



ProjectsAbroad

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Monk Blessing and Staff party for Khmer New Year 2013

The Khmer New Year is one of the significant festivals that Cambodians look forward to. It is a cheerful time for family and friends and it marks a time for traditional celebrations in Cambodia.



Figure 1 Monk Blessing at office



Staff Gathering party

We have a long holiday from the 13th to 17th April, most of the shops and local markets were closed in the main city, Phnom Penh; however this city was no less active as there are a lot of people going to their home town or having a trip with their family.

To celebrate our Khmer New Year, Projects Abroad in Cambodia had held the Monk Blessing in the office and a staff party for our team in Cambodia.

Placement Update

Recently, there are two placements who partner with Projects Abroad in Cambodia who have changed to new locations. It is Riverkids and SvayPek centre of Khemera Organization.

The new place is pretty convenient in space and location.

Ein neuer Lebensabschnitt, eine neue Aufgabe

Article written by Silvia Schar, a Care volunteer at Home of Love

Anfang 2012 ging ich frühzeitig in Pension. Da ich gesundheitlich noch sehr fit bin, wollte ich etwas für andere Menschen tun, und habe mich deshalb entschieden, mit Project Abroad nach Kambodscha zu reisen. Man hat mich immer wieder gefragt, warum ich ausgerechnet Kambodscha ausgewählt habe - Ich liebe Asien und Kambodscha ist ein Land, das ich noch nicht kannte. Also war für mich klar, dass ich genau dieses Land kennen lernen möchte, ein Land mit einer



eindrucksvollen Geschichte. Diese Entscheidung habe ich keinen Augenblick bereut, was ich dort erlebt habe, und all die Menschen, die ich kennen lernen durfte,...es war einfach ein unbeschreibliches Erlebnis.

Aufgeregt und voller Erwartungen bin ich nach Phnom Penh geflogen. Der Flug war sehr lang und voller Spannung. Von Zürich über Dubai nach Bangkok und Phnom Penh, mit Aufenthalten an den jeweiligen Flughäfen - was aber kein Problem war, da es viel zu sehen gab und somit für Unterhaltung gesorgt war. Ich war etwas angespannt, ob wirklich auch alles klappt wie besprochen und ob ich auch wirklich vom Flughafen abgeholt werde. Die Einreise mit dem ganzen Ablauf der Visumsformalitäten machten mir Sorgen. Wie sich dann aber herausstellte, waren alle Bedenken umsonst. Die Einreise war überhaupt kein Problem, innerhalb einer Viertelstunde hatte ich mein Visum sowie mein Reisegepäck, und als ich die Ankunftshalle verließ, sah ich auch schon zwei freundliche Herren von Project Abroad, die mit einem großem Lächeln auf mich warteten und mich herzlich in Kambodscha willkommen hießen. Die Bedenken hatten sich im Nu in Nichts aufgelöst.

Meine Arbeitsstelle in Phnom Penh war das Waisenhaus „Home of Love“. Dieses Waisenhaus gehört zur Organisation von Mutter Theresa und wird von sechs Schwestern liebevoll geführt. Es gibt dort 20 kleine Kinder, das Kleinste war gerade mal 3 Wochen alt, als ich ankam, und das älteste 5 Jahre. Die Kleinen waren unglaublich süß und machten es mir einfach, sie im Nu ins Herz zu schließen. Der Start war nicht ganz einfach, eine Krankheitswelle hatte die meisten Waisenhäuser in Phnom Penh durch den Monat Juli auf eine harte Probe gestellt. Einige der Kinder waren sehr krank und hatten hohes Fieber. Die Situation hatte sich aber dann anfangs August langsam wieder etwas beruhigt. Meine Arbeit dort bestand aus Windeln wechseln, duschen, füttern, spielen, trösten und weiteren Aufgaben. Die Kinder brauchten viel Aufmerksamkeit, körperliche Nähe, Wärme und Zuneigung. Die drei Monate in diesem Waisenhaus gehören zu den schönsten Momenten meines Lebens. Ich bin dort hingegangen, um den Kindern etwas zu schenken, habe aber mehr zurückbekommen, als ich geben konnte. Für alle die gerne mit Kindern arbeiten, ist diese Arbeit eine echte Bereicherung.



Nach zwei Monaten Arbeit in Phnom Penh hatte ich mir zusammen mit einer anderen Freiwilligen aus Australien ein verlängertes Wochenende in Siem Reap gegönnt. Es war ein beeindruckendes Wochenende. Wir besuchten die riesigen Tempelanlagen von Angkor Wat – zum Teil auf dem Rücken eines Elefanten - und die Floating Villages. Anschließend besuchten wir noch den wirklich schönen und interessanten „Night Market“ von Siem Reap, wo all das Handwerk, das dieses Land zu bieten hat, zum Kauf angeboten wird. Dabei hatten wir auch die Gelegenheit, einem Kunstmaler bei seinem Handwerk zuzuschauen. Ich war von der Technik seiner Malerei und seinen Bildern sehr beeindruckt, und da ich selber ab und zu male,



habe ich versucht etwas von seiner Maltechnik abzuschauen. Eine Reise ins Landesinnere ist ein tolles Abenteuer mit vielen Überraschungen. Bei einem dieser Ausflüge habe ich die unglaubliche Brücke gesehen. So etwas habe ich noch nie vorher gesehen. In Europa wäre eine solche Brücke schon längst abgebrochen oder zumindest für die Überquerung gesperrt worden. Nicht aber in Kambodscha: hier wird sie täglich benutzt und das von Groß und Klein, von Fußgängern wie von Motorrädern. Auch ich habe sie überquert, es hat mich aber doch etwas Mut gekostet. Als ich am anderen Ende gut angekommen war, war ich aber recht stolz.



Kambodscha ist ein wunderschönes Land mit viel Potenzial. Die Leute sind sehr nett, freundlich und zuvorkommend, wo immer man hinget. Die Kinder offen, herzlich und immer bereit, einem eines ihrer süßesten Lächeln zu schenken oder beim vorbeigehen oder fahren zuzuwinken. Kambodscha und seine Menschen waren für mein Leben eine große Bereicherung. Ich hoffe, dass alle, die dieses Land bereisen oder dort als Freiwillige arbeiten, dieselben guten Eindrücke und Erfahrungen mit nach Hause nehmen dürfen.

Thank you so much Silvia We really appreciated that you have a lot of contributes for Cambodia and share your experiences to other.

Benjamin a Care volunteer at New Life Centre Organization

Article written by Benjamin Fulton from Australia



I awoke with a start on an early, humid Monday morning on the 28th of January in Siem Reap. In a couple of hours I would be starting my Care placement at the New Life Centre Organisation and I was starting to feel anxious and apprehensive about what I had signed up to do for two months. As I ate breakfast doubt started to creep into my head with every mouth full of toast, “you can’t do this Benjamin you’re going to be rubbish you’re not a teacher, you have absolutely no idea what you should be doing and the kids are going to eat you a life, you’re really in over your head this time Benjamin.”

When I arrived at the orphanage I was shown around by the director, who was a really awesome, kind and caring man. I was over whelmed by the primitive nature of the place every think seemed to be falling apart. I was then introduced to the kids, who all responded in the same

high-pitched tone “Hello Teacher, how are you?”, “fine” I replied feeling the butterflies in my stomach increase their rumbling at my lies. When class started the kids sprinted into the class room, the bigger kids throwing the small ones out of the way to get seats in the front row. I was impressed, back when I was in school I would of had to of been dragged kicking and screaming into class and would of hidden in the back row far as possible from my teacher, but these kids wanted to be in class they wanted to learn.



I struggled through my first one hour of teaching and it seemed to go well. It was a little difficult because I had to work out what level the children were at with their English. Some were of course better than others but I managed to think up activities on the fly that challenged everyone. After class I played with the kids, as they were mostly boys they seemed to enjoy having an older male in the orphanage that they could play with. I spent two hours picking up and throwing around kids, it was really good fun.

After the first couple of days I was able to settle into a routine. I would arrive at the orphanage around 08:00 teach English for an hour, hour and a half to the kids who had school in the afternoon, luckily I was teaching four amazing girls who didn't call me teacher but their big brother. Then I would play with the kids until I got picked up at 11:00 for lunch. I would then return to the orphanage at 14:00 where I would do the same: teach English to the kids who had school in the morning for an hour, hour and a half. This time the class was made up of mostly boys, these classes were a bit of a challenge because the kids had already been at school and didn't want to go back, but I was able to persuade them otherwise. Also at least two times a week I would clean the kids' rooms and ones a week I would make sure the kids were taking proper showers using soap and brushing their teeth. They were surprising good at maintaining their personal hygiene and they loved having me line them up in a row in their boardies spraying them down with a hose, covering them with soap and spraying them down again.

I also started to help repair things around the orphanage, we strengthened the main gate and extended the fence out to allow the kids more room to play, we were able to put a volleyball net up. I also helped organise a dirty weekend, where other volunteers with Projects Abroad came and helped out at the orphanage, we painted the dorms of the kids so they weren't a horrible concrete colour. It was really awesome to see the changes and to know I had been a part of making those changes to help improve the orphanage for the kids.

After two weeks the attitude of the kids changed, they realised that I was going to be hanging around for a long time and they all lowered their guard and allowed me in and accepted me emotionally. The biggest difference was they all stopped calling me teacher and

started to call me Ben. This really made a world of difference to me, I really began to enjoy my time here, and I started to develop bonds with all the kids and really grew to love them. I started to get excited when they learnt to spell a new word or they solved a problem without my help, it was amazing to watch them improve before my eyes. I don't think if I had of stayed for a month the kids would of accepted me like this, I am really glad that I chose to stay for two months. All the doubts I had at the beginning were gone as I grew in confidence in what I was doing and as all the kids said, "Ben is best teacher".

The only hard part I found in my time here was saying goodbye to all the kids and the staff. Yet all in all it was the most amazing, worthwhile experience of my life; I am so glad I made the decision to volunteer in Cambodia.

Thank you so much Benjamin. We really appreciated that you have a lot of contributes for Cambodia kids and share your experiences to other.

Diving & Marine Conservation project – March 2013 c

During March, 30 seahorse surveys were conducted. We found large adults and several pregnant males which was very exciting. A few volunteers even saw a male and a female together which is a rare sight. We have successfully built a large portion of the playground with some finishing touches to add during April. This month a few volunteers also took the initiative to repaint the English school. An ocean scene was painted on one wall with the kids helping to decorate it with fish and other aquatic animals.

Conservation Projects

Seahorse Surveys



Amanda found a seahorse on her first survey. A large female right next to her.

We have had a busy month training a lot of new volunteers in seahorse identification and survey methodology but it paid off with 30 seahorse sites surveyed this month. A lot of new volunteers are excited to be involved and getting very competent at identifying male and female seahorses.

Zac, our marine biologist, visited the island this month to talk to all the volunteers about his breeding programme on the mainland and encouraged all volunteers to get involved in both seahorse and reef surveys, as well as clean ups and jungle treks and teaching English. The

idea was to stress the importance of all aspects of the project in creating a marine protected area around the island. A lot of volunteers reacted well to this and have also been to the mainland to see the seahorses and new babies.

Reef Surveys

The reef team has been busy this month and are responsible for training a lot of newly certified divers in fish and invertebrate identification and survey methodology. We are keen to involve volunteers in reef and seahorse surveys, so to do this Emma has a big job on her hands. We have trained almost 15 new volunteers this month and continued to survey and monitor reef health and fish and invertebrate populations.



Figure 2 Nice visibility on reef dives with Emma.

Clean Ups

Some unexpected wind and storms meant the beach was more susceptible to rubbish coming in. The volunteers were great in keeping the beach as well as the area around the bungalows clean. As well as snorkelling the reef sites we cleaned right along the tide line in front of the bungalow which was really dirty from fluctuating tides.

Community Projects

Teaching

The volunteers decided to repaint the school this month so we were able to create an ocean scene on one wall while conducting a lesson on colours and aquatic life. The dive instructor, other volunteers and the kids were able to get involved and paint a beautiful scene.



The newly painted English school.

Community Playground

We have successfully built four platforms at varying heights in the playground. These have also been connected with ladders, rope nets, tyres and balance beams. We are just adding finishing touches over April and volunteers are keen to paint it. A few additions, as well as some shade, more sand and fresh paint will keep the volunteers involved over the coming months.

Other stuff...

We have had a round of trivia each week in the bungalow this month. The volunteers form groups of four to five and answer general knowledge, Khmer and seahorse questions. We have prizes for each member of the winning team and it helps the volunteers learning the Khmer language. We have also started a new BBC documentary "Oceans", which focuses on

a different sea around the world each week. It also involves a team of divers researching different groups of animals.

Ali Barlow

Project Coordinator, Cambodia

New Staff and Intern

Projects Abroad have promoted Man Hannafy, who previously a six months intern, to General Assistant and we have offered Chamrong an opportunity to be our intern for six months.

Welcome both of them to our Projects Abroad in Cambodia team.

Introduction from Man Hannafy



My name is Man Hannafy, and I am a staff member of Project Abroad Cambodia. In 2012, I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree of Education of Arts in English from Norton University. After graduated in 2012, I start working for Project Abroad Cambodia as an intern for six months and in April I was promoted to be a permanent staff member. I am very proud to be working with Project Abroad Cambodia. I have been working in the position of General Assistant, which has given me good experience. Thank you

to Projects Abroad Cambodia for giving me this opportunity.

Introduction from Peu Chamrong



My name is PeuChamrong, and I am 22-years-old. I just recently joined the Project Abroad Cambodia as the new internship staff. I was graduated high school and am a student currently pursuing a bachelor of International Relation (third year) at Pannasastra University of Cambodia. I will enjoy working as internship staff at Project Abroad Cambodia within this opportunity and I am really excited to join Project Abroad Cambodia and proud of this chance because I can be the part of the leading volunteer

organisation of the world which is working to promote voluntary work through its vision and mission. Moreover, to work in this position will offer good experience, relationship, and communication among the staffs in the organisation and foreign volunteers. However, I hope my contribution to the Project Abroad Cambodia team during my internship period will be an advantage and benefit for the organisation.

Finally, I would like to say thank to Mr. Mao Pises, Country Director, and all the staff who gave me this opportunity to work and learn, and I will try my best to perform the work effectively for the Project Abroad Cambodia team.

Dirty Weekend in Phnom Penh

Article written by Sophie Weidemann Andersen, Denmark

Even before I arrived in Cambodia, I had heard of the Dirty Weekend. The concept was introduced to all volunteers quite early on, through newsletters, where volunteers in Cambodia who had done a Dirty Weekend, told of their own experience with this event. I am quite happy to have been asked to write about my first Dirty Weekend, on Saturday the 23rd of March, 2013.



I am sure that volunteers to be, and volunteers that has been, have heard about the Dirty Weekend, but allow me to tell you nonetheless. Half your day is dedicated to helping out at a school, an orphanage, or any other public establishment in Phnom Penh. We were sent to the Bamboo Shoot School. The school needed help with decorating a fence and cleaning up in their library. We were less people than we had expected, so we ended up only decorating the fences, but it was no small feat!



They had some specific drawings they wanted on their fence, so we begun with tracing the drawings with pencils. I ended up working with Canadian Fran, who does the Human Rights Project, and lives in apartment 7, nearer the Russian Market. When satisfied with the sketch, we begun mixing the colors we needed, and when that was done, it was all about painting



away! You may think it would be easy to put a few paintings on a fence, but it was hard work! It was a very hot day, and we had to make sure we got enough liquids and food. We were given soda, water, a huge amount of snacks and a good lunch, so don't be worried about going hungry!

As it is custom, when a Dirty Weekend is finished, a group shot is necessary! From left to right: Coralie, Sophie (yours truly!), Fran, Josephine, Cassey and Charlotte.

I thought the Dirty Weekend was a great way to spend a day with other volunteers! Even if you don't consider yourself artistic at all, the kids and employees will be thrilled to see how you have contributed with beautiful paintings! My first Dirty Weekend was definitely not my last, and I look forward to the ones coming up in the future!

Dirty Weekend in Siem Reap

In Siem Reap, there was a Dirty Weekend at K.S.E.D.O where we helped fulfill the soil so as to build a new classroom when this placement has changed its location.

We thank to all our volunteers who happily participated in the event with us.

Hopefully, we will have more volunteers in next month.

PHOTO PAGE



Amelia and Alison preparing for their dive (Diving and Marine Conservation project in Cambodia).