

**STORIES OF
COVID-19
IN
POIPET,
CAMBODIA**

2021
Spotlight!



**PROJECT
BATTAMBANG**

FOREWORD

I remember the look of apprehension Mac and I shared when we had our first meeting with our seniors for the project to be handed down to us. There was a great deal of uncertainty about where the project was headed - certainly an OCIP that can't go overseas isn't really an OCIP?

Almost starting from scratch was exciting. We could set the direction, innovate and fantasise, but some days it felt like we were scrambling to find things to do just for the sake of it and continuing the project.

And that's when we decided to go back to basics: get to know who we're working with and how they're coping with the pandemic.

This publication hopes to shed light on how the pandemic has affected our brothers and sisters in Cambodia. Our committee has worked tirelessly to interview various individuals, from our scholars to the sisters of MSSHJ, to understand the situation on the ground. We've seen their courage and determination to step forward and help the community, and the past few weeks of working on this publication has been nothing but inspiring.

Looking forward, we're excited about a few of the initiatives lined up and for our incoming freshmen to take them even further and to continue working with all the doctors, nurses, volunteers, sponsors and students who make the project what it is today. Till then, we hope this publication provides a greater insight into who the people behind the project are and their stories.

*Edmund Zhang & Mac Teo
Project Directors of 21/22*



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FACES OF BATTAMBANG

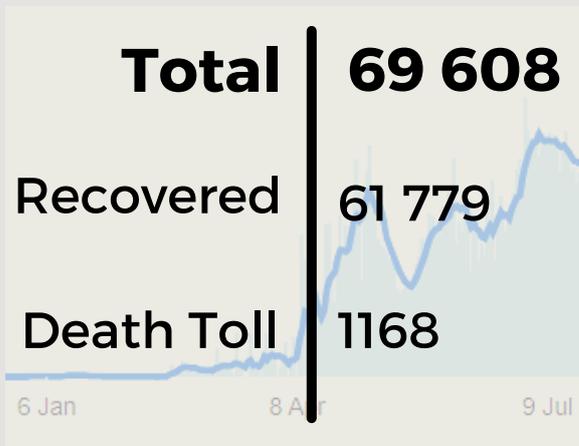
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COVID-19 IN CAMBODIA

Statistics as of 23 July 2021



Key Events

20th February 2021

- Sudden spike in cases
- Spread to 25 provinces in a week
- Government order of school and entertainment venues closure

15th April 2021

- Government order of 2-week lockdown in Phnom Penh, extended till 6th May 2021

30th June 2021

- Highest daily number of COVID-19 cases: 1130

Management of COVID-19

National Vaccination Master Plan



9 month programme
April - December 2021



1 million doses per month
10 million doses by Dec 2021



32.1% vaccinated
(as of 23rd July)

Zoning System in Selected Areas

- ✗ Not allowed
- ✓ Permitted
- ✗ Limited

	YELLOW	DARK YELLOW	RED
Schools, entertainment clubs, massage, liquor stores, cinema, museums	✗	✗	✗
Gatherings with more than 10 people OR for <i>alcoholic beverages</i>	✗	✗	✗
Curfew from 2000 to 0500hrs	✓	✓	✓
Essential gatherings	✓	✓	✗
Running of markets and businesses	✓	✗	✗

Emergency Social Assistance Programme



Government to provide one-time cash transfers to

- Low-income Households
- Affected by COVID-19 lockdowns
- Families with members who passed due to COVID-19 or are infected

IMPACT OF COVID-19

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Recession



- ~3 billion revenue loss from Tourism
- Slowest economic growth since 1994
- -3.1 % Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contraction in 2020

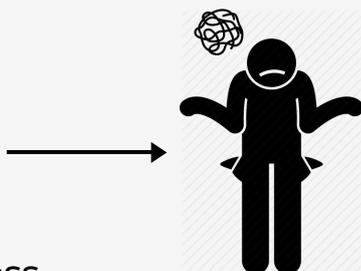
Loss of Income



50% income loss

for 6 months

for households engaged in tourism, wholesale and retail trade, garment, construction or manufacturing



Poverty to increase between 3 to 11%

Deficits & Debts



By 2022, public debt is expected to rise to 35% of the gross domestic product (GDP)

Fiscal deficit could reach its highest level in 22 years by 2022



Above information is a summary and overview of the economic state of Cambodia as of July 2021.

SOCIAL IMPACT

Healthcare

Hospitals have exceeded capacity:

- Temporary hospitals in stadiums and care centers
- Some in need of medical attention are told to quarantine at home

Lack of access to healthcare for the indigenous people of Cambodia, putting them at greater risk of contracting COVID-19

Food Insecurity



20% rise in food prices, coupled with loss of income

Unclear regulations: some unable to leave red zone for food runs



NGOs barred from red zones, making it difficult to provide food relief

Education

Inequality gaps have broadened due to the *increased use of online education* as a result of the lockdowns



Lack of stable internet connection in rural areas



Lower quality online education programmes in public schools



Lack of support programs & facilities for the less-abled students

ABOUT POIPET

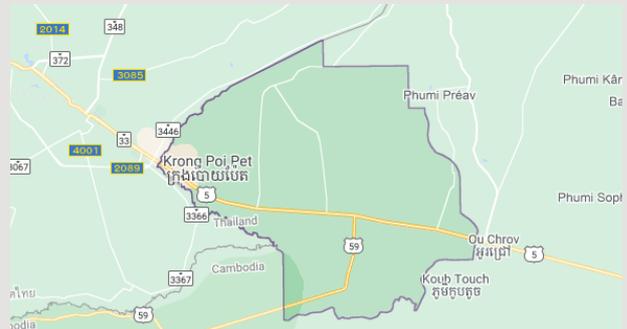
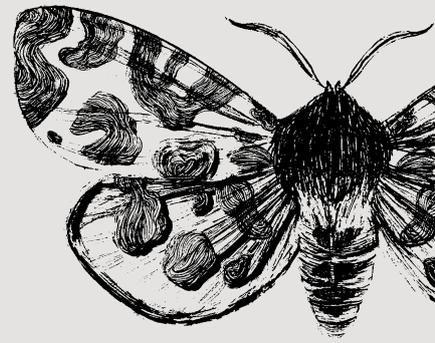
INTRODUCTION TO POIPET

Poipet, a town in Northwest Cambodia in the Banteay Meanchey province, lies near the Cambodia/Thailand border. As such, it serves as a key crossing point between the two countries, and is also a popular gambling destination. With about 98,000 people living in Poipet, it has been growing at a rapid pace.

Poipet has an apparent reputation of offering a new and prosperous start to the poor. As a result, many underprivileged Cambodian families flock to Poipet from all over the country in hopes of a better future. Many hope that the thriving cross-border trade and starting small businesses might make them a better living. Yet in reality, economic opportunities for the less educated and skilled are scarce, and the majority of Poipet's inhabitants are surviving on the bare minimum with an unpredictable tomorrow.

Over the past two decades, despite steady economic development in Cambodia, and by extension Poipet, poverty and large inequalities persist.

Even after 20 years of the end of the civil war and genocide by the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia is ranked 138th out of 186 countries in the Human Development Index, a relatively lower position than its regional neighbours. 22.8 % of Cambodians live below the poverty line, surviving on less than \$1.25 a day. Amidst that, children are amongst the most vulnerable group.



Poipet, Cambodia





ON THE GROUND

COVID-19 IN POIPET

Gambling, tourism and textile production have been the main pillars of Poipet's economy. The loss of tourism and reduced border activity has resulted in widespread unemployment, halted migration and food insecurity. Furthermore, Cambodia was struck by one of the worst floods in decades, displacing around 700 households in Poipet.

At the end of June 2021, the vaccination program was rolled out. More residents of Poipet are coming forward to get their doses. Education-wise, government-mandated school closures led to some lessons being conducted via the telephone, instead of online due to poor internet connection. Our partner school Mother of Peace Kindergarten (MOPK) has also closed their hostels as per government regulations.

With the closure of casinos and lack of foreign income from closed borders, the people of Poipet have resorted to rummaging through rubbish piles for plastic to sell and have even recently started salvaging food. Despite the ban on such activities due to the high transmissibility of COVID-19, these warded landfills still see crowds going through the wastes in the hopes of gaining some income.





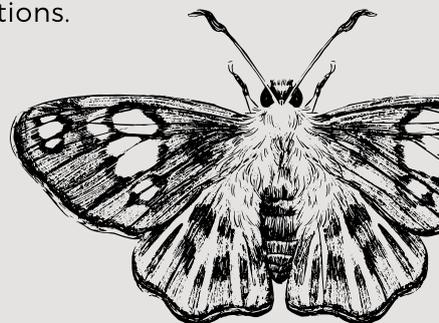
ON THE GROUND

OUR PARTNERS IN POIPET

As part of the Missionary Society of The Sacred Heart of Jesus (MSSHJ) in Poipet, Cambodia, Sister Gomi and Sister Cecilia have also been actively helping the Poipet community in the current tumultuous situation. MSSHJ is a key partner of Project Battambang in coordinating screenings for the Mother of Peace Kindergarten (MOPK) back in the pre-covid era. Currently, MSSHJ keeps us updated on how our Light-A-Dream Scholars are doing.

The sisters and Bondol, a Project Battambang member, have been receiving donations from various sources for the livelihood of the people of Poipet. Dr Ong has also kindly donated to the cause. These donations have been used to purchase staples such as rice, egg and food for the less fortunate. On top of that, families with members who are ill or are facing financial difficulties will be prioritised to receive monetary support from the sisters.

These acts of kindness by the sisters and Bondol are an act of solidarity, a gesture for the villagers of Poipet to show them that they care. Around 30 families will be benefiting from the donations.



ON THE GROUND

IN PHNOM PENH WITH OUR CAMBI COMMITTEE

As mentioned in our infographic, the number of COVID-19 cases in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, has been on the rise as of July 2021. Many of our Cambodian Committee members living in Phnom Penh have been heavily involved in the COVID-19 Taskforce.

Initially, the team was involved in lower-risk duties, such as administering vaccinations to the citizens living in the vicinity. However, the rising numbers resulted in most of them being deployed in hospitals to help out with the treatment of COVID-19 cases. Their shifts usually span 10 hours a day, 3 times a week.



LOVE ABOVE ALL ELSE

IN PHNOM PENH WITH OUR LAD SCHOLARS

One of Project Battambang's most defining features is its Light-A-Dream Scholarship (LAD Scholarship), which funds Cambodian students through various stages of their education, from secondary to tertiary schooling. Thanks to our generous donors, the LAD Scholarship has opened up many doors for our Cambodian students, helping them receive higher education and empowering them as they chase their dreams. Among the four LAD Scholars interviewed, Sok An, Kong Sokeang, Thit Kim Seng as well as Nob Vichet, three of them aspire to be teachers, while one of them hopes to become a doctor. During our interview, they mentioned that the LAD Scholarship has given them the resources to study hard. Additionally, the alleviation of the financial burden of education has allowed them to meet international counterparts with whom they can practice speaking English.



OUR LAD SCHOLARS



We are heartened to note that the scholarship is making a real difference in the lives of our students, who are themselves working hard to make the most of these opportunities. As a project, we stand for love and empowerment. We believe that education is a force of good that can help our students lead fulfilled and meaningful lives, as well as to eventually attain a higher quality of living. Our LAD Scholars share this belief, with many of them reflecting that they would someday like to return to Project Battambang as volunteers so that they can share their knowledge with future generations of scholars.

With the COVID-19 pandemic ravaging at full force, Cambodian schools have been temporarily shut down, with teaching and learning being brought to the home setting instead. Our students currently attend classes either online or through telephone, which hasn't been easy on them. They mentioned that studying online is not ideal for learning as it makes it harder to understand what the teacher is saying. Moreover, the inability to meet and interact with classmates has also made the learning process a lot more challenging and lonely. We can all only hope that the Cambodian government is able to mitigate the situation soon.



FACES OF BATTAM BANG

LOVE ABOVE
ALL ELSE

CHAPTER 1

SENIORS OF BATTAMBANG

Our seniors Tan Jian Shiun and Avelyn Aw share with us some of their biggest takeaways from the project as well as their #whybattambang

CHAPTER 2

DOCTORS OF BATTAMBANG

Our founding father, Dr Ong, and one of our project pioneers, Dr Ellie, give us insight into the early days of Project Battambang

CHAPTER 3

CAMBODIAN COMMITTEE

Here we introduce Sisters Cecilia, Gomi as well as Bondol, our Cambodian team members, who have been indispensable contributors to the project

CHAPTER 4

LAD SCHOLARS

Get to know some of our former Light-A-Dream Scholarship recipients, Sok An, Kong Sokeang, Thit Kim Sing and Nob Vichet

CHAPTER 1: SENIORS OF BATTAMBANG

Featuring:

Tan Jian Shiun (Batch 19/20)

Avelyn Aw (Batch 18/19)

Tan Jian Shiun

Why Project Battambang?

I was actually already inspired to join the Project even before my first year in University started. During the break before the start of the first semester, I decided to go for a medical mission trip to Cambodia. During the trip, I saw that many Cambodian villages relied heavily on annual health screenings provided by the medical mission teams for their health checkups as they did not have easy access to local healthcare institutions. The trip opened my eyes to the poorer medical infrastructure in developing countries like Cambodia, which was a stark contrast to a country like Singapore which already has a well developed healthcare system. It was from this trip that I realised how much of a role such trips actually had in contributing toward the universal goal of delivering health to all. As cliché as it may sound, this was definitely something I wanted to be a part of and joining Project Battambang undeniably helped me contribute toward the same goal again.

What Makes the Project So Special?

For me, it is definitely the strong alumni culture. Many of the seniors who were previously part of the Project continue to contribute and help out the project, some of them even follow us during our trip to Cambodia!



Greatest Impact on You?

During my trip in Cambodia with Project Battambang, I had a conversation with a Cambodian boy at a village who informed me that his father had recently suffered a motorbiking accident and was critically injured. While early medical attention and treatment did indeed save his father's life, the root cause of the problem was actually the narrow accident-prone roads of Cambodia due to poor infrastructure. Even till now, whenever I think of this story I am always reminded of how much and yet how little Medicine can do to help those in need.

Greatest Misses

Pork rice.

Best Memory

My fondest memories were definitely playing with the children at MOPK, it was very enjoyable!

Impact of COVID-19

Personally, I feel like the importance of the Project has grown even more during this global pandemic. The COVID-19 virus has not only impacted Singaporeans but has also significantly impacted the Poipet community as well. Even if we are not able to help their community physically, I think that we can do our best and support them emotionally and provide for their mental healthcare.



Avelyn Aw

Why Project Battambang?

I joined Med School knowing that I wanted to be a part of an OCIP. However, through the different interviews and interactions with the seniors from the different OCIPs, Project Battambang's mission was the one that resonated with me the most! So it was an obvious choice for me.

What Makes the Project So Special?

I think that the project allows for everyone to have their own ways to contribute, allowing anyone to have their own unique sense of contribution and belonging to the project. Other than that, it is definitely the strong culture within the project that allows for me to get to know both my juniors and seniors, as well as the committee and scholars from Cambodia!

Greatest Impact on You

I learned a lot about re-examination and re-evaluation during our trips to Cambodia. Over the course of our trips, my initial views on issues like sustainability and respect were constantly challenged and transformed by our experiences there, our project mentors, and the people we met.

Greatest Misses

To be honest, I miss everything about Project Battambang. I miss the pre-trip excitement and apprehension when we plan meticulously for the actual trip. I miss everything about the trip itself, from being able to see our plans materialise to the lunch and dinners in the villages and making new friends there. Even recalling it now, it certainly is a bittersweet feeling.



Best Memory

My fondest memory was during our last trip to Cambodia. For this trip, we had designed several health education posters with the help of the Cambodian committee which were meant to help raise awareness of healthcare issues within the village. I remember the Cambodian committee was holding up posters and sharing about them with the village community, who were very deeply engaged! To me, it was not only great to see my work come to fruition and be able to empower villagers to take ownership of their own health, but it was also an opportunity for the Cambodian committee to help the underprivileged in their own country.

Impact of COVID -19

I am a little disappointed that we will not be able to go back to Cambodia in the near future but I am still excited to see how my juniors will be able to adapt to the new situation and work with the Cambodian committee. Personally, I think that the pandemic has presented a great opportunity for the different OCIPs to come together for a combined initiative!

Favourite Place in Cambodia

Phnom Penh! I would love to follow the Cambodian committee back to the city where they live and study in and experience their country through their eyes.



LOVE.
INTEGRITY.
BENEFICENCE.
RESPECT.
ACCOUNTABILITY.
SUSTAINABILITY.



Shant Sin

On the left extreme



Why Project Battambang?

Well for me, there were a few reasons that I decided to join the project. For starters, I think that the location of the project (Poipet, Cambodia) is very special compared to the other OCIPs as many of the rural villages were near the border between Cambodia and Thailand. This provided us with the rare opportunity to learn more about the unique day-to-day life of the villagers whose livelihoods depended on jobs they held across the border.

Other than that, I think it would be our emphasis on sustainability. I wanted to join an OCIP for an experience different from my previous experiences with overseas service trips. I wanted to be able to have a long-term impact on the communities that I helped rather than the short-term impacts which I had become accustomed to.

What Makes the Project So Special?

Its sustainability. Without a doubt. The initiatives that we implement target things ranging from the community's perception of healthcare to funding education of talented students. I also think that Project Battambang has a strong culture. Not only do we have a strong and loyal alumni but also a great relationship with the Cambodian committee and volunteers. Throughout my 2 years in the project, it always heartens me to see how the project was able to bring people from all walks of life to work collectively towards a common goal.

Greatest Impact on You

I think it greatly changed what I saw as "legitimate" positive impact. Ultimately, we have to realise that there is only so much an overseas volunteer group can do in the local community. Facing impediments like lack of cultural understanding and a language barrier, the "legitimate" impact that we have comes from the personal experiences shared with those that we had the pleasure to serve.

Greatest Misses

The rustic and homely communal meals we had as a whole committee at MOPK, all of which were freshly cooked by members in our Cambodian committee.

Best Memory

Friendship night! Long story short, it is an event we hold at the end of each LADs camp where performances are prepared by the scholars, Singapore and Cambodian committee. From dancing to a catchy and groovy Cambodian dance to embracing your fellow mates with a slow sing-along to a nostalgic song, it is undoubtedly the most memorable night of every trip.

CHAPTER 2: DOCTORS OF BATTAMBANG

Featuring:
Dr Ong Yew Jin (Founder)
Dr Ellie (Early member)

Dr Ong Yew Jin



About Dr Ong

Dr Ong is the mainstay of Project Battambang. Since our inception in 2010, he has served as our Project Mentor, leading every team of Singaporeans & Cambodians to Battambang and guiding us in our initiatives. A Palliative Care Physician by profession, Dr Ong has served many communities, including the Singapore Cancer Society as its Medical Director previously. Passionate about helping overseas communities, he firmly believes that there are many aspects beyond medical aid that each of us can contribute to help.

Why I Began Mentoring Project Battambang

I was involved in Project Sa'bai - I was one of the doctors in 2009. Back then, that project was working with a group of Sisters, who coordinated the activities. Another group of Sisters further up in the North were also interested in starting a similar project in the city of Battambang, so I met up with them in Phnom Penh where they told me more about the situation there. So you see, the reason why the project is named after Battambang, even though we no longer serve there, is because in the first year (2010), we spent a week each in Poipet and Battambang. A few tutors from Project Sa'bai joined Project Battambang when they completed their work there.



What Makes Project Battambang Unique?

It is a student-led project! And what makes Project Battambang different is its programmes, one of which is the LADS Camp and the LADS Scholarship - the fact that the project supports the youths in their education.

My Most Important Lesson from Project Battambang

Firstly, If we want to make a difference, it needs to be long term as it is really hard to make a difference with no relationship established and if interactions are touch-and-go. When we want to change lives, it doesn't happen overnight- it takes years. If we really want to do something big, we need to think long term.

Secondly, if we think that we go there to change lives because we have more resources, time and experience, we need to think again. It is not a one-way thing. If we think this way, we end up missing many opportunities to gain from the experience. If I am not open to learning, I am actually losing out on many opportunities to learn from the people there, as they have a lot to teach us.

Something I Miss About Project Battambang

The people. One of the main reasons why I wish to return is because of the many relationships that have been formed and will continue to be formed through the years. I have become friends with many fellow doctors and even some alumni who have graduated and become doctors themselves. I guess it ultimately boils down to that sense of trying to achieve something together, which is really powerful.

Biggest Challenge Encountered

It's hard to pick one, but as doctors, one of the biggest challenges is learning to live with the helplessness of not being able to do more. Local Singaporean society has a healthcare system that is replete with resources and convenience, so sometimes when I see a Cambodian villager's medical condition, I automatically think about the possible interventions I would have performed at home. Problem is, Cambodia doesn't always have the infrastructure needed to support complex intervention, which can be frustrating.

What I Would Like to Improve About Project Battambang

It is a bit of a dilemma. On one hand, I would like to change the recruitment system such that there isn't such a high turnover, and members get more time to build long-term relationships with the villagers. But on the other hand, if the goal is to let more young people experience overseas humanitarian work, then there is a need to recruit every year, which will in turn compromise the consistency and stability of having the same people. Somehow, I would like to have people who can come back to serve regularly.

Project Battambang's Future Direction

If we cannot travel there, then it becomes about whether or not we can connect with the people there, whether we can learn from each other and know more about each other.

An Important Area to Tackle for Cambodia

I would say it is important to work on things that people need, such as employment. The lack of work means they cannot make a living to support their families, which to me is something that needs to be addressed.



Dr Ellie

About Dr Ellie

Dr Ellie has been instrumental in the creation of Project Battambang ever since its inception. Firstly as a medical student in its pioneering batch, and then as a practising doctor who has come back to serve in its operations, she has stayed committed to contributing to the communities we reach out to. As someone who has served both as a committee member behind the scenes and a medical professional on the ground, Dr Ellie has seen much of the passion & growth behind Project Battambang.



Why I Began Mentoring Project Battambang.

When I joined Project BTB, that was over 10 years ago. It was the inception of Project BTB, so I think the novelty of it was something that was quite interesting. Being able to be part of the pioneering batch and being able to plan things from the start, I think that that was challenging but also inspiring in itself.

What Makes Project Battambang Unique

I think something that is very special is the person behind this whole idea. Dr Ong is really a stable, and staple part of Project BTB. Since it started more than 10 years ago, he's been there, and makes more than one trip to Cambodia every year. Having somebody so committed and dedicated- and just being a constant part of the project- is not something you'd find elsewhere. It's quite important because you do need someone who's always there, to give the locals more trust to know that you are there for them. I really think that Dr Ong is very inspiring and therefore something very special to this project.

My Most Important Lesson from Project Battambang.

You can serve with whatever capability that you have. So when I first went as a medical student, what I thought was that I was only supporting the doctors who were running the screenings and had the main roles.

Then when I came back as a doctor, I felt again that the main service was somewhere else yet again- it's not what I'm doing! This is because as a doctor, the diseases you treat tend to be very short term, and the medications that we give are mostly for symptomatic treatment. So I felt like maybe the others who were doing things like education, service, sponsorship and camps to teach the next generation were much more impactful. So having this change in mindset really made me understand that it depends on giving what you have in that moment and that's what's most important. Don't think about your limitations, but about what you have at that point of time that can help.

Something I Miss About Project Battambang.

I miss going back! Not being able to physically see the locals there is something that I miss a lot. A lot of the people there like Cheng are about my age, and when I first started BTB, they were students, I was a student. And now 10 years later, I'm working and they're also working! It's just fun to be able to grow up with them, so I do definitely miss going back and seeing them.

My Best Memory of Project Battambang

My best memory would be the debrief sessions. After a whole day's work of clinics and screenings- pre-COVID of course- there would be 30 of us squeezed into a hotel room sitting on the bed, chairs, and floors! Every corner of the room would be filled, and people would share their learning experiences. Many were very heartfelt. Many shared their struggles too. That's something I'll always remember, because you'll be so tired and you'd have to gather at 10pm for an hour of debriefing, but it was really a period of great learning. I'll remember those moments for a long time to come!

What I Would Like to Improve About Project Battambang

Going back to my earlier point about Dr Ong, I think this kind of consistency and commitment is something that is very valuable. So of course, if it's possible for previous members to come back and serve in different capacities in different points of their lives, I think that would be very nice. It's not exactly something that I'd change, because I do know that a lot of students do come back as doctors or upper Ms, but I do think that's very nice.

An Important Area to Tackle for Cambodia

I wouldn't call it a pressing issue, but something that I've started to see more value in- and is something that Dr Ong taught me, is teaching and empowering the local medical students. So whenever we have all these trips, there are the Cambodian medical students who help in terms of the logistics or to translate; and a lot of the senior doctors and Dr Ong spend a lot of time teaching and inspiring these Cambodian students.

All of these Cambodian students, they actually come from a more privileged background and family. So to them, even going to the village is a little bit of a cultural difference. So, empowering the locals in that community- especially those with more means to help- I think is really important, and something to continue working on.



Singaporean committee members of Batch 2017/18 conducting eye examinations on villagers of Poipet



CHAPTER 3: CAMBODIAN COMMITTEE

Featuring:
Sister Ceclia
Sister Gomi
Bondol

Bondol, Cecilia & Gomi

In order from left to right



About Bondol

Bondol was a former LADS scholar who is currently volunteering to help out Project Battambang by being part of our camby comm! He is the main point of contact during the trip for the schools that Edu comm is working with. He also actively teaches health education in schools such as Santipheap.

About Sisters Gomi and Cecilia

Sisters Gomi and Cecilia are from MOPK. They oversee the LADS scholar selection process by identifying local students who need financial assistance in their studies. They follow up with the LADS scholars by monitoring their academic grades and decide on the LADS budget every year.

Personal updates from the Sisters and Bondol

Most of the working staff are vaccinated. We have been receiving donations from various people to help the villagers pull through this pandemic and the donations are in the form of food and money. Currently, Bondol is in charge of contacting the pandemic stricken families and settling logistics to distribute the money to mainly the sick and poor.

CHAPTER 4: LIGHT-A- DREAM (LAD) SCHOLARS

Featuring:
Sok An
Kong Sokeang
Thit Kim Sing



Sok An



*Kong
Sokeang*



*Thit Kim
Sing*



*Nob
Vichet*

MEET SOK AN

Tell Us More About Yourself

My name is Sok An and I am 18 years old this year. I study at Donbosco High School and I would like to be a doctor in the future! I hope to study at a university under my preferred specialisation, and find a good job to support my family. My hobbies are studying, reading books, listening to music and exercising. Next time, I would also like to help Project Battambang by sharing my knowledge with future LADS Scholars!

About Being a LADS Scholar

I am thankful for this scholarship as I am given the opportunity to study without having to think about the school fees. The LADS scholarship has allowed me to continue my studies and meet peers under the same scholarship as me. Currently, COVID has affected my education as online classes are the new norm and it has been a hard time acclimatising to such a change.



MEET KONG SOKEANG

Tell Us More About Yourself

My name is Kong Sokeang and I'm 17 years old. I study at Donbosco high school and I want to be a teacher in the future. My hobbies are studying, reading comic books.

About Being a LADS Scholar

LADS scholarship provides opportunities for me to study hard and also reduce my family's spending on my education. It gave me a chance to continue studying to complete my dreams. I want to go to a university and take up a part time job to help ease my family's expenses on my studies. COVID stopped me from going to school and meeting my classmates as I have to sit for online lessons.



MEET THIT KIM SING

Tell Us More About Yourself

I am Thit Kim Sing and I am 17 years old. I study at Donbosco high school and I want to be a teacher in the future. My hobbies are studying, reading, listening to music, using the phone and learning english.

About Being a LADS Scholar

I feel very happy to have been chosen as a LADS scholar and I think it is very good for me as it makes our family's life easier when less money has to be spent on our studies. Currently, the school fees are really high. COVID has affected my studies as online lessons make it very difficult to understand what the teachers are teaching. However, LADS scholarship can fulfil my dream through continuing studies and I also hope to help Project Battambang in the future when I have time.

MEET NOB VICHET

Tell Us More About Yourself

I am Nob Vichet, 18 years old this year studying at Donbosco Poipet High School. I love to study math during my free time, I also like to play online games with my friends and listen to music. I would like to be a teacher in the future.

About Being a LADS Scholar

It is my first time receiving a scholarship and I cherish the opportunity to study and meet new people from other countries. My future plan is to complete university and take up a state job to help my family. Currently, I am unable to go school due to COVID and my study grades have been heavily affected by government measures.



Resources

While most of our information came from interviewing our Cambodian & Singaporean friends, we also sought credible online sources for some of our statistics & data. *Click on the titles to learn more!*

Demographics

1. [Socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on Cambodia](#) (September 2020)
2. [Rising above socio-economic challenges posed by COVID-19](#) (September 2020)
3. [Enduring the Pandemic: Rapid Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on MSMEs in the Tourism Sector and Households in Cambodia](#) (October 2020)
4. [As borders shut, Cambodian families struggle to survive in frontier city Poipet](#) (November 2020)
5. [Cambodia to spend more than \\$20.5 million on vaccination campaign over nine months](#) (May 2021)
6. [Alert: "Red Zone" Restrictions](#) (April 2021)
7. [COVID City Zones in Cambodia](#) (April 2021)
8. [Cambodia in the Time of COVID-19 Economic Update](#) (May 2020)
9. ['I have no food': What it's like to live inside Cambodia's COVID red zone](#) (May 2021)
10. [Cambodia: Lockdowns Hit Low-income Families Hard](#) (June 2021)
11. [Cambodia: End Food Insecurity, Abuses During Lockdown](#) (May 2021)

On the Ground

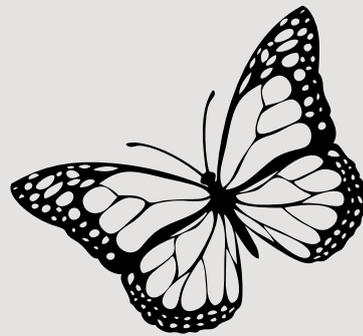
Information for this section was kindly provided by some of our Cambodian counterparts:

Bondol
Sr. Cecilia
Sr. Gomi
Thit Kim Sing
Sok An
Nob Vichet
Kong Sokeang

Faces of Battambang

Featuring heartfelt stories from

Tan Jian Shiun
Avelyn Aw
Dr Ong Yew Jin
Dr Ellie
Bondol
Sr. Gomi
Sr. Cecilia
Thit Kim Sing
Sok An
Nob Vichet
Kong Sokeang



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



PROJECT DIRECTORS
Edmund, Mac

SPONSORSHIPS
Yunxi, Rebecca Ong, Clarissa

SCREENING
Edmund, Michale

LOGISTICS
Lucas, HongMin

EDUCATION
JiaYue, gerald, Rebecca Zeng

DEVELOPMENTS
Mac, Jamie

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