

CUFA Social Impact Report

Children's Financial Literacy (CFL) Program in Cambodia

Proudly supported by Teachers Mutual Bank Limited



Nine years of strategic partnership: 2016-2024
October 2024



Proudly supported by:

**TEACHERS MUTUAL
BANK LIMITED**



**Teachers
Mutual Bank**

Table of CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Unique NGO-Bank Partnership	1
The Children’s Financial Literacy (CFL) Program	1
CFL Goals	1
9 years of Impact since 2016	1
National Pilot Roll-Out	2
About Cufa	3
About Teachers Mutual Bank Limited	4
About the CFL Program	5
Holistic approach	6
Teacher training	6
National roll-out	6
Case Study: Student	7
Cross cutting social issues	8
Youth	7
Disability	8
Gender	8
Social	9
Rural Development	9
Measuring impact and project progress by Cufa	10
Reporting and accountability undertaken by Cufa	10
The importance of financial literacy for Cambodia	11
Case Study: Teacher	12
What the Bank’s investment supports	13
Teachers Mutual Bank Limited employee fundraising ..	13
Impacts in 2024	14



Executive Summary

Unique NGO-Bank Partnership

Teachers Mutual Bank Limited (TMBL) has been a long term supporter of Cufa, a financial literacy development non-government organisation (NGO). In 2016, our strategic partnership was expanded in Cambodia through a program focusing on teachers and education with measurable social impact.

The Children's Financial Literacy (CFL) Program

The CFL program, developed and run by Cufa, has been operating in Cambodia since 2008 in various provinces including Phnom Penh, Svay Rieng and Kampong Chhnang. The program aims to instill a strong understanding and positive relationship with money, seeks to equip children with essential financial skills and habits that will empower them to make informed decisions, and build a secure financial future. The CFL program is supported by DFAT through the Australian-NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and TMBL through a co-funding contribution.

CFL Goals

The program aims to increase the financial literacy of children aged 6-12 years old, to encourage critical saving habits, educate students on financial services, help children set up their savings accounts in community-owned banks, and to ensure that the impact of this education is lifelong and makes a meaningful difference to community life.

The project has specific goals for gender and disability inclusion, and takes account of cross cutting social issues. CUFA works with schools, educational authorities, Organisations for People with Disabilities (OPDs) and financial institutions to ensure successful implementation and sustainability of the program. Notably, the program reported a 20% increase this year in student savings habits. Most school directors and teachers also report noticeable improvement of their financial literacy after participating in a teacher workshop.

9 years of Impact since 2016

- **44,267** children have received financial literacy training
- **24,269** children have started saving
- **1029** teachers trained through **111** workshops
- **7,697** financial literacy lessons delivered in **127** schools
- **3,212** home visits conducted, reaching **7,485** people
- Teachers Mutual Bank Limited's support has generated a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of **\$3.3** million through its contribution of **\$380,000**.

Moreover, over this period, Teachers Mutual Bank Limited staff have donated some \$44,000 to Cufa through workplace giving, fundraising days and charity events. This includes an annual 'Cufa Mad Day', which in 2024 raised \$3,980 and has helped Cufa to supply new whiteboards, markers and other teaching supplies in several schools.

National Pilot Roll-Out

Based on our experience of implementing the CFL program, Cufa attracted major funding in 2019 from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to manage a process to integrate financial education into the Cambodian school curriculum. To this end, we worked closely with various stakeholders including the National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) and the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS). This included a pilot program for a national roll-out of CFL. Following the success of this initiative, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RCG) now plans to commence formal implementation in 2025.

The value of the program is reflected in the invitation for Cufa to work with the Royal Government of Cambodia to integrate children's financial literacy into the school curriculum. The shift to national ownership shows the program's resonance and creates a sustainable pathway to scale up local resourcing after a decade of donor investment. This outcome embodies effective development, and is a testament to the strength and synergy of the Cufa-Teachers Mutual Bank Limited partnership.



About Cufa

Cufa is an international non-government organisation (NGO), established in 1971 with a commitment to alleviate poverty across the Asia-Pacific region. Cufa's roots lie in the customer-owned banking movement where a group of dedicated Australian bankers in the credit union industry came together to support vulnerable communities in our region.

Cufa builds economic resilience in the Asia-Pacific region through a three pillar strategy helping vulnerable communities and marginalised people to:

1. **earn:** through developing stronger cooperatives;
2. **save:** through greater financial awareness; and
3. **invest:** through access to digital tools and diverse finance sources.

Cufa has experience working across 27 countries in the region including countries like the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Timor- Leste. In pursuing financial literacy and inclusion, Cufa works toward the following twin outcomes:

1. **Economic empowerment programs promote opportunities for rural growth and impact investment; and**
2. **A portfolio of dynamic and inclusive programs builds the foundations of strong local communities**

Work extends to all areas of financial development such as micro-enterprises, social enterprises, employment placement programmes, financial literacy education for both children and adults, and livelihoods programmes.

Cufa is fully accredited by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), with current offices in Cambodia and PNG. Cufa is also a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and is a signatory of its Code of Conduct. As a registered charity in Cambodia, Cufa has a Memorandum of Understanding with the respective Foreign Affairs and Education ministries of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RCG).

About Teachers Mutual Bank Limited

Teachers Mutual Bank Limited is one of the largest customer owned banks in Australia, helping almost a quarter of million Australians working in the vocations of health, education, and emergency services.

Teachers Mutual Bank Limited is B Corp Certified and focuses on helping their customers to achieve home ownership and their financial goals. Teachers Mutual Bank Limited is committed to delivering exceptional service, competitive rates, and supporting the vocations that support the wider community. Teachers Mutual Bank Limited: Banking for good, for those who do good.

Teachers Mutual Bank Limited has been a supporter of Cufa for several decades and, in 2014, conducted a review with Cufa to explore options to fund a specific project focused on teachers and education with measurable social impact. This new support for Cufa's CFL program in Cambodia began in 2016.



About the CFL Program

The CFL program, developed and run by Cufa, has been operating in Cambodia for the past decade. It is supported by DFAT through the Australian-NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) and, since 2016, Teachers Mutual Bank Limited has provided co-funding support. The CFL program aims to increase the financial literacy of children aged 6-12 years old, to encourage critical saving habits, educate students on financial services, help children set up their savings accounts in community-owned banks, and to ensure that the impact of this education is lifelong and makes a meaningful difference to community life.

Cufa not only provides training to teachers, but also conducts in-school and at-home visits to students and their parents in order to create an enabling environment. The key objective is to equip children with financial knowledge, skills to improve their financial futures and entrench positive behaviours. **To achieve this, the CFL program aims for at least 60% of participating children to save money at home or in a community saving bank.**

This year the CFL program has again exceeded this target, with 70% of children in Svay Rieng and 77% in Phnom Penh saving money. Pre and post testing also show that at least 20% more students save money after taking part in training compared to those students who don't. Cufa expects the percentage of children who save to increase as the CFL program continues and community banks improve their skills and coverage.

The project has specific goals for gender and disability inclusion, and takes account of cross cutting social issues. A good example of this is the delivery of community based financial literacy training for children living with disability and their parents. This is vital work as these children face barriers to educational inclusion and would otherwise miss out, while for the parents and carers the training provides an important opportunity to strengthen their social networks and engage with others facing similar challenges.

Financial Literacy Lessons

1. UNDERSTANDING MONEY & SAVINGS



2. UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY SAVINGS BANKS & BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER



3. SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS



4. BUDGETING



5. BORROWING AND LENDING



Holistic approach

The CFL program takes a holistic approach to enhance the knowledge of financial literacy for children affected by poverty, and how their early financial choices will impact their future. Trained field officers monitor the program and provide educational materials, including engaging interactive games to assist the children in the retention of key information.

While the CFL program primarily focuses on teaching kids aged 6 to 12, the structure ensures that all members of the community gain a deep understanding of the program's purpose, its implementation, and its impact. Field officers constantly maintain a high level of engagement with local educators and families over the course of the program. This approach allows the whole community to have a positive outcome with financial literacy increasing their awareness about the future; also, through training local educators, the CFL Program allows teachers to educate children once Cufa officers complete the program.

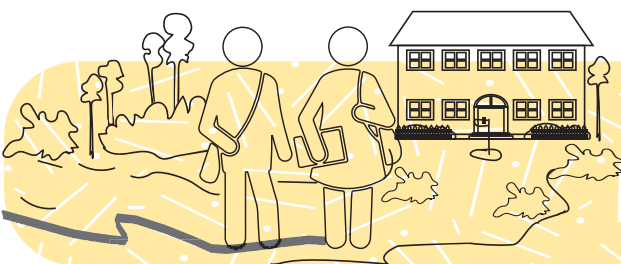
Teacher training

After the Khmer Rouge was overthrown in 1979, teachers were trained at a rapid rate, with courses lasting from a week up to a month. While this pragmatic decision quickly boosted teacher numbers it has led to a continued lack of qualified teachers, with only 693 teachers receiving pedagogical training, out of a combined 84,312 teachers nationwide. Teaching remains an undesirable job today, with teachers paid around 60% of what similarly educated professionals would receive with little career progression. Importantly, pre and post testing of teachers shows that teacher's financial literacy improves after participating in the programs teacher training workshops.

National roll-out

Cufa has been working alongside DFAT and the Cambodian Government on a national roll-out of the CFL program, based on the experiences of implementing the CFL program over the past 10 years.

The various stakeholders included the Asian Development Bank (ADB), National Bank of Cambodia (NBC) and Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS). A pilot program for financial education in the National Cambodian curriculum was launched in 2022, called: "Integrating Financial Education in Cambodian School Curriculum".



Cambodia has **7,228** primary schools and approximately **2** million students.

CASE STUDY: Student

Chanthavy

Chanthavy is an 11-year old student and like many children her age, she loves going to school to see her friends and learn about new things. Her siblings are also at school, while her mother is a garment worker, and her father looks after them in the village of Kngokpong. She started taking classes with the CFL program in 2021 and, thanks to the skills she has learned, Chanthavy has been able to make better decisions about what to do with her money.

Chanthavy was visited by Cufa's field staff recently, and she told them that before she did the CFL program, Chanthavy would save some of her money, but not consistently, and she did so without a savings goal. Chanthavy admits she was just following what her sister would do.



In 2021, I got a chance to participate in the CFL program at my school. The program has changed my saving concept, now I understand how important saving is and I save with a goal. Since learning the program, I now save my money regularly by allocating a proportion of my daily pocket money.

Since starting the CFL program she has been able to share with them the financial skills she has learned, including reading the story book for her friends. Cufa staff are delighted to see the change that CFL program has had on Chanthavy and how she has shared this with those closest to her.

Cross cutting social issues

The program aims to increase the financial literacy of children aged 6-12 years old, to encourage critical savings habits, educate students on financial services, help children set up their savings accounts in community-owned banks, and to ensure that the impact of this education is lifelong and makes a meaningful difference to community life. The project has specific goals for gender and disability inclusion, and takes account of cross cutting social issues.

Youth

Cambodian youth face a series of challenges, including unemployment, vulnerability to violence, exploitation, and access to quality education. Due to an underdeveloped education system and a lack of connection between learning and the labour market, young people often struggle to find meaningful work. Young people are more vulnerable to a wide range of physical dangers and mental health problems, with orphans and young migrants being the most at risk of exploitation and violence. Reproductive and sexual health is a major challenge for the Cambodian youth, due to a lack of both access and information. These health risks are not universal experiences, with differences based on ethnicity, gender, marital status and economic status.

Disability

In the last two years, the CFL has coached 25 children living with disabilities, as well as a teacher living with a disability who participated in the teacher's workshop. Due to the nature of their impairment, Cufa ensures these children receive the extra support needed for them to attend the program. On top of this, Cufa's officers also visit their families to encourage the CFL program and ensure their integration and full support into the program. To further help kids understand disabilities, Cufa has created a "**Gender & Disability Inclusion Toolkit**". This is a reader-friendly book using culturally relevant pictures to help children understand disabilities, and how to implement disability inclusion in the classroom, and into their lives.

Gender

Cambodia is a patriarchal society where there is significant inequality between men and women. In 2017, Cambodia's Gender Inequality Index placed it 116th out of 160 countries, behind other ASEAN countries. Exemplified by the number of girls in our program, who believe that boys should receive more education than them. Cufa believes in equal opportunities regardless of gender. Despite the inherent challenges when working in Cambodia, Cufa maintains a principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of gender; thus, Cufa encourages the CFL to have equal participation of boys and girls. In the past three years, around 12,695 girls have participated in the program, totalling 46% of all the participants.

Social

Due to the legacy of war, young people are often cautious about participating in socio-political activities. Civic and political engagements are seen as pointless, divisive, and not worth the risk. These challenges and beliefs often come from parents who have been victims of the legacy of the Khmer Rouge, and these ingrained social ideologies of improvement have become difficult to challenge. Cufa challenges these norms and tackles inequality, underdevelopment, and poverty through its CFL program. As home visits are one of the main activities offered by the CFL program, this time is used to encourage parents and members of the community to engage with the financial opportunities over the long-term. These visits encourage communities to become more approachable and engage in other social issues.

Rural Development

The majority of Cambodia's population lives in rural areas, with poor access to social services and limited infrastructure. Cufa acknowledges the need for financial inclusion and development in the most excluded regions of the country, and the CFL program targets these areas to help address this disadvantage and inequality. Teaching financial literacy will help these communities become more independent and financially capable over the long-term.



Measuring impact and project progress by Cufa

Reporting and accountability undertaken by Cufa

In 2021, Cufa calculated that every \$1 invested creates \$7.91 of social value. It is estimated that Teachers Mutual Bank Limited's support has generated a total Social Return on Investment (SROI) of more than \$3 million through its investment of \$380,000. Cufa undertakes a range of reporting and accountability, including;



REPORTS

CREATION OF MONTHLY AND QUARTERLY REPORTS ANALYSED BY PROGRAM



ROLE CALL

COLLECTION OF ATTENDANCE RATES OF EACH LESSON



RECALL

APPLICATION OF QUIZZES THAT TEST ALL KNOWLEDGE RETAINED BY CHILDREN AFTER EACH LESSON



VISITS

PROJECT MANAGERS UNDERTAKE 1-2 VISITS TO DOCUMENT PROGRESS MADE WHERE THE CFL PROGRAM IS IMPLEMENTED



COMPARE

ANALYSIS OF THE OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS OF PREVIOUS YEARS TO MONITOR AND COMPARE PROGRESS AND TO DISCUSS WHETHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES ARE BEING IMPLEMENTED AND GOALS ARE MET



SHARE

SHARING REPORTS WITH PARTNERS, LOCAL NGOS, AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO FURTHER EXPAND KNOWLEDGE AND DRIVE MORE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF FUTURE PROGRAMS

The importance of financial literacy for Cambodia

Cambodia is a lower middle income country with a national GDP of US\$31.77B and an annual GDP growth of 5.4% (World Bank 2024).

While the percentage of Cambodians living in poverty was reduced from 50.2% in 2003, to 16.5% in 2016, progress has reversed in the wake of COVID 19. With 20.5% of the working population earning less than \$2.15 PPP per day in 2023 (ADB 2024).

There are a range of ongoing challenges in terms of rural poverty, inequality, corruption, and limited human resources. Therefore, investment in areas such as education relies heavily on foreign aid. Since 1999, Cufa has been working in Cambodia pursuing the creation of financial inclusion and poverty reduction. One of the most important tools to tackle all these social and economic issues is through early education, yet the Cambodian education system still struggles to inculcate high level numeracy and literacy for all students. **Cufa believes financial literacy to be one of the four core pillars in empowering people to break the poverty cycle.**

The Children's Financial Literacy Program therefore provides children with essential knowledge such as smart savings, key investments, long-term financial planning and changing individual relationships with money.

In 2015, Cufa also integrated a financial literacy app, which engages with children using five stories to better understand savings and assist in smart spendings, as well as developing digital literacy.



CASE STUDY: Teacher

Mr Heng

Teachers are the heart and soul of the CFL program, with their connection to their students and their ability to amplify the lessons learned about financial literacy leading to an ever increasing generation of children who are able to make good financial decisions. Our field officers spoke to one such teacher, Mr Heng, a grade 3 and grade 6 teacher at Angsa'art Primary School. He says there is a noticeable difference in the spending habits of the children at the school since the CFL program started.

Mr Heng sees the difference, when children buy healthier food than before, like rice and bread, which also saves money. He has seen the children spend less money on toys, and they have money to save after the Khmer New Year, when previously they would spend it all.

Mr Heng thinks the program has been such a success, he would even like to see it expanded to high school students.

I think this project is very good because it helps students realise the value of money and think wisely before spending money. If possible, the project should be also implemented in high school.

What the Bank's investment supports

Teachers Mutual Bank Limited provides \$45,000 each year to Cufa, which funds a range of project costs.



Teachers Mutual Bank Limited employee fundraising

Over 9 years, our people have donated almost \$44,000 to Cufa through workplace giving, Teachers Mutual Bank staff have fundraising days, and charity events.

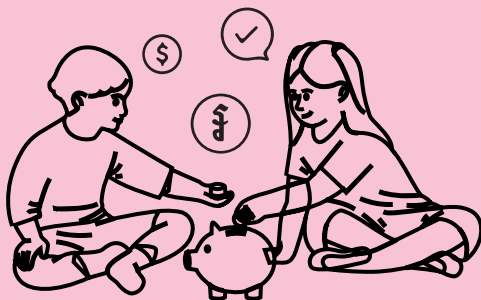
In May 2024, in support of the Cufa Mad Day, Teachers Mutual Bank Limited employees raised \$3,980. This helped to supply new whiteboards, markers, and other teaching supplies in several schools. Vital support will assist poor rural schools in provincial Cambodia.

Impacts in 2024

In 2023-24, some **959** students participated in **180** formal in-class training sessions in **5** partner primary schools. The lessons were supported by a teacher workshop with **49** participants, **41** teachers (**25** Females), **1** Vice Governor, **1** representative from the Department of Education, Youth and Sport, **1** from a partner disabled persons organisation and **3** Commune councillors, **2** study tours and saving campaigns, a community-based outreach program to **20** students living with disabilities and their parents, and **111** home visits reaching **268** students and parents. Most notably:

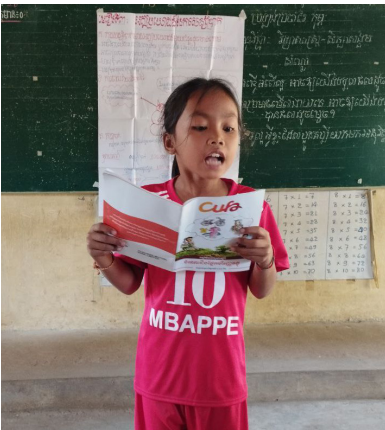


648
(**343** girls, **6** children living with a disability) or
70% of students reported saving money



135 students and
7 teachers participated in
2 study tours in partnership with Beoung So Meanchey Community Bank









SOCIAL CHANGE, SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

Proudly supported by:

**TEACHERS MUTUAL
BANK LIMITED**



@CUFAOrg



@CUFAOrg



@CUFAorg



@CUFAOrg



GPO Box 1016, Sydney, NSW 2000



+61 1300 490 467



CUFA.ORG.AU