hard because I was too old. My uncle found out about MT, so I went there to catch up (at NFE). I regret that if I hadn't dropped out I'd have a job by now. I coped with state school a second time because I was older and had started to think about my future and my mum, who is single, and needs my help. I almost failed in the first year back at Grade 7 because I just didn't understand it and I thought I'd have to go back to MT. But then in Grade 8 I could do it and now I can cope.'

A few interviewees also described positive experiences at their state schools –

- 'I like all the lessons.' The 13 year old boy proudly showed us his school book which revealed that he comes top of the class most weeks. He explained how he achieves this position, 'I listen and pay attention. Yes, I can ask the teacher if I don't understand, they don't mind.'
- 'I have a reasonable teacher for my class.' (Sixteen year old boy, member of the Happy Bird group.

Most children have difficult experiences in state schools. They compare the NFE and their state school, they must learn to protect themselves and survive in a less-caring, more expensive and far less protective environment than they are used to. Some learn to cope and thrive. Approximately 13% of the total number of children attending state school with BTS left in 2018. However the number of these who dropped out of all schooling and who used to be NFE students is not clear – there is no long term tracking of the achievements and set-backs faced by former NFE students.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. M&E track the long term results of former NFE students who transfer to BTS. BTS can 'tag' such children as 'former NFE'. Numbers of children who drop out amongst the larger number who leave can be recorded under various reasons for leaving and dropping out (see section 4.4.2.1 Recommendation 3 on M&E of drop outs for the NFE school above). Numbers of children who finish Grade 9 can be recorded.
2. If this is not already done, consider how BTS can utilise the experience and self-reflection of the Student Representatives and Happy Bird members who successfully negotiated state school, to help prepare younger children for their move to state school or to encourage them in the first few months at the new school. In workshops the more experienced youth can talk honestly about difficulties that children will face and encourage younger children by describing how they dealt with those difficulties and succeeded. BTS could also use case studies based on real life students' experiences for children to discuss and consider how they would feel, what could go wrong and the best ways of dealing with problems ('mean' teachers, bullying by other children, not understanding the class work, teachers demanding that children buy their snacks etc).

4.5.3 Transfer of cases from Outreach and NFE teams to the BTS team.

The decision is made by Outreach and NFE managers and if it is agreed that the child graduate to state school then their case with the Outreach team is usually closed and transferred to the BTS team.

(-) There was some confusion over the transfer of cases from Outreach and NFE teams to the BTS team.

- In 2018 Outreach and BTS teams failed to communicate and so many children leaving NFE did not receive their uniforms and equipment grants from BTS before they started their new state school.
- The BTS manager said – partly joking – that ‘We have no rights’ but must just receive the cases sent to them by the Outreach team. (The NFE manager made the same comment about receiving referrals to NFE from Outreach in a separate interview.). BTS also said that they do not get the full NFE file of each child from Outreach.
- BTS agreed that if a child lived in a violent family they would continue to get more intensive support. It is not clear how this fits with the closing of the Outreach team case and the end of health service support and support to the family.

RECOMMENDATIONS: transfer of cases from Outreach and NFE to BTS.

1. Teams need to work more cooperatively. Outreach has the main responsibility to decide whether a child graduates based on three criteria. However NFE and BTS also have responsibility to critically review Outreach team’s decisions and advocate for changes if this is best for the child. Replace the notion of which team has ‘rights’ to make decisions, with the concept of shared responsibility to apply criteria for the best interests of each child, with one team having the main responsibility to make the decision but always open to and expecting review by the other teams.
2. Make sure children in serious situations continue to get the social work support they need.
3. Pass on Outreach files to BTS. OSCaR’s unified database will make this easier. However the information it contains must be read, absorbed and used by the BTS team.

These recommendations are similar to those made by the former Social Work Advisor to reduce competition between teams, increase cooperation and plan cases and program development together more^{xix}.

4.5.4 Support provided by BTS to former NFE students to enable them to maintain their attendance at state school.

(+) MT provides multiple forms of material and practical support that makes it possible for children to attend state school. MT-

- Provides long term support - for as long as the child attends school and needs help.
- Pays for uniforms and books twice every year.
- Provides transport via MT trucks for those whose journey from home to school fits the direction of the trucks.
- Provides lunch to many children whose state school is close to MT’s centre.
- Pays for very poor children to attend the ‘extra classes’ that teachers have privatised from the curriculum to raise their salaries and to get handouts in grades 9 and 12 when important exams are held. (Officially these education services are free but in reality they are not).

(+) MT is flexible. Children are allowed to return to MT NFE school if their move to state school is not successful first time. Some children mentioned that at times when they found their new state school hard in the first year after they moved there they planned that they would return to MT, although actually none of them needed to. Clearly they felt the possibility of return was a lifeline.

(+) MT continues to provide sport, art and computer extracurricular classes to graduates. This provides an important link to a place and to people that children have built trusting relationships with where they feel safe.

One grade5/6 girl thinking about the move she would make later this year from MT NFE to state school, sadly remarked that she would only go to MT twice a month for her football classes, because her home is very close to her new state school. All the children interviewed who had left NFE in 2018 said they visited MT many times a week for sport, computer, art and lunch. ‘I go for art and sport classes and lunch to see my friends and the teachers too’.

(+) BTS provides a social worker for each child who monitors their performance at state school against various criteria and keeps contact with the child and their family and teacher or Director of their state school. This level of attention works to keep children at school and to prevent high drop-out rates.

- BTS monitors children against multiple criteria: attendance, grades, position in class and exam performance.
- BTS has a poor ratio of social workers to children – 80-120 children per social worker – but has developed clear systems and criteria for paying useful, focused attention to large numbers of children. Social workers spend

three days at schools and two days visiting families every week. Four kinds of form are used i) Monitor social workers' activities daily (Visit children, visit families, meet a child at school, meet a child's teacher or Director of school, provide material support to families or food to children, make arrangements for a new child entering BTS) ii) Record children's attendance iii) List of children in the social worker's caseload with each child's name, sex, grade, study morning or afternoon, average grade, rank in class, date of meeting child and iv) Results form: to prompt some critical reflection on their work to describe successes (e.g. 'start a new child back at school') or Difficulties (e.g. 'teacher demands bribes').

(+) The BTS PM reviewed MoEYS 2019 practical guidance, 'Early Warning System to Prevent School Dropouts.' He noted that MT already implements most of its contents but that he could use two of the forms provided in the annexes to improve BTS' existing forms and systems: a Home Visiting report and a Contract of Participation for Children and/or Parents.

(+) BTS' success depends partly on their good working relationships with teachers, school Directors and officials. The level of attention MT pays to individual children provides greater oversight than public schools are used to. The BTS Programme Manager stated, 'I think we have some effect on state school Directors and teachers. Some of them have started to come to us to tell us about poor children in their classes who are not in MT. And School Directors take problems we report – like MT children being discriminated against and bullied by other children – seriously and promise to take action. They respond like this because they want to save face'. (However see the section 4.8.2 on Student Representatives' perspectives on this event).

(-) BTS managers thought that 3 of 7 BTS social workers were not sufficiently skilled at communication and relationship building. They described a common tendency to use visits with families and teachers/school Directors to just greet people ('*sua sok took*') and no more. Some of these social workers have been MT staff for some time.

4.6 TO WHAT EXTENT ARE PARENTS/FAMILIES AND CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF THE NFE PROGRAMME?

Child Friendly School Dimension 5: The participation of children, families and communities in the running of their local school.

4.6.1 Parents

The Evaluator talked with a group of five parents (one mother and father and four mothers) of children who attend - or used to attend - the NFE school. Many of those parents had more than one child in MT's education programmes. The Outreach Manager explained that the parents were a representative group – selected for interview based only on the criterion of living quite close to the MT Centre.

Parents' lives are very hard. They face poverty and its many consequences daily. Of the three parents for whom there was time to tell their stories, two had faced severe difficulties and traumatic losses. One mother's child had recently died because he had not received medical attention in time to treat concussion. She had told him to go to the doctor at MT on his own which he had not done. She spoke about her great regret that she had not accompanied him to the doctor. Another single mother had been accidentally shot, and when she was unable to work her children had begged for work in the village to get food. One of her children had also had a traffic accident. The parents clearly wanted to talk, to have their stories heard to relieve their stress.

Many of the parents demonstrated determination to get education for their children: The three parents who had time to share their stories in detail, had made considerable efforts to meet MT social workers and get their children into the MT school (see section 4.1.1 on children's access to MT education services above).

Parents expressed appreciation to MT for education services and commitment to their children's education.

(+) All the parents expressed appreciation of MT and the NFE school: 'It gives parents time to work and the children love it!', 'My children get up at five every morning and walk to get the truck, even if it's raining – they *want* to go to school', 'My child loves the MT school. I'm just worried that when my construction job ends we'll have to leave Kampong Som and the school'. One parent expressed surprise and pleasure that the school follows up with her if her child is away for a day.

- (+) All the parents mentioned having a social worker with appreciation and without embarrassment, 'The social worker gives us fish and rice,' 'repairs the house,' 'tells my husband to stop drinking!' (talking about her partly drunk husband who was present in the group interview).
- (+) All the parents knew what grade their children were at and what the main subjects were that they studied. One expressed pleasure and surprise (and some bewilderment) that his child won a prize for drawing and had drawn him. They sounded proud of their children. When asked if they thought their children knew how proud their parents felt one mother replied, 'I think my children know because I know about (ask them about) their lessons'.
- (+) The parents remembered much of the advice that they get at Parent meetings, from MT: 'They say "Don't rely on us (MT). Be responsible parents!" It's fair that we should do it together'. 'They tell us to get birth certificates' (all the parents said that they had done so), 'The teacher says I should check my children's school books and I do everyday'.
- (+) All the parents expressed hope that education would give their children better lives than they had in terms of earning power and in social standing and self-esteem: 'I want them to be able to feed themselves', 'I want them to be able to look after themselves', 'I hope they'll be smart and able to work with paper and pen, not like I do', 'I want them to be able to work so others don't look down on them and so they can make us proud', 'I just want them to try their best and not be ignorant like me'.
- (-) Parents' attendance at their children's sports events, performances and art exhibitions was – according to teachers – low. See section 4.3.6 on Extra-curricular activities.

Many parents place a high value on education for their children even though they face the relentless problems of poverty and not being able to meet their family's basic needs on a daily basis. They appreciate many of the things that MT also values in its services e.g. paying attention to each child (following up children who miss school) and justice in recognising a child's ability rather than their family's ability to pay. Parents felt that they were involved because they made an effort to get their children into school, knew the basics about what their children do at school and attend Parent meetings.

However at the same time as taking determined action to get education and other services for their children parents also sometimes neglect them (for example by expecting a young, unwell child to take himself to the doctor rather than accompanying him). Neglect and commitment coexist.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Given the fact that parents must spend time working, that proactive parenting which requires very active involvement in children's schools is new even for middle class Cambodians and that MT has limited resources, it is perhaps sensible to accept that it would be hard to set up a Parent's Association and invite parents into the management of MT to 'participate in running the school'. Parenting classes, on the other hand, could improve parents' and children's relationships with each other and build on the level of involvement in children's lives that parents already have. This in turn could build the foundation on which parents' involvement in their children's schooling could increase.

Pilot parenting classes for NFE parents:

- The purpose of the classes is to give parents new ideas and skills with which to raise their children and deal with difficult behaviour.
- Discuss with Social Services of Cambodia which has facilitated successful Parenting classes recently (SSC's presentation on their classes has been sent to MT.) Discuss with any other organisation with similar experience too. Use MT's own experience with parenting classes in other programmes.
- Adopt the five basic steps of 'Positive Discipline' as the framework: i) parents identify their long term goals for their child(ren) ii) provide warmth and consistent structure/rules iii) have empathy – understand how your child thinks and feels when they behave in a difficult way, iv) when the child behaves in a difficult way use problem solving methods with the child v) respond to difficult behaviour with positive discipline.
- Hire a facilitator who uses these methods in their own personal and/or professional life with children successfully.
- A group of approximately 10-15 parents would meet ten times for approximately two hours a time with break and refreshments. There is time for people to talk about their own experiences and with the help of the facilitator reflect in depth and build self-awareness. Parents do 'homework' - practice a new idea from the class with their children - and return to the next class to discuss what happened. Simple, real-life case studies can be

used in class to practice finding 'positive discipline' solutions and reflecting critically on violent or neglectful or punitive behaviours.

- Benefits: SSC described how parents attending later classes, reported stories of how they had started to use the new methods at home with their children (warmer, kinder, more interested, more consistent with no yelling or hitting) and excitedly noticed that, as a result, 'Their children also changed their behaviour, and became more open and warm with their parents, seeking their company more. Instead of being afraid of their parents and staying at a safe distance from them, they wanted to be with them more and responded to their parents' wishes better. The parents were excited by this and attributed it to the positive parenting methods they had learned.' (SSC Director).
- MT classes could spend some time focused on school related issues, for example getting children up and ready in the morning, talking with children about their day at a school and positively reinforcing what they enjoy and do well, as well as issues around children's need for supervision to be safe, accompanying to doctors etc.
- Connect with the recommendation for training and coaching for teachers and managers of NFE given in section 4.2.2 on improving methods of discipline practiced in NFE.

4.6.2 Youth representation and personal development.

The Evaluator met four youth aged between 16 and 18, (one girl) all of whom attended the 'Happy Bird' personal development group (10 girls, 4 boys) and three of whom were Student Representatives (one girl). They were all former NFE school students.

- (+) MT has successfully created roles and positions in the school management structure so that former NFE students (currently at state school with BTS) develop their leadership skills and use their influence amongst their peers and younger children positively as role-models. The four Student Representatives also act as a bridge between children and the NFE school (and BTS team and state schools) by raising important issues with MT management.
 - (+) An efficient system of selection by adults followed by a participatory election by children: One student described the process by which Students Representatives are selected and elected. Youth join student volunteer groups. Teachers observe their behaviour with their peers and adults and select candidates. All the children then vote for the candidate of their choice.
 - (+) The Student Representatives are active in representing children and resolving conflicts. They gave a few examples: i) a child told one of the Student Representatives that she was afraid of her violent father. The Representative reported this – with the child's permission – to the Outreach PM. Outreach visited the family. The child now feels safe. ii) another Representative described his mediation of a conflict between two girls successfully after teachers asked him to help, 'I used all my techniques to calm them down!' He thought that the Representatives can have influence amongst other children and gain their trust in a way that adults cannot, 'Children will care more about other children's (their peer group's) opinions'.
 - (-) One Representative gave an example where intervention by adults after Representatives reported bullying of other children was not successful although the situation eventually seemed to have resolved itself. He reported bullying and discrimination by richer children of children supported by MT BTS at one state school, to MT management. BTS discussed with the School Director who promised to intervene. The Representative explained that after this the bullying got worse for a while, 'although it's stopped now. I don't know why'. Adults must consider the complexities of intervention and try to ensure that they do not actually make children more vulnerable by interfering. Adults need to keep close contact with all the children involved and not wrongly imagine – as state school teachers might – that giving advice once and then assuming everything is resolved, will work. Adults need to have knowledge and skills – psychological insight, communication and positive discipline skills – to take effective action to stop bullying.
- (+) MT has successfully given some of its youth an important opportunity to further their personal development.
 - (+) The Representatives were articulate in describing how their role 'gives us the right to speak out freely which we did dare do before', 'It helps us mature more quickly', 'It's good to help other people'.
 - (+) the representatives showed self-awareness, critical thinking and the ability to plan for the future, when asked to look back over their lives and involvement with MT education services. One 18 year old MT Student Representative told his story: 'I dropped out of school at 10 because school was so bad. Three years later I wanted to go back but my mum thought it would be hard because I was too old. My uncle found out about MT, so I went there to catch up (at NFE). I regret that if I hadn't dropped out I'd have a job by now. I coped with state school a second time because I was older and had started to think about my future and my mum,

who is single, and needs my help. I almost failed in the first year back at Grade 7 because I just didn't understand it and I thought I'd have to go back to MT. But then in Grade 8 I could do it and now I can cope.'

- (+) The Student Representatives and Happy Bird member gave an articulate description of the positive impact of NFE (and other supporting services) on their lives. They said –
- 'Before I just wanted to run away (from school). My Dad wanted me to come to MT. I did and now I know I can understand....it made me want to come to school' (Happy Bird member, aged 16).
 - 'If I didn't care, if I'd just stayed in the village it would be like the end of the world for me at only 18 years old! MT has given me opportunities - like learning Chinese and English - and rights.' (Student Representative aged 18).
 - 'MT made it possible for me to continue school. When I asked her to, the social worker visited our home to persuade my mum so I could continue in school. My mum's got old-fashioned ideas about girls,' (girl aged 18).
- (-) One boy said that because everyone else had said positive things he would say one negative thing about MT's education services. He explained that MT paid for him to attend private English classes. However, 'When I asked the teacher they said that MT only agrees to pay for the cheapest classes. Everyone just plays with their phones and chats all the time. It's useless, a waste of money. I want to go to a serious school with native teachers'.
- (-) The only 'weakness' seems to be that out of the many hundreds of children which pass through MT NFE, few get this opportunity for personal development at this age. MT has had to amalgamate three Happy Bird groups into one as numbers willing to attend have fallen. The Evaluation did not find the reason for this.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Identify the reason for dropping numbers and/or reducing interest – especially amongst boys – in the Happy Bird group and strategise to bring more teenagers in.
2. See section 4.5.3 above on using Student Representatives to facilitate and provide case studies for children to prepare for the transfer to state school or to support those recently graduated.

4.7 DO DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN – FOR EXAMPLE GIRLS AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO THE NFE PROGRAMME?

CFS Dimension 1: All children have access to schooling : to include all children, especially children in difficult circumstances (children of poor families, girls, orphaned children, child victims of domestic violence, disabled children, ethnic minority children, children affected by drugs, children affected by HIV/AIDS and other diseases) to have access to schooling with equity.

The Evaluation looked very briefly at the inclusion of children with disabilities (CWD) and at girls' inclusion and gender equality in MT's education service.

4.7.1 MT's Special Needs School.

There was no full evaluation – just a brief review of these services.

4.7.1.1 The Special Needs School.

(+) MT set up a specialised, free service available for CWD. MT's Special Needs school is open for all CWD in the area, not just poor children, because it is the only such service available. CWD in Cambodia are often isolated and discriminated against. General and professional knowledge of the causes and treatments for any kind of physical or intellectual disability in Cambodia is very low. (A 2014 study by MoEYS and Humanity and Inclusion discovered that 3.5% of Cambodian children aged 2-9, live with a moderate to severe disability. The percentage of this group that had their medical and rehabilitation needs met was zero).

The Special Needs school recently separated from NFE to become an independent unit as it now works with 38 children who attend the school and 6 children who receive MT services in the community. Children have a range of physical and intellectual disabilities including Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Attention Deficit Disorder, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Epilepsy. The Special Needs school has one Programme Manager, 6 teachers and 1 assistant.

4.7.1.2 Staff capacity

(+) MT built the capacity of the Programme Manager and team creatively and step by step in an environment with very little professional training for those working with CWD. Now the PM has the ability to make an assessment of a child's physical and intellectual capacities and then plan how to build each child's skills. 'I find out what children can and cannot do by testing them and ask parents what they expect for their child. Then we build the child's skills' (Programme Manager).

The PM attended two weeks' training per year for two years and then one week's training per year for four years at Cambodia's only hospital and training centre for children with a range of disabilities, The Centre for Children and Adolescents' Mental Health. 'I use everything I learned there in MT. It was very good. We learned how to build up skills through daily living activities and strategy learning for autistic children'.

The children are diagnosed, and treatments drawn up for them by volunteer specialist doctors from the UK who visit four times a year. They assess the children's progress and meet and teach parents and staff what exercises and behaviours they should use with their children to improve physical and intellectual abilities. These meetings also act as training for the PM and staff.

4.7.1.3 Integration/inclusion in the NFE school and Extra-curricular activities.

(+) Since 2018 the children have been given their own time to exercise every Monday and another time is scheduled to have fun with musical instruments. The sport and art teachers note that the children, 'Don't follow instructions, but they have fun...a new experience'.

(+) Some children join the NFE grade classes. 'The teachers say that the children with Down Syndrome and Globalised Mental Delay don't learn, they just copy the teacher. Their classroom behaviour is okay. The children with Autism can learn but sometimes their behaviour is very hard for everyone else' (PM).

4.7.1.4 Impact on the abilities of CWD.

(+) Attendance at the Special Needs school has a significant impact on CWDs' abilities

In MT's in-house survey 2019, all but one of the 35 parents/caretakers stated that they had seen positive changes in their child since attending the MT Special Needs school and most had seen more than one kind of change e.g. in their children's ability to dress themselves, to pay attention, to speak, to move around and to relate well with others.

4.7.1.5 Parents' Involvement and Learning.

As with all children, but even more crucially for CWD, parents' interest, understanding and active involvement in building their children's skills, is crucial in determining how far a child can learn and improve. Thus it is important that the Special Needs school teaches parents as well as children.

(+) MT involves and supports parents of CWDs in various ways:

- The PM stated that when she first assesses a child many parents say that they want the child to become 'normal'. She explains that this is not possible but that the child's knowledge and skills can increase.
- Parents meet the British volunteer doctors twice a year to hear about their child's diagnosis, treatment and progress. The PM estimated that approximately 40% of parents follow what the doctor tells them to do with their child.
- MT held a workshop for parents to share with each other their experiences and knowledge as parents of CWD.
- MT conducted a survey of the parents/caretakers of the CWD to learn more about the impact of the service on children's parents.
 - All the parents reported reduced stress levels and having more time now that their child attended MT.
 - Nearly 100% parents reported positive changes in their child's behaviours, skills and knowledge.
 - Nearly 100% parents said they had simple (and so realisable) life skill goals for their child. Perhaps many of them now realised that their child would never 'be normal', but could increase their capacities and improve their life experience.

(-) Parents' learning is limited and their understanding of their crucial role to work with and reinforce what their children learn to do at MT, at home, seems to be unclear to them or simply not accepted.

- Nearly two thirds of the parents in the survey stated that they had not learned more about their child's condition from MT.

- 50% said they already had a diagnosis before enrolling in MT. This seems unlikely as there are few services in Cambodia which can diagnose CWD accurately and none in Kampong Som.
- More than 80% of parents stated that they did not learn anything from other parents when they attended MT's Family Meeting held to share knowledge and experience.
- 30% said they still did not have a diagnosis of their child's condition even though they had all met MT's volunteer doctors on more than one occasion who provided a diagnosis as well as teaching parents how to communicate with and build up their child's skills. Khmer translations of medical and technical terms are being developed but may not be known by the Interpreter or recognised by the parents.
- The PM estimated that approximately 30% of parents do not follow what the volunteer doctor teaches them to do with their child.

Parents spend relatively short periods of time with the volunteer doctors and MT Special Needs staff demonstrating and explaining to parents what exercises and communication will build their child's understanding and skills. Parents are not involved with the school activities so they are not learning by observing what teachers do with children repeatedly so that they can also do it and reinforce it. If they spent some time with the teachers who teach their child perhaps they also could learn what to do.

Involving parents more is the key. It requires frequent repetition and coaching and practice for parents to really start to understand their child's development, limitations, and potential and to incorporate new activities or ways of playing/communicating into their daily lives.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Experiment with ways to increase parents' involvement, to give them the motivation, understanding and skills to reinforce at home what their children learn at MT's Special Needs school.
 - Discuss with other specialists in Cambodia who work with CWD and their parents successfully e.g. Jess Whitney and her staff at Safe Haven and Dr Bhumi and his team at CCAMH. Observe their best work with parents to look for new strategies and ideas. The Safe Haven Director would welcome mutual observational visits.
 - The EPIC ARTS video 'My Child Is Special' (20minutes) might be helpful for the team and parents. It shows several parents of children with various kinds of disability (cerebral palsy, autism, Down Syndrome) before and after they enrol their child in EPIC ARTS' Kampot school. After getting involved with the school, watching their own and other children learn and joining in, in the classroom, the parents talk about how that experience over many months has changed them, their own motivation, knowledge and skills.
2. Safe Haven and the Evaluator developed various training materials, for Family Care First to teach generalist social workers (or anyone) to identify and make a very basic assessment of a CWD. The lessons include information about the five most common kinds of disability and a quiz on myths and false beliefs. Safe Haven has various visual and video materials to use and an excellent facilitator. Perhaps some of these materials could be used for MT teachers, social workers and even parents?

4.7.2 Girls' access to the NFE programme and gender equality at school.

Child Friendly School Dimension 4: Gender responsiveness to promote awareness in schools, families and communities of their roles and responsibilities for providing equal and equitable education and educational opportunity for both girls and boys so that they can participate equally in all activities in school, family and society.

4.7.2.1 Beliefs about gender.

(+)All the children, teachers and managers interviewed and asked questions about 'gender equality,' stated that girls and boys, women and men, are equal and that at the NFE school they are treated equally. Some made the important point which MT highlights for child protection, that boys can be abused and need protection as well as girls.

- 'Boys and girls should be treated the same way'(Grade 4 children).
- 'Both have rights. Don't abuse girls, or boys'. 'In MT you don't see anyone treated differently'. Nobody in this group thought it unusual that three girls in the group are in the football team and none of the boys were. (Grade5/6 children).

- 'It means that men and women are equal', 'Students at MT are treated equally'. Grade 4-6 teachers – all women, also said, 'But in reality high paying jobs usually go to men.'
- 'Traditional thinking about gender roles does not reflect reality. We can see both girls and boys have ability. And that women can be leaders too – like here in this organisation' (NFE PM).

(-) As is common this belief that women and men are equal coexisted with some more traditional stereotypes and with understandable confusion over certain issues e.g. how to account for the various kinds of differences that clearly do exist between women and men, why those differences exist and what those differences mean.

- 'Boys don't think girls are weaker' (boy), 'Girls are weaker' This boy's opinion was not altered when the Evaluator pointed out that the girl he was sitting next to, the same age as him, seemed to have about the same mass of muscles in her arms as he did (they were both not yet in puberty). 'Hitting girls is bad', 'Boys have more energy and physical power', 'Girls are better at circus' (physical flexibility). (Grade 4 children).
- Some managers explained that girls will not want to play football because they are afraid of making their skin brown and that the ball will hit them.
- Some teachers described feelings of unease that 'the upper level' (management) might be 'looking down on them' because of their tendency not to make eye contact and greet them in passing. This was described under the topic of 'gender inequality'. It is quite common for people to conflate all kinds of social inequalities perhaps because they have not ever discussed the topic of social justice and inequality in general and do not have vocabulary for it – so they use vocabulary of the inequality of gender to describe other kinds of inequality too.

Interviewees tended to conflate social convention with nature and biology. Interviewees did not explain the gender differences they raised through analysis of society's power inequalities but tended to assume those differences must be expressions of what is natural or at any rate not changeable.

4.7.2.2 Gender equality for children in practice?

(+) Children, teachers and other staff all thought that in MT and the NFE school girls and boys are treated as equally important and given the same opportunities. One 18 year old young woman – a former NFE student – expected and got support from her BTS social worker to persuade her mother to allow her to stay on at school against her mother's assumptions that girls do not need education to the extent boys do. MT runs a girl's football team. Girls and boys in grades 5/6 mentioned girls' membership of this team in a way that demonstrated that they found it completely normal.

(-) The January 2019 Donor Report states that girls account for 46% of NFE students. This is only marginally under 50% but the Evaluator wonders why there are less girls than boys at the school? (The population gender breakdown is close to 50/50).

(-) See section 4.3.7 on Extra-curricular activities, the recommendation on sport to discover whether it is possible to reverse the decline in numbers of girls attending football. .

4.8 HOW DOES MT's M&E SYSTEM CAPTURE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AND THE OUTCOMES OF THOSE SERVICES?

(+) MT has been developing and improving its M&E systems over time. i) MT tracks numbers for indicators on an Excel sheet ii) recently MT has undertaken several surveys a year of its own services – for example a survey of children's satisfaction level with sports activities in 2018.

(+) NFE education services are tracked with indicators^{xx} which measure activities and outcomes i) numbers of children registered at school, ii) numbers of children attending various extra-curricular classes iii) the total hours of class-time attended by all NFE children iv) numbers graduating to state school with BTS v) numbers of children who leave without graduating including the percentage of children who dropped out vi) numbers/ a percentage who pass annual exams. The BTS programme – which records the ongoing experience of many former NFE students who graduate to state school - is measured on indicators i) numbers of children at school ii) numbers of children whose attendance is at a minimum 90% iii) numbers passing annual exams. It is not possible to follow the progress of former NFE children within the BTS cohort.

The system mainly measures numbers - or percentages - of children for certain activities. However there are some measures of outcomes with the indicators of exam passes and – for children (and families) for whom attendance itself is an achievement and a sign of changed behaviour - measures of the rates of attendance. However for NFE attendance is reported only as an overall number of hours for the total number of children.

(+) the most significant M&E development is MT's commitment to starting to use the combined case management and database system OSCaR. It is expected that OSCaR should be functioning in one year's time. Interviewees were aware that it is a complex system and that the work needed to input 2000+ cases is enormous, however people were also enthusiastic about how it could improve many aspects of MT's work : 'Once we input information that a child has dropped out, every team will be able to find that information. We will no longer have to repeatedly write lists for Outreach and others,' (NFE Programme Manager).

Opportunities and threats: The NFE PM grasped some of the benefits that OSCaR could bring and was enthusiastic about the new system. However the scope of benefits is even greater than is currently imagined. Teachers and social workers may not grasp OSCaR's usefulness for their work. Understanding the gaps in the current M&E system and the many benefits that such a CM and database can bring to their work would increase commitment (for example to enter data effectively) and increase teams' and managers' requests for and use of information from OSCaR to provide feedback and guide their work and future programme development.

Examples of possible benefits of OSCaR for NFE -

- MT will know how many children it has as clients, with no more issues of double counting.
- MT will have a profile of the services each child gets. Each team which provides a service – like NFE or BTS or Outreach or the Clinic – will be able to know about the other services the child gets as well as its own.
- MT will know the related dates and the periods of time for which each child received specific services, for example how long a child has attended the NFE school or been in Grade 1 of NFE.
- MT will be able to see evidence of the benefits (or lack of benefit) which its services have on children, by tracking and comparing the results of OSCaR assessments and reviews against the six domains of needs, for each child.
- NFE will be able to see evidence of the impact its schooling has on children by assessment and review against the 'Education' domain of OSCaR's six domains of needs. NFE will also be able to see what other needs each child has which may impact on the child's ability to attend school and learn and the impact of other services on those needs e.g. OSCaR's domains 'nutrition', 'shelter', 'care', 'abuse,' etc.
- NFE will be able to access information in many forms which will increase the managers', the team's and the donor's understanding about the experience of the children it provides education to. For example NFE could see what percentage of children stay less than one year or over three years (or any period of time); what percentage of its children have serious issues with violence in the family or malnutrition, or what percentage of children in NFE receive three or more MT services in addition to education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The adoption of OSCaR makes recommendations for improvements in the M&E system's capacity to give feedback on outcomes of education (and other connected) services unnecessary. The Evaluator also has little information about MT's detailed plans for their use of OSCaR and how it will be tailored to MT's needs. However she has a few suggestions –

- 1) Desegregate by sex and age for every measurement. When looking at desegregated results question the reason for any gender imbalances which may be revealed. If the reasons for the imbalances are connected to gender inequalities – for example they are likely to be rooted in beliefs that - for example - girls and women are not natural leaders or boys and men cannot be hurt and do not need protection – then look for ways to change the imbalance.
- 2) Capture and use information on periods of time that children attend NFE. Currently a weakness of the M&E system is that it is not possible to know – for example – how many children enter the school, stay a short time and then leave or how many children remain for a long time but do not move up through the grades. OSCaR will track all children as individuals. This will replace the Excel sheet's anonymous numbers. This will allow many kinds of analysis that MT cannot do now and open up the possibility of making improvements too.

- 3) Find other ways to report on the children who remain in the NFE school for the reporting period (those who do not leave or graduate). Currently the only indicators that describe this group's experience are i) a percentage who pass the annual exam and ii) an average number of hours of classes attended from the total hours attended by all children. For example set indicators for i) a number/percentage of children to have no more than - say - three days absence a year ii) a number/percentage of children who go up one grade - or more - in the year. NFE already keeps data on attendance/absence of children, monthly and semester exam passes and that information can be included in OSCaR.
- 4) Build on M&E's recent innovation to keep information about children's reasons for leaving school by creating a system to develop options on dropdown menus (or whatever method OSCaR uses). NFE, BTS and Outreach could meet to brainstorm and then refine descriptions for the most common reasons children have for leaving. Each description must be meaningful and provide an explanation of the reason the child left. For example, 'Child left and stays at home,' is not a description of the reason for leaving. Pilot for a period and then refine again. Keep written definitions of the agreed meaning of each option. Make sure staff who work with children and input the data all understand the meaning of each option and apply them consistently.
- 5) Continue to track children whose parents have migrated to the area to work as construction (or any other kind) of worker. And children who drop out of education to work in casinos (or any of the new businesses). Tag and track children of families who were forced to move to the suburbs by the economic changes. This tracking should enable MT to understand and report on the impacts of those changes on its clients and its programmes.
- 6) BTS tracks children – including former NFE children – for many years. Find a way to tag former NFE children now in BTS so that NFE can report on long term results. Consider setting up an Indicator for children who pass grade 9 exams as well as grade 12 exams as the Excel sheet does now. (The law requires that children remain at school until completing Grade 9).

5. CONCLUSION

M'Lop Tapang successfully provides primary grade education to large numbers of the poorest, most disadvantaged children who are drop outs from the public education system, through its Non-Formal Education programme school and extra-curricular activities. It is successful in all five of the Ministry of Education's six Child Friendly Schools' dimensions relevant to MT^{xxi}. The keys to MT's success are its flexibility and its view of the child as a whole person with multiple aspects to their lives and multiple needs – not only education but protection, health and basic needs too – and its provision of multiple services to respond to those needs. MT was proactive in adapting its outreach activities to ensure that it continues to find disadvantaged children in the fast-changing environment of Sihanoukville, for example by setting up a team to identify children living on construction sites with their migrant parents. Children expressed their trust in MT to prioritise their safety above adults' status and power. This is a rare achievement. MT provides basic but essential forms of material and practical help to get children into school e.g. transport, lunch and schooling without fees. MT provides a basic social work service and monitoring which can focus attention on children as individuals, in order to prevent drop out, by analysing the child and family's specific needs and connecting them to the right mix of services to meet those needs. The essential extra-curricular sport, art and computer lessons act as an attractive counter-balance to the academic subjects and keep children involved, creative and confident. Children feel that the NFE teachers are kind and teach well and patiently. Children and teachers believe that MT treats girls and boys equally. Nearly 20% of children who attend NFE grade classes graduate to state school with MT's 'Back to School' programme supporting them. MT provides good quality education at scale.

Future challenges.

Clearly NFE's priority – along with the MT as a whole – will be to continue to act flexibly in devising new ways to find the children who need help to access a decent standard of education as the enormous socio-economic changes of the Belt and Road Initiative roll out in Sihanoukville. MT knows that this largely involves finding ways to respond to the needs of transient migrant workers from other Cambodian provinces as well as providing services to families pushed to the suburbs by rising prices.

Other areas in which MT could improve the NFE education services for children are : the quality of teaching (and parenting) by building understanding of children's points of view, child development and 'positive discipline'

methods in training and coaching/supervision; conducting more formal and organised supervision especially for the newer teachers who need to and want to learn more; ensuring that all children have all their needs identified and planned for and that this information is shared between the Outreach social workers and the NFE team; improving social work support to children at risk of dropping out and so increasing the percentage of children who graduate to state schools and Outreach, NFE and BTS teams making more decisions together.

MT's decision to use a new combined case management and database 'OSCaR', makes all kinds of improvements possible to MT's ability to track, unify and learn from the experiences of its thousands of child-clients – including the hundreds of children attending the NFE school. OSCaR holds the potential for shining a light on areas that the current M&E system cannot track, for example, how long children attend the grade school at NFE, what happens to children at the NFE grade school before they graduate or leave; on tracking long term achievements of former NFE students who graduate to the BTS programme and in measuring outcomes by comparing scores for each child as time goes by against OSCaR's 6 domains – including the education domain.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

CHINA'S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE^{xxii} IN SIHANOUKVILLE:

- 1) **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION:** The scale of the changes facing Sihanoukville cannot be overstated. Therefore the overriding recommendation is that M'LopTapang continues to meet this new reality flexibly in order to maintain services – including education services – for poor and disadvantaged children who live in the area. If M'Lop Tapang and the NFE school are able to focus on programme improvements too, then consider the other recommendations given below.

ARE DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN OF POOR FAMILIES IN SIHANOUKVILLE ABLE TO ACCESS MT'S SERVICES PARTICULARLY THE NFE PROGRAMME? (Child Friendly School Dimension 1 – schools' proactive efforts to make sure children have access to education).

- 2) **RECOMMENDATION to try to involve Local Authorities in MT's outreach activities identifying out-of-school children in construction sites.**

Following the collapse of the seven-storey building this July the Government has undertaken to start to implement various laws around construction as well as to repair streets and clear up rubbish. This might be a good time to approach municipal Social Services and/or Education to encourage them to take part in and support visits to construction sites to identify children who are not attending school and help them enrol (or attend to MT's NFE school).

- 3) **RECOMMENDATION to involve NFE in decision-making about which children are referred to NFE.**

- Teams need to work more cooperatively. Outreach has the main responsibility to decide whether a child meets the criteria to attend NFE. However NFE also has responsibility to critically review Outreach team's decisions and advocate for changes if this is best for the child. Replace the notion of which team has 'rights' to make decisions, with the concept of shared responsibility to apply criteria for the best interests of each child, with one team having the main responsibility to make the decision but always open to and expecting review by the other teams.
- Pass on Outreach case files to NFE to read. OSCaR's unified database will make this easier. However the information it contains should be read, absorbed and used by the NFE team.

These recommendations are similar to those made by the former Social Work Advisor to reduce competition between teams, increase cooperation and plan cases and program development together more.

- 4) **RECOMMENDATION to formalise the process of testing children to place them in an appropriate when they join NFE.** Review the method for assessing which grade a child should be placed in. Staff feel that the current system places most children in an appropriate grade, so build on it. Consider whether the results of the current reading test provide enough information for the teacher about their new student's academic capacity. Should tests of numeracy be added appropriate to different grades? Are the results of the test recorded? Are there staff with professional teaching experience who could conduct the tests (the PM or TL?).

IS MT's NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME A HEALTHY, SAFE PLACE IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE? (Child Friendly Schools Dimension 3: Health, Safety and Protection of Children).

5) RECOMMENDATION to improve methods of disciplining children at NFE and to help teachers learn new techniques for solving the problem of difficult behaviours.

Develop a combined training and coaching/supervision process which lasts 6-12 months for NFE teachers and their managers.

- The purpose of the training is to enable NFE to build knowledge and skills for ways to manage children in the classroom and use 'Positive Discipline' methods to change difficult behaviours.
- The purpose of the coaching/supervision element is to ensure that ideas introduced and discussed in training are used by teachers with children. Teachers will have the opportunity to discuss one-to-one with an experienced facilitator and bring back difficulties and successes as 'case studies' to discuss again in bigger groups in training sessions over a period of time. NFE managers can sit in on coaching/supervision sessions and learn step by step how to facilitate these.
- Hire a facilitator who uses these methods in their own personal and/or professional life with children successfully. (Consider MT's former Social Work TA together who could facilitate with MT's Senior Counsellor and NFE PM).
- Adopt the five basic steps of 'Positive Discipline' as the framework: i) teachers (and social workers?) identify their long term goals for the child(ren) ii) provide warmth and consistent structure/rules iii) have empathy – understand how the child thinks and feels, understand the causes of their difficult behaviour, iv) when the child behaves in a difficult way use problem solving methods with the child v) respond to difficult behaviour with positive discipline.
- Utilise the experience of MT's teachers and children including what is documented in this report: the methods of discipline that children (and teachers) have found acceptable (and not acceptable) after critical reflection. Connect to MT's Child Protection policy and child rights.
- Utilise experience in Cambodia in the training design and sessions. For example invite social workers from First Step Cambodia who can present real-life case studies of change to the very difficult behaviour of child-clients (for example children with sexually harmful behaviour) using positive discipline methods (empathy, honesty, problem solving together, setting goals and follow-up, with positive reinforcement when the child takes steps towards success, not being judgmental or lecturing etc). Other organisations including MT itself may be able to present such real situations and use practitioners who already trust and are experienced in using these methods.
- A similar recommendation has been made for parenting classes based on Positive Discipline in Recommendation 15 below, on parents' involvement with their children and children's schooling.

IS TEACHING EFFECTIVE AND CHILD-CENTRED IN MT's NFE PROGRAMME? (Child Friendly Schools Dimension 2: Effective teaching and learning).

6) RECOMMENDATION on class size for largest sizes of youngest children and least experienced teachers: increase the number of teachers and reducing the class size of the lower grades 1 and 2.

7) RECOMMENDATION to pilot the topic of budgeting with grade 5/6 children: Build on the grade 5/6 teacher's work. Adapt the training materials on budgeting from the '7 Tips to a Successful Future' used in MT's Vocational Training programme and connect to what Grade 5/6 children are learning in maths and other classes. Pilot to find out if children are interested, understand and can apply the lessons.

8) RECOMMENDATIONS for capacity building teachers through increased opportunities for supervision and feedback on their teaching.

Increase the time available for newer teachers to both observe and ask questions of more-experienced teachers and to demonstrate their teaching to supervisors and capable senior colleagues who can provide constructive feedback.

- A framework and process for supervision should be established with clear roles and responsibilities for supervisors and supervisees, connected to probationary periods and Job Descriptions. Possibly the Family Care First Supervision process which the former Social Work TA and PM introduced to the Outreach team might provide a useful framework which could be adapted.
- Supervisors should assess each (new) teacher's strengths and weaknesses, set goals with each teacher and then take the responsibility to develop a schedule of observations and demonstrations with new and experienced teachers to give authority and structure to the arrangement, and to ensure that it is productive. Opportunities

for professional development should not depend on teachers arranging them themselves and on their personal relationships with other staff.

- If this is not already the case, teachers (and maybe social workers) could learn a system for providing constructive, descriptive, factual (rather than evaluative) practical and honest feedback. (The GIZ/MoWA Young People's Toolkit used by the senior counsellor with the Happy Bird group has a lesson on this topic).
- 9) **RECOMMENDATIONS for girl's football team.** If this has not been done yet –
- Find out why the numbers of girls in the football team have reduced from 25 to 10 in recent years e.g. does this follow a drop in overall student numbers? Is it true for boys' as well as girls' teams? If the reason for reduced numbers is specific to the girls' team, ask girls who have dropped out and girls who remain in the team what the reasons for drop out are. A neutral interviewer should be used who is simply interested and not applying pressure to rejoin. Probe under the surface: explanations like those given the Evaluator, that girls don't like playing under the sun because it makes them unattractive, do not explain the reduction in numbers over time, as this gender belief was also true several years ago when there were greater numbers of girls in the team.
 - Consider whether MT can contact other organisations which have girls' teams in other cities to arrange friendly matches to give more structure and incentives to team members (e.g. Indochina Starfish in Phnom Penh).
- 10) **RECOMMENDATION to encourage parents to join children's performances, sports events and exhibitions.** Research globally shows that the involvement and interest in a child's education by parents is a major factor in the child's success at school. Performances and exhibitions provide an opportunity for parents to find out what children do at school and to demonstrate their pride in their children.

Perhaps MT could consider ways they could increase parent numbers by ensuring that parents know about the event, can attend because the event is held at times when most parents are least likely to be working, feel welcome, understand how their attendance is central to the event for their children and possibly even help with transport.

HOW DO MT's SOCIAL WORK SERVICES SUPPORT THE NFE PROGRAMME TO EDUCATE CHILDREN?

11) RECOMMENDATIONS to improve the prevention of dropouts.

- MoEYS recently published a new, practical, detailed good-practice guide^{xxiii} for preventing dropouts which MT could review for useful ideas to strengthen their own systems.
The NFE Programme Manager has already reviewed the Guidance. He stated that the Guidance had useful sections and describes work that MT does to some extent already but not completely. He noted that NFE and Outreach could improve their work by adopting some of the ideas in the section on identifying likely dropouts, teachers and social workers planning how to prevent dropout together and then checking progress on the success of their actions regularly.
The Evaluator suggests that NFE and Outreach now discuss together how to adapt parts of the MoEYS Guidance to strengthen the work of both teams to prevent drop outs.
- Clarify the policy on what social workers are expected to do when it becomes clear that a child may drop out or has already done so: e.g. build a trusting relationship with a child and family, discover the reasons for increasing absence or dropping out and plan ways to prevent that by meeting needs e.g. support to parents to improve income generation.
- Improve M&E on tracking individual children who leave and drop out as well as finding general trends.
 - NFE, Outreach and M&E together brainstorm a list of common reasons that children leave school under two separate categories i) leaving but intending to continue education away from Sihanoukville ii) dropping out. The 'reasons' must provide clear explanations for why a child is no longer attending the NFE school e.g. death; serious illness of child or family member; parents or other family members requiring the child to work; parents or other family members requiring the child to do domestic work at home every day and 'other'. These reasons will replace unclear descriptions like, 'child has stopped school and stayed at home'.
 - Integrate the list of possible reasons for leaving school in two categories into the new OSCaR system by way of dropdown menus (or their OSCaR equivalent). Extra space could be provided to explain more about the chosen option if wished.

12) RECOMMENDATIONS on social work case management of children when they are first assessed and referred to the NFE programme.

- Follow the recommendations made by the former Social Work Technical Advisor.
- In addition the Evaluator suggests that all children who attend the NFE programme kindergarten and grade classes are -
 - Assessed by an Outreach team social worker against all categories of needs when the case is first opened. Families' needs are also included.
 - A plan is made about how to meet each identified need.
 - Each case is assessed for progress/outcomes at a minimum one time, when the child leaves NFE (or when MT's work with the child ends) thus providing a comparison so that MT can assess the impact that NFE and other MT services have on children. This can be done by using the OSCaR Assessment against six domains on a minimum of two occasions – when the child's case is opened and when the child leaves NFE (or MT).

ARE THE CHILDREN WHO ATTEND MT's NFE PROGRAMME GRADE SCHOOL ENABLED TO GRADUATE TO AND CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION AT STATE SCHOOLS? (Child Friendly School's Dimension 1: access to school)

13) **RECOMMENDATION for tracking long term outcomes of former NFE students in public school with BTS.** Track the long term results of former NFE students who transfer to BTS. BTS can 'tag' such children as 'former NFE'. Numbers of children who drop out amongst the larger number who leave can be recorded under various reasons for leaving and dropping out (see Recommendation 18 (4) below, on M&E, for more detail.) Numbers of children who finish Grade 9 can be recorded.

14) **RECOMMENDATION for increasing support for children when they first graduate from NFE.**

If this is not already done, consider how BTS can utilise the experience and self-reflection of the Student Representatives and Happy Bird members who successfully negotiated state school, to help prepare younger children for their move to state school or to encourage them in the first few months at the new school. In workshops the more experienced youth can talk honestly about difficulties that children will face and encourage younger children by describing how they dealt with those difficulties and succeeded. BTS could also use case studies based on real life students' experiences for children to discuss and consider how they would feel, what could go wrong and the best ways of dealing with problems ('mean' teachers, bullying by other children, not understanding the class work, teachers demanding that children buy their snacks etc).

15) **RECOMMENDATIONS to improve the transfer of cases from Outreach and NFE to BTS.**

- Teams need to work more cooperatively. Outreach has the main responsibility to decide whether a child graduates based on three criteria. However NFE and BTS also have responsibility to critically review Outreach team's decisions and advocate for changes if this is best for the child. Replace the notion of which team has 'rights' to make decisions, with the concept of shared responsibility to apply criteria for the best interests of each child, with one team having the main responsibility to make the decision but always open to and expecting review by the other teams.
- Make sure children in serious situations continue to get the social work support they need.
- Pass on Outreach files to BTS. OSCaR's unified database will make this easier. However the information it contains must be read, absorbed and used by the BTS team.

These recommendations are similar to those made by the former Social Work Advisor to reduce competition between teams, increase cooperation and plan cases and program development together more^{xxiv}.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE PARENTS/FAMILIES AND CHILDREN INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF THE NFE PROGRAMME? (Child Friendly Schools Dimension 5: the participation of children and families in the running of the local school).

16) **RECOMMENDATIONS to increase parent's involvement in their children's lives (and schooling).**

Given the fact that parents must spend time working, that proactive parenting which requires very active involvement in children's schools is new even for middle class Cambodians and that MT has limited resources, it is perhaps sensible to accept that it would be hard to set up a Parent's Association and invite parents into the management of MT to 'participate in running the school'. Parenting classes, on the other hand, could improve parents' and children's relationships with each other and build on the level of involvement in children's lives that parents already have. This in turn could build the foundation on which parents' involvement in their children's schooling could increase.

Pilot parenting classes for NFE parents:

- The purpose of the classes is to give parents new ideas and skills with which to raise their children and deal with difficult behaviour.
- Discuss with Social Services of Cambodia which has facilitated successful Parenting classes recently (SSC's presentation on their classes has been sent to MT.) Discuss with any other organisation with similar experience too. Use MT's own experience with parenting classes in other programmes.
- Adopt the five basic steps of 'Positive Discipline' as the framework: i) parents identify their long term goals for their child(ren) ii) provide warmth and consistent structure/rules iii) have empathy – understand how your child thinks and feels when they behave in a difficult way, iv) when the child behaves in a difficult way use problem solving methods with the child v) respond to difficult behaviour with positive discipline.
- Hire a facilitator who uses these methods in their own personal and/or professional life with children successfully.
- A group of approximately 10-15 parents would meet ten times for approximately two hours a time with break and refreshments. There is time for people to talk about their own experiences and with the help of the facilitator reflect in depth and build self-awareness. Parents do 'homework' - practice a new idea from the class with their children - and return to the next class to discuss what happened. Simple, real-life case studies can be used in class to practice finding 'positive discipline' solutions and reflecting critically on violent or neglectful or punitive behaviours.
- Benefits: SSC described how parents attending later classes, reported stories of how they had started to use the new methods at home with their children (warmer, kinder, more interested, more consistent with no yelling or hitting) and excitedly noticed that, as a result, 'Their children also changed their behaviour, and became more open and warm with their parents, seeking their company more. Instead of being afraid of their parents and staying at a safe distance from them, they wanted to be with them more and responded to their parents' wishes better. The parents were excited by this and attributed it to the positive parenting methods they had learned.' (SSC Director).
- MT classes could spend some time focused on school related issues, for example getting children up and ready in the morning, talking with children about their day at a school and positively reinforcing what they enjoy and do well, as well as issues around children's need for supervision to be safe, accompanying to doctors etc.
- Connect with the recommendation for training and coaching for teachers and managers of NFE given in Recommendation 5, above on improving methods of discipline practiced in NFE.

17) **RECOMMENDATIONS for older teenagers and Happy Bird group and Student Representatives.**

- The number of Happy Bird groups has reduced in the last few years. Identify the reason for dropping numbers and/or reducing interest – especially amongst boys – in the Happy Bird group and strategise to bring more teenagers in.
- See Recommendation 13 above on using Student Representatives to facilitate and to provide case studies for children to prepare for the transfer to state school or to support those recently graduated from the NFE programme.

DO DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN – FOR EXAMPLE GIRLS AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES – HAVE ACCESS TO MT'S NFE PROGRAMME? (Child Friendly Schools Dimension 1: All children have access to school equally. Dimension 4: gender responsive).

18) **RECOMMENDATIONS for MT's Special Needs School: increasing parents' learning and MT teachers and social workers understanding of physical and intellectual disabilities of children.**

- Experiment with ways to increase parents' involvement, to give them the motivation, understanding and skills to reinforce at home what their children learn at MT's Special Needs school.
 - Discuss with other specialists in Cambodia who work with CWD and their parents successfully e.g. Jess Whitney and her staff at Safe Haven and Dr Bhumi and his team at CCAMH. Observe their best work with parents to look for new strategies and ideas. The Safe Haven Director would welcome mutual observational visits.
 - The EPIC ARTS video 'My Child Is Special' (20minutes) might be helpful for the team and parents. It shows several parents of children with various kinds of disability (cerebral palsy, autism, Down Syndrome) before and after they enrol their child in EPIC ARTS' Kampot school. After getting involved with the school, watching

their own and other children learn and joining in, in the classroom, the parents talk about how that experience over many months has changed them, their own motivation, knowledge and skills.

- Safe Haven and the Evaluator developed various training materials, for Family Care First to teach generalist social workers (or anyone) to identify and make a very basic assessment of a CWD. The lessons include information about the five most common kinds of disability and a quiz on myths and false beliefs. Safe Haven has various visual and video materials to use and an excellent facilitator. Perhaps some of these materials could be used for MT teachers, social workers and even parents?

HOW DOES MT'S M&E SYSTEM CAPTURE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DELIVERY OF EDUCATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AND THE OUTCOMES OF THOSE SERVICES?

19) RECOMMENDATIONS

The adoption of OSCaR makes recommendations for improvements in the M&E system's capacity to give feedback on outcomes of education (and other connected) services unnecessary. The Evaluator also has little information about MT's detailed plans for their use of OSCaR and how it will be tailored to MT's needs. However she has a few suggestions –

1. Desegregate by sex and age for every measurement. When looking at desegregated results question the reason for any gender imbalances which may be revealed. If the reasons for the imbalances are connected to gender inequalities – for example they are likely to be rooted in beliefs that - for example - girls and women are not natural leaders or boys and men cannot be hurt and do not need protection – then look for ways to change the imbalance.
2. Capture and use information on periods of time that children attend NFE. Currently a weakness of the M&E system is that it is not possible to know – for example – how many children enter the school, stay a short time and then leave or how many children remain for a long time but do not move up through the grades. OSCaR will track all children as individuals. This will replace the Excel sheet's anonymous numbers. This will allow many kinds of analysis that MT cannot do now and open up the possibility of making improvements too.
3. Find other ways to report on the children who remain in the NFE school for the reporting period (those who do not leave or graduate). Currently the only indicators that describe this group's experience are i) a percentage who pass the annual exam and ii) an average number of hours of classes attended from the total hours attended by all children. For example set indicators for i) a number/percentage of children to have no more than - say - three days absence a year ii) a number/percentage of children who go up one grade - or more - in the year. NFE already keeps data on attendance/absence of children, monthly and semester exam passes and that information can be included in OSCaR.
4. Build on M&E's recent innovation to keep information about children's reasons for leaving school by creating a system to develop options on dropdown menus (or whatever method OSCaR uses). NFE, BTS and Outreach could meet to brainstorm and then refine descriptions for the most common reasons children have for leaving. Each description must be meaningful and provide an explanation of the reason the child left. For example, 'Child left and stays at home,' is not a description of the reason for leaving. Pilot for a period and then refine again. Keep written definitions of the agreed meaning of each option. Make sure staff who work with children and input the data all understand the meaning of each option and apply them consistently.
5. Continue to track children whose parents have migrated to the area to work as construction (or any other kind) of worker. And children who drop out of education to work in casinos (or any of the new businesses). Tag and track children of families who were forced to move to the suburbs by the economic changes. This tracking should enable MT to understand and report on the impacts of those changes on its clients and its programmes.
6. BTS tracks children – including former NFE children – for many years. Find a way to tag former NFE children now in BTS so that NFE can report on long term results. Consider setting up an Indicator for children who pass grade 9 exams as well as grade 12 exams as the Excel sheet does now. (The law requires that children remain at school until completing Grade 9).

CONSULTANT AGREEMENT

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION OF M'LOP TAPANG'S NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Objectives:

- To identify the key strengths and weaknesses in M' Lop Tapang's Non-Formal Education Programs.
- To listen to and document feedback from beneficiaries in order to evaluate and improve the quality and range of M' Lop Tapang's Non-Formal Education Programs.
- To measure the impact of M' Lop Tapang's Non-Formal Education Programs on beneficiaries and their families.
- To guide and influence the future training needs of students in our Non-Formal Education Programs

Outputs:

- To produce a report that highlights the results and to make recommendations on service developments.
- To document best practice for sharing with partners.

The consultant will follow all MT Child Protection, HR and Visitor policies 2019.

The fee of \$3,500 is inclusive of travel and accommodation costs and other practical costs of the evaluation. The consultant is responsible for paying any taxes on this fee and this will be deducted by M' Lop Tapang prior to payments to the consultant.

MT will provide local travel to visit beneficiaries and a staff member to facilitate translation and logistics.

The Consultant will report to and receive guidance/ support from MT Management team.

Qualifications and experience:

- Recognized Master's Degree in Research, International Development, Social Sciences, Education or related child field.
- Experience working in Cambodia essential, experience working with Cambodia children and youth highly desirable.
- Professional work experience in a child protection or research role
- Excellent English reading, writing and speaking skills
- Khmer speaking skills desirable but not essential
- Strong analytical and problem solving skills
- Excellent report writing skills
- Excellent communication skills

Date: 20 May 2019

Roth Chanphalkun
Co-Director
M' Lop Tapang
Sihanoukville, Cambodia

Lucy Carter
Consultant

ANNEX 2

M’LOP TAPANG EVALUATION OF NFE PROGRAMME: INTERVIEW GUIDE - MAIN ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

1st June 2019

	Child Friendly School Dimensions	ISSUES & POSSIBLE QUESTIONS Questions will be selected, prioritised and adapted for different interviewees and as the Evaluator’s knowledge of MT and the NFE programs increases.	INTERVIEWEES -Interview times are short so questions to ask interviewees will be prioritised – not all interviewees listed here will be asked every question suggested here.
1	CFS dimension one	<p>Access of poor, at risk children to MT and to MT’s education services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Which children are eligible for MT’s services? (at risk, poor) ii. What are the reasons children do not attend school (parents do not send them)? What are children (and parents) needs and problems? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask about impact of social economic changes in S’ville last 2 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What affect does the massive Chinese investment and immigration have on poor families, on children’s access to school, MT services and to MT? (p3 Jan 2019 donor report shows only 82 against indicator of 200 new children to directly enter public school system via BTS program). (Old families leave the city, new migrant families arrive and move on quickly and...?) - MT Report 2018 ‘focus on changes needed to meet new fast-changing situation’: what are the results of MT’s work to improve recruitment of children and to investigate opportunities for jobs in the new situation? - Results of the meeting planned with UNICEF and MoSVY? - Child protect with Chinese businesses? Recruiting Chinese staff? Raising funds from Chinese businesses? Other changes to services? - Any research on the situation? iii. Is MT proactive in finding children who don’t go to school? What methods do you use? iv. Do most children who enter NFE get referred in by outreach team? (How else might a child enter the school?) v. Do children of all discriminated &/or vulnerable groups gain access e.g. CWD (mild to severe), migrant families’ children, street-living children, girls? 	<p>Parents Students Teachers Social workers Team Leaders and management</p>
2		<p>Access, Assessment and Planning – Social Work (Case Management) link to Education Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ratio of Outreach team SWs to cases (all cases) and to NFE children specifically. ii. Describe the steps of CM (Intake assess, Plan, Implement & Review and adapt, Review and Close)...what do you do/not do? Show me the forms. 	<p>Outreach Social workers Team Leaders and management</p>

		<p>iii. Is each incoming child assessed for all their needs ? Are they always checked for education needs? And a plan made to match services with needs? Give examples. If not, how are children selected for a full assessment? How do you know what the not-selected children need?</p> <p>iv. What leads a SW to refer a child to NFE, Special Needs, BTB, Extracurricular services?</p> <p>v. Does every child in NFE have a SW? What is the SW’s regular work with each child in NFE?</p> <p>vi. Are most children who go to NFE also identified with other needs and get other services? Give examples.</p>	M&E
3	CFS dimension two	<p>How effective is MT’s NFE education service? (See Special Needs below no 12 and Extracurricular no 11) How effective is the teaching in NFE? How effective are the social work services for children and parents in NFE?</p> <p>3.1 NFE teaching (also see section 4 below on teacher’s capacities). <i>Ask MT NFE teachers and TLs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do children come to MT’s NFE rather than straight into BTS? • Size of classes? Ratio students to teacher? • How do you assess which grade a child should be in? • Age range of children in each grade • Curriculum includes what subjects? How was it developed? How does it connect to public schools’ curricula and competencies expected for each Grade? • How are the annual exams set and held and scored and results given to children/parents? (MoEYS role) • What kind of problems with learning do children have when they enter your class (see section1 above)? Describe ways that MT teachers can help and respond to children and parents’ needs and problems? What are your goals for each child? When would you bring in the child’s SW? Give real examples. • What kind of relationship should you – a teacher – aim to have with a child (friendly but professional, empathy but not overly emotional, curious about and learning the child’s needs, capacities, what helps her learn and not, her progress, how she relates with teachers, with other children, how well parents support and if not why not). • Describe examples of children and who have been successfully helped through NFE. Describe their situation ‘before and after’ attending NFE. • Describe examples of children who have not been helped successfully. What went wrong? Any ideas what could have been done to help? • How do you link your work with Outreach team SWs? Do you see the SW’s Assessment and Plan for each child? <p>3.2 Outreach team social work support and referral to other services for children and parents (also see section 4 on SW capacity below)</p>	Parents Students Teachers SWs TLs

- Describe ways that MT SWs respond to children and parents needs and problems? What are your goals? Give real examples.
- For example if you want a parent to change their behaviour, get child ready for school and check they get to school safely what would you do (identify problems together in detail. Ask how could do different, timely, safely. Discuss options for change in specific detail e.g. wake up by xx, cook breakfast by xx etc. Repeatedly.)?
- Describe examples of children and who have been successfully helped. Describe their situation 'before and after'.
- Describe examples of children who have not been helped successfully. What went wrong?
- How do you share your work with each child with teachers of NFE? And how do they share concerns with you?

3.3 Children NFE students current, now in BTB or dropped out

- When did you first come to MT? To MT's school (NFE)?
- How did you get to attend MT's school?
- What Class are you in?
- What do you do at MT school, what subjects do you learn about (maths, Khmer language,...)? What do you like about it? Anything you don't like?
- Choose something you learned about recently and tell me about it or show me.
- What are the teachers like? How does the teacher help you learn? What do you like? Anything you don't like? Anything that would help you learn better?
- Compare your (&family's) situation before you came to MT and now at MT (better things, the same, worse things). How do you feel about that ? Has MT helped you? How?
- Describe any problems or difficulties you have now (to do with school and more generally.)
- What work do you want to do in the future?
- What could MT do to improve NFE school? To help you/your family better?

3.4 Parents of a range of NFE children

- Briefly ask parents to compare the experience of going to school when parents were children, with their children's experience now.
- How did your child(ren) get to attend MT's school (NFE)? Did she go to public school before?
- What does your child/ren do/learn at MT school (subjects, exercises, sports, art etc)? Does your child have friends at school? What does your child like about school? Anything s/he doesn't like?
- Describe the teachers and teaching at NFE: what kind of relationships do they have with the children? With you and other parents?
- Do you know your child's social worker? What's her/his name? When/how often do you see her/him? Does she/he help you or your child with any problems?
- Compare your situation – (what you did everyday/what your child did everyday) – before your child started

		<p>coming to MT and MT school and now s/he is at MT (better, same, worse). How do you feel about that? Has MT helped your child/you? How?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe any problems or difficulties you have now (to do with your child(ren) attending school and more generally.) • The next step might be for your child to join public school again. What do you think about that? (what benefits and difficulties? What do you know about the way MT moves children back to public school and helps them stay there?) • What do you hope for your child’s future? • What are your suggestions for MT to improve their school? Other services? 	
4	CFS dimension two (effective teaching)	<p>What capacity do MT teachers and social workers and team leaders have? How does MT build capacity?</p> <p>Teachers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What ages/grades and subjects do you teach in MT NFE? Qualifications, experience? How would you compare traditional teaching methods and modern student-centred methods – the methods and their purpose? What do you want a child in your class to know/understand about maths/Khmer language by the time she finishes the grade you teach? What kind of challenges are there for children to learn? For you to teach? What different methods do you use (show me?); What materials and lessons do you create? Evaluator ask questions about materials on walls and in classroom to link to the subjects, children learning and methods used. How do you monitor the progress of each child? Choose one child and describe her progress, attainments and difficulties in a specific period. Clear JD so you know what your responsibilities are and who to report to and coordinate with? What help has MT given you to learn more about teaching? Training? Supervision? What would you like to know more about? Ask TL: how do you give feedback, correct bad practice, support good practice? <p>Social Workers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Qualifications? Previous experience? (Questions testing knowledge of CM in section 3) Clear JD so you know what your responsibilities are and who to report to and coordinate with? What training has MT provided? What supervision? Ask TL: how do you correct bad practice, support good practice and monitor SWs decision-making with their casework? 	<p>Teachers</p> <p>SWs</p> <p>Their TLs.</p>

		<p>Team Leaders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. How do you recruit teachers, SWs? What standards do you have/what must they be able to do? ii. Clear JDs for staff and lines of reporting, decision-making, supervision, coordination? iii. And what is the TL/PMs experience and qualifications? iv. Do TLs have overview of staffs' work and how? Make it clear what decisions staff and TL are each responsible for? Give (+) and (-) feedback? Identify gaps in capacity, build it and monitor progress? (Supervise). <p>Recruitment and staff turnover with massive socio-economic changes?</p>	
5		<p>How does MT provide holistic services to children - link the different services children receive? (continued from point 2 above 'Access and Assessment and Planning of cases')</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. How do TLeaders get an overview of their teachers work with each child and SWs' caseload? ii. How do TLs share information and make joint decisions together across Education and other services, particularly social work about clients? iii. Regular case reviews which SWs, teachers, TLs and others join? 	Team leaders, managers
6	CFS Dimension 5 – involve parents in school.	<p>How does MT support parents? Involve parents in children's education?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Barriers to working with parents? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. What does MT do to support parents e.g. conditional payments, savings schemes, business/skill training and access to jobs.... ii. Research shows that parental involvement supports children's ability to learn, commitment, confidence etc. What does MT do to involve parents? 	Managers.
7		<p>Access to public schools from MT's NFE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. How does MT NFE (and social workers) decide which children should move on to BTB and public schools (academic readiness and social-emotional readiness)? ii. What is the average time period – or range of time periods – that children attend NFE before they enter BTS and public schools? iii. What are the changes for a child and parents to deal with when s/he leaves NFE and enters public school? iv. How does MT prepare children and parents for this change? v. How do NFE, Outreach SW and BTB coordinate in this preparation? vi. How does BTB help children to stay at public school? Use checklists for visits? Check what? Check same for each child or is it tailored? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (For 1, 189 children, 1360 planned (1700+ actual) Follow Up visits to schools. 13000+ actual visits to children and 1815 home visits in 2018. + school uniforms.) vii. What are the reasons for dropping out once a child has moved to public school. Give real examples; could you help recover the situation? 	<p>BTS manager and team leader.</p> <p>Outreach SWs, TL</p> <p>NFE teachers and TL</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor report – Child rep reported bullying of ‘MT kids’ at schools to MT Cttee. <p>viii. How long does MT monitor and support children in BTB (at least to grade9)?</p> <p>ix. What percentage enter public school? (Jan 2019 report showed 150 new children pa x 3 years added to 450 already attending = 900 and 80 per year move to BTB x 3 years = 240. 900 – 240 = 660 remaining children. Even with 15% drop out that’s a large number who remain in NFE.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens to the children who do not ever enter public school? How long do they stay in NFE? What are MT’s goals for them? • What happens to the children whose families move away and who attend public school in their new locations? 	
8	CFS dimension three	<p>Are MT NFE services safe and protective of children?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the services hygienic with water, bathrooms and access to medical and psychological services? • Do staff and other adults in MT understand and follow the MT CP policy? Do they know how to apply it in their work? Give examples where they have taken action to ensure a child/ren are kept safe? • When did you last attend training on MT’s CP Policy? And how long was it? 	Parents Students Teachers SWs TLs
9	CFS dimension four	<p>Are MT ‘s NFE services gender responsive? (and protective, non-discriminatory)</p> <p>i. Do you think girls and boys should be treated equally or not? Have the same opportunity to go to school? What can make girls get less chances than boys? Or boys than girls (pressure to migrate to work on teenage boys and boys’ academic performances are poorer)?</p> <p>ii. What does MT do to make sure girls and boys have equal opportunities and neither is discriminated against because of their sex in the NFE and other programmes?</p> <p>iii. Why are indicators only 45% girls for children attending NFE, passing exams etc?</p> <p>iv. M&E: GENDER DISABILITY TEMPORARY MIGRANT CHILDREN -SEE POINT 14 BELOW.</p> <p>v. Ask children what they would do if another child was bullied because she was a girl or gay or disabled or...</p> <p>vi. Ask parents...</p>	Parents Students Teachers SWs TLs
10	CFS dimension five	<p>How does MT encourage Child Participation, self awareness and decision-making?</p> <p>i. Happy Bird (some members will be interviewed about the NFE programme)</p> <p>ii. Happy Bird members: compared to the hundreds of children in the NFE and BTS programme 18 is a small number? What is the reason?</p> <p>iii. Give examples of issues School Reps have reported to the MT Committee.</p>	Teachers Social Workers Children (Happy Bird and student reps) Parents.
11	CFS dimension two & five (quality education)	<p>What is the role of the extracurricular classes in children’s experience at MT?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender –related (girls football teams) • Disabled children included? 	TLeader Extra curricular teachers.

	and participation/ expression)		
12	CFS Dimension one (access for all)	<p>MT Special Needs follow up the findings of MT’s survey of parents early 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reason that amongst good feedback a majority of parents said they had not learned anything about their child’s condition from MT and 30% said they did not know the diagnosis (2019 survey by MT). ii. Ideas for ways to improve parents’ knowledge, skills and involvement. 	Special Needs TL.
13		<p>Partnership with MoEYS</p> <p>MT management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. What has MoEYS achieved locally implementing CFS for 10 yrs+? District Training and management teams inspecting schools regularly and helping them implement Plans to Improve? ii. What is MoEYS involvement with MT Education? (NFE curriculum and exam? BTS – Directors, teachers and BTS social workers?) iii. Does MT support schools the children attend in any way – for example to improve teaching quality? <p>MoEYS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Describe what you know of MT’s education (and other) work? Have you ever watched their work with children , seen the classrooms etc? v. How does MT support education in your area? (NFE, BTS, Special Needs)? How does MoEYS work with MT on NFE, BTS? vi. For public schools: Implementation of CFS Policy? District Training and Monitoring Teams inspect schools? 	
14		<p>M&E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. See question on numbers NFE to BTS qn ix, section 7. ii. Describe the NFE M&E system. iii. Collect info on?: child name age SEX DISABILITY/ILLNESS entry date address family info; enrolment, attendance; achievement drop out? iv. (What information does NFE collect all the time about its students in kindergarten and all grades? Is this the info it uses to report to itself and to donors?) v. What info does MT collect from the CM systems of Outreach and BTS and Special Needs to report, monitor? If MT does not collect this info how does it do M&E for reporting to donors? (are M&E and CM integrated or separate?) (OSCaR integrates) vi. GENDER (disability, TEMPORARY MIGRANT, ethnicity, religion): What do you do to analyse any gender differences ? Breakdown the info to see how that group performs comparatively? vii. Test children for progress/outcomes e.g. literacy? Numeracy? viii. Currently monitor attendance and exam success, and could you – 	<p>M&E staff Sinat</p> <p>Directors and TA</p> <p>PM and TLs</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ix. Have any way to collect info systematically on outcomes for every child for education and resolution of other needs (health, safety etc) x. OSCaR or similar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if NFE wanted to use OSCaR but couldn't get the basic info from Outreach to set it up – names children, dates entry, village etc • Ask what different people and programmes think of OSCaR or similar: to capture more info about each child so can answer questions like 'what was the most common reason for drop out in xxx time period?' 'how many children are in NFE for less than 6 months? 6-12 months? 12-24 months? Longer? And can show what needs children have and how well they are met by MT's services. 	

ការវាយតម្លៃកម្មវិធីអប់រំមិនផ្លូវការអង្គការម្លប់តាប៉ាង: ថ្ងៃទី៣-៧ ខែមិថុនា ឆ្នាំ ២០១៩

EVALUATION OF M LOP TAPANG S NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAM 3rd -7th June 2019

ខ្ញុំយល់ថាអង្គការម្លប់តាប៉ាងមានគោលបំណងវាយតម្លៃសេវាកម្មអប់រំ ដើម្បីឲ្យបានដឹងថាតើសេវាកម្មទាំងនេះមានសារៈប្រយោជន៍ចំពោះកុមារដែលមកទទួលសេវាកម្មដែរឬទេ និងស្វែងយល់ពីបញ្ហាផ្សេងៗ ហើយធ្វើការកែលម្អសេវាកម្មទាំងនេះឲ្យកាន់តែល្អប្រសើរ។
I understand that M Lop Tapang wishes to evaluate its Education services to find out whether these services are helpful for the children who attend them to become aware of any problems and to improve those services.

អង្គការម្លប់តាប៉ាងមានគោលបំណងសួរសំនួរដល់កុមារ ដែលប្រើប្រាស់សេវាកម្មរបស់អង្គការ សួរសំនួរដល់ឪពុកម្តាយកុមារ ដោយសួរអំពីគំនិតយោបល់ និងចំណាប់អារម្មណ៍អំពីសេវាកម្មរបស់អង្គការម្លប់តាប៉ាង។ ខ្ញុំយល់ថាអង្គការម្លប់តាប៉ាងនឹងសួរសំនួរខ្ញុំសំរាប់គោលបំណងទាំងអស់នេះ។
M Lop Tapang wishes to ask children who use their services, and their parents, their ideas and feelings about M Lop Tapang's services. I agree that M Lop Tapang may interview me for that purpose.

ខ្ញុំយល់ថាអ្នកវាយតម្លៃនឹងរក្សាព័ត៌មានដែលខ្ញុំបានផ្តល់ឲ្យជាការសម្ងាត់។ អ្នកវាយតម្លៃអាចនឹងប្រើគំនិតរបស់ខ្ញុំនៅក្នុងរបាយការណ៍ ប៉ុន្តែមិនត្រូវដាក់ឈ្មោះរបស់ខ្ញុំ ឬថវិកលក្ខណៈរបស់ខ្ញុំនៅពេលដែលអ្នកវាយតម្លៃបានឃើញខ្ញុំផ្ទាល់នោះឡើយ។
I understand that the Evaluator will keep any information I give in the interview confidential. She may use my ideas in a report but not my name or any other personal characteristics that identify me.

កាលបរិច្ឆេទ និងពេលវេលាសម្ភាសន៍
INTERVIEW DATE AND TIME

ឈ្មោះនិងហត្ថលេខារបស់អ្នកត្រូវសម្គាល់
INTERVIEWEES' NAMES AND SIGNATURES

	ឈ្មោះ Name	Age of child	Sex	Grade Child attends	ហត្ថលេខា ឬស្នាមមេដៃ Signature or thumbprint
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

- **Dimension 1: All children have access to schooling (schools are inclusive)** to ensure and support all children, especially children in difficult circumstances (children of poor families, girls, orphaned children, child victims of domestic violence, disabled children, ethnic minority children, children affected by drugs, children affected by HIV/AIDS and other diseases) have access to schooling with equity.
- **Dimension 2: Effective teaching and learning** to develop teacher proficiencies so that teachers have theoretical and practical knowledge with a specific focus on learning/teaching activities and materials which promote active, creative and child-centred approaches to learning in a joyful classroom environment and to nurture teacher attitudes, behaviour and moral values which will lead to learning together in a harmonious way.
- **Dimension 3: Health, safety and protection of children** to ensure that all children that participate in education are cared for and supported by all concerned people and institutions to keep them healthy and safe and protect them from violence in school, family and society.
- **Dimension 4: Gender responsiveness** to promote awareness in schools, families and communities of their roles and responsibilities for providing equal and equitable education and educational opportunity for both girls and boys so that they can participate equally in all activities in school, family and society.
- **Dimension 5: The participation of children, families and communities in the running of their local school** to enhance the dynamic relationship and two-way participation between schools and communities so that schools become community-supported resource centre and that families and communities become resources for school improvement and play an active role in management.
- **Dimension 6: The National Education System supports and encourages schools to become more child-friendly** to ensure the effective and sustainable implementation of the CFS Policy in all schools with a high spirit of responsibility; all mechanisms and levels of the national education system must work together to support schools in improving the quality of education.

END NOTES

ⁱ See Interviewees' Informed Consent form example in Annex 3.

ⁱⁱ Evaluation of the Child Friendly School Policy Implementation in Cambodia, 2016, UNICEF and MoEYS.

ⁱⁱⁱ Survey of Violence Against Children in Cambodia, 2013. UNICEF and MoSVY.

^{iv} One example of such research was conducted before the development of 'The Young People's Toolkit on GBV', GIZ and MoWA.

^v 'The Belt and Road Initiative is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government involving infrastructure development and investments in 152 countries and international organizations in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas.' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belt_and_Road_Initiative

^{vi} M'Lop Tapang Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

^{vii} The Ministry of Education's Child Friendly Schools' Six Dimensions can be found in Annex 4.

^{viii} Senior Technical Advisor in email late June 2019.

^{ix} Information drawn from MT's M&E Excel Sheet 2017-19 for 2018.

^x From MT's January 2019 report for the donor WISE for the period 2018, Output 1.1.1

^{xi} Evaluation of the Child Friendly School Policy Implementation in Cambodia, 2016. UNICEF and MoEYS.

^{xii} From MT's M&E Excel Sheet 2017-19, for the Outreach team, 2018.

^{xiii} From MT's M&E Excel Sheet 2017-19 for the Outreach team, 2018.

^{xiv} Early Warning System to Prevent Drop Out Guidance Manual, 2019. MoEYS.

^{xv} OSCaR is the acronym for Open Source Case-management and Record-keeping.

^{xvi} From MT's January 2019 report for the donor WISE for the period 2018, Outcome 1.1.

^{xvii} Information drawn from MT's M&E Excel Sheet 2017-19 for the Outreach team, 2018.

^{xviii} From MT's January 2019 report for the donor WISE for the period 2018, Output 1.1.1 point 3.

^{xix} 'Feedback for M'Lop Tapang Social Work: Based on insights in 2018/2019 in Outreach, Child Protection, Alternative Care, Transitional Home and Drugs teams' presentation. Former Social Work Technical Advisor.

^{xx} The Evaluator noticed this information in either of two places i) the Jan 2019 report to the donor WISE and ii) the 2017-19 M&E Excel sheet 2017-19 which records some information used in donor reports.

^{xxi} See Annex 4, MoEYS' Child Friendly Schools six dimensions.

^{xxii} 'The Belt and Road Initiative is a global development strategy adopted by the Chinese government involving infrastructure development and investments in 152 countries and international organizations in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas.' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belt_and_Road_Initiative

^{xxiii} Early Warning System to Prevent Drop Out Guidance Manual, 2019, MoEYS

^{xxiv} 'Feedback for M'Lop Tapang Social Work: Based on insights in 2018/2019 in Outreach, Child Protection, Alternative Care, Transitional Home and Drugs teams' presentation. Former Social Work Technical Advisor.