

Damnok Toek Annual Report 2025



ជួយកុមារខ្សោយចំណេះ
និងគ្រួសាររបស់ពួកគេ
To assist vulnerable
children and their families.

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About Us

Damnok Toek is a Cambodian NGO specialising in disability, child protection, education, and safe migration. Damnok Toek works in various locations to ensure the most vulnerable children and their families have their basic needs met and can access their full potential. Since our founding in 1997, Damnok Toek’s scope of work has continued to adapt to the changing needs of Cambodia’s most vulnerable population. Our work focuses on providing sustainable services to vulnerable children and their families to help them build a better future for themselves. Our programmes are operational in three provinces in Cambodia and serve 5,000 beneficiaries annually.

Throughout our 28 years of operation, we have developed a reputation as a leader in disability and child protection, specifically providing services in education, safe migration, alternative care, and family reintegration. Our work relies on collaboration between multiple actors, including other NGOs, local and national authorities, community members, and specialised partner institutions. This network and our tireless staff’s dedication allow us to continue improving the lives of thousands of children, youth, and their families each year.



Our Vision

For every child and youth in Cambodia to have their rights respected and their basic needs met.

Our Mission

To provide protective services for children and youth in Cambodia, including those with disabilities, to mitigate the risk of harm or abuse.

Our Approach



Prevention

Of child abuse, child abandonment, substance abuse, and trafficking of children both internal and external to Cambodia.



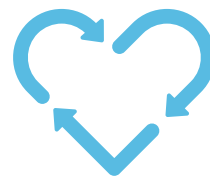
Protection

Of children who are at risk of abuse or exploitation by utilising outreach and education.



Rehabilitation

Of children and youth from trauma, substance abuse, and rehabilitation therapy for children with disabilities.



Reintegration

Of trafficked, runaway and children with disabilities into their families of origin when possible, or otherwise into their communities or villages.

Damnok Toek is committed to the following SDGs - 2030:



How We Help

Child Protection

Refers to measures and actions taken to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children. **To protect vulnerable and marginalized children, Damnok Toek has developed outreach, rehabilitation, and reintegration programmes.** Damnok Toek's educators reach out to children and their families and refer them to Damnok Toek or other organizations' programmes to ensure their safety.

Safe Migration

To prevent unsafe migration of children and their families between Cambodia and Thailand as well as human trafficking, Damnok Toek has developed **prevention programmes including capacity building, job-skills training, job placement, income generating activities and education about the dangers of unsafe migration.**

Disability

To respond to the lack of advocacy, support, and programmes for children and young adults with intellectual and/or physical disabilities in Cambodia, **Damnok Toek has developed innovative projects including adapted residential care, rehabilitation, training for people working in the field of disability, support for families as well as outreach and awareness raising in the communities.**

Education

To help children and their families access a better future, Damnok Toek has developed **non formal education classes for out of school children as well as apprenticeships for teenagers and young adults** to learn their skills from local professionals (beauty salons, barber shops, mechanic shops).



Message from the Executive Director

The year 2025 has been a very challenging time for Damnok Toek. One of our main programmes was directly affected by the border conflict between Cambodia and Thailand, requiring the evacuation of our staff and children under our care and the temporary postponement of programme activities. Throughout this period, the safety and wellbeing of children and our teams remained our highest priority.

Despite these challenges, 2025 also powerfully demonstrated the resilience, compassion, and dedication that define Damnok Toek. Together, we achieved a lot as an organization. Across our Safe Migration, Education and Child Protection programmes, we witnessed children exercising their rights to safety, care, play, and education; young people benefiting from skills training; families rebuilding stability through access to employment and income-generation opportunities; and communities stepping forward to protect their most vulnerable members.

Our Disability Programme continued to provide the “best possible care” for children and young adults with intellectual disabilities. We supported families within communities to care for their children at home and to access services at our Daycare and Therapeutic Care Centre. Where needed, families were referred to medical and specialised services and assisted in obtaining disability documentation and accessing social protection schemes. Parents and guardians were also supported to connect with one another and to share experiences, strengthening peer support networks.

In 2025, Damnok Toek placed increased emphasis on supporting young adults with intellectual disabilities to gain greater autonomy and social inclusion, including through access to life-skills development, vocational training, and jobs. These achievements are the true measure of our impact

and reflect the consistent, patient, and collaborative efforts of our dedicated staff, social workers, educators, and teachers.

In 2025, Damnok Toek also continued to strengthen beneficiary-centred approaches firmly grounded in the best interests of vulnerable children and youth. We invested in safer systems, enhanced safeguarding, and expanded opportunities that support long-term wellbeing. Central to this work was our continued commitment to listening to children and young people themselves, ensuring that their voices, choices, and rights shape the decisions that affect their lives.

None of this work would be possible without the enduring support of our donors, government counterparts, and civil society partners. The unwavering guidance and commitment of our Board of Directors has also been paramount. Your trust enables us to adapt in an ever-changing environment while remaining firmly rooted in our core values.

As we look ahead, the challenges facing the organization—particularly within a changing funding landscape—remain complex. To meet these challenges and ensure the best care possible for all our beneficiaries, Damnok Toek has undertaken a review of its programmes to develop a five-year strategic plan which will guide the organization's future. Our determination remains strong, and we enter the coming year with renewed focus and a firm belief that, together, we can ensure children and youth have safety, opportunity, and hope in their lives.

Thank you for standing with us and for your continued commitment to children and families.

With sincere appreciation,

Im Norin
Executive Director, DT

2025 Highlights

Future's Office: building economic stability for the most vulnerable

Damnok Toek's Future's Office, established to build economic stability for the most vulnerable families, became even more critical in 2025. Following the return of approximately 900,000 Cambodian migrants from Thailand due to the border conflict between Cambodia and Thailand, the Future's Office played a vital role in supporting returned migrants and families from poor and vulnerable backgrounds to access employment opportunities, income-generation activities, and vocational trainings. Some components were increased due to the closure of the border and others, such as vocational training, became more challenging due to the economic challenges in Poi Pet.

In 2025, a total of 194 parents and caregivers from vulnerable families benefited from employment opportunities, while 50 parents and caregivers received support to establish micro-business activities. In addition, 203 parents and caregivers benefited from career counselling services, and 28 young people accessed vocational training support (beauty salons, barber shops, mechanic shops). Through these interventions, the Future's Office contributed to strengthening household income, reducing economic vulnerability, and supporting families to care for their children safely.

This programme is expected to play an even more vital role in 2026 in contributing to supporting vulnerable populations in accessing job opportunities and sustainable incomes. Damnok Toek will further develop vocational training and employment pathways for young people from poor and at-risk backgrounds, supporting their transition to dignified livelihoods.



Disability Programmes: inclusion and advocacy

In 2025, Damnok Toek strengthened its long-term commitment to inclusion with the development of a Disability Strategy 2025-2030 that was adopted by the Board on 28 June 2025. The strategy reinforces Damnok Toek’s focus on improving access, protection, participation, and life outcomes for children and young adults with disabilities in Cambodia.

The overall strategy was complemented by the development of an Advocacy Strategy 2026–2028, which sets clear priorities for advocacy, including improved access to identification documents and social protection, promotion of inclusive employment, and strengthening the voice and influence of people with intellectual disabilities in society.

Building on these strategic frameworks, Damnok Toek has taken the lead, with other organizations, in developing an inclusive employment project aimed at improving employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities. Key components of the project include a survey study on inclusive employment in Cambodia, an international exposure visit to learn from successful models and good practices abroad (India), and developing a model on supporting inclusive employment for people with intellectual disabilities.

To further strengthen partnerships and programme learning, Damnok Toek’s Executive Director visited Switzerland and Spain in October 2025, engaging with centres supporting children and adults with intellectual disabilities and meeting with Damnok Toek’s long-standing donors and founders. These exchanges contributed to strengthened relationships and informed future programme development.



Disability Programme



In Cambodia, people with disabilities remain one of the most marginalised groups. They face multiple challenges such as social exclusion, inequality, and discrimination in accessing education, healthcare, employment, social protection, justice, and public transport. People with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to violence and other violations of their rights due to cultural misconceptions, limited public awareness, and the lack of inclusive services.

Damnok Toek’s innovative projects respond to these challenges and promote the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual disabilities. Today, their programmes in Neak Loeung and Kep offer a continuum of care from early childhood to adulthood, promoting autonomy, inclusion, and their full participation in the Cambodian society:

Programmes for children with intellectual disabilities in Neak Loeung

The programmes offer a holistic approach to respond to the specific needs of children with disabilities in Neak Loeung and the region:

- Outreach and Home Care programmes for the children with intellectual disabilities living in the region of Neak Loeung.
- Daycare facility offering development, therapeutic, and recreational activities: physiotherapy, sensory stimulation, occupational therapy, music, games, etc.
- Small Group Homes welcoming children (whenever possible temporarily) who cannot live with their families in a family-like environment.

As part of its Disability Strategy 2025-2030, Damnok Toek conducted a contextual evaluation in 2025 which demonstrated the importance of continuing and strengthening the programme to welcome children who cannot (temporarily) live with their families and/or communities in Small Group Homes. The main Government Centre for children with disabilities in Phnom Penh currently cares for over 200 children. Damnok Toek and the centre are considering transferring some with developmental potential to Neak Loeung, which offers better facilities and greater opportunities for skill development. This could help them to eventually be reintegrated in their families or transition to adult life at the Kep Farm or another protected environment.

49 Children attended therapeutic activities at the Day Care facility

36 Children from the Neak Loeung area and their families benefitted from the outreach and home care programmes

Programmes for young adults with intellectual disabilities in Kep

The Kep Farm opened its doors in 2016 in response to the need for a safe environment providing long-term holistic support to young adults with intellectual disabilities who currently cannot live by themselves or with their families. Located on a big farmland, residents receive care, get support, and learn to live as independently as possible. Most of them will require support throughout their life, while others, following adequate training and supervision, will eventually become semi-autonomous or even autonomous. Activities are organized to allow residents to follow a daily routine, to participate to all activities independently to the extent of their abilities, and to find meaningful occupations to participate in the community and contribute to the income of the programme.

- Residents live in three types of living environment based on their autonomy and need for support:
- The Residence delivers 24/7 care to beneficiaries who require constant support in a safe, structured environment.
 - The Semi- Independent Living Arrangement (SILA) supports young adults in building life skills through daily routines and self-advocacy training.
 - Community-based living (under the supervision of the Kep team) allow young adults to engage in part-time farm-based activities while living in the community where they gain practical and social skills.

One of the challenges of centre-based projects like Kep is that beneficiaries live disconnected from the community and the society. To facilitate exchanges between the community and its beneficiaries, Damnok Toek is planning to expand its project and create a Discovery Farm. Part of the actual farm will be open to the public on certain days and hours inviting individuals, families with children, and tourists to spend time at the farm and enjoy various offers. Activities will include caring and feeding farm animals (cows, goats, and ponies), fishing for beneficiaries and visitors, giving tours of the farm to the visitors, serving coffee and refreshments, selling tea and farm products, etc. They will offer new forms of therapies and new types of responsibilities to the residents and will create new inclusion opportunities through the opening the farm to outside visitors. In addition, the project will provide opportunities for income generating activities to support the activities of the Kep Farm (entrance fee to the farm, fishing activities, coffee stand for refreshments and product sales).



26 Young adults with intellectual disabilities live at the Kep farm

Impacting lives



Chet's story shows how with patience, routine, inclusion, and love a child's life can be enhanced one step at a time.

explained that it was her sister's dying wish for her to take care of Chet. Whenever her aunt visited Chet, her happiness was evident as she greeted her visits with joy and an open heart.

Chet moved in with her aunt in 2025 following thorough legal verification and assessments to ensure that her new home would be a secure and supportive space for her to live. Since then, her life has been blooming in small, beautiful ways. She smiles more often and even the most ordinary expressions like laughing or nodding are more frequent.

Her health care remains a concern for her aunt. Chet cannot speak or express her feelings, and she requires significant support for about 80 percent of daily activities. However, there have been encouraging improvements in her abilities, and her aunt gets support from her daughter and at times from trusted neighbours. In addition, Damnok Toek continues to play an active support role by working with the family and giving a financial support for daily living and ongoing consultations.

Looking ahead, Chet's aunt remains deeply committed but realistic about the challenges: "In 2026, I hope Chet will gain more knowledge and independence, at least 30 percent more, so she can better care for herself. Also, one day, Chet will be able to live with my daughter".

Chet*, an 11-year-old girl with autism and intellectual disability, arrived at Damnok Toek in 2021. When her mother passed away, her father, lost to dementia and with high blood pressure, could no longer care for her. After some time in a foster home, she was sent to Children in Family (CIF) and later referred to Damnok Toek, opening the door to her new life.

During her stay in the Small Group Homes, Chet's progress unfolded in small but radiant moments. She slowly gained in independence and understanding of the world around her. Smiles, which have been hard to find, started appearing whenever she understood what she was told. Her improvements were not just milestones, they were signs of growing trust, presence, and growth blooming in the quiet warmth of routine.

In 2023, a new chapter began when her aunt, who had lived with her during her mother's lifetime, finally found Chet after a long search. She immediately reached out to Damnok Toek and



Chantrea's story shows how you can become a self-confident and happy young person despite strong disabilities.

Chantrea*, 31, was referred by Hagar International to Damnok Toek in 2020 after her foster family could not take care of her any longer. She has cerebral palsy with a slight intellectual disability.

She moved to the semi-independent living arrangements in January 2023. There she learned the gestures of daily life such as cooking, tidying her room, taking care of her hygiene, etc. which today allow her to live almost independently. By June 2025, Chantrea had acquired sufficient independence to move in with 3 other beneficiaries in the Kep community near the farm (under the supervision of educators). She adapted well to her new environment and became increasingly confident in managing her daily routines.

In October 2025, Chantrea underwent knee surgery to improve her mobility. She recovered well and can now move around without support. This boosted her self-confidence, independence and willingness to engage in daily life and farm activities at the centre, as well as socially within her community housing.

Chantrea participates in household chores and helps with farm work, taking care of the chickens and growing flowers and lemongrass for tea production. She also showed interest in helping the educators support other residents. She is reliable and performs all these tasks with pride which motivated the educators to set up a part-time position for her in the tea factory. This new responsibility should strengthen her professional skills, independence and integration into the community life.

The progress made by Chantrea underscores the impact of consistent, long-term support to move towards an ever more independent and fulfilling future.

**The name has been changed in order to protect her identity.*

Safe Migration Programme



Much of Damnok Toek’s work in the fields of child protection and education occurs in Poi Pet due to its proximity to the Thai border with a focus on safe migration. Poi Pet has been a highly challenging environment for nearly 3 decades; the informal labour market and the multitude of casinos and online gambling locations mean many jobs remain unstable, fostering an environment of unsafe migration and trafficking. Many Cambodians choose to cross into Thailand in search of more lucrative job opportunities. The situation in Poi Pet has been worsened by the border conflict which resurged in 2025 resulting in the border closure in June with no reopening in sight.

Over the years Damnok Toek has developed a holistic approach including many different projects to fight against child trafficking, promote safe migration, child protection, and education. Some of these projects are described below:

Child trafficking and exploitation is both the cause and the effect of their lack of education, which remains the most effective weapon against poverty and plays a key role in preventing violence and reducing vulnerability to abuse. Education is crucial to support the children and their families: through Damnok Toek’s outreach activities, children are either directly referred and enrolled in public schools or invited to join the **Non-formal Education programme** which offer courses to help them (re)integrate into public school as soon as they have reached a sufficient level.

653

653 children followed non-formal education classes in Poi Pet and Neak Loeng

165

165 children were reintegrated to public school

194

194 beneficiaries found a job

50

50 beneficiaries opened a small business

The **Future’s Office** plays an important role in preventing at-risk migration and reinforces the success of all Damnok Toek projects in Poi Pet. It provides youths and young adults with soft skills, vocational training (in Poi Pet or other cities in collaboration with other organizations), and small loans to start an income-generating business. The economic and social stability of families is essential to prevent dangerous migration, reduce child labour, and enable children to access education and/or reintegrate into their families.

The **Drop-In Centre** plays an important role in the identification of at-risk children in the community both through activities at the centre and outreach in the communities. The centre provides children with a safe space where they can come to take a break, get a meal, participate in recreational and creative activities, prepare themselves for schooling (Non-formal Education or public school), and get psycho-social support and protection services. The teams also organize other activities including:

- Outreach activities in the communities to meet children and their families at home to conduct awareness activities with parents and caretakers and provide them with individual support based on each child's specific needs.
- A Mobile Library travels to the communities twice a month to raise awareness among children and women about children's rights, the risks linked to unsafe migrations, and the importance of getting an education.
- Peer Educators (Youth groups) are trained and supported to raise awareness among their peers in the communities and schools.
- Child Safe Agents, which include tuk tuk drivers and market sellers, are trained to identify and report/refer high-risk children for emergency supports.

222 222 children came to the DIC and benefited from its services

1'362 1'362 children attended the Mobile Library sessions

The **Child Migrant Office** provides support to children and young adults victims of unsafe migration through identification and emergency management on a case-by-case basis. It is run through the Poi Pet Transit Centre – main point of entry for Cambodian citizens deported from Thailand. To prevent children to be re-trafficked, Damnok Toek works in collaboration with Friends International and Krousar Thmey at the CMO to identify unaccompanied children and provide them with case management to either be reintegrated into their families or, if family reunification is not a viable option, to be referred to Damnok Toek's Transitional Care Facilities or to other partner NGOs.

844 844 children deported or returning from Thailand were supported by the CMO, 111 of them were reunited with their families

Impacting lives



Chhouk stands as a strong example of how resilience and determination combined with the right support can transform a young woman's life.

At just 19 years old, Chhouk* has already been through tough challenges that have forced her to grow up quickly.

Chhouk is the youngest of five siblings. Her childhood was shaped by family instability following her father's departure to start a new family and her mother's unemployment. Due to financial pressure, Chhouk had no choice but to stop her education and find work to support herself and her family. She first worked selling books and later found a job at an online casino. However, due to border-related issues, she lost her job.

Determined not to give up, Chhouk turned to Damnok Toek's Drop-In Centre (DIC) and together with her mother sought guidance from the Future's Office (FO) about learning vocational skills. With the support of the FO team, she was connected to a salon where she began hands-on training. From the start, Chhouk showed remarkable commitment. She approached every lesson with focus, discipline, and enthusiasm. In just a few months, she developed strong technical skills, impressing both her trainer and those around her. For Chhouk, learning was not just about gaining a skill. It was about rebuilding her livelihood.

With her newly acquired skills and support from the FO, Chhouk opened her own small beauty salon in her village. Today, her business is growing steadily and what once felt uncertain has now become a source of pride and independence. Chhouk expresses deep gratitude for the support she received during her most difficult time: "My family and I are very grateful to Damnok Toek and the Future's Office. They helped us when we had nothing by giving me skills, a job, and a regular income. Now I and my family have a better life."

**All names have been changed to protect the anonymity of beneficiaries*



The story of Srey Phea shows the importance of Damnok Toek's holistic approach addressing not only the children's needs but also their parent's to stabilize the family as a whole and give all its members a chance to access a better future.

Srey Phea*, 12 years old, comes from a large struggling family of eight siblings, including five girls. Srey Phea's parents worked as farmers. Their income was too low to feed the whole family and so they decided to move to Poi Pet. After resorting to begging to survive, they ended up migrating with their children to Thailand where they lived with 22 other family members. The mother had to stay home to take care of the father and grandfather, both of whom live with disabilities. The other family members sold flowers and begged in the streets to support the family and thus Srey Phea and her siblings never had the chance to go to school.

Early August 2025, Srey Phea was sent back to Cambodia. She was received at the Poi Pet Transit Centre (PTC) where Damnok Toek's Child Migration Office (CMO) conducts interviews of unaccompanied migrant children. She was identified as a victim of physical and emotional abuse by her mother and her brother who beat and scolded her for not taking care of her younger brother. She was then referred to Damnok Toek's Non-Formal Education programme.

Family reunion research permitted to reunite Srey Phea with her mother and sister. Damnok Toek's Future's Office supported them to find stable jobs as cleaner and vegetable seller. This helped reduce

the pressure to remigrate and helped create a more stable sources of income for the family. When Srey Phea and her siblings fell ill with dengue fever, the family could not afford hospital fees so Damnok Toek worked with other organizations to cover the medical expenses through government health services. Damnok Toek also helped the family apply for Social Security cards and ID Poor cards and guided the family to update their records to ensure access to local services.

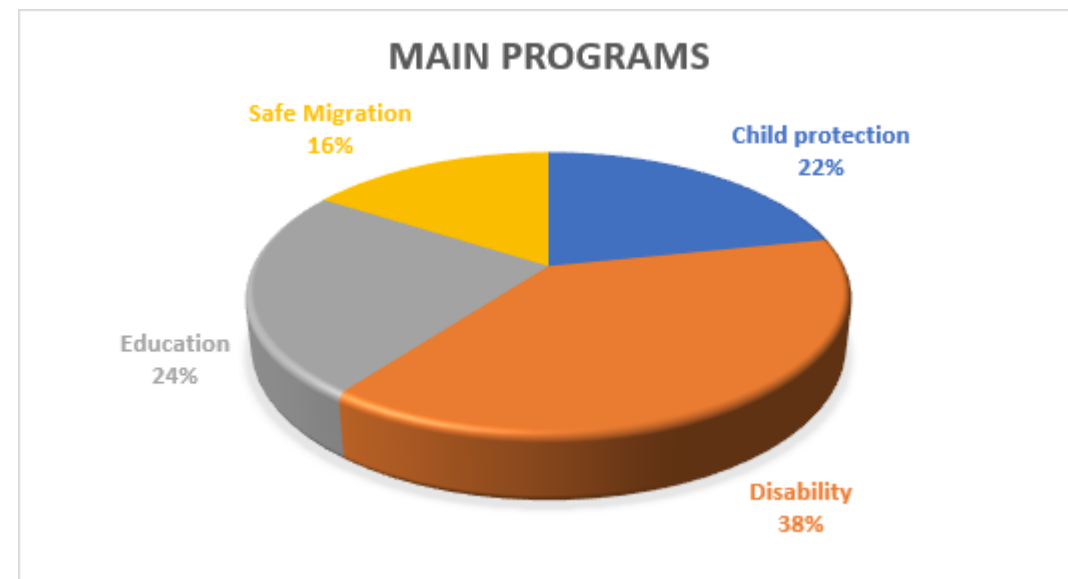
Yet, post-migration life in Cambodia remains a gradual process. Returned children like Srey Phea often face stigma, financial pressure, and the risk of being drawn back into migration. With continuous support from Damnok Toek, Srey Phea and her family are learning to manage these challenges, focusing on stability instead of survival through migration to help the family achieve economic stability and a better future.

Srey Phea has shown great determination to continue studying and has assured not to return to Thailand. She now feels more confident with herself and want to become a teacher to support her mother financially when she grows up.

**All names have been changed to protect the anonymity of beneficiaries*

Financial Report

Income	2025
Opening 2025	USD 14'028.00
Grant income for 2025	USD 872'062.20
Other income for 2025	USD 23'107.00
Total income for 2025	USD 909'197.20
Expenses	
Project costs	USD 884'646.73
Operational expenses	USD 101'522.27
Total expenses for 2025	USD 986'169.00
Balance for 2025	USD -76'971.80
Grant income in 2025 for 2026	USD 372'005.00



Special Thanks

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<https://damnoktoek.org/donate-today>

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