



Here are 16 of the 35 CATALYST girls.

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## **CATALYST (Cambodian Tertiary-Education And Leadership, YouTh Program)**

After completing High School, a rare accomplishment for a Cambodian girl, Lotus Outreach (LO) helps to orient the girls it has been following into tertiary education or training. This sometimes monetary and always moral support is called CATALYST.

**So what is being catalysed?** Their lives from poverty to no poverty (including their families!)

**And how is this being done?** First of all by orienting High School graduates into tertiary institutions and supporting them with a basic stipend so that in their first year they don't need to work, by giving them moral support and following their development, and by equipping them with the tools necessary for a full life. From the second year on many have full-time jobs (shop assistant, cashier, accounting

- At any given time in 2016, an estimated **40.3 million** people are in **modern slavery**, including 24.9 in forced labour and **15.4 million in forced marriage**.
  - It means there are **5.4 victims of modern slavery for every 1,000 people in the world**.
  - **1 in 4 victims of modern slavery are children**.
  - Out of the **24.9 million** people trapped in **forced labour**, **16 million** people are exploited in the **private sector** such as domestic work, construction or agriculture; **4.8 million persons in forced sexual exploitation**, and **4 million persons in forced labour imposed by state authorities**.
  - **Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labour**, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry, and 58% in other sectors
- Source: **Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage** , Geneva, September 2017.



assistant, quality control staff, teller, teacher of Khmer for kids, contract teachers at public schools) often working from 7 am to 5 pm and then going to classes from 5.30 - 8.30. Others have part-time jobs (cashier, teacher Chinese/Math.) Some girls even do overtime at the weekend! Others study at the weekend.

Once a month they go to the office to be checked up on and a couple of times a year they all get together and have a workshop in English (mainly) which builds community and confidence. We were able to be present for one of the workshops on June 2nd: what an eye-opening experience!! Raksmeay, LO national representative, and Pisey, LO office manager, swung into motion and got the 16 girls introducing themselves to each other and to a third party. Then there was the solidarity game where each group of 8 had to keep one foot on a small piece of cardboard. The winners had leaders: one for strategy, the other for checking! The losers felt very satisfied with having no leader.

Then there is English... Ah English.... What a difficult and absolutely essential subject for a dispersed group of girls — they are in about 19 different colleges in 4 regions. So we have come up with an innovative plan to give the girls tablets loaded with the necessary English lessons etc. and test them every month. We are just working on the programs now and hope that our pilot study (three of the girls who won a competition) over the next 3 months show that the USD\$120 dollar per tablet investment (including one year of internet)

is successful — fingers crossed!



Meet Raksmeay, and Pisey with some of the students oriented into other



projects through CATALYST. At Bayon, ([www.ecoledubayon.org](http://www.ecoledubayon.org)), a pastry school which also runs a primary school support project, the girls are fully supported. (Question: do the primary school kids get to eat the delicious not so beautiful baking trials and tribulations of the students???) In the past, some girls studied at Sala Bai ([www.salabai.com](http://www.salabai.com)) to learn every aspect of hotel life and

hospitality but this year none of the Catalyst girls are there; we visited it anyway to get an idea. We found the tour, the explanations, the food, the whole atmosphere very inspiring.

Here is a break down of the support of one of these determined, enthusiastic, women who will change the world sooner than we think!!!! (And yes, they receive rice rations or else they don't eat properly!!!!)

Description	Formula	Annual Pro Rata Support	
		Year 1	Year 2,3,4
Accommodation (Utilities)	\$20x12months	\$240.00	\$240.00
Documents / Text Books	\$25x2 semesters	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Computer (one off course for year 1 students)	\$35x1course	\$ 35.00	0
English Tuition	\$10x12months	\$ 120.00	\$120.00
Monthly Allowance	\$65x12months	\$780.00	\$780.00
Rice Support (15kg/person)	\$0.7 x15kg x12months	\$126.00	\$126.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,351.00</b>	<b>\$1,316.00</b>

Curious? Want to know more? Take a look at [www.lotusoutreach.org](http://www.lotusoutreach.org). Or write to me: [mujin@me.com](mailto:mujin@me.com) am always keen to answer any queries or comments.

Take care, mujin