

GVI Cambodia Annual Report

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Executive Summary

In September 2018, GVI launched programs in Cambodia for the first time. Working in the province of Kampong Cham, GVI found education to be the most recognisably useful asset for local community members to accelerate their opportunities and quality of life. Specifically, education enables one to reach higher education and skilled employment in Cambodia. Consequently, we have now partnered with a multitude of local NGO's to provide free English lessons and workshops to the local community.

Since September 2018, we have taught approximately 285 community members through our workshops. Topics have ranged from career techniques to women's empowerment. On a daily basis, we teach an average of eighty students in beginner English. From September- December 2018 we have tripled the number of volunteers coming to work with us. We look forward to growing our hub even further in 2019 to reach a greater number of community members and make a bigger impact in Kampong Cham.

Introduction

In June 2018 we began working in Cambodia. Our aim was to continue the success of GVI's long-term sustainable development programmes worldwide in more locations, creating bigger impact worldwide.

Cambodia, with its recent turbulent history, has faced many barriers to economic and social development. With most of the country still earning an income in subsistence farming and access to healthcare and education remaining limited, families continue to live on incomes averaging less than three dollars a day (CEIC, 2018). However, Cambodia is committed to development and was one of the best performing



countries in reducing their poverty rate, halving their rate from 53% in 2004, to 20.5% in 2014 (Sobrado et al, 2013). Change is happening here in Cambodia and GVI are committed to accelerating this.

Since our launch, we have focused on providing free English classes. This has been our primary concern as education in English is reserved primarily for the middle class, operating in private institutions or paid for drop-in centres. The importance of this skill cannot be understated: if students can speak English their opportunities for higher education and skilled employment greatly increase (Bun, 2010). Studying abroad and receiving scholarships becomes possible. Ultimately, regardless of the career one may choose, your chances of success greatly improve if can speak English (Bun, 2010).

We have since built upon our project areas to include women's empowerment, healthcare and the environment. This has come from a growing understanding- and research- into the community and further barriers to community members reaching their potential. These areas of importance are tailored to what we understand of Kampong Cham, ensuring that we work and tailor our programs to the specific needs of the community that we live within. It is working in these areas, alongside providing a free education in English language, that we believe long term impact can be achieved.

GVI's mission and GVI Cambodia

It is our mission to build a global network of people united by their passion to make a difference. Our work in Cambodia can be summarized in the following mission: GVI Cambodia accelerates the development of Kampong Cham by providing education in four identified areas of need- English, healthcare, women's empowerment and the environment- which, in turn, improves the employment opportunities, life choices and autonomy of the students we work with.



Our Long term objectives and the SDG's

As a hub we have five long term objectives that focus on four critical areas of development in Kampong Cham: education, healthcare, women's empowerment, and the environment. Our fifth objective ensures that in all our areas of work we are community driven. Our objectives are expanded on below.

Long-term objective 1: To improve the quality of education to the local community of Kampong Cham, regardless of age, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background or any other disadvantageous factors.

Long-term objective 2: To improve awareness and knowledge in health and wellbeing and provide basic tools and knowledge in maintaining hygiene and prevention for tropical diseases.

Long-term objective 3: To improve the opportunities, aspirations and autonomy of local women and girls and to raise awareness in the local community on the importance of women's empowerment for their family, the economy and for equality.

Long-term objective 4: Improve the awareness and knowledge of important environmental issues and increase community participation in efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

Long-term objective 5: Strengthen bonds with our current partners and develop new partnerships with local organisations to broaden our areas of work and reach a higher proportion of the Kampong Cham community, in turn ensuring that our areas of focus remain driven by the community we work within.

Our objectives stand in union with the ambitious goals of the United Nations; specifically, goal 1: No Poverty, goal 3: Good Health and Well-being, goal 4: Quality Education, goal 5: Gender Equality, goal 8: Decent Work



and Economic Growth, goal 10: Reduced Inequality, goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, goal 13: Climate Action, goal 15: Life on Land, and goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal.

Our partners

Since launching in September 2018, the GVI Cambodia hub has established four active partners and several partners we work with on a bi-monthly basis, to execute our workshops and trainings.

BSDA

Our first partner, Buddhism for Social Development Action (henceforth BSDA), is a Cambodian-run NGO established in 2005 by seven Buddhist monks in response to criticism from the villagers who felt that the monks preach altruism in theory but do not practice it.

BSDA has three early childhood care and development (ECCD) drop-in centres across the province, a vocational training centre, and three social enterprises providing graduates of their training centre a full time position.

GVI Cambodia works closely with BSDA, providing daily English classes at two of BSDA's drop-in centres - Happy Happy Centre and Apsara Dance Centre. Aside from English classes we also routinely assist BSDA with reports they must produce for their donors in English, including their quarterly and annual reports. There is also capacity for GVI interns to work more regularly with BSDA on a variety of projects when such opportunities present themselves.



CFL

The Centre for Foreign Languages (CFL) provides reduced rate English classes to members of Kampong Cham. Set up with the aim to provide English to all, CFL provides a full day of English lessons to the local community and also acts as a hub for workshops, conferences and training.

Since October, our partnership with CFL has produced several workshops, including a TEFL workshop for students and teachers from the surrounding provinces, and a professional development workshop that focused on writing CVs and cover letters. CFL are also keen for us to provide English classes at our centre and have invited us for a variety of meet-and-greets over the past year including a Christmas party. As volunteer numbers grow, CFL is certainly a partner we could work more closely with to further our impact in the community.

Moon River Guesthouse

Moon River Guesthouse- the GVI base- is a popular riverside restaurant and guesthouse. The majority of the staff members here are graduates from BSDA's vocational training centre. Providing accommodation, a work space, a social space, and a staff room to GVI staff and volunteers, Moon River Guesthouse is a quintessential part GVI Cambodia. Staff at Moon River not only provide a safe and welcoming environment for all GVI personnel, but also often assist GVI projects with translation, local knowledge, and logistics.

Boeng Snay



Boeng Snay is a well-known sprawling temple complex and active pagoda in Kampong Cham which homes approximately five hundred Buddhist monks. Many young men and boys will join the temple in Cambodia as a chance to improve their lives: receiving housing, food and an education at the temple enables them to have a quality of life that otherwise may not be possible. Therefore, working with the local pagoda is an important partnership for GVI as this enables us to access some of the poorest community members across Cambodia. Currently, our partnership with Boeng Snay consists of four daily English classes, although there is potential once we to provide more cultural experiences for our volunteers including attendance at Buddhist festivals and chanting.

Alongside our four active partners, we have several partners- such as Kampong Cham University, Kampong Cham Teacher Training Centre and Kampong Cham Youth Centre- who we run regular workshops, trainings and conferences with.

Our classes

Each morning we run four English classes for approximately sixty Buddhist Monk students at Boeng Snay Pagoda. An essential part of integrating into the culture of Cambodia, we are able to learn and understand more of the Buddhist traditions and customs through working with our students. Our students started learning with us with little or no English and, by the end of 2018, have reached all landmarks recognised in our curriculum.



In the afternoon we provide English classes to disadvantaged students in the community. We work in two drop-in centres ran by our partner NGO, BSDA. Both classes have ages ranging from 3-16 years and approximately thirty students in each class. Working with this young age group we are able to make meaningful progress that can impact the higher education and employment opportunities these young people will have in the future.



In the evening we open our English classes up to anyone in the local community as well as the staff we work closely with at our local NGO partners. This gives us the opportunity to broaden our reach. At these evening classes alongside the main objective of broadening English education, we also aim to improve local community members' confidence at public speaking and teaching others through the activities we provide in our lessons.



Overview

September

In September we launched our six classes which will work with a variety of community members across Kampong Cham. Beginning our classes with our pre-beginners curriculum, we begun teaching Jolly Phonics group 1 and learning words within this remit such as “cat”, “bat”, “rat” and more. In the same month we launched our first workshop, introducing to local teachers the communicative method of teaching. This workshop had approximately fifty attendees and introduced GVI Cambodia to a wealth of local community members interested in our work.



October

This month we invited our first intern and our second volunteer on our program teaching Buddhist monks. We made changes to our class curriculum to fit the needs and diversity of the students we teach, including creating a more dynamic class approach in our youngest class. Finally, we invited our first national staff member, Kimyi Yong, to work with us as a National Scholar.



November

In November we worked with the local community to provide a careers workshop and saw over fifty participants engage with interview technique and CV writing. In the same month we led progress tests at Boeng Snay Pagoda and Happy Happy Centre and celebrated the success of our students- who achieved an average of 93% and 82% respectively.



December

In December we ran our first workshop focused on empowering the local women of Kampong Cham. We partnered with The Kampong Cham Teacher Training Centre to discuss with over 150 women on the importance of their well-being and professional development. In this same month, we ran workshops to our younger students- aged between four and fifteen- focused on child rights and well-being.



Achievements

Fundraisers

On Sunday 28th October we embarked on an eighty kilometer cycle from our base in Kampong Cham to the border of Vietnam. In under four days we raised over \$1,300 to put towards improving our lessons with more educational equipment and resources and improving the quality of our classrooms to ensure our students understand our classrooms as a safe and fun space to learn and play.



Impact

All our classes have begun on a pre-beginners curriculum that has been created internally by GVI to teach English to students who do not use a roman alphabet in their native language. Many beginners courses assume learners already have a firm understanding of the alphabet and how phonemes can be combined to create words. In Cambodia, however, this is not the case and the Khmer alphabet works very differently comprising over 70 letters. As such we have been focusing heavily upon pronunciation of phonics and blending base sounds together to create syllables and words.



Our students learn at very different paces, although progress has been achieved in all of our classes over the past four months. With a strong ethos for learning and systemic advantages our students at the pagoda have learnt at the quickest rate and are now roughly a third of the way through the curriculum and have consistently passed progress tests required to advance through the curriculum.

Students at Apsara and Happy Happy Centre have also shown strong progress, particularly with speaking and listening components of the curriculum. However, BSDA are currently facing challenges across all their institutes with regard to attendance as many parents are reluctant to send their children to schools and drop-in centres instead of having them contribute financially towards their family. Moving forward, it is our priority to lead workshops and trainings to parents of our students, to ensure we have the backing and support of families across the province.

We have made great strides in ensuring equal access to education for male and females in Kampong Cham. On average, girls occupy 45% of our classes and 65% of our workshops. We are continuing to work with our local partners to ensure that all of our classes have equal numbers of boys and girls.



Male and Female Students Attending Classes

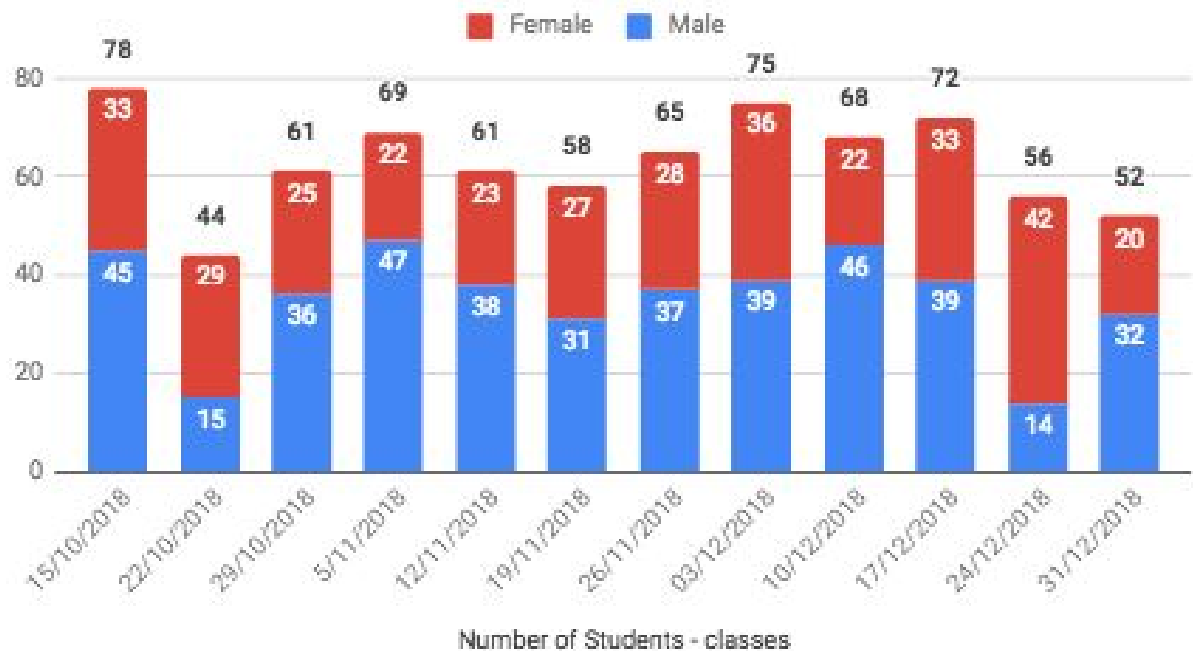


Figure 1: Male and Female Students Attending Classes



Male and Female Students Attending Workshops

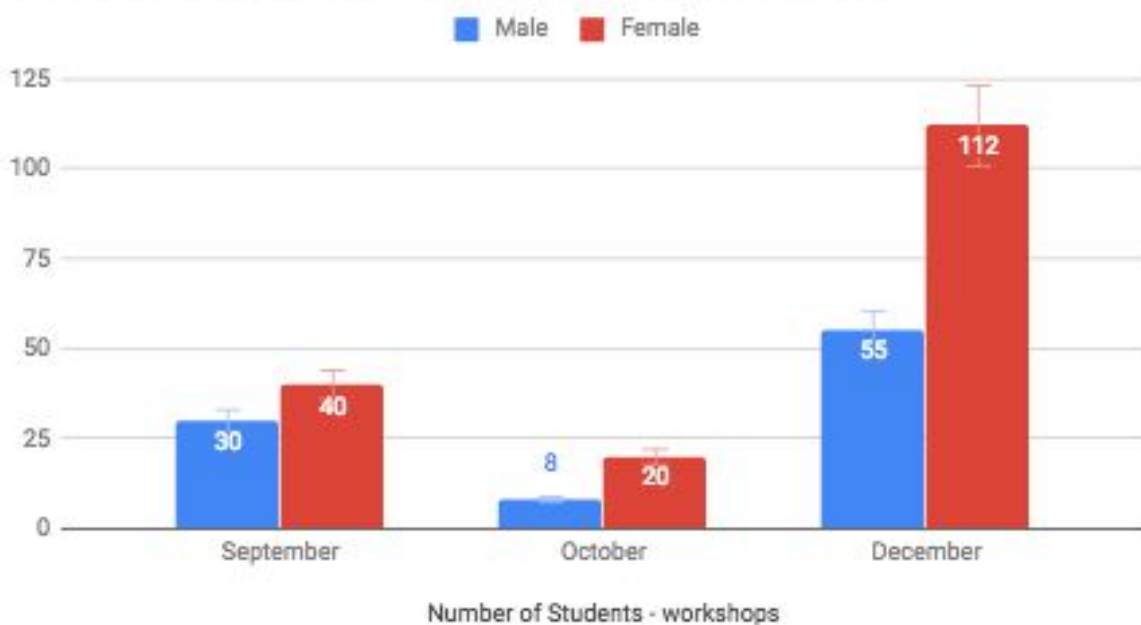


Figure 2: Male and Female Students Attending Workshops

Moving Forward

In 2019 we already have exciting developments planned. We will be launching our second fundraiser to raise money for our healthcare program. We plan to start this program by providing each student with a toothbrush kit and teaching students how and why to use these.

We plan to begin workshops every other week on vocational topics to support our students and community members alongside their employment or education. These workshops provide the opportunity for community members who are not our regular students to benefit from GVI; enabling us to reach a larger



number of community members. In 2019, we look forward to beginning the year with our second workshop focused on women's empowerment.

Finally, as we are getting to know our students and their personalities, we are continuing to think of new and creative ways to maximise the effectiveness of our teaching. We have divided our kids class by age, now teaching under 11's separately to over 11's to allow students to receive more tailored teaching according to their age. We have introduced a fourth class at Boeng Snay Pagoda, now teaching nearly 100 students at the pagoda each morning. Our new class opening is for the younger members of the pagoda, providing opportunity to young students who can utilise English in their future careers and education.

There are a multitude of issues that hinder community members from reaching their potential economically and in terms of well-being. So far our project has focused on what we understand as the priority of the community. As we continue to work here, we continue to discover more routes we need to work on and as the community's needs change, so will our work.



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