Greetings from Sustainable Cambodia

We hope you enjoy these stories from our schools and the villages in which we work…

Sustainable Cambodia is guided by the Rotary principle of Service Above Self. The board of directors is made up of Rotarians and other unpaid volunteers. Our only paid staff are the Cambodians working onsite. Everyone else is a volunteer. Our funding comes from student sponsors, sustaining and special program donors, international service groups and Rotarians worldwide.

Programs include Education from as early as preschool through university and Village Development programs, including water, sanitation and hygiene along with agricultural and economic empowerment opportunities that build a self-sufficient and sustaining quality of life for students and families.

To sponsor a student, click below... If you're interested in Rotary, please consider visiting a club in your area. Ask us for the name of a club near you!

SPONSOR A CHILD!

Community Development Program

How a Single Well Changed A Family's Life

For a very long time, Mr. Vat, who is 69 years old, and his wife Mrs. Sim, who is 62, lived a very difficult life in Bakan village. Even though Mr. Vat was a leader in his community, the family had to spend almost all their money just to survive.

Every month, they paid a lot of money to buy clean water for drinking and washing. Every day, they also had to spend some money at the market to buy vegetables to eat. Because everything cost so much, they could never save any money for their future or for their emergencies.

Their lives changed when Sustainable Cambodia and kind donors had an opportunity to help the family with a water well and many types of seeds to plant. This support had a huge impact on their daily lives. Because they now have access to safe water, they never have to pay for water again. Mr. Vat and Mrs. Sim used the new water to start a large garden around their home. Instead of buying food, they now grow their own healthy vegetables. This has saved them more money and made their bodies stronger and healthier.

Today, Mr. Vat and Mrs. Sim are very happy and successful. Their garden grows so much food that they have more than they can eat. Mr. Vat now sells their extra vegetables at the market, earning between 10,000 and 40,000 riels each day **(approximately $2.50 to $10.00 USD)**. They even have enough to share food with their neighbors who are in need.

Mr. Vat and Mrs. Sim want to say a very big "thank you" to the donors who made this possible through Sustainable Cambodia. They are very proud because they can finally take care of themselves, and they are grateful for the kindness that gave them a better life.

A New Dream School

A New Branch of our Family Tree

Sixteen years ago, in a humble classroom without desks or tables, a little girl named Sichiv Sek raised her hand to join Sustainable Cambodia's English outreach program at SC's Agricultural Training Center (ATC). That simple act of courage began a remarkable journey. Despite studying on the floor and facing many challenges, her determination never wavered. Step by step, she continued her education until she reached university.

Today, she proudly serves as Deputy Operations Director of Sustainable Cambodia, overseeing the Child Sponsorship and Scholarship programs to ensure that children across Cambodia have the same chance to learn, grow, and dream as she once did. Her story is living proof of how education, family support, and donor kindness can transform lives and create lasting hope.

Now, under her leadership and alongside dedicated teachers like **Chantrea**, herself a former SC student who has returned to teach, SC's ATC School has officially opened its doors. With the support of local principals, 163 children from grades 4 to 6 were carefully selected, ensuring that families most in need could benefit.

The seeds of this new school were planted by the family of Kim Hong to honor their mother's vision to strengthen the daily lives and futures of Cambodian children. In a gift of remarkable timing, the Neall Family Charitable Foundation joined in the funding to bring this dream to life. Please watch for our ***Special Edition Newsletter*** *that will carry you through the emergence of this new branch of our Sustainable Cambodia Family Tree.*

On opening day, parents and students gathered with pride and excitement, receiving notebooks and pencils as symbols of opportunity, while teachers prepared through training to create a nurturing environment filled with discovery, teamwork, and joy.

Though classes have begun in a temporary space, construction is already underway on a new U-shaped school building with wide classrooms, a teacher's office, and a library built from the old school's wood, carrying forward its spirit into this new chapter.

Around the grounds, trees have been planted for shade, and plans for a community-built fence to improve the school campus reflect the shared commitment of families and neighbors.

More than just a school, ATC has become a community-driven dream, embraced by local leaders, parents, and former students as a symbol of resilience, equity, and opportunity.

Their gift is more than bricks and books; it is a legacy of compassion that will live on in every smile, every lesson, and every child who dares to dream bigger because of this school.

Chantrea is reading books with students

Students read the newbooks for the first time

The Community English Class

As the students beautifully expressed,

"Thank you for the gift of our new school, the home of dreams and learning."

Volunteer Spotlight - by Nele Schultze

Name: Nele Schultze
Volunteer Role: Teaching and Co-Teaching (English, Math, Research Class)
Duration: 4 Weeks

What inspired you to choose volunteering at SC?
I studied to become a primary school teacher, and I have always wanted to use my knowledge to help in another country. For me, it was important not only to travel, but also to support children and gain new experiences in a different culture. Cambodia has always been a very interesting country for me. When I learned about Sustainable Cambodia and its focus on education and long-term support for communities, I felt that this was the right place for me to volunteer and learn at the same time.

What role do you take on at SC, and what does it involve?
My role at Sustainable Cambodia is mainly supporting teachers and students in the classroom. I help during lessons, work with the children, and support them with their learning. I also speak English with the Khmer and math teachers to help them improve their English skills and feel more confident using the language. With the children, I focus a lot on English conversations, helping them learn new words, practice speaking, and feel comfortable using English in class.

Where do you see your work make an impact?
I can see my impact mainly in the confidence of both teachers and students. The teachers are speaking more English and feeling confident about it. The children are very open and curious. They enjoy asking questions, learning about different cultures, and speaking English. Many of them are proud when they can use new words or have small conversations, and they are very happy when someone takes the time to speak English with them.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering here?
What I enjoy most is the happiness and openness of the children. They are always excited to talk, learn, and share their thoughts. You can really feel their motivation and joy when they come to school. It is very rewarding to see their smiles and to know that even small moments and conversations can make a difference.

What have you learned through your time at SC?
Through my time at Sustainable Cambodia, I have learned how important encouragement and patience are in education. Small positive words can give students a lot of confidence. I have also learned to appreciate simple things more. The children's curiosity, kindness, and happiness showed me that learning is not only about books, but also about connection, respect, and enjoying the moment.

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