



IMPACT REPORT 2020

photo: Todd Brown



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WHO WE ARE

ISF Cambodia (ISF) has over 14 years of experience using education and sport to change lives. We are dedicated to a vision where every child has access to quality education, healthcare, and sport. Our aim is to make a fundamental and lasting change in the lives of some of the poorest and most disadvantaged children and their families in Cambodia.

Nearly 49% of Cambodian children live in multidimensional poverty (UNICEF, 2019), lacking education, adequate nutrition, healthcare, and sanitation. This deprivation many children live in not only strips them of their childhood, but it also means that they miss out on an education and vital life skills that are taught through peer interaction and play. Through our holistic programme combining education, healthcare, sport, and community outreach projects, ISF supports those most in need to build a brighter future.

WHAT WE OFFER

Catch-Up Education – accelerated learning for children who have never been to school or have dropped out to ‘catch up’ to the correct grade for their age and enter state school.

State school support – ongoing holistic support to students and their families who attend state school after completing the Catch-Up Education Programme.

Community development projects – ensuring our education centres do not exist in vacuum through community libraries, sewing projects, adult literacy courses, and more!

Healthcare – supporting the health and well-being of all our students through check-ups, treatment, vaccinations, and health education.

Nutrition – nutritional school meals and monthly food parcels for families.

English and Information and communications technology (ICT) classes – developing students’ skills through English classes as well as courses in ICT skills and computer-tablet use.

Employment support – careers counselling, vocational training, soft skill development, and more.

Football Programme – opportunities for ISF students and students from partner schools and organisations to play football competitively and attend weekly training sessions.

OUR KEY SUPPORTERS AND DONORS



សុខភាព និងជីវិត
កាន់តែប្រសើរ



Goldman
Sachs
Gives



PEMBERTON INVESTMENTS PTE LTD



Linklaters



COVID-19 ACTIONS

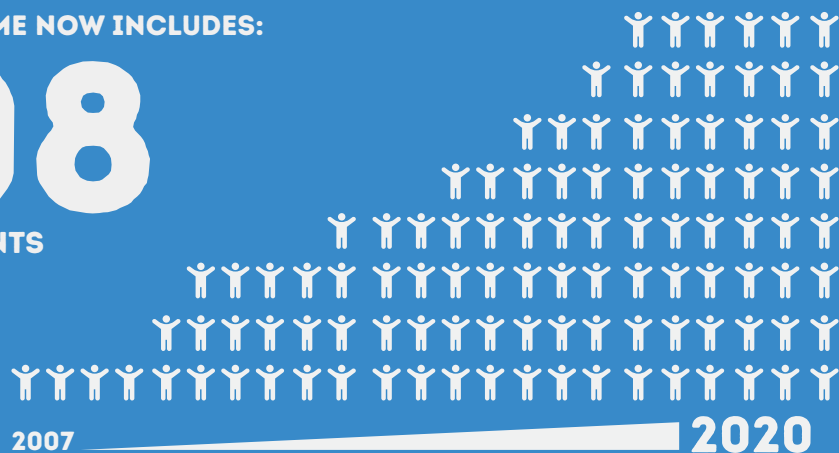
EDUCATION

WE HAVE HAD REDUCED FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES IN 2020 AND FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE DUE TO THE PANDEMIC. THIS SITUATION CAUSED US TO MAKE THE DIFFICULT CHOICE TO NOT TAKE ON ANY NEW STUDENTS. THIS HEARTBREAKING DECISION ENSURES WE CAN CONTINUE PROVIDING OUTSTANDING AID TO THOSE REMAINING IN OUR PROGRAMME.

OUR PROGRAMME NOW INCLUDES:

708

STUDENTS



TO HELP OUR BENEFICIARIES WEATHER THE CRISIS, ISF HELPED THEM WITH A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES, INCLUDING:



125

rents negotiated down to keep families in their homes



1,209

Extra food parcels given to families most in need



3,339

bars of soap given to poor families to promote sanitation

FOOTBALL

TO HELP SAFEGUARD PLAYERS IN OUR PROGRAMME AGAINST THE SPREAD OF COVID-19, ISF HAS TAKEN STEPS TO PROTECT THEIR HEALTH DURING TRAINING AND MATCHES FOLLOWING THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S BEST PRACTICES.

SOME OF THESE PRACTICES ARE:



Temperature checks at entrance



Physical distance enforced

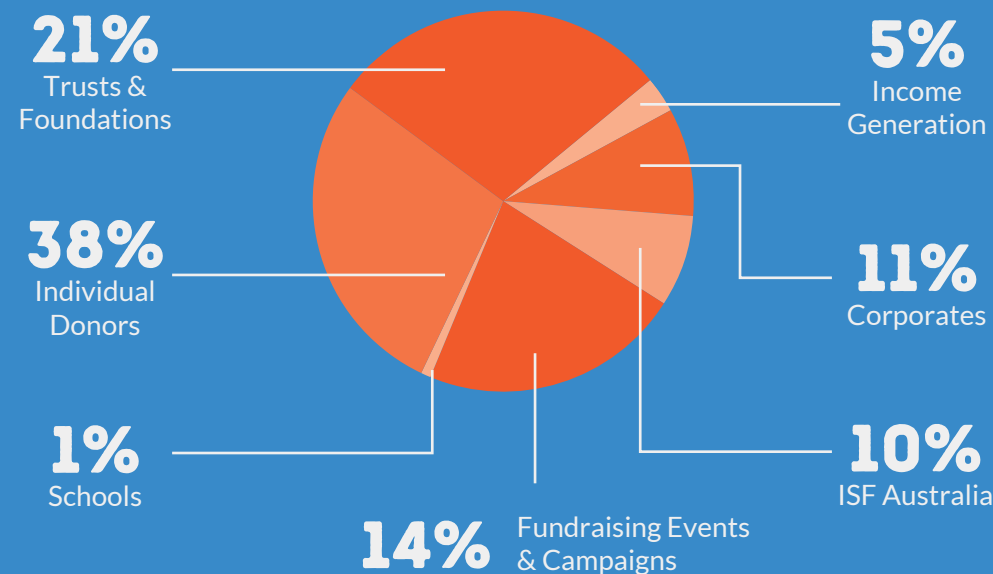


Audience members must wear masks

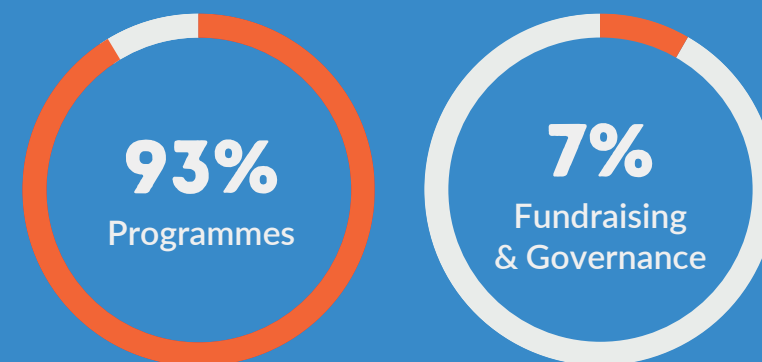


Players asked to wash hands regularly

WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM:



WHERE OUR MONEY GOES:



ORGANISATIONAL EXPENDITURE IN 2020



OUR IMPACT AT A GLANCE



708
Students



47%
Female students



3,000
Children and youth in
ISF's Football Programme



3,000
Community
development project
beneficiaries

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is of the upmost importance to ISF. To demonstrate that our operations are consistent with our values, we provide clear reporting to our donors and stakeholders on ISF's accountability and sustainability performance.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an essential part of all project delivery and we have developed our capacities in this area to increase impact for our beneficiaries, as well as accountability to funders. Our evaluation methodology includes both internal and external monitoring processes enabling comprehensive assessment of programme delivery.

OSCaR (Open Source Case-management and Record-keeping) - In partnership with Children in Families and Save the Children, ISF has implemented the case management and record-keeping system OSCaR to effectively collect data and monitor and evaluate the progress of all students in our programme. OSCaR also allows for case referrals with partner organisations working with vulnerable children in Cambodia.

Dream Life Skills Assessment Scale (DLSAS) - ISF uses the five-point scale provided by the DLSAS to measure how effective our interventions are at increasing students' life and soft skills. The tool is specifically designed to suit the needs of organisations providing life-skills development to children in developing countries and allows for base and end-line evaluations to be conducted.

Family's Needs Assessments - with COVID-19 having a profound impact on students and their families, ISF carried out needs assessments throughout 2020 to determine the level of support each family should receive from ISF going forward. This report included collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and focused on aspects such as income, nutrition, and health.



ChildSafe
MOVEMENT
TOGETHER, PROTECTING CHILDREN

CHILDSAFE ALLIANCE

In 2020, ISF joined over 50 other organisations in 13 countries to become a ChildSafe Alliance Partner. Led by Friends International and UNICEF, **ChildSafe Alliance** is a global network committed to improving the quality and impact of services for marginalised children and youth, their families, and communities. We whole-heartedly believe in ChildSafe Alliance's mission to protect the most vulnerable in a sustainable manner and are delighted to be a part of it.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

To achieve a more sustainable future for all, the United Nations introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These global goals target the persistent issues that keep populations from thriving. ISF uses the SDGs as a framework to improve the lives of those in the communities we serve.

Throughout 2020, ISF contributed to the SDGs in the following ways:



SDG 1: No Poverty - ISF's comprehensive and holistic programming ensured 708 students and their families were provided with the skills they need to lift themselves out of poverty.



SDG 2: Zero Hunger - 7,510 monthly food parcels were distributed to ISF families and 646 ISF students also received two meals a day, six days a week during school openings. For families experiencing extreme financial hardship, an additional 692 food packages were provided.



SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being - All our students have access to comprehensive healthcare and 2,772 visits to ISF nurses' office occurred. The Football Programme aims to improve participants' general health, fitness, and well-being by being active and participating in sport.



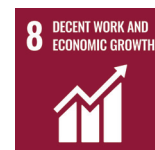
SDG 4: Quality Education - Despite school disruptions, 214 students received catch-up education and 432 received state school support through a variety of face-to-face, virtual, and remote learning activities. 13 students have also continued with higher education.



SDG 5: Gender Equality - ISF is committed to promoting the inclusion of girls in sports and education and contribute to a shift in attitudes towards the role of women in sports and society. 47% of students, 25% of football players, and 71% of our staff are female.



SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation - ISF students have access to clean water, toilet facilities, and free soap as well as health and hygiene education at ISF.



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth - 68 students and 27 parents have been supported in finding meaningful employment and training opportunities.



SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities - 3,000 people living in extreme poverty are provided with the chance to change their lives for the better and 3,000 football players, including children with disabilities and HIV, are provided the opportunity to play football in a safe and fun environment.



SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns - ISF's recently adopted Environment Policy is committed to reducing our plastic and waste consumption including no single-use plastic at ISF's education centres, Sports Ground, and events.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals - We partner with over 100 like-minded organisations, schools, and community groups to promote quality education, community development, and sport for social impact in Cambodia.

EDUCATION

All students at ISF come from Phnom Penh's poor, urban settlements. When they join our Catch-Up Programme they will have likely never attended school or received healthcare before. The aim of our programme is to give each student the foundation of a quality education, improve their health and nutrition, build their confidence, and give them the opportunity to build a brighter future.

Through our Education Programme, we offer ongoing holistic support to students to help reduce barriers to education. All students receive healthcare, two school meals six days per week, monthly food parcels for their families, school fees, uniforms, and other materials. Additionally, students benefit from English classes, computer classes, extra-curricular activities such as sport and dance, vocational training, and employment support.



214

Students catching up on missed education at ISF



432

Students completing state school education



49

Students receiving ongoing employment support



13

Students supported in tertiary education

COVID-19 THREATENING OUR STUDENTS FUTURE

With businesses and factories closed, tourism halted, and informal work sparse, the impact of COVID-19 has forced many ISF families further into poverty. In fact, 90% lost over half of their earnings in the early stages of the pandemic, with a third losing all sources of income. Schools were also forced to shut down across Cambodia. For our students, this not only served as yet another disruption to their education but put increasing pressure on them to find work to support their families who are struggling to make ends meet.

Fears of the virus spreading in Phnom Penh, combined with few job opportunities and school closures, resulted in many uprooting their families to the provinces to stay with relatives. Our students found themselves hundreds of miles from home, often lacking the resources needed to access ISF's introduced remote learning initiatives.



We know that when a child stops going to school it becomes increasingly harder for them to re-integrate. Increased financial burdens and these relocations has sadly resulted in 16 students dropping out of our Education Programme over the year. On average, 30 students were also regularly inactive from learning.

ISF responded immediately to the outbreak of COVID-19 with a range of holistic support focused on our students and their family's health and education. Through remote learning initiatives, increased social work support, hygiene education and promotion, and additional assistance, we wanted to make sure no one was forced to miss out on school as a result of the pandemic.

After many months of adaption and remote learning, ISF was delighted when we reopened our learning centres in November. However, small infection spikes within the local community forced us to close again before the end of the year. Both students and teachers have found it difficult to change between remote and in-person learning. However, we are committed to reaching those most affected by COVID-19 so their progress is not undone, and will continue to adapt our support to meet the current situation with minimal disruptions for our students.

Although we have worked tirelessly to safely adapt our Education Programme in the ever-changing situation, unfortunately some of our activities were suspended throughout 2020. We are looking forward to resuming ICT classes; extra-curricular activities including physical education and field trips; and life skills training in 2021.



CATCH-UP PROGRAMME

Our Catch-Up Programme uses an accelerated learning curriculum so students who have missed out on education, or have been forced to drop out, can reach the right grade for their age and enter the public education system. With schools closed since mid-March, ISF worked hard to mitigate the short- and long-term impacts of COVID-19 so it did not further disrupt the learning of the 214 students in our Catch-Up Programme.

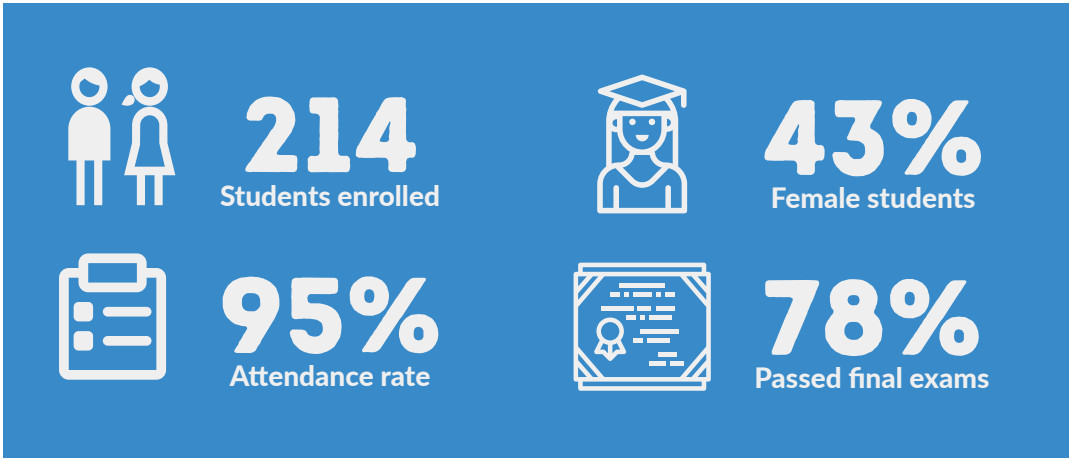


While schools remained closed, lessons and take-home assignments have been developed for students to collect and complete at home. Although students are normally taught two years of the Khmer curriculum in one year, with many disruptions to their education and challenges faced at home, students have just been focusing on one grade this year.

Despite continuous disturbances to their learning, over 95% of catch-up students continue to regularly engage with their studies and 78% progressed to the next grade. We are delighted that this includes 80 students who graduated from our Catch-Up Programme to begin state school, where we will continue to support them.

Our teams worked tirelessly to prepare for the long-awaited school reopening. When students returned to ISF Learning Centres in Stung Meanchey and Chbar Ampov all the necessary requirements were in place to follow the Ministry’s guidelines and keep students and staff safe. These measures include:

- Daily health checks for all visitors on site
- Mandatory face coverings
- One-way systems throughout the school
- Physical distancing procedures and protective screens in classrooms
- Reduced class sizes with students attending lessons in morning and afternoon shifts.





BOPHA ISN'T GIVING HER STUDIES A BREAK DURING COVID-19

From the comfort of her home, Bopha* is delving into a variety of subjects. Bopha's studies Khmer, Math, Physics, and Chemistry, just to name a few, and attends an extra class for Math on the messaging app Telegram provided by ISF. Bopha also expands her English skills with video lectures from devoted English teachers posted to the ISF English Programme Facebook Group.



Online learning is effective but also challenging because I don't have constant contact with my teachers.

Since internet access is cost prohibitive for most students, ISF provides needy students like Bopha with four dollars a month for mobile internet service. This subsidy is vital in making sure that she can attend her online classes regularly. Now that she has steady internet access, Bopha attends our classes along with searching for other lessons relevant to subjects she is enrolled in.

While Bopha found online learning unfamiliar at first, adapting to it has given her new expertise. Distance learning can be frustrating and time-consuming for young students like her, but ISF social workers are always on hand to encourage them. Bopha thanks ISF for helping her to keep studying during the COVID-19 crisis.

**Names of those under 18 have been changed to protect their privacy.*

STATE SCHOOL SUPPORT

When a student successfully catches up to the right grade for their age, ISF supports them to integrate into a government run state school. While studying, they receive ongoing support from ISF including uniforms, school books and materials, extra classes, healthcare, school meals, and monthly food parcels for the family.



Photo: © Thomas Cristofolletti / Ruom for UNICEF

We have provided continued online support to 432 state school students despite school closures. To make sure they can access these resources, ISF has loaned tablets to students alongside an average of 255 data top-ups a month for those who do not have internet access. For students in primary school, take-home lessons are also available.

Despite the challenges they have faced this year, 98% of state school students successfully passed their exams to move to the next grade. Furthermore, all 17 grade 12 students graduated from high school and 65 out of 67 ISF grade 9 students graduated from lower-secondary school – Cambodia's target for children's basic education of nine years' worth of schooling.

ENGLISH CLASSES

English is an essential skill in Cambodia's rapidly developing job market and a prerequisite for university. To ensure our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to pursue higher education and employment, we provide English classes to nearly 500 catch-up and state school students.

Working in close partnership with the **English Schools Foundation** (ESF), lessons are taught exclusively in English and the use of a variety of aids, activities, and technology provides a fun and engaging learning environment. Students can read, sing songs, and play challenging and creative games in class.

This creative way of learning has been adapted virtually during school closures so students can continue developing these crucial skills. 214 catch-up students have been provided with take-home assignments and videos that their teachers have prepared while 278 state school students have been attending lessons via Zoom.

Students in English classes have also had the opportunity to participate in an online engagement project with students from Tembusu College in Singapore. Students from Singapore worked with our students for one hour a week, teaching grammar and vocabulary to help improve their abilities.

HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORT

13 ISF students who completed their high school education are currently in higher education, pursuing bachelor's degrees or associate degrees. ISF provides them with tuition fees, educational materials and uniforms, a laptop at the beginning of their course, a bicycle and helmet if required, administration costs, and monthly family food parcels. Alongside this, they continue to receive support from ISF's dedicated Employment Team who provide them with career counselling, emotional support, and guidance.

The majority of students currently enrolled in higher education also work part-time to support their income. COVID-19 resulted in some students losing their jobs but the Employment Team provided support in finding suitable alternatives. Furthermore, the team have remained in constant contact and provided data plan subsidies wherever necessary to help our university students study online.

We are delighted that a further 17 students who graduated from grade 12 in November have decided to continue on to university. ISF will continue to support them on their journey through tertiary education.

SONA IS DETERMINED TO GET HER UNI DEGREE



ISF prides itself in being there for our students through good times and bad. We make sure they have the support they need when life gets rough and celebrate with them when successes come. As was the case with Sona, who continues to work hard towards a bright future despite hardships.

Sona has been studying with ISF since age six. After graduating from our Catch-Up Programme, she integrated into state school. With hard work and determination, she reached grade 12 but, unfortunately, was unable to pass the final exam. Though she was devastated by the result, she did not give up.

With support from our Employment Team, Sona is working towards her Associate's Degree in Tourism at university. To help support herself and her family, she took a job at a cafe where she was recently promoted to a senior barista.

Before she began studying at ISF, Sona reports never believing she could ever go to school. But now, while she navigates the tricky landscape of study and work, she holds fast to hope. Sona believes that once she completes her degree, she will find a well-paid job to fund even further education.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

In Cambodia, many young people are left ill-equipped with the skills, experience, or qualifications needed to access the limited employment opportunities available. As a result, they often end up in low-skilled, informal jobs, trapping them in an endless cycle of poverty.

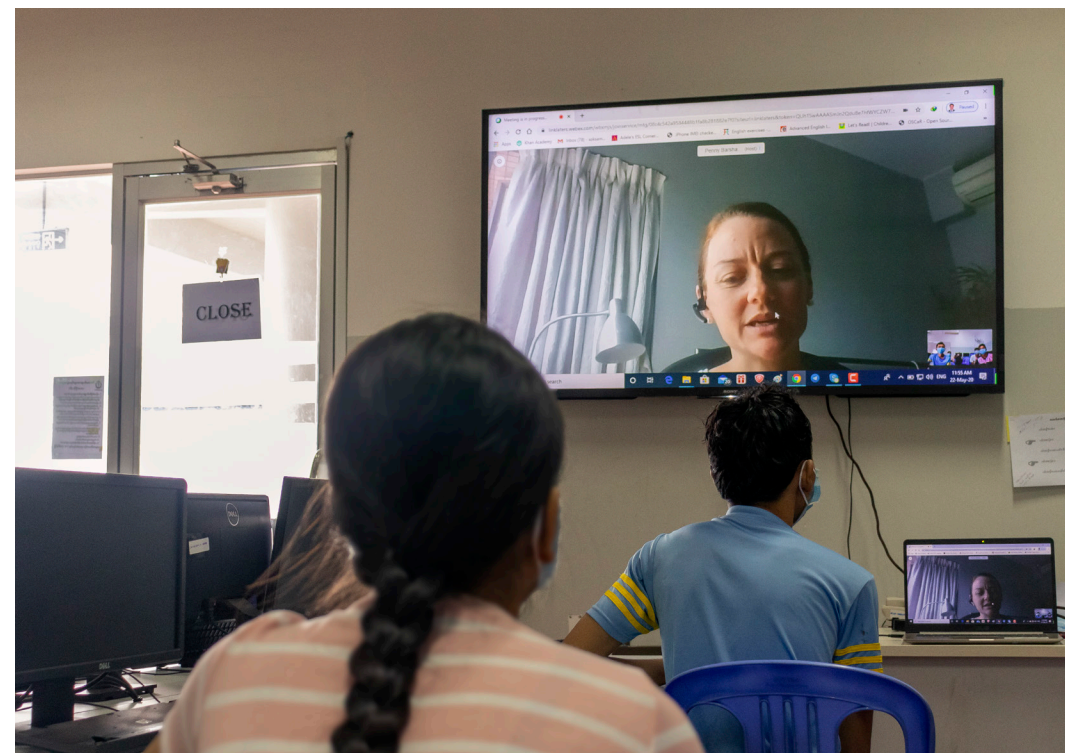
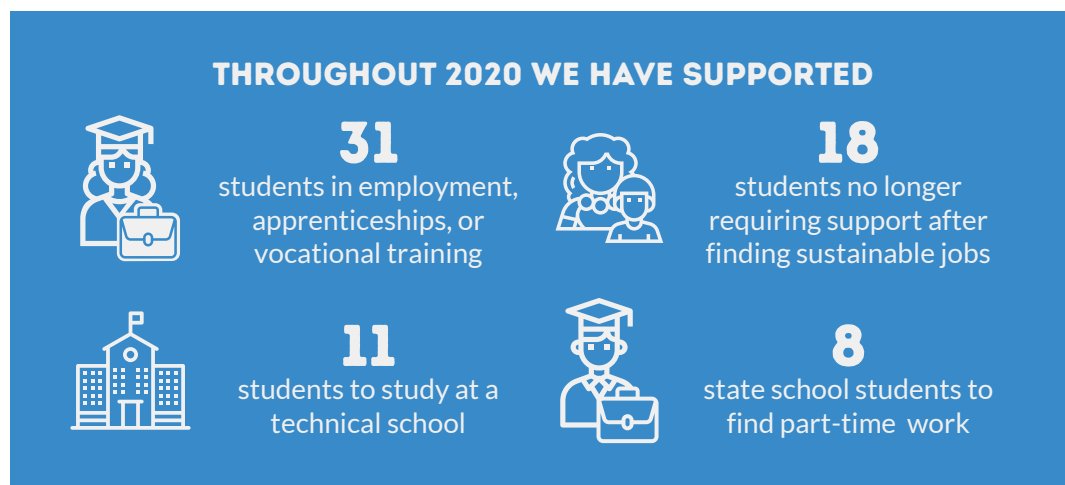
Our Employment Support worked with 68 students aged 15-20 throughout 2020, 56% of whom are female, to pursue specific career routes and attain stable and enjoyable forms of employment through skills training, careers counselling, and work experience. We also partner with over 50 organisations, social enterprises, and companies to partner our students with suitable apprenticeships and training courses that better prepare them for their future careers.

Despite widespread job losses in 2020 due to the economic impact of the pandemic, our team worked hard to maintain close contact with each individual and pair them with available opportunities wherever possible. As a result, 18 of our students found sustainable forms of employment this year and no longer require our support.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING

ISF's research undertaken with employers in Cambodia indicated that many of the young applicants they encounter are equipped with academic qualifications yet lack essential qualities or soft skills, such as leadership, communication, and problem-solving. To address this employability gap, we deliver an Employability Skills Course.

Students can attend training sessions led by representatives from national and international organisations, such as the National Employment Agency (NEA) and students from Tembesu College, Singapore, which are designed to better prepare our students for working life. To ensure the safety of our students during this challenging year, training sessions on subjects such as proposal writing, time management, and team-building, were held online or in-person whilst abiding by social distancing guidelines.



We have also continued to deliver our Youth Role Model Project that gives ISF students the chance to develop essential soft skills by delivering our football for social impact curriculum to students in our Catch-Up Programme. Designed by our Football Team, it uses football-based games to teach players about social issues.

Unfortunately, school closures prevented the delivery of many of these sessions. However, during the months that our education centres were open, our 24 Youth Role Models were able to exercise and improve their skills in areas such as leadership, time-management, and communication, whilst teaching younger children about important topics such as addiction and gambling.

Linklaters

With the support of international law firm **Linklaters**, our students were able to receive crucial support and guidance during what has been an especially challenging year for them. Linklaters staff have continued to extend their expertise and support in 2020 by providing online careers talks to our eager students. During these talks, staff members gave valuable advice to our students regarding which career paths to choose and how to succeed in a working environment. Linklaters staff also continued to provide one-to-one mentorship to 13 of our students. This partnership enables students to discuss and receive useful advice surrounding potential career paths, university, and current challenges with their studies.



SREY DY

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE IN LINKLATERS CAREER WORKSHOPS

Following in her two brother's footsteps—one of whom became an ISF coach—Srey Dy is on the road to completing her education with support from ISF. Starting in our Catch-Up Programme ten years ago, Srey Dy successfully completed the accelerated learning programme and currently studies at a local high school. Though she is no longer a full-time student with us, she still has access to our facilities such as English classes, computer rooms, workshops and support in the form of school supplies and nutritional support. Now in grade 12, Srey Dy is preparing to graduate and eagerly anticipating university life. But one thing was bothering her. She had no idea what she wanted to major in.

So, when she heard about a career talk for high school seniors arranged by ISF's Employment Team with Linklaters in Hong Kong, she signed up immediately. In the workshop, Linklaters staff encouraged students to choose a major that appeals to them, and more importantly, matches their talents. To give the youth some ideas, Linklaters representatives presented a host of different majors and the jobs that could be had from studying them. The presentation helped Srey Dy get to know what options were available to her and inspired her to discover what her own dreams were.

After some self-exploration, she discovered she had a strong interest in interacting with different cultures and wanted to be able to practice English in her future job. So she is settled on studying Tourism and Hospitality after graduating high school. Srey Dy credits the session with Linklaters staff as integral in helping her make informed choices when planning her higher education. She reports never having come across a class that sparked her desire for self-discovery like the workshop did. Now Srey Dy sees herself becoming a successful hotel manager in Cambodia once she graduates university.



photo: Todd Brown



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

ISF knows that only happy and healthy children are able to learn effectively. Now more than ever, this vital part of our holistic Education Programme supports the health and well-being of all our students and provides the necessary services to improve their physical and mental health.

ISF NURSES

We continued to provide healthcare and support throughout school closures and in 2020 there were 2,772 visits to our nurses' office. The majority of these visits were for minor illnesses such as the flu, simple wounds, headaches, fevers, and diarrhoea.

VACCINATIONS

Our nurses administer vaccinations against 10 illnesses to all new children in our programme. For students new to ISF in 2020, the pandemic has impacted on our ability to provide this healthcare and so far, they have only received rabies, diphtheria pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus, polio, measles rubella vaccinations. Remaining vaccines will be administered in 2021.

EAR, DENTAL AND EYE CARE

Free dental, ear and eye care were provided to 455 students in partnership with other local organisations. With the outbreak of COVID-19, clinics have been suspended but students could still be referred in emergency situations.

HEALTH EDUCATION

We provided a number of virtually and face-to-face health education sessions to students over the past 12 months. Topics include:

- Sexual & Reproductive Health
- Good Touch, Bad Touch
- Internet Safety & Online Abuse
- Hygiene and Sanitation
- COVID-19 prevention
- Dengue Fever

NUTRITION

At ISF, we provide our students with two nutritious meals a day, six days a week to help keep children healthy, more active, and focused in class. Families also receive monthly food parcels to help improve nutrition at

home and compensate for any loss of income with the child being at school. Throughout 2020, we distributed 7,404 food parcels.

The ongoing economic impact of COVID-19 has significantly increased the risk of child hunger. To combat the threat of malnutrition, ISF has provided students in extreme hardship with additional food resources during school closures to compensate for the school meals they normally receive at ISF. 1,209 additional food parcels were also distributed to ISF families to help with loss of income.



617

Food parcels per month



TWO

School meals per day

EACH FOOD PARCEL CONTAINS:



20KG
Rice



1KG
Sugar



250ML
Cooking oil



1KG
Salt



250ML
Fish sauce



250ML
Soy sauce

FOOTBALL

ISF's award-winning Football Programme plays a key role in providing grassroots footballing opportunities to some of Cambodia's most marginalised children. We believe that all children, no matter how disadvantaged, should have the opportunity to enjoy themselves by participating in organised sport.

Working with over 70 organisations and schools, as well as the Football Federation of Cambodia (FFC) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC), our comprehensive football for development initiative includes annual youth leagues, tournaments, festivals, skills and social impact training, and coach development.

Our renowned Football Programme started out with 50 players in Phnom Penh in 2007. Today, the programme engages 3,000 children and young people of all abilities from 12 of Cambodia's 25 provinces. We are proud to be a pioneer in increasing inclusion for girls and players with disabilities and HIV, and seek to use football as a platform to promote equality and social integration.

PARTICIPANT NUMBERS



3,000

Participants



254

Disabled players



774

Female players



59

HIV-positive players

photo: Daniel Harrington

TACKLING THE PANDEMIC

ISF's Football Programme has had its fair share of challenges imposed through the outbreak of COVID-19. With organised sport banned, partner schools closed, and long-distance travel discouraged, our programme was suspended in March.

Restrictions have also resulted in our Sports Ground and initiatives ceasing to exist as safe spaces that serve to improve their health and wellbeing. Many children – both those involved in our programme and throughout local communities – resorted to playing football on the streets, ignoring restrictions in place, and increasing their susceptibility to the spread of the virus.



Like ISF, all 70 associate groups, organisations, and schools were forced to stop activities, with over 3,000 participants being directly impacted. Sadly, some of these partner organisations have permanently closed as a result of the pressures brought on by COVID-19.

Alongside the ongoing impact of the pandemic, Cambodia experienced extreme levels of flooding in late October. ISF's Sports Ground suffered extensive damage and is currently unusable. We are working with our Insurance Company to organise repairs and we hope for it to be back in use as soon as possible.

ISF is committed to protecting the mental and physical health of the vulnerable youths in our Football Programme. We have worked tirelessly to overcome these challenges, and adapt our policies, practices, and curriculum to continue providing our activities. Unfortunately, COVID-19 restrictions forced the cancellation of three of ISF's annual events resulting in 500 less football players being reached throughout the year. Our Football Festival, Community League, and Deaf Tournament will be resumed in 2021.

ISF TAKES THE PITCH ONLINE

Though our Football Programme was put on hiatus, ISF coaches were still dedicated to their players. They took advantage of technology to creatively keep players engaged. To make sure these vulnerable children kept active and stayed positive, our coaches shared football techniques and exercise plans through a dedicated Facebook Group and in online sessions. The response was very encouraging, with many players sending us back videos of their training sessions.

Our football team also used their time to upgrade their skill set, undertaking additional training in topics such as refereeing, working with players with disabilities, computer skills and English-speaking courses.



Photo: © Thomas Cristofolletti / Ruom for UNICEF

CREATING A WORLD FIRST - SOCIAL DISTANCE FOOTBALL

Our coaches also set themselves a challenge to create a new way to play football in response to seeing young people playing on the streets every day, not following any COVID-19 prevention guidelines. After putting their creative minds together, the team came up with the ingenious idea of Social Distance Football. Now trialled with multiple groups of players in our programme, the game follows similar rules as normal football whilst enforcing zones to prevent physical contact or closeness. When organisations and media outlets from across the world began reporting on our innovative response to the pandemic, it was proof of the power of creativity and positivity in the face of adversity.

WEEKLY FOOTBALL COACHING

ISF coaches provides weekly technical training to almost 1,200 girls and boys, including 289 players with disabilities and living with HIV in and around Phnom Penh. Our sessions provide a safe space for children to escape from their difficult lives, have fun, develop essential life and soft-skills, and improve their health.

In monthly sessions, players receive bespoke football for social impact lessons, developed in partnership with Coaches Across Continents (CAC). These lessons engage them with important local and global issues such as gender equality, disability inclusion, and addiction. Coaches also use football-based activities to teach players soft skills such as leadership, problem-solving, and communication, that will help them to succeed in later life.

Through our football-for-good activities, we seek to improve physical and mental health whilst advocating for an inclusive and equal society in the future. When face-to-face training sessions were suspended, our coaches continued to encourage the health and well-being of players by launching online coaching and workout videos under our Workout At Home Campaign.

EVENTS

AIA-ISF YOUTH LEAGUE

ISF collaborates with AIA Cambodia to offer underprivileged boys and girls the rare opportunity to play football in a safe environment with the ultimate aim of helping them live healthier, longer, and better lives. In 2020, 1,550 players took part in weekly league's matches. Spanning across seven divisions and four age brackets – 18, 16, 14, and 10 years old - it is the largest grassroots football programme in Cambodia.

IAN THOMPSON MEMORIAL - ISF BOYS' TOURNAMENT

In February, over 500 players travelled to ISF Sports Ground in Phnom Penh to

compete in the 13th annual ISF Boys' Tournament, run in partnership with the Ian Thompson Memorial. Due to such high demand, the tournament included under 16s for the first time, as well as under 10s and under 14s.

GOLDMAN SACHS GIVES - ISF GIRLS' TOURNAMENT

420 young female players from nine provinces across Cambodia assembled at our Sports Ground in March to celebrate inclusion in sport at the 11th annual Girls' Tournament. Since 2009, the Girls' Tournament has grown from 13 to 35 teams today and now includes

under 10 girl's team alongside U14s, and U18s.

ALL ABILITIES EVENTS

To encourage inclusion in sporting activities for Cambodian people with disabilities who lack access to sports, ISF organises football games and small tournaments for players who are wheelchair users, visually impaired, hearing impaired, intellectually-challenged, or HIV-positive. Our team were overjoyed to finally host 92 players in September to compete in a special All Abilities event - with all the necessary measures in place to keep players safe.



PEACE
AND
SPORT
AWARDS
2020
DIGITAL EDITION

DIGITAL CEREMONY
15 DECEMBER 2020

Football is fun, but it can be more than that too. We can use it to learn and teach about social issues, such as drug and alcohol use, domestic violence, and gender inequality. That's at the heart of what we do at ISF.

-Samedy Yin, Football Programme Manager

ISF WINS PRESTIGIOUS PEACE AND SPORT AWARD

We were delighted to be announced as the winners of the 2020 Peace and Sport Award for Sport for Development and Peace Programme of the Year. Peace and Sport is an independent organisation that works closely with the United Nations and NGOs across the world to reduce conflict and build peace through sport. The award recognises our 'Football for Change' Outreach Project, sponsored by **UEFA Foundation for Children**, where ISF coaches trained 200 aspiring coaches in rural Cambodia to provide sport and social impact lessons to young players in their areas. After the training course, we selected 20 exceptional candidates to run 480 "football-for-social-impact" coaching sessions to 500 children from deprived rural areas of Cambodia.



SARIM'S STORY:

HIS JOURNEY FROM POVERTY TO FOOTBALL GREATNESS

One of the most fulfilling things about ISF is watching our beneficiaries succeed, whether that's a student, a football player, or a staff member. In the case of Sarim – it's all three! With football matches restarting in Cambodia, Sarim is back at work as lead coach for the capital's celebrated Boeung Ket Women's Football Club. During a lull in his busy schedule, we talked to him about his incredible journey from homelessness to professional success.

"I grew up in a rural area 60 kilometres from Phnom Penh. I worked as a farmer all day. It was very hard work and I never got to play at all. By 13, I hadn't even finished first grade.

"My family were very poor, so my father went to the city to find work. One day, me and my older brother decided we would follow him. We didn't tell anyone, we just got up and left. We didn't have any money for a bus, so we just walked. It took three days.

"We knew our father was in the slums, somewhere near the old garbage dump. We looked for him during the day and slept on the streets at night. After a few days, we finally found him. Two weeks later, our mother arrived as well. She had been really worried about us.

"I had another reason for coming to the city, I wanted to get an education. After two years in Phnom Penh, I became one of the very first kids to go to ISF. Other students had better clothes and were cleaner because they had more access to water than I did. But my teacher was so nice and encouraging that she probably saved my education.

"Because of their catch up curriculum and the fact that I studied so hard, I did something I would never have dreamed possible. I actually finished high school. I was 24 years old, but I did it. I'm grateful to ISF and proud of myself for achieving that.

"Football was a bit different. I didn't start playing until I had already been studying for many years, but I found that it was my hidden talent. I started training with the ISF team very early on. As I played more, I learnt to love it even more. I also realised how much it was helping me.



I wish Cambodia had a bigger league for female players, but there's still a long way to go.

"That's why, in 2016, I decided I wanted to be a coach. I wanted to promote football to the poorest people in Cambodia. I wanted there to be equality because most football opportunities only went to wealthier families. I wanted to show poor kids like I was, that we could also play football.

"I found I was good at understanding players with different needs, and I really liked passing on my skills and encouraging people. Then, two years ago, I got the chance to be lead coach for the women's team of one of Cambodia's biggest football teams, Boeung Ket.

"It can be quite difficult managing my time as a coach for ISF and also for Boeung Ket, but I love to do it. I wish Cambodia had a bigger league for female players, but there's still a long way to go. Sometimes their parents don't want their daughters to play because they are girls. I try hard to encourage them, I tell them to find their passion in football and not focus on the challenges but on the opportunities. It motivates them. Mostly, I tell them to set targets for themselves and work hard to achieve them. If you can succeed on your own terms, that's the best success."



photos courtesy of Boeung Ket Women's Team



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

We work closely with community and village leaders to make sure our education centres do not exist in a vacuum, but serve to lift up the wider community. Our goal is to create a good foundation for the children in our programme and opportunities for their families to develop their skills to change their own lives.

photo: Daniel Harrington

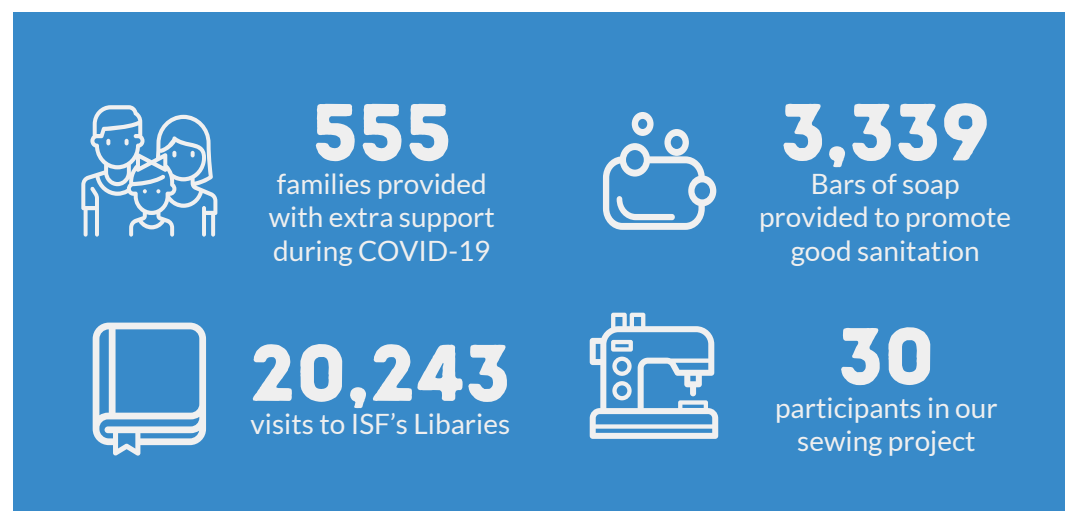
LIFE ON COVID-19's FRONTLINE

In a crisis, it is often the poor who are most vulnerable; the outbreak of COVID-19 is no exception. Severe income losses, during the pandemic means that ISF families are struggling more than ever. Many are living on less than two dollars a day. This simply is not enough to feed a whole family, let alone pay rent, school fees, or medical bills.



While our schools and football ground were closed, our team had to drastically change the way they work to continue providing support to vulnerable children and their families. In fact, given the wave of fresh unemployment, increased poverty, and worsening social problems, their jobs have been busier and more demanding than ever.

By providing additional support, we hope to lessen the negative impact on those who are most vulnerable in this crisis—the poor and marginalised.



EXTRA SUPPORT FOR THOSE MOST IN NEED

ISF introduced a range of holistic support to students' families to alleviate the negative repercussions of reduced income opportunities. Support provided will continue throughout 2021 for as long as it is needed with activities including:

- Negotiating with landlords for rental reductions or deferments for 125 families.
- Career counselling for 27 parents to help them find stable jobs, alongside employability and skills development for those un- or under- employed.
- Expansion of ISF's Sewing Project with a 60% increase in participants to provide vocational training and employment opportunities.
- Relocation assistance for those wanting to return to Phnom Penh from the provinces.
- 339 families assisted to access COVID-19 subsidy funds from the Government, ranging from \$25 to \$120 a month, and extra support provided to those ineligible to receive it.
- 20 small financial loans for families facing extreme hardship to help set up their own business.



OUR PROJECTS

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

We established community and mobile libraries to foster an appreciation for education and a habit of reading in our students, their families, and the wider community. This year, our libraries have operated with social distancing and hygiene measures in place and have been an integral part of our COVID-19 response during school closures through the distribution of take-home lessons and assignments each week for students. ISF community and mobile libraries were visited 20,243 times and 6,750 books were borrowed by community members.

SEWING CLASSES

ISF runs sewing courses for 30 students' parents and members of their families. Classes offer participants the opportunity to learn a new skill and access increased employment opportunities, such as sewing school uniforms and face masks for ISF or local schools, or selling their products at local markets. After establishing several partnerships in the local area, our trainees now have more avenues to sell their wares, and many of their handbags, t-shirts, and face masks are now being sold in local businesses. Collectively, the trainees received a total income of almost \$10,000 this year - 10% of which is channelled back into the project to support the training and development of the participants.



SOAP FOR HOPE

Through the Soap for Hope Project, we collect used soap bars from local hotels and train caregivers to put them through a recycling process to disinfect, reshape, and make new soap bars available to reuse or sell. These are then included in the monthly food parcels that ISF students and their families receive.



CHANTHY FINDS NEW LIFE THROUGH WORDS

At three years old, ISF librarian Chanthy was forced to drop out of school due to chronic illness and was working to earn money for her family from the age of five. Out of the school system, she was unable to access books and learning materials that would help her develop her reading and writing skills.



Growing up, I didn't read much and knew very little about what is going on in our society. But because of this job, I've become more interested in reading and getting to know more about my own country as well as the world.

Now, surrounded by books, the 30-year-old loves being in a job that allows her to improve her literacy skills and develop a passion for reading. Chanthy now spends her time guiding young visitors on their reading journey, including her young son.

OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY

ISF's mission is to help lift children out of poverty with a mix of education, healthcare, and access to sport. But that is not our only strategy to help create a better world. We are also committed to improving our community through environmental protection.

In January 2020, we kicked off the year by implementing a less wasteful way to deliver monthly food parcels to our students' families. Before, each family received single-use plastic bags for each item in the parcel. Now, we give them a reusable tote bag to carry their food. When families pick up their parcel from ISF, they must bring their tote for the smaller items. By switching to this approach, we prevent over 1,000 single-use plastic bags from reaching unofficial dump sites and waterways each month.



To ensure our staff and students understood the importance of responsible consumption, we held sustainability workshops covering the effects of plastic pollution on health and the environment, and encouraged them to contribute to a cleaner future.

We helped staff and students to achieve their sustainability goals by providing reusable water bottles and cloth bags, and hung signs on walls and rubbish bins to encourage students and staff to change their habits whilst they are separating waste.

We closed out the year by approving a new Plastic Reduction Policy. This means that we will work more closely with suppliers to reduce the amount of plastic they deliver supplies with. Students and staff will be forbidden from bringing single-use plastics on campus. We will also arrange rubbish bins for easier pickups by the city's garbage collectors. By implementing these new policies and building upon our successes from the previous year, ISF plans to make 2021 even more green than the last.

The tide has gone out and millions of starfish are stranded on the beach. They are slowly dying under the heat of the sun.

A little girl is walking along this beautiful sandy beach. As she walks along, she picks up a starfish and throws them back into the sea.

An old man watches her for a while, approaches her and asks "What are you doing little girl? There are millions out there dying. You cannot believe that you can make a difference".

She answers by picking up another starfish and throwing it into the sea, and says,

"I made a difference to that one"

ISF Cambodia is built on the moral of this story, adapted from The Star Thrower, by Loren Eiseley. There are millions of disadvantaged and marginalised youth across the globe. We know we can not save them all, but **we can make a difference, one child at a time.**

While we do, we are guided by these core principles:

Every child deserves a chance.

ISF believes that every child, no matter where they come from, no matter who their parents are, no matter what gender, creed or colour, deserves a chance to have a decent education and the opportunity to make their dreams come true.

We are a family.

We always aim to ensure that the children, the communities they come from, our staff, our trustees, and all our wonderful friends and supporters know that they are part of one large family. A family in which everyone can contribute in any way that is meaningful and appropriate.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR INTEREST IN
AND SUPPORT OF OUR MISSION!**



photo: Todd Brown



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