



Educational
Support to
Children of
Underserved
Populations
(ESCUP)



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Communication with Parents and Community Meetings



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Communication with Parents and Community Meetings

I. Introduction

- The Child Friendly School program should work towards enhancing communication between parents/community and teachers/school. Parents have an important role to play in the education of their children regardless of their own level of formal education. To date in Cambodia, the role of parents and the community in education has often been restricted to one of fund-raising. However, recent interventions such as the School Breakfast Program, scholarships and life skills have allowed some schools and community to move beyond such a role. This module makes some suggestions on how the role of the community and communication between parents and the school can be further enhanced.

II. Objective

- A higher degree of motivation for learning is achieved and maintained through regular communication with parents

III. Duration

- 2 hour orientation during a Thursday Technical meeting attended by members of the community and teachers

IV. Materials and Resources Required

- Large poster paper
- Markers
- Cellotape

V. Procedure

1. Improving communication between parents and teachers

- The facilitator explains to teachers that the school wants to organize activities that promote communication between teachers and parents. The facilitator engages members of the community and teachers in a discussion based around the following questions.

(a) *Why is it important that there is a good communication between parents and teachers?*

Consider the following points:

- It benefits students' learning achievements.
- It improves the relationship between parents and teachers.
- Parents understand better what is going on in school.
- Teachers understand the living circumstances of their students better.
- Etc.

(b) *How can we improve communication between parents and teachers?*

Consider the following points:

- Organize an Open House Day at school.
- Organize classroom visits for parents.
- Home visits by teachers.
- Use of 'communication books'.
- Use of 'monitoring books'.
- Etc.

- As participants might not be familiar with these points, the facilitator should explain each activity shortly.

Organize an Open House Day for parents: Two times per year the school organizes an Open House Day for parents. Parents can observe the library, resource centre and different classrooms. The school director gives some information about the school's activities during the past six months such as students' activities and purchases made by school, etc. Furthermore, students can prepare some activities for the parents like singing and playing music. The school provides some snacks and refreshments. Students can make a picture for their parents to invite them to come to the Open House Day.



Organize classroom visits for parents: At the beginning of each school year and midway through the school year, teachers should organize a classroom visit for parents. During this visit the teacher should show the different classroom features and explain about the learning activities of children such as learning books on different subjects as well as showing children's work. Parents have the opportunity to ask questions at the teacher and the teacher should talk to parents about the results of their children.

Parents at an open house day admire student work. Such opportunities emphasize the relevance of education to parents

Home visit by teacher: Teachers could visit parents of students at risk of repeating or dropping out and identify the reasons. The teacher should talk about the importance of learning and s/he should explain about school activities that could motivate parents

to send their children to school such as remediation program, life skills program and scholarship program.

Communication books: The teacher could communicate with parents through a small book on personal issues or issues related to students' home work.

Monitoring books: The teacher could communicate with parents through a small book on issues related to students' performance in the different subjects.



A teacher visits a vulnerable girl at home.

- After the discussion, the facilitator helps the participants to identify which actions they want to take in order to improve the communication between parents and teachers. The school director sets dates with the participants for the actions that have been identified.

2. Organization of a Community-School Notice Board

- The facilitator explains the simple idea of erecting a notice board on which information about school activities can be displayed for members of the community to read. The facilitator engages members of the community and teachers present in a discussion based around the following questions.

(a) Where should a notice board be erected?

Consider the following points:

- the number of people who visit the location regularly (such as the market)
- weather (the board should have some sort of shelter)

(b) Who is responsible for updating the display?

- students
- teachers
- parents
- Student Associations

(c) What sort of material should be displayed on the Board?

It is particularly important to spend some time considering this question in order to ensure that there is a regular supply of new material if interest in the Board is to be maintained. The Board should not be used for mundane announcements by the school director to the community such as holidays, meeting times, etc... Items of this type on their own are unlikely to motivate children in their learning

efforts. The facilitator should encourage participants to think about developing a link between the Board and other aspects of the CFS program with which they are already familiar. The facilitator may also introduce some new ideas based on his/her knowledge of the CFS Service Menu even if the school has not yet had experience of implementing these ideas.

Thus, the facilitator may raise the following activities as possible sources of material for the School-Community Board.

- Photographs of child friendly classrooms
- Photographs of life skill activities
- Photographs of library activity
- Information about Remediation activities
- Samples of students' work from portfolios
- Samples of creative writing (either by students, teachers, or members of the community)
- Interview conducted by children with members of the community
- Results of student project work
- Results of local research
- Samples of pen-pal communication with other schools
- Description of Market Simulation activities (written by students)
- Names of members of the Students' Association
- Plan drawn up by Students' Association
- Brief reports from the Students' Association
- Results of research related to gender issues in education
- Announcements related to disabled children activities
- Health messages (written by children)
- Supplementary learning activities in the home (publicize the names of families who have tried hard at the end of each month)
- Etc...