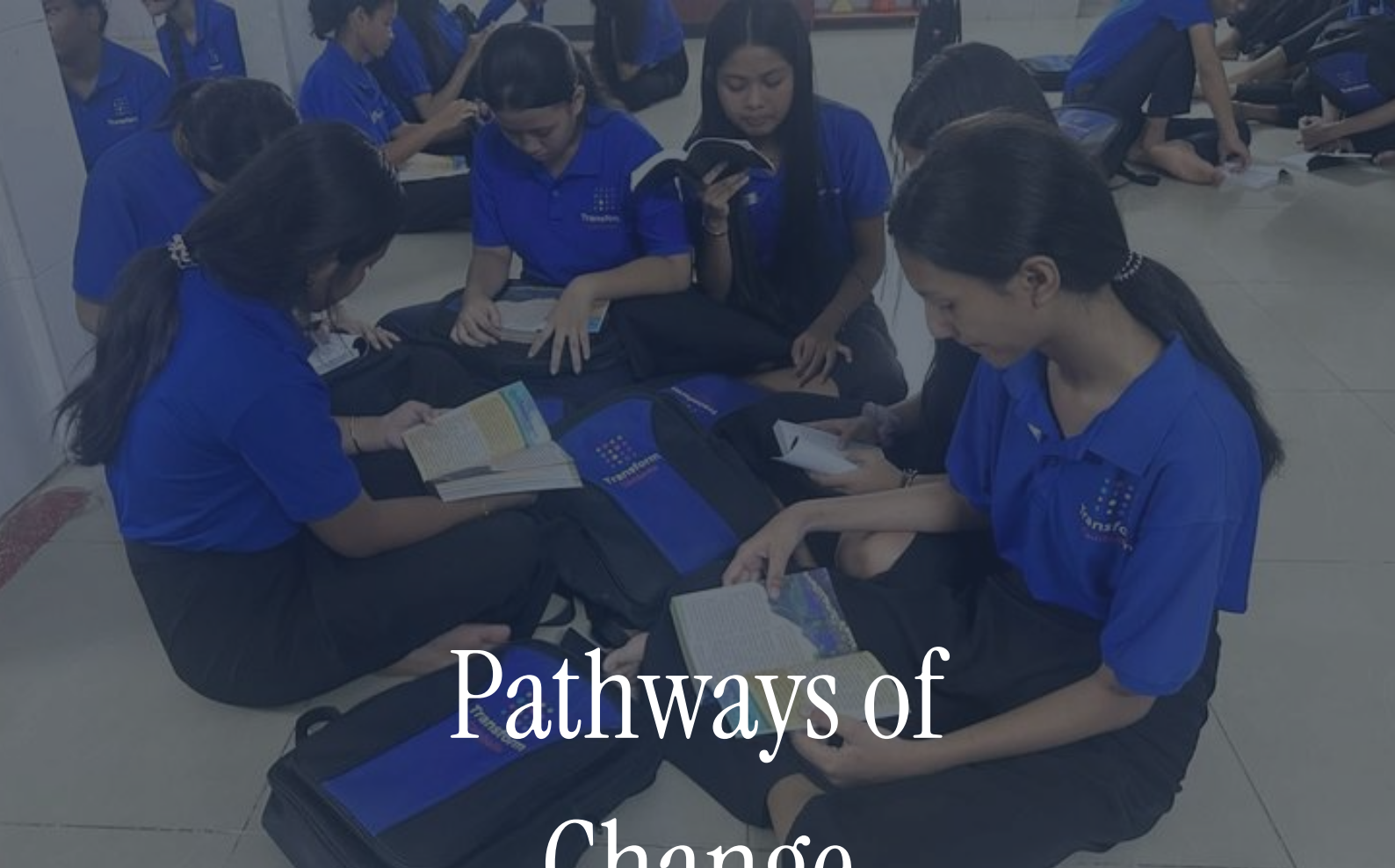




# Pathways of Change

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An evaluation of Transform's contribution to  
children and young people's pathways  
2006–2025



**Transform**  
Cambodia

July 2026

# Executive summary

Transform Cambodia was founded in 2006 with a long-term vision: to walk with vulnerable children from childhood into adulthood, supporting growth in education, character, identity, dignity, leadership and future pathways. This evaluation assesses outcomes from Transform Cambodia programmes between 2006 and 2025, asking where Transform appears to be making a credible contribution, how that contribution is experienced by children and families, and what constraints continue to shape young people's pathways. It is a practical contribution evaluation. It does not claim to isolate Transform's effects from all family, school, community or social influences, but uses quantitative and qualitative evidence to assess where Transform appears to make a meaningful contribution.



The evaluation reviewed Transform's administrative data, including child records, school results, Life Check data, Home Visits and health records. Qualitative interviews with children, youth, graduates, caregivers and staff were used to understand how change is experienced. Findings are treated as strongest where programme data and participant accounts point in the same direction.

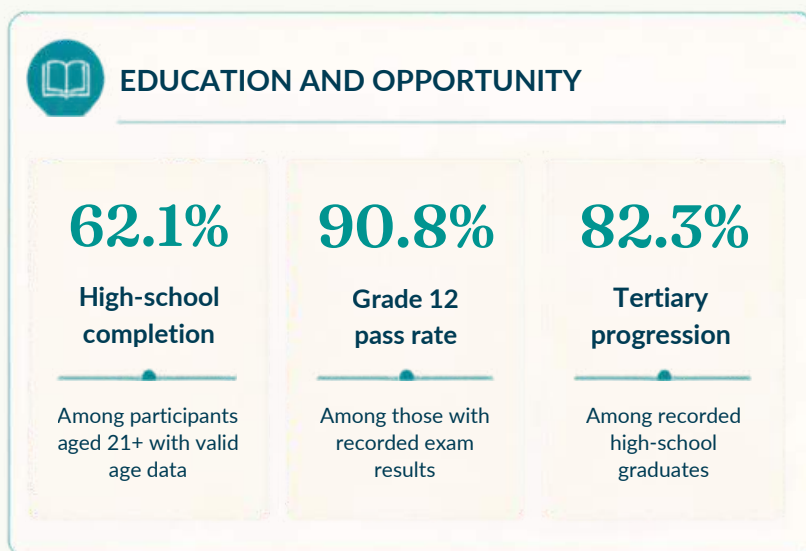
The strongest finding is that Transform's contribution is relational and developmental, not only educational. Children and young people described Transform as a place where they are known, encouraged, guided and given repeated opportunities to grow. Across the qualitative interviews, children, young people, caregivers and staff described perceived gains in confidence, belonging, responsibility, values, future orientation and family resilience. These human outcomes appear to provide the foundation for deeper participation, educational persistence and future opportunity.



# Headline findings

Taken together, the findings support a credible contribution story. Transform appears to create the relational, practical and developmental conditions that help many children and young people remain engaged, grow in confidence and pursue educational and

future pathways. The strongest evidence combines programme records with participant, caregiver and staff accounts. While these signals are encouraging, they should be read carefully. They show credible patterns of participation, continuity, educational progression and movement in recorded indicators, rather than proof that Transform alone caused all observed outcomes.

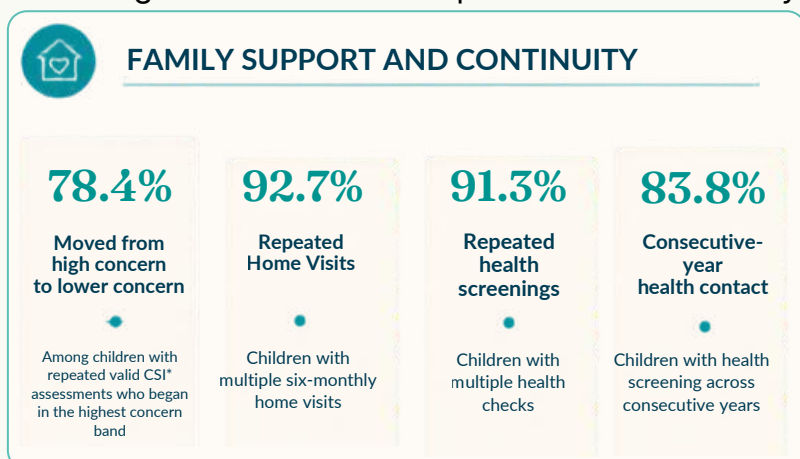


The education findings are among the strongest quantitative results, showing high Grade 12 success and tertiary progression, although completion of both high school and university was lower. Life Check findings point to positive movement in relationships, leadership and responsibility, while Home Visit, CSI and health records show sustained contact with children and families over time.

The evidence of sustained support shows good continuity and repeated engagement, creating conditions in which positive outcomes may develop. However, outcomes are



not automatic. Family poverty, school quality, transport, household stress, student effort and programme capacity continue to shape how far young people can progress.



\* The Child Status Index (CSI) is a structured tool that assesses key aspects of children's care environments and vulnerability.

# 1. Introduction and Evaluation Purpose

Transform Cambodia was founded in 2006 with a long-term vision: to walk with vulnerable children from early childhood into adulthood, supporting them to grow in education, character, identity, dignity and leadership. What began as a response to children living in highly vulnerable circumstances in Phnom Penh has developed into a long-term, community-based model that supports children, young people and families over many years. Transform's public description of its work emphasises long-term commitment, Cambodian-led leadership, university and employment pathways, and whole-family support.

This long-term model is central to the evaluation. Transform is not designed as a short-term education project or a single-service intervention. Its support follows children and young people across life stages: from childhood and early schooling, through adolescence and secondary education, and where possible into university, vocational training, employment and adult responsibility. The programme's work includes education, health, wellbeing, family support, leadership development and longer-term life outcomes.

## Evaluation purpose

This evaluation was commissioned to provide a clear and practical assessment of outcomes experienced by children, teens and young adults who have participated in Transform Cambodia programmes from 2006–2025, and to compare these outcomes, where possible, with recognised indicators for children and young people in Cambodia. The evaluation was also intended to help Transform Cambodia understand the extent to which the programme is improving life outcomes over time.

In line with the Terms of Reference, this report considers outcomes across childhood, adolescence and early adulthood; examines education outcomes including secondary school completion and tertiary progression; identifies areas where Transform appears to make its strongest contribution; and notes data gaps or limitations that affect interpretation. It draws on Salesforce programme data alongside qualitative interviews with children, youth, graduates, families and staff. By necessity, it focuses most on the recent years of the programme (since 2018), where detailed data is available.

This report is deliberately practical and proportionate. It is not a complex academic impact study, and it does not claim to isolate Transform's impact from all other family, school, community or social influences. Instead, it assesses contribution: where Transform appears to be making a credible difference, how that difference is experienced by children and families, and what constraints continue to shape young people's pathways. The findings are intended to support accountability, learning, future programme planning and communication with major funders and partners.

## 2. Evaluation Approach and Evidence

This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, combining analysis of programme monitoring data from Salesforce with qualitative interviews with children, youth, graduates, caregivers and staff. The purpose was to understand both measurable educational progression and the human changes that participants, families and staff associate with Transform's support.

5,314

children and young people in  
Salesforce programme  
database, covering back to  
2006

16

qualitative interviews with  
children, youth, graduates,  
caregivers and staff

203,644

Individual checks on children  
and young people's progress,  
through school records, Life  
Checks, home visits and  
medical records

Transform holds extremely detailed Salesforce data on the children and youth in its programmes. This data stretches back to the beginning of the programme, although it holds more detail from 2018 onwards when a new database system was adopted. This depth of monitoring is unusual and a rich source of information for supporting Transform's ongoing learning and reporting, as well as providing strong evidence for this report.

The qualitative evidence, while much less extensive, was important for understanding confidence, relationships, belonging, responsibility, faith and values, family resilience, and the constraints that continue to affect young people's progress. It gave faces and voices to the stories told by the programme data.

Children, youth and family voices were prioritised as evidence sources when assessing outcomes. Staff evidence was used mainly to explain programme mechanisms, such as teacher support, safe learning environments, leadership opportunities and family engagement. All data was managed securely and participant confidentiality was fully respected.

Overall, the evidence is strongest when quantitative indicators and qualitative accounts point in the same direction. The Salesforce data shows evidence of educational progression and participation in the programme, while the interviews explain how change happens and why some young people continue to face barriers.

### Data note

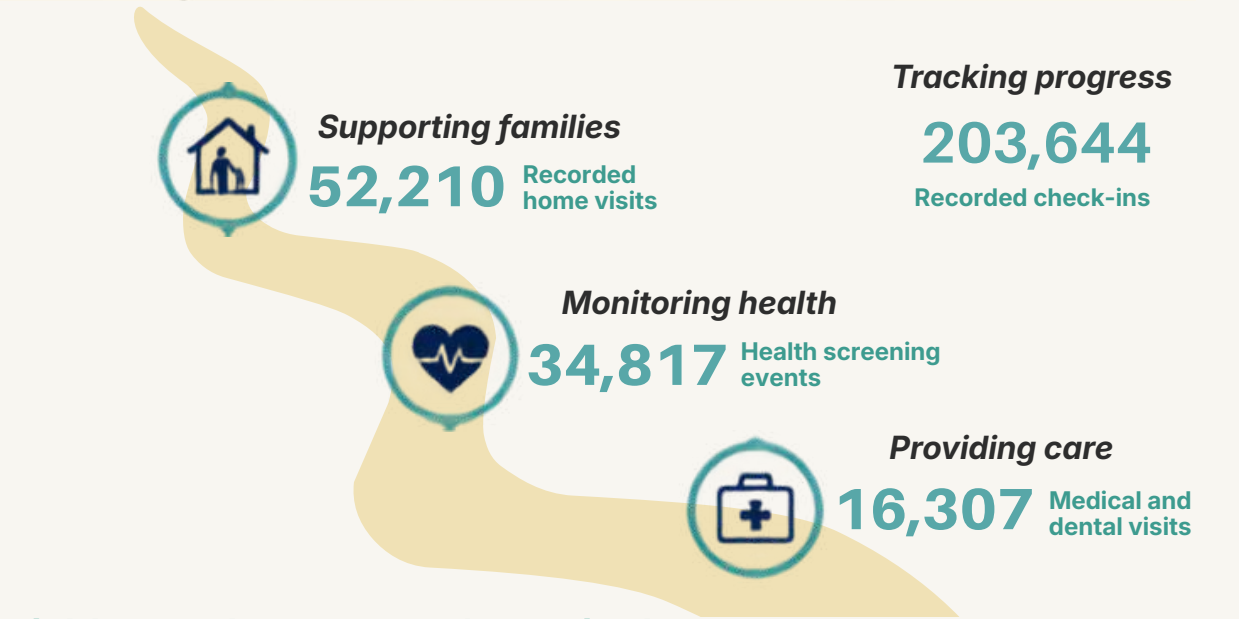
Salesforce is an administrative dataset, not a purpose-built evaluation tool. Many fields were strong and complete, while others required careful interpretation. For example, programme exit dates were usable for analysing exit patterns, but precise exit reasons were not recorded. For this reason, this report uses conservative denominators, states limitations clearly, and avoids claims that cannot be directly supported by the available data.

# 3. Twenty Years of Walking Alongside Children

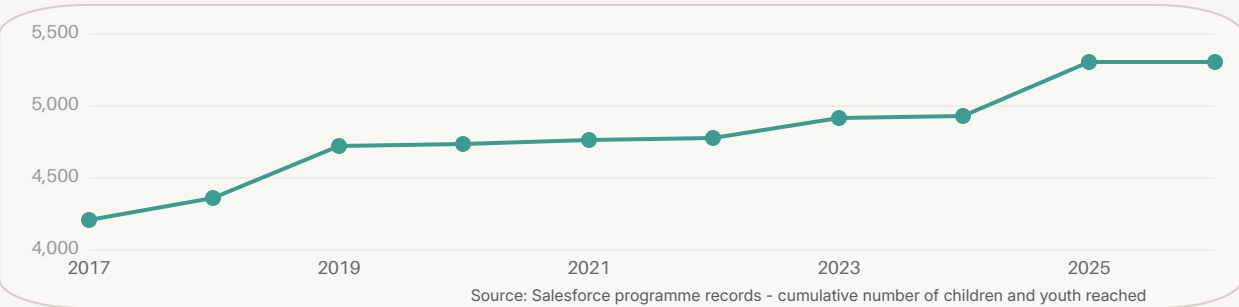
5,314 Children and young people engaged through Transform programmes



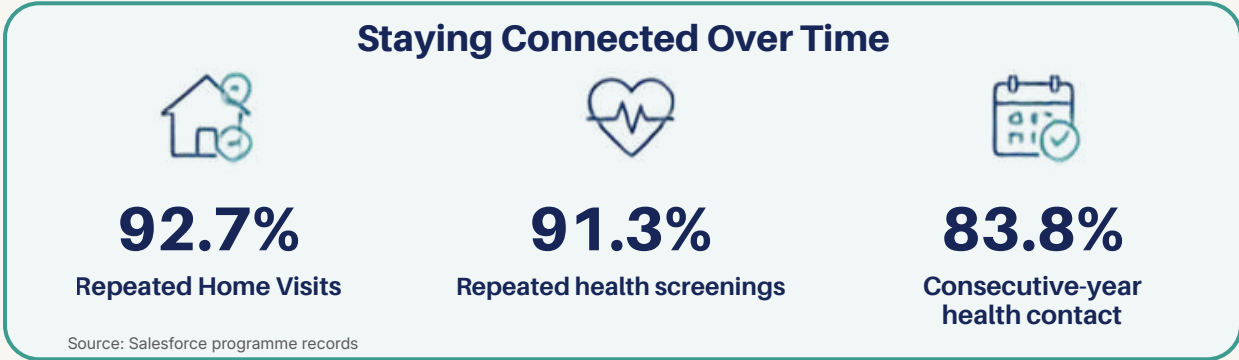
Over the past twenty years, Transform has supported children and families through education, family support, health monitoring and practical care. These records show not only substantial reach, but repeated engagement over many years—creating opportunities for trusted relationships, belonging, growth and future pathways.



## Children and young people reached



## Staying Connected Over Time



The following sections explore how long-term relationships and sustained support contributed to outcomes in belonging, development, education and family wellbeing.

## 4. Transform's Pathway of Change

The data gathered indicated a consistent mechanism for change was at work. Transform's pathway of change is best understood as a relational and developmental model. The evidence suggests that change begins with **safe, trusted relationships** between children and centre staff. Children and youth described teachers as people who encouraged them, helped them solve problems, and created a safer environment than many children experienced elsewhere.

These relationships build **confidence, belonging and motivation**. Across the evidence, children and youth described moving from being shy or fearful to speaking more, joining activities, answering questions, taking leadership roles and thinking more clearly about their future.

Confidence then becomes visible through **participation and repeated practice**: presentations, English activities, leadership tasks, service, helping younger children, family engagement and values-based activities. Over time, these experiences contribute to **skills, character and responsibility**, which support success in **education, leadership and future pathways**.



However, the pathway is not automatic. It is shaped by external conditions. Family financial pressure, weak or unsafe school environments, long travel distances, student effort and programme capacity can all affect how far confidence and participation translate into sustained educational progress.

In summary, Transform's pathway of change is strongest when children experience trusted relationships, emotional safety, regular participation and practical support. Outcomes are co-produced by the child, family, school and programme environment.

## 5. What Has Changed for Children and Young People?

This section looks at the human outcomes of the Transform programme; what has changed for children and young people over their time with Transform. The section focuses on four areas that reflect the pathway of change previously described. All four areas were supported by evidence from multiple sources; the documentary and qualitative evidence are mainly drawn on in these sections to explain the reasons for change.

### 5.1 Confidence and Personal Agency

One of the strongest human outcome themes in the evaluation is confidence and personal agency. Across the qualitative evidence, children, youth and graduates described becoming more willing to speak, participate, present, answer questions and make choices about their future.

This confidence was not only expressed as feeling better about oneself. It was also visible in practical behaviours: speaking in front of others, raising a hand in class, joining presentations, managing oneself better, taking responsibility and making decisions about study or career pathways.

The evidence is strongest where young people describe their own change directly. One child explained that before joining Transform she “did not really have confidence” but later “came to know self-confidence”. Another described becoming “more bold and strong” and being able to speak in front of others. Youth evidence shows a similar pattern, with one participant saying she now speaks more, has more courage, and has clearer goals for her life. Graduate evidence strengthens the finding because it shows transfer beyond the programme: former participants described being more confident in university presentations, job interviews, work and interaction with foreigners.

### Leadership, agency and responsibility



**49.4%**

**Improved leadership, agency and responsibility scores**



**68.8%**

**Moved upward from the low leadership band**

*Among those starting in the low band for leadership who had repeated valid measurements*

Figures describe movement in recorded Life Check scores.

*"When I first joined Transform, I was very fearful, but because the teachers paid attention to me, it made my confidence much stronger... that gave me confidence in speaking English and in many other things."* — Youth interview

Family and staff evidence triangulate these changes. Caregivers observed children becoming more communicative, thoughtful and responsible at home. Staff described confidence-building as an intentional part of the programme, especially through presentations, leadership opportunities, encouragement and a supportive environment.

However, confidence remains context-dependent. Some young people still face fear, bullying, transport barriers, financial stress and family pressures, and staff noted that behaviour outside the centre is harder to influence. Overall, the evidence shows that Transform makes a very strong contribution to confidence and agency, but these gains are strongest when young people have safe relationships, repeated opportunities to practise, and realistic pathways for applying their confidence beyond the centre.

## 5.2 Relationships, Belonging and Emotional Support

Transform's contribution to children and young people is strongly relational. Across the interviews, participants described Transform as a place where they are supported by teachers, encouraged to grow, able to build friendships, and connected to adults who understand their situation.

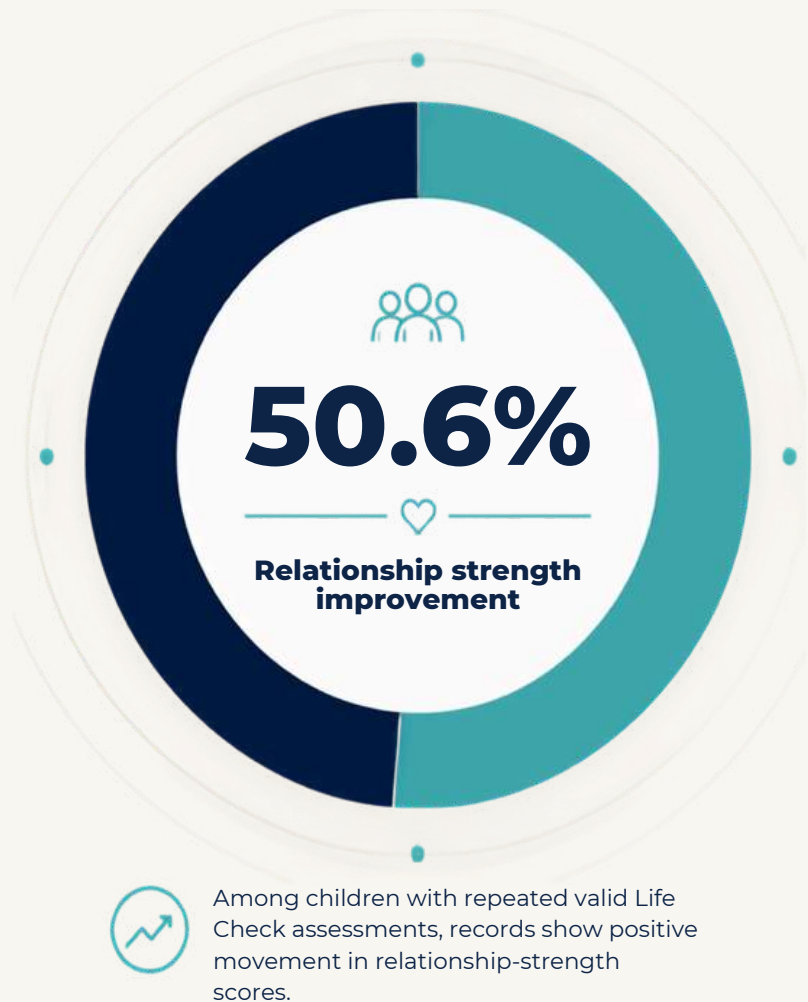
Children and youth gave the strongest direct evidence. One child said she talks with teachers because a teacher understands her and does not judge her. Youth participants described teachers who encourage them, pay attention to them, explain choices and help them feel less afraid. One youth linked friendship directly to confidence, saying that having friends to talk with made her more confident, while another described becoming more confident because teachers paid attention to her.



*"The strongest point is love. We want them to feel loved: 'You are coming to a place that is safe, and we want you to feel loved and grow.'"* — Staff interview

Families and staff triangulate this finding. Caregivers described teachers as caring for children, following up when children are absent, understanding family difficulties and reducing parental worry. Staff described the centre as a safe and loving environment, and Family Day as a way to build trust with families and create peer support. These mechanisms appear to help children feel that they belong to a wider supportive community, not only an educational programme. At the same time, relational safety is not guaranteed outside Transform. Children and youth still face bullying, fear, limited friendships, family pressure and difficult school environments.

## Relationships and belonging



*"I really love the class here... If I go out there, they would bully me... they're very picky with friends."*

— Child interview

Overall, the evidence indicates that Transform makes a very strong contribution to belonging and emotional support, especially through trusted teachers, friendships, family engagement and a safe centre environment.

*"We have friends to talk with, and that makes me more confident and improves me a lot in that area. When I am at home, I am quiet because I am alone and do not go out much. So the success I have each day comes a lot from Transform."*

— Youth interview

## 5.3 Responsibility, Service and Emerging Leadership

Transform's approach to leadership appears to begin with responsibility and self-management. Children and youth did not describe leadership only as holding a formal role. They described learning to manage themselves, speak more respectfully, take responsibility for tasks, help younger children and contribute to group activities.

"At the organisation, I like Leadership because it helps us learn to lead ourselves and to lead other people."

— Child interview

Transform teaches leadership specifically as part of its regular curriculum. Moreover, the evidence suggests that Transform provides practical opportunities to practise leadership in everyday settings. Children reported helping younger children, sweeping, cleaning and volunteering, while youth described being encouraged by teachers to take on roles such as MC, host and activity leader. As mentioned earlier in the report, regular Life Checks showed improvement in perceived leadership scores, especially for those who started lower in this area; 68.8% who started in the 'low' leadership-skills band showed subsequent improvement.

Faith, values and character formation were important themes for some participants. Children and young people's self-reported faith engagement, faith-informed character and values showed positive movement in Life Check scores for 56.4% of participants with repeated valid data. For staff and for some of the youth interviewed, this was a key motivation for their work. The evidence should be interpreted cautiously and does not measure spiritual maturity or discipleship depth directly.



*As a Transform student I joined activities such as teaching younger children, Family Day, Mother's Day and community service. In Grades 10 and 11 I taught younger students in other centres, led activities, and joined community actions such as rubbish collection.*

— Intern interview

Graduate evidence indicates that opportunities for leadership can continue beyond childhood, with former students describing teaching younger children, leading activities, participating in Family Day and contributing to community service. Staff and family members similarly described young people becoming more mature, helpful and responsible.

At the same time, the findings suggest that leadership development remains an ongoing process rather than a completed outcome. Children and young people continue to face challenges with behaviour, self-control and competing responsibilities. Staff noted that behaviour outside the centre is often harder to influence, and some graduate volunteers do not consistently fulfil their commitments.

Overall, the qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests that Transform makes a meaningful contribution to responsibility, service and emerging leadership. The strongest findings relate to creating structured opportunities for young people to contribute, support others and gradually take on greater responsibility within a supportive environment.

## 5.4 Future Orientation, Values and Family Resilience

Transform's support appears to help children and young people look beyond immediate circumstances and think more clearly about their future. Children and youth described gaining confidence to identify dreams, consider future study or work, and make decisions about pathways. One youth explained that Transform teachers "always talk to us about dreams" and help students think about what they should do when they grow up.

Future orientation is linked to practical pathway support. Youth described being guided but not forced in decisions about study or work. Graduates described applying confidence and skills in university, job interviews and employment settings. Families described Transform reducing burdens and helping children continue studying despite poverty.

Transform's contribution also includes values, character and faith formation. This appears across the interviews as changes in care for others, respect, responsibility, helping behaviour, self-control and the ability to value other people. Faith-related learning is important for some participants, with references to Christian life, Bible learning, worship, prayer and church activities.

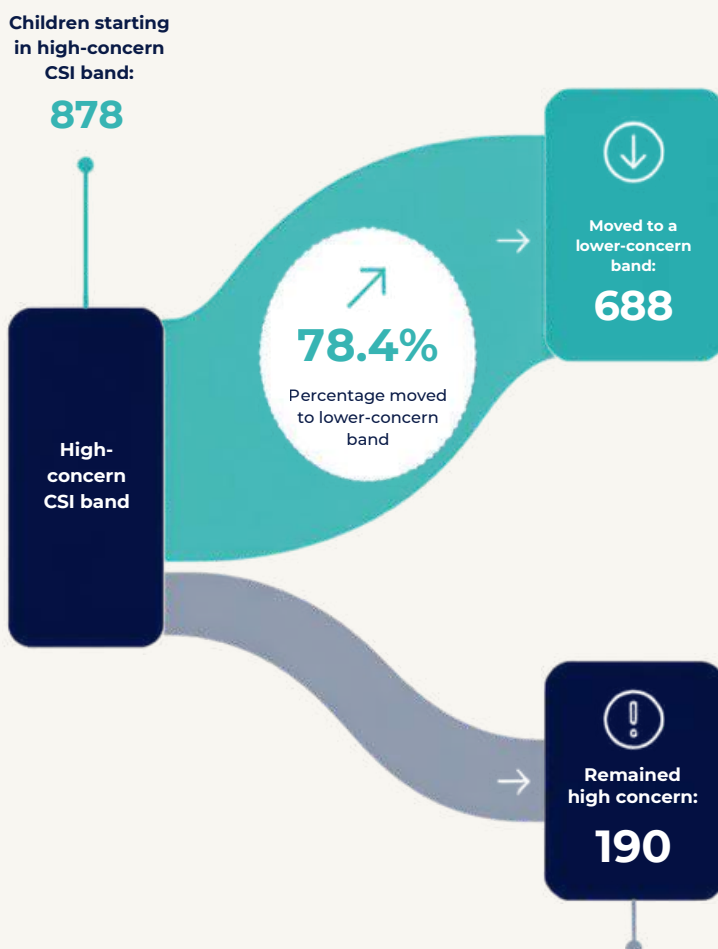


*"I learned to understand the opinions of people around me, to value other people, and to value the words they speak to me."*  
— Youth interview

However, these outcomes are not uniform. The evidence supports exposure, encouragement, learning and personal change for some participants, while also recognising that faith and character outcomes remain shaped by children's own choices, family context and wider environments. There was strong evidence of the financial difficulties families face, which puts pressure on children to stop studying and begin working. Additional school costs, including transport, can create further barriers.

*"My family situation is unstable — some days when my mother sells well, we have money, and some days when sales are poor, we do not really have money."*  
— Child interview

Family resilience is another important outcome. Caregivers observed children becoming more thoughtful, responsible and helpful at home: understanding when money is short, not demanding unnecessary spending, helping with chores, caring for younger children and taking responsibility for their own things. This suggests that Transform's human outcomes are not only visible at the centre or school; they also affect family life.



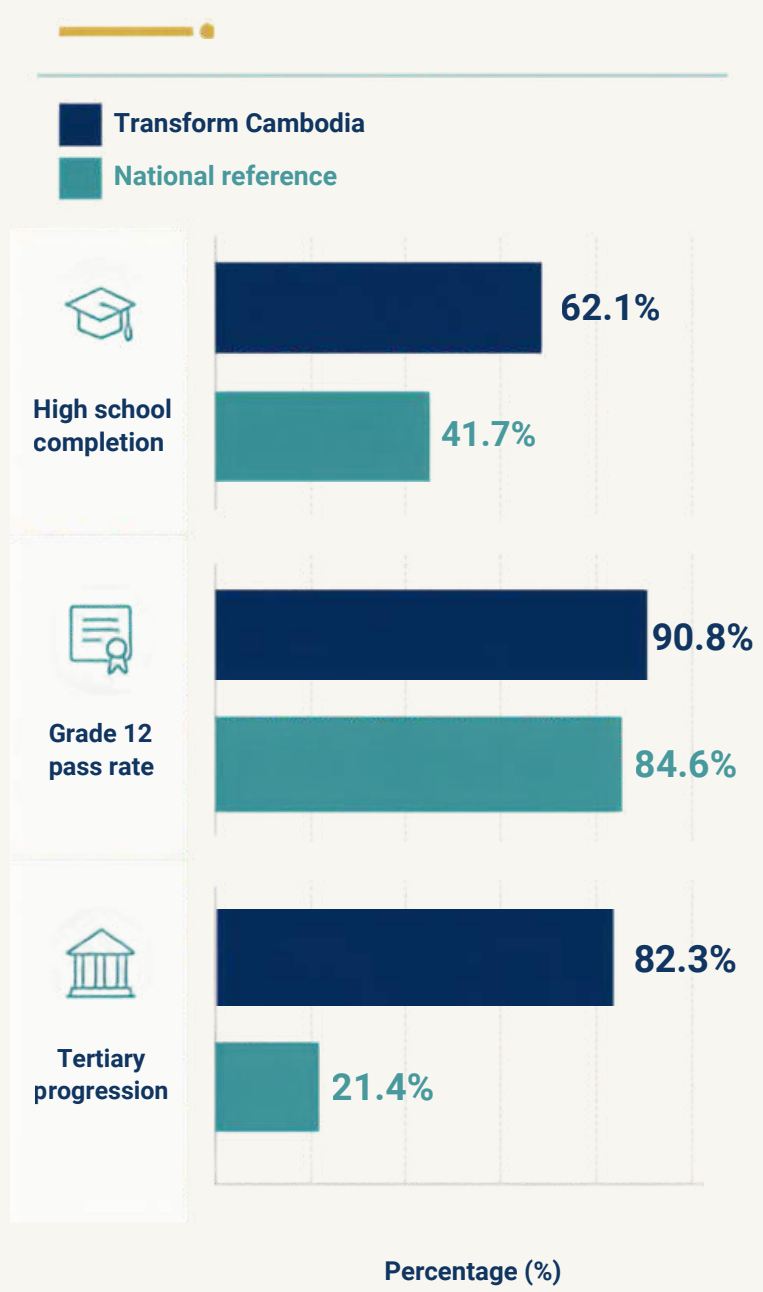
Home Visits include the use of the Child Status Index (CSI), a structured tool that assesses key aspects of children's care environments and vulnerability. Among children with repeated valid assessments who began in the highest-concern CSI category, 78.4% moved to a lower-concern band over time. This suggests positive movement in recorded family and care circumstances, while recognising that CSI reflects broader care and vulnerability conditions rather than wellbeing alone.

# 6. Educational Outcomes and Pathways to Opportunity

Education is one of the strongest outcome areas in the evaluation. Administrative records show substantial high-school completion, Grade 12 examination success and progression to tertiary study. As shown in the chart opposite, participants with recorded educational outcomes compare favourably with national reference points across all three measures. While many factors influence educational achievement beyond Transform's control, the findings suggest that sustained engagement helped many children and young people remain connected to educational pathways and future opportunities.

The qualitative evidence helps explain these outcomes. Children and young people described Transform as supporting English learning, school engagement and confidence in learning. One youth noted that English learned at the centre could be applied directly in school examinations. Caregivers described Transform reducing education-related costs and helping children remain in school despite financial hardship. Graduate interviews provide a longer-term perspective, with former students describing journeys from limited confidence to university, employment, presentations, interviews and wider opportunities.

## Education outcomes compared with national reference points



Indicative comparison only. Transform and national figures use differing denominators and data definitions. Tertiary progression means recorded entry to tertiary study, not completion. The chart provides context rather than an exact impact estimate.

# From high school to future pathways

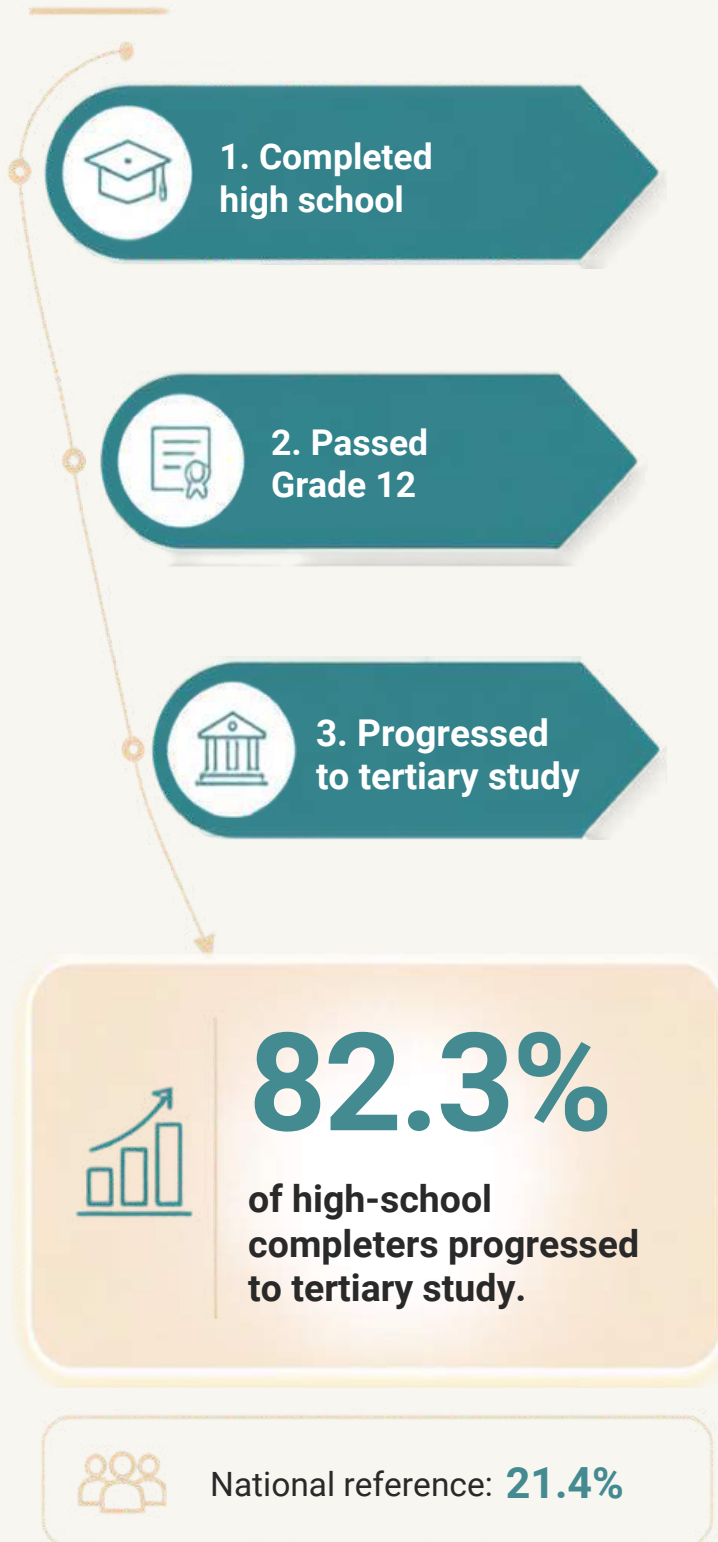
A pathway snapshot of recorded transitions



The education analysis suggests that continued engagement matters. Educational completion was much more common among participants who remained connected to Transform through later adolescence, while many children who exited the programme earlier left before reaching normal high-school completion age. At higher levels, not all youth who progressed to tertiary education completed their studies; current records show out of 991 entrants, 188 have completed to date, 537 remain active and 266 have withdrawn.

Educational progress remains influenced by factors beyond Transform's control. Interviews describe higher academic demands at university, alongside work, family and time pressures. Staff consistently identified financial pressure and the need to support household livelihoods as risks to continued education. Some families may struggle to meet school-related costs such as fees, materials and transport. These provide helpful context to understand withdrawal, although specific reasons for withdrawal were not recorded for individual students.

Overall, the evidence suggests that Transform makes a strong contribution to educational continuity and opportunity, but that results are strengthened when financial, family and school-environment barriers can also be addressed.



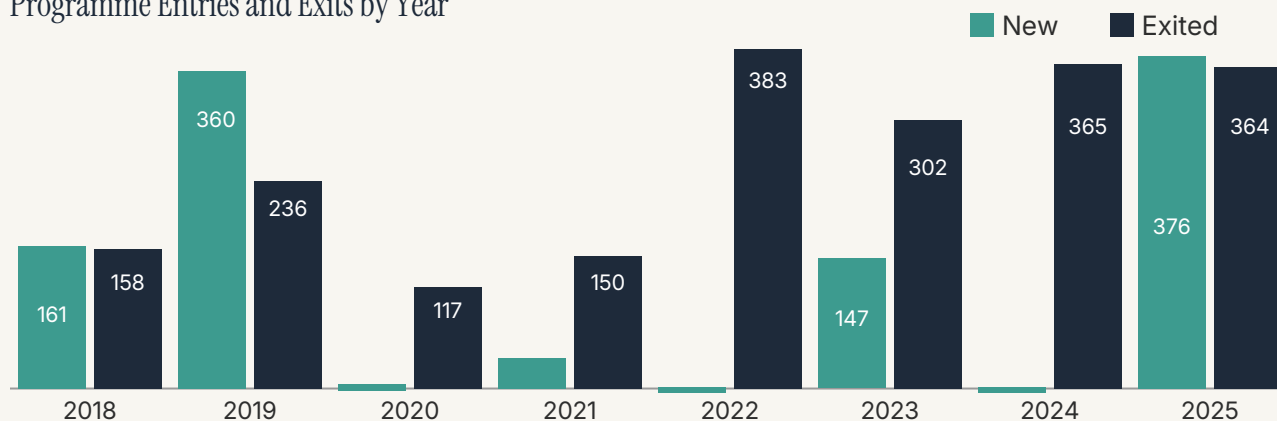
Among 1204 high-school completers recorded in the dataset.



## 7. What Continues to Constrain Young People's Progress?

The evidence shows that Transform supports many children and young people to progress, but also that their progress remains constrained by forces outside the programme's direct control. The quantitative data provides strong evidence of risks to participation and progression. Among inactive or pending records with exit dates, most exits with a known age occurred before 18. This suggests that many young people leave Transform before the point at which high-school completion would normally be expected. The rate of exiting the programme has been significant in recent years:

Programme Entries and Exits by Year



The qualitative evidence helps explain why this risk persists. Family and economic pressure is the strongest and most consistent constraint. Children described unstable household income and missing study because of illness or being busy. Youth described financial barriers to future pathways, including aspirations that may be difficult because of cost. Caregivers described rent, school fees, transport costs, health problems, low literacy and limited ability to provide academic support.

In addition, the organisation itself has weathered significant organisational and resource pressures. It has reduced costs by amalgamating 36 centres into 5 larger centres and reducing staff numbers. These changes were costly in terms of staff losses, stress and change management. Even with these changes, the number of children in the programme has declined from 3,287 at 2019 Q4 to 2,034 at 2026 Q3. This shows that the programme is operating within a changing resource environment. Parents and youth have been asked to share costs of education and other support services more where possible.

External school environments create further barriers. Some children described difficulty understanding maths, not being fully caught up, and experiencing school environments where teachers were less supportive or where students felt unsafe. This matters because Transform's strengths — trusted teachers, encouragement, English learning, leadership and emotional support — operate alongside school contexts that may be academically weak, socially difficult or unsafe.

Overall, these constraints should be understood as shared and structural. Transform can support, guide and encourage children, but family poverty, transport, school quality, household stress and organisational capacity continue to shape whether children can remain engaged long enough to complete the pathway.

## 8. Conclusion

The evidence is consistent with Transform making a substantial and distinctive contribution to children and young people's lives. The strongest finding is that Transform does more than provide education support. It creates a relational environment where children are known, encouraged, guided and given repeated opportunities to grow.

Across the qualitative evidence, children, youth, graduates, families and staff consistently described increases in confidence, belonging, responsibility, values, future orientation and family resilience. These human outcomes matter because they are the foundation on which educational progress and future opportunity are built.

The quantitative evidence supports this positive picture. The programme database includes 5,314 children and young people, and the verified education indicators show meaningful progression: 62.1% of age-eligible participants were recorded as completing high school, 90.8% of those with a recorded Grade 12 result passed, and 82.3% of recorded high-school graduates entered tertiary study. Tertiary entry was stronger than recorded completion, with 26.8% of those entering tertiary study recorded as having withdrawn to date. Even with this qualification, these figures compare favourably with available national reference points, although the analysis uses conservative denominators and notes comparability limitations.

At the same time, the evaluation shows that progress is not automatic. Children and young people continue to face significant constraints from poverty, transport, household instability, school quality, academic difficulty and the limits of what any centre-based programme can control. Exit analysis also shows participation risk: many exits occur before the age at which high-school completion would normally be expected, and most inactive or pending exit records were still classified as primary or secondary ongoing. These records should not necessarily be interpreted as confirmed school dropouts because exit reasons are not recorded, but they do show that maintaining engagement through adolescence remains a major challenge.

The central message is therefore both encouraging and realistic. Transform is achieving outcomes that are highly valued by children, families and staff: confidence, trusted relationships, educational persistence, character formation and future pathways. These outcomes are strongest when young people receive consistent relationships, safe spaces, practical support and opportunities to practise leadership and responsibility. However, the evidence also shows that continued investment is needed to sustain these pathways, especially for children facing economic hardship, transport barriers, weak school environments and family pressure.

Overall, Transform's contribution is best understood as a pathway of change rather than a single intervention. The programme supports children to move from safety and belonging, into confidence and participation, and then towards education, leadership and future opportunity. This pathway does not remove every structural barrier, but it gives children and young people the relationships, skills and hope needed to keep moving forward. For that reason, continued investment remains important to sustain the relationships, practical support and opportunities that appear central to Transform's pathway of change.



## Appendix 1. Evaluation Evidence and Data Notes

This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, combining Salesforce programme data with qualitative interviews. The quantitative analysis drew primarily on records for 5,314 children and young people, including status, high-school completion, Grade 12 exam results, tertiary progression and course status, exit dates and retention patterns. Data for life checks, school progression, medical care and home visits were also reviewed.

Three children, four youth, three graduates, three families/caregivers and three staff were interviewed to gain a qualitative understanding of the programme's successes and challenges. These interviews were coded thematically and analysed. Findings were considered strongest where they appeared across multiple respondent groups and were supported by both child and youth voices, and family or staff observation.

The Salesforce data was analysed cautiously; small but significant gaps in data accuracy and completeness were identified and allowed for during analysis. The numbers reported have been carefully reviewed by the evaluation team against the original data sets.

Sources for the national comparison figures for education data are given here for reference.

84.6% Grade 12 examination pass rate (2025) - this was reported by Xinhua based on a MoEYS announcement that 122,473 of 144,848 candidates passed. (20 Sep 2025, <https://english.news.cn/asiapacific/20250920/773cb341aad64d13b55778de29d34b50/c.html>)

21.4% for tertiary enrolment (% gross, 2024) is reported on the World Bank data page (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.TER.ENRR?locations=KH>) along with previous year rates. Note that the definition is a gross enrolment ratio - total tertiary enrollment regardless of age, relative to the population age group officially corresponding to tertiary education.

41.7% upper secondary completion rate (2025) was reported by MoEYS/National Education Congress on 12 February 2026 (<https://cambodianess.com/article/early-childhood-education-and-school-completion-rates-rise>)

## Report authors

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