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New Centers at Khemara Organization



Established in 1991, Khemara was the first local NGO in Cambodia which played a significant role in working for the advancement of women and children in Cambodia by working directly with communities. Its goal is to support vulnerable people including women, children and disadvantaged families by providing them with consultation, life skill capacity, proper intervention to take part in reducing poverty and providing non-educational to the children.

There are six running Day care centers in Phnom Penh; each center can fit about 25 to 40 children who are aged from 3 to 6. Function as a Day care center in a local community, ideally, they provide the basic Khmer and English language, the children will have lunch at the center and get some snacks in the afternoon. Keeping this sustainable, we have asked the parents to pay 1000 Riels which equal 0.25 dollars per day, which it is an encouragement to the parents that they should bring their children to the center every working day, so that the children are not home alone while they are going to work.

To understand that there are a lot of advantages for the children, local communities and the families; Projects Abroad decided to fully support Khemara Organization to open another three Day care centers, which was launched from January 2014.

There are five main goals that we expect to accomplish in a long term running at these centers, all includes: - to improve English language for children and local teachers, to accelerated Early Child development, to improve hygiene levels, to increase the level of stimulation of each child, and to improve quality of life for those living with children with disabilities.

We, Projects Abroad in Cambodia, believe that to allocate our volunteers to work at the center, get the support from our local staff, we will reach our goal and we would appreciate any helps, initiatives and pro-actively from our volunteers and staff.

Below is some pictures of the new centers and our volunteers who are currently working at each center, also the picture of the Volunteer Report Book that they are going to write each day so that the next volunteers who are coming to each center will get some idea of what they need to do and what to continue, so on and so forth.

2 Week Special in December

As December approaching, we were ready to welcome a lot of volunteers who came to Cambodia to offer their hand to help. Amid of that, we got two groups of 2 Week Special, which set up for students from 16 to 19 years old. One group were allocate to Siem Reap, another group to Phnom Penh.



In Siem Reap, they were supervised by our Operations Manage, Jessi and coordinator, Reangsey. They all arrived on the same date, so that we can start up the plan altogether. After picking them up from the airport, some were exhausted and some were ready to work with their talent. Starting on Monday, we had provide full induction in the morning and introduced them to the placement called New Hope for Orphans which is a non-profit Christian mission, dedicated to the rescue of orphans and widows through the local Church.

Beginning from Tuesday till the end on 23rd December, we realized that many great outcomes were done as planned, those includes making playground for the children at the center, where the children can jump on after class or within free time, painting and drawing fun and educational picture at the fence of the center which would be motivation for the children to learn and live in a good environment, teaching them basic English, playing educational game, cleaning up, helping out when they have lunch. Besides working at the center, our volunteer had a chance to explore the Cambodian culture. They were taken to Anghor Wat temple, a world famous heritage that is a must to see while visiting Cambodia, plus visiting other temple in Siem Reap, where introduced to a floating village – where it proofs the reality of local village living life. For free time, we went for shopping at a local market, have some fun at Pub Street – where it is famous for westerner, out for dinner and saw the traditional culture dancing.



The other group in Phnom Penh was leaded by our coordinators, Aimee and Kanika. The group had also done an amazing job, mainly activities included gardening vegetable at the center, hopefully, it would provide a basic food to the placement in a few months, playing and teaching children, feeding the disable children, packing donations for the villager ect. They also crab this chance to visit the

temple in Siem Reap, tour around Phnom Penh, the famous places such as Royal Palace, S21, National Museum and experienced the puppet show.

We at Projects Abroad really appreciated your hard work and for making a difference either for the children and the placement and we believe that you are a great inspiration for the next volunteers. Many thank everyone.

For more photos please [click here](#).

Article from Elisa Malacrida from Italy – Khmer Project



Quest'anno ho deciso di regalarmi un viaggio in Cambogia per Natale. Lavorando, si ha sempre poco tempo per viaggiare e per scoprire cose nuove, e a volte ci si fa anche impigrire dalla routine da lavoro da ufficio.

Per questo ho sentito la necessità di staccare dalla mia vita e di vivere una nuova esperienza, immergendomi completamente in un nuovo mondo. Avendo purtroppo solo quindici giorni di ferie ho trovato che il Progetto Khmer fosse il più adatto a scoprire davvero l'anima della Cambogia, e di questa cultura così lontana dalla nostra ma così affascinante.

Sono arrivata a Phnom Penh in una calda domenica d'estate, lasciando a casa il freddo inverno milanese.

La città ti accoglie in un caotico turbinio di motorini, macchine e claxon che suonano all'impazzata. Ma la differenza rispetto alle metropoli a cui siamo abituati è che, guardandosi intorno, nessuno sembra arrabbiato o stressato, sembra quasi che tutti conoscano e sappiano tranquillamente muoversi in quel perenne ingorgo della città!

L'indomani ho conosciuto Sython, la nostra guida, un giovane ragazzo cambogiano con il sorriso sempre stampato sulle labbra, e le mie compagne di viaggio. E lì è partita la nostra esplorazione della cultura, degli usi e dei costumi di questo splendido Paese.

Nella caotica capitale un primo impatto con la grandiosità dell'arte Khmer ci è arrivato dalla visita al Museo Nazionale, mentre il Palazzo Reale, residenza dell'ultimo re di Cambogia, ti avvolge in un'atmosfera di altri tempi.

Ma è il Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, testimonianza del genocidio cambogiano, il primo vero incontro con quello che è stata, ed inevitabilmente è, la Cambogia oggi. Attraverso le parole della nostra guida, una donna riuscita a scappare da quella stessa prigione con la madre e una sorella e che ha perso lì il padre e i fratelli, abbiamo rivissuto l'orrore e la paura in cui è immerso l'edificio, sede di una Scuola Superiore ribattezzata Ufficio di Sicurezza 21 (S-21) dal regime comunista degli Khmer Rossi, dove hanno trovato una morte tragica quanto assurda circa 17.000 persone.

Siamo poi partiti per Siem Reap, per immergerci nella magica Angkor, dove non puoi far altro che rimanere a bocca aperta davanti a quest'incredibile città di pietra immersa nella giungla, che ti si rivela piano piano in tutto il suo immenso splendore.

Ma niente è stato più bello ed emozionante di vivere e visitare la vera Cambogia, nei villaggi sul fiume o in campagna, dove bambini sorridenti ti salutano dalle finestre delle case e le signore ti guardano e ti dicono "ma forse tu sei già stato qui, mi sembra di conoscerti", perché per loro, lontani dalle mete turistiche e dalle macchine fotografiche, siamo tutti uguali!



La semplicità e la naturalezza di queste persone, con cui abbiamo raccolto il riso e creato vasi di argilla, è disarmante, lontani anni luce dal nostro modo di vivere, di pensare e di vedere le cose, e t'insegnano forse più di tanti musei.

Ci hanno aperto le porte delle loro case e ci hanno accolto con un sorriso nella loro vita, scandita spesso dai ritmi della natura e della famiglia.



Ciò che la Cambogia ti regala è la forza del suo popolo, della sua tradizione, la voglia di guardare alla vita con la semplicità di un sorriso.

Vedere un paese, con le sue inevitabili contraddizioni, le sue paure e le sue meraviglie, attraverso gli occhi di chi ci è nato e ci vive, è semplicemente ciò che ha reso unica quest'esperienza.

Volunteering in Cambodia

Article from Deepa Ramakrishnan – a volunteer at NBIC from Australia

Cambodia was honestly an amazing experience!! I was able to volunteer, meet so many locals, form friendships with volunteers from all around the world and site see around the beautiful country.



I was lucky enough to share this experience with my cousin. We both had an amazing time and learnt so much about the culture and practices that took place in Cambodia. I took part in the Care Project at NBIC. Some of my roles at NBIC included teaching the children, playing games with them, changing nappies, singing songs and performing various activities with them. It was such a rewarding experience!

The TukTuk driver would pick me up from the apartment on a daily basis and take me to and from my placement. In fact one of my most memorable moments of Cambodia was when the Children at the orphanage were able to ride on the TukTuk. The smiles and joy on their faces were just priceless.

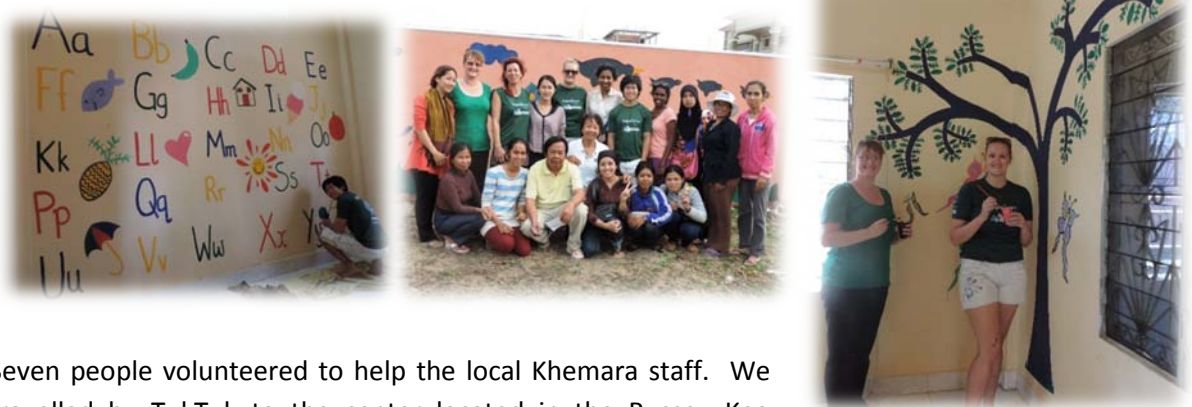
The apartment was a great place to come back to after the placement shift was over. The volunteers at the Project Abroad apartment were all very outgoing and friendly. They were always willing to have a chat, watch a movie, go out to dinner, go out to the local pub, site see and travel to different cities on the weekend.

Overall this was an amazing experience. I miss it so much, and I definitely would recommend you guys to volunteer with Projects Abroad.

Dirty Weekend in Phnom Penh

Thank you Leanne Gillespie for contribute the article on Dirty Weekend day.

Projects Abroad is partnered with Khemara Organisation, a local NGO (Non-Government Organisation), that provides day care and schooling for children growing up in the disadvantaged areas surrounding Phnom Penh. On Saturday 21st December, a social event – Dirty Weekend had been organised and we had an opportunity to help out, as Khemara is setting up a new Day Care Centre called Boeng Chouk on the outskirts of Phnom Penh.



Seven people volunteered to help the local Khemara staff. We travelled by TukTuk to the center located in the Russey Keo district which is about 40 minutes out of the city. On arrival at the centre we were greeted by a fully fenced yard with a couple of established trees leading up to a home which is being converted into classrooms, a kitchen and bathrooms.

As the yard was so large, we knew that unfortunately it would not all be completed in one day but other volunteers will complete what we have started. We divided into two groups, one inside and one outside. Each group working towards a common goal – make a fun and educational environment for the children.

I was on the inside group and we decided in room 1 to paint numbers – the number, the word and then the Khmer word. If time permitted, we would have also added a picture next to each one i.e., 2 balloons next to number 2.

In room 2 we painted the alphabet on one wall and a tree in the opposite corner spanning over two walls with butterflies. There is room for future volunteers to add further designs.

Outside the other group worked alongside the Khemara staff and laughter was often heard echoing throughout the grounds☺. Along the fence there was a range of designs painted; grass, flowers, butterflies, birds, rainbows, umbrellas, beach scenes etc. Additionally the entrance into the building was being painted by a teacher and students.

Each person that volunteered here had different strengths – some could draw and were fantastic artists others like me could paint once the design had been drawn. The staff working with us this day was amazing and so passionate. It was very warming to both see and be a part of it. It is definitely worth taking the opportunity to do something like this on your placement as you get to; meet some amazing people, have a lot of fun in the process and create a fun environment to the future students.

Future volunteers will finish off the painting, landscape the yard and build/install a playground which will give the children a great place to learn and play ☺.

Photo of the Month



A happy day, Amy showing a pair of splint for disabled girl, Baty.



Laetitia with her colleague Melanie taking photo with her students on their last day.



Fernando doing dental treatment for local student.



Nala and her daughter teaching at SCC.