



PROJECT Sign Language Committee

In the absence of reliable data, we can estimate that approximately 51,000 profoundly deaf and 500,000 hard-of-hearing people live in Cambodia. Fewer than 4% of them have been identified, and those who have, benefitted from no education or other services.

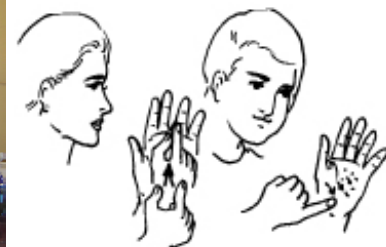
In the late 90s, given the lack of an informed sign language, Krousar Thmey decided to adapt the American Sign Language to swiftly provide education to deaf children. At the same time, the Deaf Development Program (DDP) had chosen to work at a different pace in order to establish a sign language more deeply rooted in Cambodian culture. In 2013, both organizations decided to unite with aim to institute a common sign language for the Cambodian people. Consequently, a joint Cambodian Sign Language Committee (CSLC) was formed and started documenting and creating signs. Since then, a substantial body of literature and documentation has come into being. However, much remains to be done: a more elaborate and widely available language is needed, especially for secondary school students; teachers of the deaf need to become more fluent when using signs in classrooms; interpreters have to be trained in order to enhance deaf people's opportunities to get an education, a career and become included in society.

OUTCOMES

- Develop a comprehensive and recognized Cambodian sign language, rooted in the local culture and based on the linguistic experience of deaf people living in local communities or studying in special schools operated by Krousar Thmey
- Disseminate the Cambodian Sign Language with the aim of giving as many deaf Cambodians as possible access to a rich, diverse, well-documented sign language, approved by the committee comprising experts in Sign language and daily users.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Acquire a solid understanding of sign linguistics thanks to training, coaching and exposure
- Compile signs used by students currently studying in the schools for the Deaf of Krousar Thmey as well as by deaf people in local communities from 5 different provinces
- Produce supporting learning materials such as sign language textbooks for each major area of study taught at the secondary level
- Referenced all signs used for academic and non-academic topics in online tools
- Develop a PC and tablet application called Signs Discovery as a means to both teach and disseminate sign language
- Provide sign language instruction to all hearing teachers from DDP and Krousar Thmey, as well as to families and relatives of deaf and to the general public



BENEFICIARIES

Direct beneficiaries: 15 members of CSLC; 75 teachers of the deaf; about 150 deaf students in Krousar Thmey schools from grade 7 to 12; around 750 sign language trainees (including 150 parents and relatives of deaf students), and 20 interpreters. Indirect beneficiaries: the deaf community and general audience through online documentation set to reach the greatest number.

SUSTAINABILITY

In 2011, all teachers from Krousar Thmey, including CSLC members, became civil servants and consequently began receiving their salary directly from the MoEYS. Then in 2014, it was the CSLC itself which started to be funded by the MoEYS. From that point on, no more financial costs were to be supported by Krousar Thmey which was solely left with the management of the committee, in coordination with DDP. In this coming cycle, based on successful experience and good practice, we are confident that we will be able to also include CSLC members coming from DDP into the Ministry's payroll. By the end of this project, we will have established a fully trained committee with renewed activities, financially supported by the Ministry and able to pursue its work on sign linguistics for generations to come.

BUDGET

Contribution from/for	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Donor	91 784	89 601	79 288	260 673
Ministry of Education	15 976	24 577	35 309	75 862
Krousar Thmey	16 374	16 374	16 374	49 121
Total	124 134	130 551	130 970	385 656

