



Seed Small Beginnings Annual Report 2020

2020 was a very difficult year, but I would like to start this annual report with positive news.

After 7 years of building up, we were able to hand over the project management completely into Cambodian hands. Two young Cambodians, Seavyoung Yonn and Heang Ho, who started their own initiatives a few years ago completely inexperienced but with a lot of motivation and heart and soul, are now managing directors of the Cambodian non-profit organisation Seed for Cambodia, which they founded and which will work very closely with the two Seed associations in Germany and Switzerland. They will continue to need our financial and advisory support, but a big step towards independence and self-reliance has been taken.

In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic is hitting Cambodia hard, which has no resources to avert the worst consequences. People's livelihoods are threatened not only in terms of health but also in the long term. There is no unemployment insurance, no emergency aid from the state and no soup kitchens that could help to survive this pandemic. For many Cambodians, it means the immediate and long-term loss of their livelihood and ending up in abject poverty.

All schools in Cambodia were closed from the end of March. Seed for Cambodia used this time wisely to provide further training for the staff and offered an alternative educational programme for the students in Bech Khlok and Battambang.

Bech Khlok

In mid-March, shortly before school closed, 23 small helmets were distributed to the kindergarten children in Bech Khlok thanks to the Helmet Squad initiative. But first, the parents had to attend an information evening about safety on motorbikes and bicycles.

In addition, each child received deworming tablets. They were distributed 2x to all school and kindergarten children in Bech Khlok in 2020.

As a joint project of the Rotary Club of Sangke Battambang and the Rotaract Club of Battambang Youth, all students of Bech Khlok Primary School also received a school uniform, writing materials and notebooks.

After the pandemic reached Cambodia, Heang travelled from family to family, educating them about Covid-19 and distributing information sheets with simple illustrations on hygiene and behavioural recommendations. The information sheets were designed by Seed Switzerland and some were adopted by other organisations.

The students of Bech Khlok were particularly hard hit by the Covid-19 measures, as they did not have access to the government's online education service and homework was not enough to replace the missing primary education. Seed for Cambodia therefore decided to send a Countryside Class teacher to Bech Khlok to teach the children there in small groups of 5 students each at their homes. In addition to the lessons, the pupils were given homework. The offer was accepted with enthusiasm and was so successful that 8 girls and 2 boys made the transition to secondary school at the end of 2020.

But the kindergarten children were also regularly visited by the kindergarten teacher and received assignment sheets from her. Of course, this could not replace the hours spent playing together with their little friends, but unfortunately Seed for Cambodia could not do anything about that.

In addition to looking after her little students, the kindergarten teacher received tutoring from Heang in Khmer (the local language) so that she could learn to read and write better and had to read books every day.

Heang intensively took care of the newly planted school garden and trained herself in the field of agriculture.

As a first small agricultural project, he then started a small chicken farm together with a low-income family in Bech Khlok. In the future, Seed for Cambodia would like to try to improve the families' income in the long term with animal husbandry and small agricultural projects.

The chicks hatched in large numbers and in 2021 it will hopefully be possible to include more families in this project.

As if Covid-19 was not enough, a violent cyclone hit in June and a big flood in November. The cyclone left major damage to the roof of the kindergarten and the old school building and damaged one family's house. The response to the appeal for donations via Facebook was overwhelming and the associations Seed Switzerland/Germany had collected enough money within a few days to repair the damage to the school. The German association Die kleine Hilfsaktion e.V. covered the costs of repairing the damaged family home.

In November, towns and villages sank in the floodwaters and rivers turned into raging torrents that destroyed houses close to the banks. These disasters left many desperate people without livelihoods.

The house of the headmaster of the primary school Bech Khlok was completely destroyed by the floods. The house was located in the neighbouring village, where the secondary school for the older students of Bech Khlok is also located.

The school and kindergarten in Bech Khlok were able to reopen in September, but then already had to close temporarily again because the access roads were flooded.

This disaster also had far-reaching consequences for the second Seed project in Battambang ...

The Countryside Class in Battambang

When the schools in Battambang had to close, an alternative educational programme was also set up for the Countryside Class students. They were given homework by their teachers, which was handed in weekly at school and corrected when it was returned. In addition, the students were allowed to contact the teachers by phone if they had any questions. Unfortunately, this offer was not taken up in as many numbers as had been hoped. This was probably because most city children had better access to the government's online education service than the children in the remote settlement of Bech Khlok.

Then, when the flood came, the Countryside Class had its operating licence revoked due to a government demolition order for all buildings built along the riverbank, and unfortunately had to close the school and library forever.

Two teachers from the former Countryside Class and Seavyong Yonn then started teaching mathematics and Khmer in Bech Khlok, as a supplement to the normal classes in the public school. They also offered activities in the library and assisted the kindergarten teacher.

Bech Khlok's secondary school students also benefited from the teachers' regular presence. Seavyong, who has a high school diploma, was able to support them especially in the difficult science subjects.

So a very difficult 2020 ended with a few happy events after all.

ACCOUNTING 2020

Balance 01.01.2020

PostFinance account balance 15,746.00 CHF

Revenue

Individual donations and membership fees 11,737.50 CHF

Contribution from foundations 17,000.00 CHF

Total revenue 2020 28,737.50 CHF

Expenditure

Transfers to Seed for Cambodia* 31'000 CHF

Office supplies and postage 324.00 CHF

Toys for kindergarten Bech Khlok 65.50 CHF

Farewell gift Country Manager Cambodia 139.00 CHF

Domain Seed Website 179.00 CHF

Bank account fees 86.00 CHF

Total expenses 2020 CHF 31,793.50

Balance 31.12.2020

PostFinance account balance 12'690.00 CHF

** Seed for Cambodia (a non-profit organisation registered in Cambodia) financed the running costs of the projects in Bech Khlok and Battambang with our contributions. Seed for Cambodia keeps detailed accounts of all income and expenses, which are audited annually by the relevant Cambodian authorities.*