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UWS Covid-19 Update

April 2020



This report contains:

- An update on our response to Covid-19
- Details of our interventions and continued provision of education
- Latest photos of our work across Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal
- Other news and UWS in numbers

Our response to Coronavirus

First and foremost - our thoughts are with you, your families and everyone impacted by COVID-19.

Everyday, United World Schools commits to supporting marginalised and vulnerable communities. In these particularly challenging times, we continue to do everything we can to support and protect our staff and students.

During this uncertain time, we are actively monitoring the COVID-19 situation in all of our countries. Our priority is ensuring the health and wellbeing of our students, teachers, staff and partners around the world. Due to poor access to healthcare, our communities are particularly vulnerable. We will continue to provide necessary and safe support, following respective government advice.

In all three of the countries in which we work we have closed our schools, in line with respective government policies. We are actively exploring the best ways to ensure education can continue during this time, as it continues for so many other students around the world who also are not able to physically attend school during the outbreak.

In order to protect our staff, students and communities, partner trips to our schools have been paused across all three countries. During school closures we will continue to look after our schools, including paying all of our community teachers and support staff.

Through our community teachers and support staff we are uniquely positioned to support those that we work with. Our community teachers are being retrained to be a source of information to those around them about the virus and how they can effectively practice social distancing and hygiene practices to reduce their risk of infection.

This report, rather than containing details of your specific partner school, will update you on our current interventions and plans being put in place to protect and educate our community during this time. Specific details about your school and photos will be provided to you via email instead.

Whilst some of our UK team are on furlough during this time, I am still working virtually and on hand to discuss any questions or concerns you have. Please do bear with me if I take a little longer to respond than normal, however.

Thank you in advance for your continued kindness. It is with your support that we will be able to work through this and continue to teach the unreachable.

Best wishes,

Sara Furness
Associate Director for Partnerships

COVID-19 Initiatives

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, our teams in Myanmar, Nepal, Cambodia and the UK have been working together to support communities during this time. We are focusing on three key areas which have begun in all communities, and will continue to develop them as the situation progresses.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Without access to clean water and hand washing facilities, communities have little hope of avoiding a virus outbreak. The UWS team across Nepal, Myanmar and Cambodia have completed an audit to determine the water and hygiene facilities available in all the communities we work. This information has been used to draw up an action plan, focusing on upgrading hygiene facilities where it is most needed first, and ensuring all communities have safe access to water. This week, these water facilities will begin to open not just to the students of the school but to the entire community and surrounding area that have been fully trained in social distancing and how to use the facilities safely.



Awareness Campaign

This campaign has been focusing on promoting social distancing and handwashing, and providing reliable information about what the virus is and how it spreads, to the communities we work with. Often the way remote and marginalised communities access information is through word of mouth, so it is vital to provide reliable and effective information about COVID-19.

The campaign will also focus on keeping the children across our programmes safe and protected from harm, following our Child Protection Policy. This campaign will include information on specific child-protection risks, gender-related risks, and promoting student wellbeing. It is essential children in marginalised communities feel safe and protected as they spend more time at home during school closure. The delivery of this has been slightly different for each country depending on what they have available – In Nepal, for example, there is greater internet connectivity so we have been creating and sharing videos online, whereas in Myanmar we have relied more heavily on phone calls, photos and posters. Cambodia has been a mix of the two.

कोरोना भाइरस (COVID-19)

कोरोना भाइरसका मुख्य लक्षणहरु

- ज्वरो आउने
- खोकी लाग्ने
- सास फेर्न गाह्रो हुने

कोरोना भाइरस संक्रमित बिरामीसंगको नजिकको सम्पर्कपछि एक व्यक्तिबाट अर्को व्यक्तिमा सर्दछ । यस भाइरसको संक्रमणबाट आफुलाई र अरुलाई बचाउनका लागि ध्यान दिन पर्ने कुराहरु :

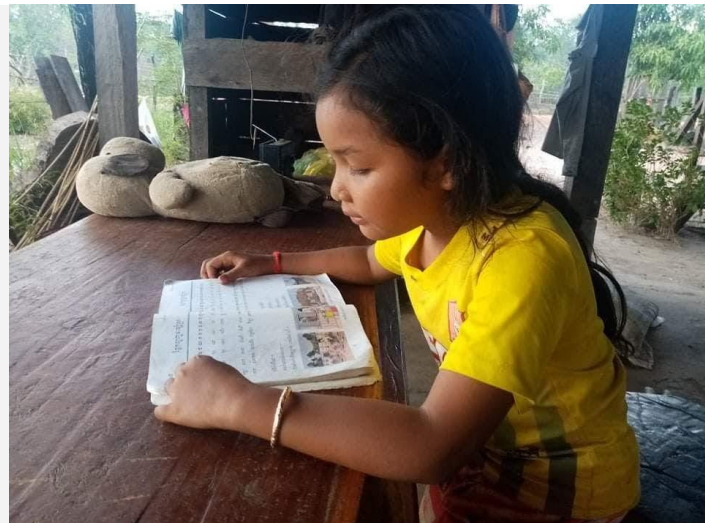
- नियमित रूपमा साबुनपानीले २० सेकेन्ड सम्म हातलाई मिचीमिची धुने ।
- अत्यावश्यक काम बाहेक भिडभाडमा नजाने ।
- खोक्दा वा हाच्छिउं गर्दा रुमाल, कपडा वा लुगा को बाउलाले मुख ढाक्ने ।
- ज्वरो वा खोकी लागेको व्यक्तिबाट टाढा बस्ने ।
- ६० वर्ष भन्दा बढी उमेरका र अन्य रोग भएका व्यक्तिहरूमा कोरोना सर्ने सम्भावना भएकोले यस्ता व्यक्तिहरूको विशेष ध्यान राख्ने ।
- उल्लेखित लक्षणहरु देखिएमा नजिकको अस्पताल वा स्वास्थ्य चौकीमा सम्पर्क गर्ने ।

श्रोत: WHO

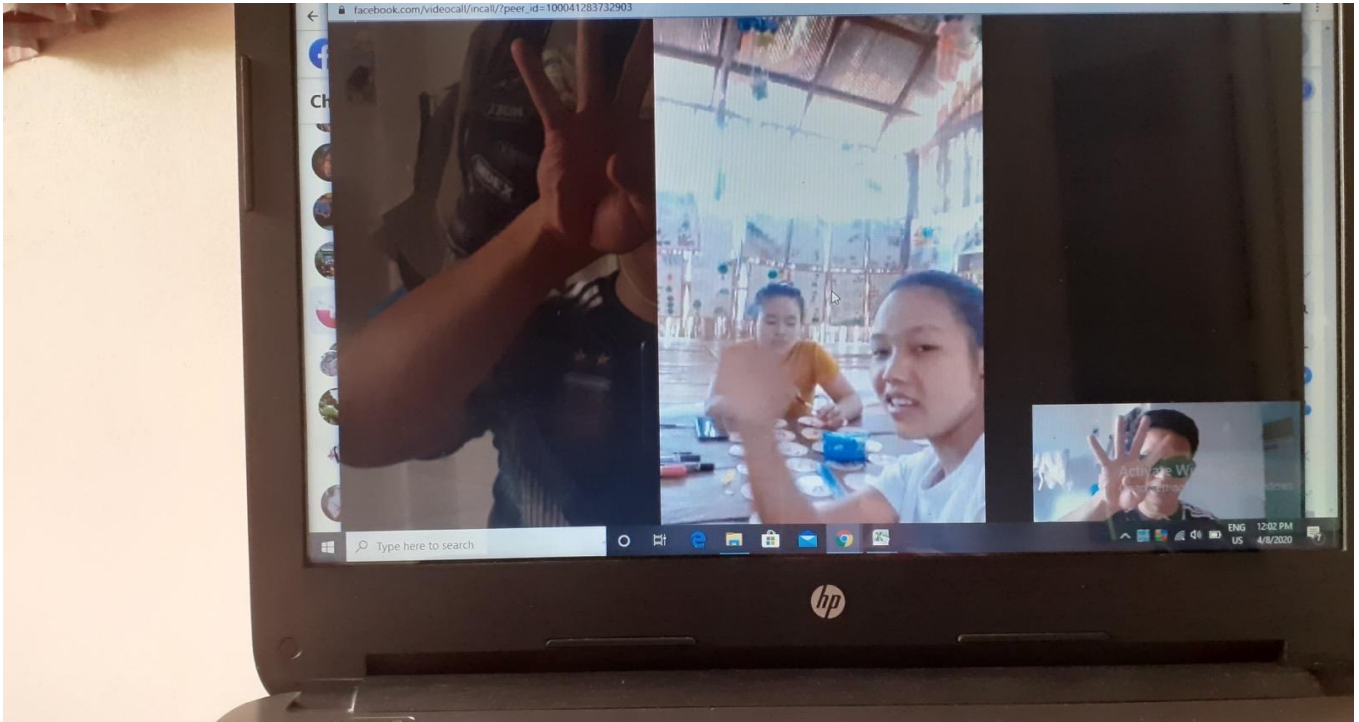
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Continuing Education

UWS are committed to ensure our students continue to learn while schools are closed during term time. Our Education team are developing innovative approaches to remote learning and ways we can continue to support children's learning during school closure, which will again likely be unique to each country. The team have carried out an audit in-country to determine what resources are available and what is needed to ensure team members are sufficiently trained to enrol remote learning, and that students are supported with learning resources at home. Current plans include 'loudspeaker lessons' in the open with children safely distancing, and pre-recording lessons to be played either over the radio or phone. During this time we will also continue to develop school improvement plans, improve our curriculum delivery and conduct staff training while schools are closed.



Latest photos



Community teachers are trained in hygiene to pass on to community members and students. Where possible this training has been done remotely, often via facebook, whatsapp or pre-recorded videos, to avoid our staff visiting communities and risking transmission.



Very few communities we work with have easy access to soap, so we have been sourcing ways in which to either provide soap or the materials needed for communities to make it themselves. Here our building team in Cambodia are making and bottling soap for all our schools.

Latest photos



Our building teams have been working tirelessly to ensure all schools have WASH facilities that comply to WHO standards for the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes having working taps that are 2m apart, as in this new facility in Cambodia (with an exceptional view to boot!)



While school buildings themselves are closed, our community teachers have been using the playgrounds and other safe areas to train the students and other community members how to protect themselves during the virus. This includes safe social distancing and how to wash their hands properly. This will also likely be a key way we will continue to provide education during this time – teachers will speak to children in large, open areas using a loudspeaker, and then provide work and resources for the students to take home.

What else has been happening?

Cambodia



Our Cambodia Country Director Nan Sitha has been recognised for his work leading the Cambodian team and reaching over 100 remote communities. He was recently presented with two awards by the Cambodian Education Minister Dr. Hang Chuon Naron. One of these was the National Constructive Golden Medal. This award is a formal recognition by the Cambodian government, making it easier to collaborate with national and local governments. In the long-term, this will support us to transition our schools to government control.

Myanmar



In February 2020, eight staff from Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal gathered in Yangon, Myanmar to share updates from their respective countries and learn from one another. They shared experiences of their country's unique environment, the needs of the communities we work with, and their innovations. From learning about the expansion of the Library Officer programme in Cambodia, or the Fellowship programme in Nepal, the teams exchanged ideas and encouraged one another. Doing so reinforced the idea that our teams are stronger together than working separately.

Nepal



Following the success of our Community Learning Site programme in Myanmar, we are expanding this to reach more of these smaller, harder-to-reach communities in Cambodia and Nepal. Our first two have recently opened in Nepal (pictured right). They are currently providing education to 68 previously out-of-school children. Access to education is giving these children the opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their communities.

[Find out more about our CLS model](#)

UWS in numbers

36,500

children have enrolled into UWS schools since 2009



226

schools have been developed in remote communities across Cambodia, Myanmar and Nepal



999

community and government teachers are employed across our schools



Thank you

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