

Future Skills Case Study – Friends-International

Friends-International – Cambodia

Primary programs:

Job readiness & soft skills training, career counselling, vocational training, internship/job placement, business incubation and training for disadvantaged young people (referred to as the “FUTURES” project).

Beneficiaries:

Young people aged 15 – 25 years old and marginalized caregivers who can access the opportunities they need to support their own children, keep them in school and build their futures.



Online cooking training session (by Friends-International)

Story of Huan, Friends beneficiary

Huan¹ is 16 years old, living in Siem Reap (Cambodia). He has overcome significant misfortune and hardship in his life, experiencing marginalization, high levels of risk and loss from a young age. With the support of Friends-International, Huan enrolled in vocational training and is now benefitting from a stable and dignified job.

Huan and his two older brothers, born in Cambodia, moved to Thailand with their parents at a young age in the hope of making money. Following the death of his parents and his oldest brother, Huan and his other brother were living on the street and were soon referred to a Thai government shelter. In July 2019, the Thai government repatriated them to Cambodia where they were referred to Friends-International.

Huan was enrolled in a hospitality vocational program at the Friend’s training restaurant Marum and his brother started the barber vocational training. The training provided them with life skills education, career counseling, soft skills and hard skills necessary for each professional stream, as well as further education in Khmer, maths and English. The training also included psychosocial support and regular follow-up from social workers.

Despite the closure of Friends’ vocational training businesses, including Marum restaurant, due to Covid-19 in 2020, beneficiaries continued to receive support from Friends’ social workers and education on Covid-19 prevention and protection practices. Friends’ students were offered enrollment in alternative Friends’ vocational training programs, referred to vocational training programs delivered by Friends’ local partners or received job placement support. Huan decided to enroll at the new Friends’ vocational training restaurant “Let’s Eat” in September 2020 because he wants to be a cook. He progressed quickly through his training and graduated in January 2021.

In February 2021, Huan was supported with a job placement as a cook at a local Thai restaurant where he is able to use both his Thai and Khmer language skills whilst advancing his cooking skills. His dream is to have his own restaurant one day.

Quote: A quote from Sebastien Marot, Friends’ Executive Director

“The partnership with Credit Suisse has benefitted Friends-International in many ways. It has not only helped us to expand our Futures project in several countries in South East Asia, but it has also built our organization’s capacity through the support of Credit Suisse volunteers.”

¹ name changed to protect privacy.