

How are things for you both? How is Nitrogenx going? The end of the year is coming again so quickly...

Here in Cambodia, November is the month of Water Festival and National Independence Day, so we have had holidays! There are many, many both religious and secular public holidays, it is just incredible - feels like we have them every month! The weather has been beautiful and the sky has been blue... so it's been perfect for holidays.

I'm not sure if you're aware of the latest COVID-19 news in Cambodia, but we had a diplomat visit who didn't wear a mask or social distance and had COVID-19. The repercussions of the visit have been minimal actually. The whole country went into another compulsory two week lockdown. Schools were closed, including our Flame after school activity centres, cinemas and places of public gathering and the city became quite quiet again. But, the two week shut down finished on Monday with no community transmissions, so again, another bullet has been dodged. One of the ministers that the Hungarian Foreign Minister met with, contracted COVID-19 and had met with over 220 families which in total added up to 1400 people in a couple of rural areas. The quick and clear response to the event have proven effective and it seems there were only 4 positive cases of COVID-19 from the visit.

So, here we are again with all of our After School Centres up and running again since Monday, and we are ensuring that each child follows the COVID-19 safety regulations with hand sanitizing, temperature taking and some mask wearing by some people. As you can see in the picture below - actually not that much mask wearing since there is zero community transmission.



At one of our central city centers, the one right in the community next to the open sewer, we have had so many children that they don't quite fit in the space... so our staff asked if we could put an extension on the roof. We received funding and have wanted to go ahead but the roof extension has been delayed as we have not been given permission. The land is owned by the government in that area, so any make-shift buildings there are all officially illegal. We are very aware that this is a centre that will not be able to continue in its current location for much longer. There have been huge earthworks around the open sewer and it's just a matter of time before the area is completely razed for new development.



Huge news on the admin side is that this past month we have been awarded our new iNGO status with the government. This registration took approximately six months and has been the ongoing headache of the admin staff! We are so happy to have our registration out of the way again for the next three years! What a relief! CHEERS!

I'm not sure if I have mentioned but some donors bought us land to build a centre on. We have finalized the design and are waiting to hear of the work actually starting. We estimate that this will take two months to complete. Vandeth our National Director has negotiated with the builder and has managed to agree to get an extra two classrooms built inside the building for very little extra cost. The building costs have all been covered by a foundation in the UK and a donor in NZ :) it's wonderful to see people pulling together to help the kids here.

One of the young boys at our Boeung Tumpun After School Centre has lost his home. They were renting and five homes were burned down because of a dispute about someone owing someone else money and being unable to pay. There are three children in the family and we are glad that nobody was hurt, but they lost everything. The Red Cross donated a bag of rice and our partnering local football team have helped the family with a generous donation. On the weekend, we visited the family and the kids and the wider community got to shake hands with a football star. This was special! The Singaporeans who are partnering with the Sensok Centre build donated hand sanitizer and face masks for the entire community, which the football star gave out while we were there visiting the family. We will do a media release later in the week locally and just show that when disaster strikes, these vulnerable families are not alone. I think it's a beautiful picture of people caring for one another. (The picture below is of the burned area. You can see the kind of houses they usually live in on the left side of the picture.)



Thanks so much for your support. We simply could not do what we do without the help of kind and generous people like yourselves.