



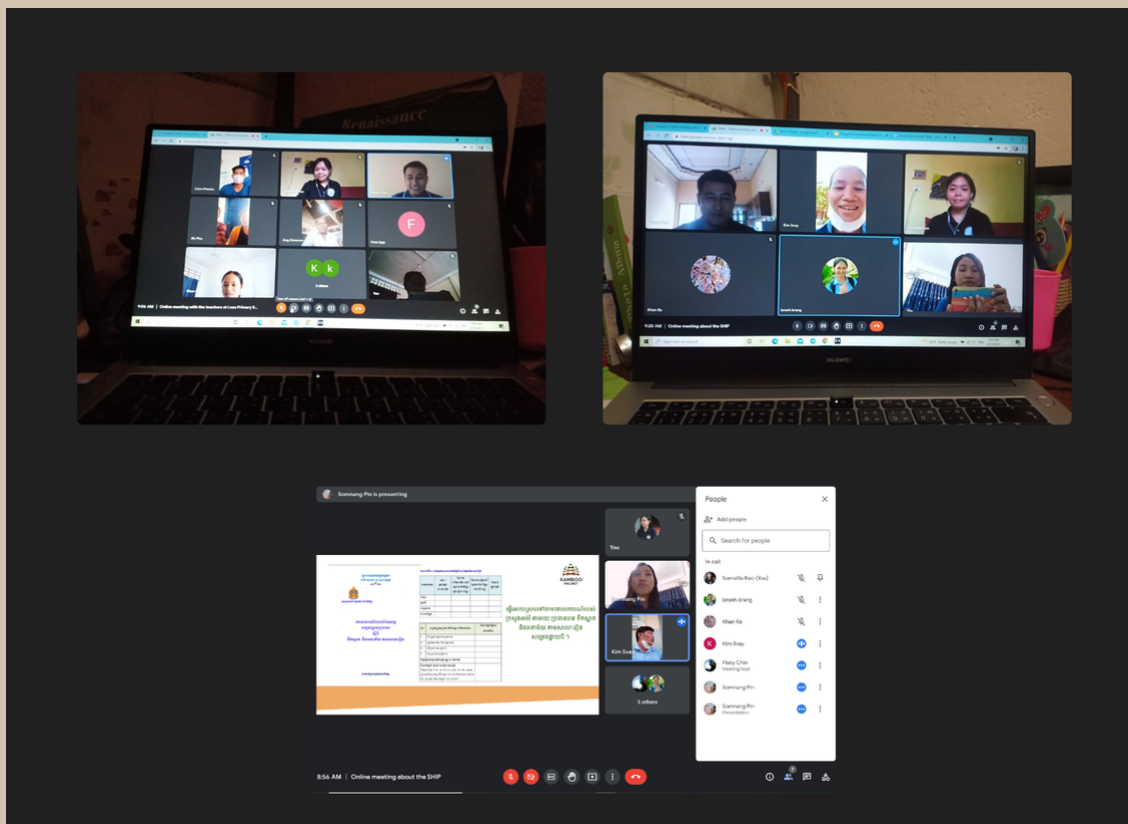
KAMBOO PROJECT

Supporting Cambodians

Kamboo Project Newsletter December 2021

Dear friends of Kamboo Project

Let us look back at the months of September, October and November 2021. The most important question is always: Are we making progress with our projects? The pleasant answer: absolutely yes!



Let's start with this: The financial base and security of our School Hygiene and Improvement Program, or SHIP, was never at risk during the pandemic. On the contrary, donations and support even picked up speed in 2021.

For those who may be reading our newsletter for the first time (the others are welcome to skip the following two paragraphs): Kamboo Project is active in Cambodian schools focusing on three aspects. First, we promote and support the construction and rehabilitation of school facilities with a focus on the sustainability of the projects. Secondly, we are particularly concerned with drinking water and sanitation, especially in schools, and thirdly, we give direct support for education. This ranges from paper and stationery to learning materials and bicycles as will be discussed further below. What we do and initiate reaches far into the families and communities.

But back to SHIP. SHIP always links the upgrading of a school's buildings and sanitary infrastructure with hygiene training. Teachers at the school concerned are responsible for implementing the behavioral training. Wash basins and hand washing stations, sanitary facilities, hygiene training and workshops and

even such simple things as fences around schools seem so self-evident from our Western point of view that we easily lose sight of how essential they are on the ground. They provide security and make the actual education possible in the first place.



As of November, there are nine schools participating in SHIP. Attentive newsletter readers will notice that three schools have joined since September 2021. We have presented the program in detail online to the schools, i.e. the teaching and management staff, in orientation workshops. Before reopening for the new school year on November 1, the new additions to the program confirmed their collaboration with us in writing and pledged their own active participation. This active role of the schools themselves is at the core of SHIP. We help with equipment, support with hygiene trainers, but most importantly we train the teachers who bring the program to life every day and guide and motivate the learners.

The students learn a lot about hygiene and, just as important, they can practice and reinforce the right behavior. So far, we have built twelve hand washing stations in six primary schools, installed toilets in three schools and repaired the toilet facilities in one school. Each school is responsible for 15 percent of the cost, and once completed, they are also responsible for the facilities and for the program as a whole. The schools thus make SHIP their own project. And they do it with great commitment.



Waste management is another important aspect of SHIP. Schools in rural areas of Cambodia often struggle to separate their waste for recycling. And this is simply because they lack the budget for even the simplest equipment on campus. We distributed waste bins to "our" nine schools, but not ready-made: signs and text for labeling were up to the schools, which let them take ownership of the bins, so to speak. Paper, plastic and residual waste: by now, the students know exactly what this means.



What do bicycles have to do with education? A lot. School routes in Cambodia are often arduous, public transport is not available everywhere, and not infrequently the route determines how many days a child can come to school, or whether he or she comes at all. Back in 2020, the company woom supported us with a very nice fundraiser that the company christened "Bells for a Better Life". The manufacturer of children's bikes in Austria sold bicycle bells in its online shop, the proceeds of which went to Kamboo Project. In the meantime, some bicycle dealers in Switzerland have also participated with fundraising campaigns after they heard about this project.

As in the previous year, we asked our schools which children would be particularly helped by a bicycle. Our Cambodian team then visited the families, and we were indeed able to promise all of these students a bicycle. We have already handed over 35, the rest will follow by the end of the school year. Of course, all of them with bells. We thank woom and all other supporters very much!



Fundraiser? Runs - even without a marathon. Originally, our Cambodian team, not all of them, only the more sports-affine ones, wanted to participate in the Angkor Half Marathon in order to raise some funds. The marathon was cancelled, due to corona, but we ran anyway. On the beach, 10 of course carefully measured kilometers, during the annual retreat on Kong Roh Island. Three team members were the active participants in the Kamboo Project Running Event, earning the equivalent of an impressive 200 packs of school supplies, each a backpack, shoes, books, paper and pencils. According to reports, sore muscles reminded them of the good deed for several days.

Already in October 2020, with the help of a new sponsor, the *South East Asia Foundation*, we distributed **food packages** to students in the Prasat Bakong district for the first time. Food aid is not really part of our self-imposed mission, but where help is needed and funds are available, it makes sense that we contribute. We have also worked with monks from Wat Kesarm and Wat Domnak temples who have distributed food parcels to villagers around Tonle Sap Lake and to families in Kleang district, Kampong Thom province.



This November, we partnered with *The Together Project* (TTP), which provides food to those most in need. The TTP is a sub-organization of the Cambodian non-governmental organization Rural Schools Support Organization, established only in 2019, and seeks to maintain food supplies in the Covid-19 pandemic for families at massive risk of hunger with the help of primarily US donations. Now we have a promise that we will be supported by the TTP with a grant that will allow us to fund three more months of food assistance. Together with the teachers, we will select the one hundred students most in need. Unfortunately, the need for food aid far exceeds our budget, but we are doing our best to make an impact.

In July 2021, we learned about the *Human and Hope Association*, a local non-governmental organization that is running an exciting project **to provide food from their own gardens**. The project fits also to the families of our schools and could help to cushion the loss of income and the food shortage in the pandemic at least a little bit, we thought. And we sought contact. We started our collaboration with a pilot project. The *Human and Hope Association* has started with free training and support in growing strategies for food supply from their own garden or field, which has given the families of the students of our schools valuable start-up help. We launched the practical phase in July by purchasing seeds for five families and are visiting and advising families regularly. The pilot project generates enough food for about 30 people, and some of the fruits can even still be sold on the market to generate a small income.



We are strengthening our connection to the communities with the garden project and see that this help for self-help works very well. However, we also have limited possibilities to find and approach new donors at the moment, so that the funds for the project are very scarce at the moment. We can use part of the financial support from the TTP (see above) for the garden project. The budget will be enough for about 20 families.

Additional money for the garden project comes from the **donation boxes from seven shops** in Siem Reap. We have already mentioned the donation boxes in a previous newsletter, and for those who wonder what has become of them: they are indeed well received and fed with small sums by the customers. Our heartfelt thanks to the shop owners who put up the donation boxes in their shops.



Many people who still remember our report on the [Geberit social project](#) from 2019 are certainly asking themselves: "What has become of it?" The Swiss company had financed and built school buildings and sanitary facilities, mainly for the Arranh Rangsey Primary School, partly with the active help of the company's apprentices who came to Cambodia. The school has since flourished, the number of students has risen, the illiteracy rate has fallen and the number of cases of illness has been reduced to a minimum. Everyone has fond memories of the Geberit team and their work. A big thank you again!

Above the short-term projects, we do not forget the future generations. The Kamboo Project team has been involved in a great activity with the elementary schools in our area, where the students show their **responsibility for the environment and the future by planting trees**. We plan to hold our own event in our communities next year on Earth Day, for which we still need the funding. We plan to work with the Ministry of Environment and hope to get tree seedlings at a discounted price. And we are counting on broad community participation, beyond the schools and learners we support.



Instead of a conclusion, this time we would like to end our newsletter with our newly formulated vision and mission. We have updated it, with a view to our actual work, and above all have placed the focus more strongly on the team and the work on the ground. It has remained short and concise:

Our Vision:

Cambodians work together to meet the basic needs of children.

Our Mission:

We combine donations and voluntary work with a dedicated team in Cambodia to help children learn in a safe environment. We leverage our extensive knowledge of local needs and build effective collaborations with teachers, parents and communities to achieve sustainable impact.

If you want to support our numerous actions with a donation, now is the right time:

[Donate now](#)

With warm regards
Your Kamboo Project Team



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