

SE Asia Foundation Grant Submission
Equity for Learning

Free To Shine works with more than 450 girls living in 59 villages on the outskirts of Siem Reap. The program aims to prevent sex trafficking and exploitation by supporting girls to remain in school. Due to COVID-19, state schools in Cambodia closed in March and do not plan to re-open until the new school year in November.

Due to the length of time that schools have been closed, many young people have sought work during this period to help financially support their families. Others have become quite disengaged from learning. A major concern held by Free To Shine is the retention of students in school once they return to classrooms later in the year. Schools are doing their best to offer tuition through various means, the most viable for secondary and high school students being remote learning via the internet.

A significant issue presenting for many of the girls involved with Free To Shine is that they do not have means to access the internet, and thus they are totally disconnected from their schoolwork and are falling far behind in their studies. This will obviously impact their motivation to return to school and/or their ability to pass. Despite the popularity and high-level use of mobile phones and the internet in Cambodia, many of these girls' families are so poor that they do not have smart phones and therefore their children are unable to access essential e-learning. Free To Shine has nearly 80 girls ranging from grade 7 – grade 12 who are currently facing this dilemma

Free To Shine is seeking funding to purchase 20 smart phones. We cannot give a smart phone to some and not to others, and so these phones will remain the property of Free To Shine. The phones will be loaned out to girls and it is anticipated that girls living in the same villages will be able to share a phone and so 20 phones should reach the 80 students in need. Girls' siblings will also be able to use the phones for remote learning, meaning many more children and young people will be able to stay connected and engaged with education. The minimum requirement to access e-learning can be gained by a reasonably priced smart phone in Cambodia.

When the students return to class-based learning and no longer require the phones, Free To Shine can return to phones to SE Asia Foundation for them to re-purpose or alternatively, Free To Shine could re-purpose internally.

Resource	Amount	Cost	Total
Smart Phones	20	\$90	\$1800
Phone cards - credit for internet			\$100
TOTAL			\$1900

