

Phare Ponleu Selpak

Sponsorship Program Policy

1. Introduction

a. Phare Ponleu Selpak

Phare Ponleu Selpak (PPS) is a not-for-profit Cambodian association that works with vulnerable children, young adults and their families through 3 fields of intervention: art training, social support and educational programs.

Phare Ponleu Selpak was created in 1994 by nine young Cambodians who returned with their French teacher to their country after spending their childhoods in the refugee camps at the Thai border. These young people wanted to help to rebuild their country after many years of conflict, and so they created an organization to support the children in their community. Many of these children were living in difficult situations, with histories of trauma, poverty and abuse. Through classes in visual and performing arts, along with social support, the organization helped to reintegrate these children into society.

The artistic training offered at PPS has been found to aid concentration, communication and creative thinking skills, vastly improving the choices available to children as they reach adulthood.

Graduates from PPS arts schools promote Cambodian art and culture through national and international performances and exhibitions. Professional opportunities are provided by PPS' sister organizations: Phare the Cambodian Circus and Phare Creative Studio. In a country where the arts industry was destroyed through years of upheaval, these initiatives promote a renewed sense of Cambodian pride and identity.

b. The Child Protection and Sponsorship Programs

The purpose of the **Child Protection Program** is to identify, assess and support students of Phare Ponleu Selpak who live in difficult conditions or who fall victims to neglect and abuse. The mission of the Program is to promote the safety and wellbeing of children through education, health support and prevention. (See *Annex 2* for more details about the Child Protection Program and responsibilities of the Social Support Department.)



The Social Support Department works towards:

- GOAL 1: Ensuring that the children have access to education by providing them with the right conditions to allow them to grow (health services and hygiene, food, school kits and case monitoring)
- GOAL 2: Strengthening the capacity of the family to protect their children by providing them with social, economic and psychological support
- GOAL 3: Collaborating with the local authorities for the implementation of better policies towards protecting children and respecting their rights
- GOAL 4: Mobilizing and enhancing community involvement
- GOAL 5: Raising awareness among all levels of society through advocacy and social mobilization

The **Sponsorship Program** is one component of the Child Protection Program and acts on GOAL 1. Under sponsorship, students are provided with food support, health and referral service, as well as a stipend for personal development. This stipend and food allocation is apportioned after needs assessment is conducted by one of PPS's social workers. (See *section 9 on distribution and spending* for more details.)



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3. Aim of the Sponsorship Program

The main objective of the Sponsorship Program is to provide financial and psychological support to children from challenging backgrounds in order to help them gain the academic and professional skills they need to project into the future and lead responsible and healthy lives.

It aims to do so by promoting human dignity and respect for children's rights. Human dignity implies respect and recognition of the value of human life, while children's rights include the right to education, access to food, access to health, fair treatment, a violence-free childhood and being heard.

4. Phare Ponleu Selpak's Approach to Sponsorship

Phare Ponleu Selpak's Sponsorship Program operates on the basis of collective sponsorship. As such, donations from individual or corporate sponsors go directly to the program fund and are then shared between all of the children in the program. Allocation of such funds is managed and decided by the Sponsorship Committee (see *section 5 on the Sponsorship Committee* for more details).

5. Governance

a. The Sponsorship Program Officer

Under supervision from the Social Support Manager, a member of Phare Ponleu Selpak's social support team, named the Sponsorship Program Officer, oversees the day-to-day running of the Sponsorship Program. This person is in charge of conducting assessments and monitoring the situation of the sponsees. The Sponsorship Program Officer reports to the Sponsorship Committee for decisional matters (see *below*).

b. The Sponsorship Committee

Phare Ponleu Selpak's Sponsorship Committee is the main body in charge of overseeing and making key decisions concerning the Child Protection Program. It embodies the various departments of PPS and as such comprise of 9 members:

- The Executive Director
- A representative from the Program Department
- A representative from the Development Department
- A representative from the Social Support Department
- A representative from the Finance Department
- A representative from the Visual and Applied Arts School
- A representative from the Performing Arts School



- A representative from the Education Department
- A member of the Founders' Advisory Committee

Members of the Sponsorship Committee gather on a quarterly basis to select sponsees, handle disciplinary procedures, terminate sponsorship and supervise general administration matters. The Sponsorship Committee can also convene for extraordinary meetings at any time outside of the scheduled sessions in case of exceptional circumstances. In case one of the members cannot be present for those meetings, he or she can delegate voting authority to another Sponsorship Committee member.

The Sponsorship Program Officer is responsible for organizing all of the Committee meetings, whether regular or extraordinary. The agenda for each meeting is to be sent in one week prior to the meeting taking place.

6. Selecting sponsees

The selection process to accept new sponsees into the Program is as follows:

- STEP 1: SUGGESTION- A member of Phare Ponleu Selpak's staff team or of the local community contacts the Social Support Department in order to make a suggestion about a student joining the Program.
- STEP 2: RECOMMENDATION- Based on their assessment of the situation, the Social Support Department suggests a new sponsee to the Sponsorship Committee.
- STEP 3: PRESENTATION- The Sponsorship Committee gets together to decide on the selection and the representative from the Social Support Department presents the case to members present.
- STEP 4: VALIDATION- The Sponsorship Committee decides to validate or infirm the selection of the new sponsee.

After confirmation from the Sponsorship Committee, the sponsee begins receiving sponsorship from the month which follows the decision. Additionally, once selected, the sponsee receives sponsorship for a minimum of one year.

The Sponsorship Committee validates the selection of sponsees in accordance with the criteria below (*section 7*).

7. Requirements for receiving sponsorship

Phare Ponleu Selpak operates its Sponsorship Program based on 5 main criteria for receiving sponsorship. Sponsees must fall under all of the following categories:

- The sponsee is under 18 years of age. Students over this age limit may receive a *stipend* for study upon validation from the Sponsorship Committee. Such cases must remain exceptional.
- The sponsee's family has been identified as poor by the local authorities.



- The sponsee's family lives within the targeted communes (Ochar, Toul Ta Ek and Chamkar Samroeung) of Phare Ponleu Selpak and must keep living there throughout the duration of the sponsorship. This criterion can be overlooked in special cases only. Such cases are decided solely by the Sponsorship Committee.
- The sponsee does not benefit from outside sponsorship. This is subject to assessment from the Social Support department.
- The sponsee must study at the Visual and Applied Arts School and/or the Performing Arts School, and simultaneously attend public school or Phare community kindergarten.

Phare Ponleu Selpak is also committed towards providing equal opportunities to all its students. It ensures the respect of non-discriminatory practices towards gender, ethnicity, religion, academic achievement, etc. in the selection process for sponsees.

8. Terminating sponsorship

a. Normal proceedings

Sponsorships end once the sponsee reaches 18 years of age or the sponsee's family gain the means to sustain decent living conditions. When this happens, the process for terminating sponsorship starts:

- STEP ONE- ASSESSMENT: Phare Ponleu Selpak's social workers conduct an assessment of the sponsee's family.
- STEP TWO- RECOMMENDATION: If the social workers are favorable towards terminating sponsorship, they make a recommendation to the Sponsorship Committee.
- STEP THREE- VALIDATION: Upon receiving the recommendation, the Committee gets together to validate or infirm the social workers' decision.
- STEP FOUR- INFORMATION: A letter of termination is sent to the sponsee's family.
- STEP FIVE- TERMINATION: Sponsorship ends 3 months after reception of the confirmation letter.

Additionally, sponsorship is temporarily put on hold after one month if the sponsee goes abroad to study, or leaves Battambang and Phare Ponleu Selpak for educational and internship purposes while receiving an income/stipend. The sponsee receives sponsorship again only once he or she is back in Battambang.

Despite terminating sponsorship, Phare Ponleu Selpak's social workers remain in touch with the sponsee for a period of 3 months after cessation is made effective. This follow-up process takes place only if the sponsee remains in the vicinity of Battambang.

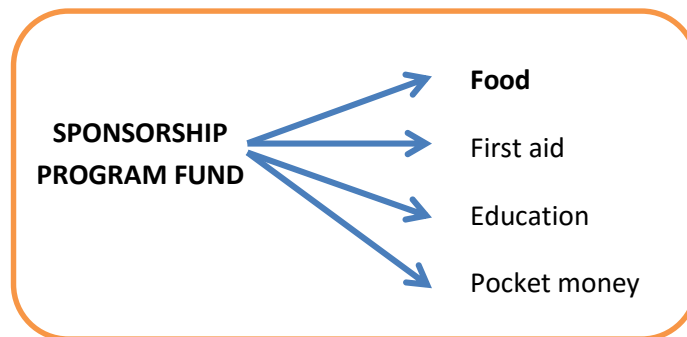
b. Disciplinary procedures



Sponsorship can also be terminated in cases of misbehavior or non-respect of the requirements for receiving sponsorship. Such cases may arise when children fail to attend and/or disengage from school according to school policy, if sponsorship money is used for purposes other than the sponsee's primary or educational needs, or when there is disrespect for the general rules of the Program. In such cases, the process for terminating sponsorship is as follows:

- STEP 1- ADVICE: The Sponsorship Program Officer speaks with and advises the sponsee.
- STEP 2- WARNING: If misbehavior continues, the Sponsorship Program Officer speaks with both the sponsee and the sponsee's family, and all parties sign a letter of acknowledgement concerning the warning.
- STEP 3- TERMINATION: In extreme cases where there are no positive changes, the Sponsorship Committee gets together to discuss the next step of action. The Committee may then decide to terminate sponsorship with immediate effect (no three-month extension). When this happens, the family and sponsee are immediately informed of the results.

9. Distribution of donations



Donations from sponsors are collected in the Sponsorship Program Fund and spent on the following:

- Food support
- Educational support and investment in learning materials
- First aid provision
- Pocket money for personal development

Ten to fifteen percent of all donations go towards the operational costs of the Program that are directly linked to children's basic needs.

Phare Ponleu Selpak distributes equal shares between the sponsees: a portion is allocated to food support, while another is allotted to a stipend for individual needs (ie. language learning, additional learning materials, electricity and rent, health support, etc.). These shares will be decided by the Sponsorship Committee.



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Phare Ponleu Selpak

Sponsees receive their sponsorship in kind or in cash on a monthly basis, with Phare Ponleu Selpak distributing the assigned monetary amount within the first week of each commencing month. Depending on the degree of financial independence, sponsorships are given directly to the sponsee or to the sponsee's family, as approved by the Sponsorship Committee.

10. Communication and privacy

a. Sponsors discontinuing support

Sponsors have the right to discontinue sponsorship at any time they wish. They must inform Phare Ponleu Selpak of their intention to stop. A confirmation e-mail is then sent to the sponsor.

b. Privacy and data protection

Phare Ponleu Selpak takes extreme care in protecting sponsors and sponsees' personal information. All data collected is kept private and confidential and is never passed onto partners without explicit consent. Data may circulate on an internal basis to the relevant Phare Ponleu Selpak staff members.

Should sponsors wish to learn more about the Program and visit campus premises, they can get in touch with Phare Ponleu Selpak.

c. Accountability and keeping in touch

Phare Ponleu Selpak is committed to providing clear and accurate information to sponsors and the outside community. As such, Phare Ponleu Selpak provides regular feedback in the form of quarterly newsletters. The newsletters are edited for Christmas, Khmer New Year and the Pchum Ben Festival. They are sent by e-mail to all sponsors and anyone who wishes to be kept informed about the Sponsorship Program.

Additional information may be sent at intervals for celebrations or special occasions.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation



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The tasks of monitoring and evaluation fall primarily to the Sponsorship Program Officer. The latter is in charge of following up on:

- Sponsees' living conditions (shelter, nutrition, health)
- Sponsees' family situation
- Sponsees' school attendance (results, behavior and motivation)
- Sponsees' emotional wellbeing (counselling)
- Sponsees' budget management.

In order to ensure both effective communication with and participatory involvement from the sponsees and their families, the Sponsorship Program Officer organizes two types of meetings:

- Bi-monthly gatherings with sponsees to monitor their overall development, and
- Semi-annual consultations with the sponsees and their relatives to build up involvement and create a space in the Program for the community's voice.

These meetings allow the Sponsorship Program Officer to review and measure the impact of the Program from the individual sponsees.

The Sponsorship Program Officer communicates all of the above findings to the Sponsorship Committee in the form of a quarterly report. However, when difficulties arise, the Sponsorship Program Officer also has the capacity to call for extraordinary Sponsorship Committee meetings.

12. Additional clauses

- **CLAUSE 1: MODIFICATION OF THE POLICY-** The Sponsorship Committee reserves the right to modify this present policy when it deems necessary. In such cases, sponsees, their families and sponsors will be kept informed of important changes before they are to be implemented.
- **CLAUSE 2: SPONSORS' ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE POLICY-** New sponsors will always be kept informed about Phare Ponleu Selpak's Sponsorship Policy prior to commencing sponsorship.



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Phare Ponleu Selpak

Drafted in Battambang by the Phare Ponleu Selpak Sponsorship Committee,

Date:

PPS Executive Director

Signature:

Program Department

Signature:

Performing Arts School

Signature:

Social Support Department

Signature:

Development Department

Signature:

Visual and Applied Arts School

Signature:

Finance Department

Signature:

Education Department

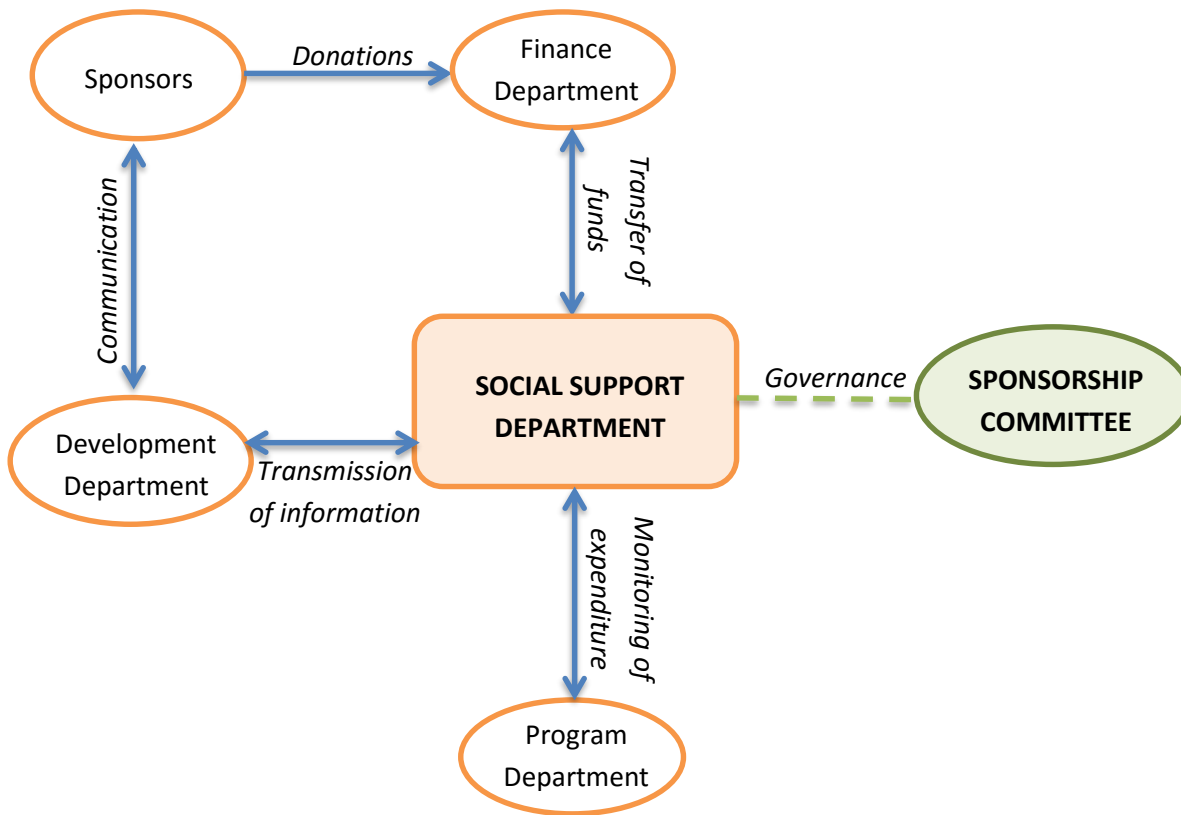
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Founders' Advisory
Committee

Signature:



Annex 1: Structure of the Sponsorship Program





Annex 2: Social Support at Phare Ponleu Selpak

Phare Ponleu Selpak's Social Services unit was established in 1998, with the aim to identify and support vulnerable children and their families. It worked alongside the Child Protection Unit, which housed trafficked children from the wider community.

When the CPU closed in 2013 after all children had been reintegrated into their local community, the two entities merged to create the Social Support Department. This new department works with 3 communes from Battambang Municipality, 6 villages in Ochar Commune, 5 villages in Toul Ta Ek Commune and 5 villages in Chamkar Samroeung Commune.

Phare Ponleu Selpak has three key concerns when addressing children's welfare: education, child protection and health. These priorities are addressed through a portfolio of programs:

Sponsorship program- The aim of the program is to improve the life prospects of most vulnerable children and young adults whilst by extension contributing to poverty reduction within the local communities.

Family Reintegration- Some of the students live in local pagodas or are in foster care. In order to provide stability in their lives, the Social Department works with the family until it is safe for the children to come back. This may take several years. Phare Ponleu Selpak is also a member of a foster care sub-committee under the Ministry of Social Affairs Veteran and Youth-rehabilitation.

Daily lunches- Healthy lunches are provided daily to over 90 students. Doing so relieves a substantial financial burden from the poorest families and contributes to keeping students in school.

Health services- Up to 400 students a year visit the medical room for minor injuries and illnesses. They are attended by one of the social workers who has been trained to provide first aid. Students with more serious illnesses or injuries are referred to the local hospital or a private clinic.

Counseling services- One of the social worker, who received training to do this, provides monthly sessions for children/young adults suffering from the psychological consequences of abuse, violence and neglect. Counselling can also be extended to families where the department is attempting reintegrating a student.

Student club- Established in 2014, the Student Club is vital to monitoring the most vulnerable students. The club consists of children and young adults who meet four times a year to help the department's social workers follow-up on their fellow students who are absent or have dropped out from school.

Awareness-raising- This action focuses on prevention, protection and intervention. Phare Ponleu Selpak is part of an NGO network of around 30 organizations which work towards training and reporting in their own communities. The network members meet 4 times a year. This network is also actively supported by local authorities, police and commune chiefs. Battambang Municipality has begun distributing a Social Protection manual in support of this and has worked together with the Social Department to conduct an extensive socio-economic survey of the local community.