



Update Report

Saysa Morn Primary School Building – Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia

This report is related to the development of Saysa Morn Primary School since the most recent inspection by our field office staff Sinoeuy, from Child's Dream Cambodia Organization (CDCO), Siem Reap.

General Information

- The construction of the concrete building with four fully furnished classrooms and three toilets was completed on 13 June 2018.
- The new primary school building officially opened on 29 November 2018.
- The running costs of the school are borne by the district government.
- The school caters to kindergarten and primary levels 1 to 6.
- Classes are held from Monday to Friday from 07:00 - 11:00, afternoons from 13:00 - 17:00.
- The pupils live within a radius of approximately 3 kilometers. The school route is either covered on foot or the parents bring/collect the children by motorbike.
- School fees are free but the cost of the uniform must be borne by the parents.
- A total of **USD 52,650** has been donated, used sensibly and sustainably for the school building project.

School Management and Students

- School staff: 1 director, 7 teachers (3 male, 4 female)
- At the time of opening, the number of pupils was 182 (100 boys, 82 girls)
- Current number of pupils: 154 (87 boys, 67 girls). The student population decline is due to a substantial drop in fertility rate in the area and migration. School dropouts during the current Covid-19 pandemic is also reducing attendance rates.
- Poverty and lack of opportunity are the leading causes of student dropouts in this part of Cambodia. Saysa Morn Primary School is located in an impoverished village where people are mainly dependent on subsistence agriculture; and due to its proximity to the Thai border, many of them migrate to Thailand with their parents to work as migrant workers in farm and construction jobs.

Cleanliness, garbage disposal, and management

Following our previous visit, we reported the sub-par management at Saysa Morn Primary School to the District of Education (DoE) and Provincial of Education (PoE) and the following progress was made;

- Both bodies quickly replied to the case, by contacting the principal and teachers to have a meeting, and to discuss steps that would lead to a solution.
- One week later the environment at school was seen to have improved.
- The school was cleaner and there was a big reduction in plastic waste.
- The school principal, who at that time was experiencing some difficult challenges in their family life, is fully committed to improving the running of the school and creating a better environment for the students and the teachers.

Saysa Morn Primary School during Covid-19

All schools in Cambodia closed in March 2020 by government order. During this closure, most students stayed at home with their parents while some looked for work or food for their family. Teachers tried to run online classes with small groups of students, but this could not be executed efficiently because;

- the internet connection was too weak/non-existent and/or
- some families could not afford to pay for an internet connection and/or
- some parents were not able to use the programme/app

In lieu of online teaching, teachers travelled to the village to run learning groups with small groups of students.

When the government announced the reopening of schools, Saysa Morn reopened, but after just a month of classes, it had to close again due to some bad flooding in the area. Access roads to the village remain cut off, meaning that teachers or children cannot go to school. The field surrounding the school is waterlogged leaving the area quite muddy and inaccessible.

It is expected that, with the rainy season coming to an end, the flooding will clear and students and teachers can return to school by the end of November.

Future Plans

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the school had filled up the school area with 200 truckloads of soil. They also built a 91-meter fence around the school.

In 2021, the school plans to make a green space by planting trees and flowers. They will continue to fill up the school ground if they have the finances to do so.

Photographs



Front view of Saysa Morn Primary School



With better waste disposal practices and new soil, the school is getting ready to set more trees and flowers in 2021.



The bad flooding around the school made it inaccessible for teachers and students; the roads to the village were cut off due to the heavy rain.



The school ground itself is waterlogged, but with the rainy season coming to an end, the students are expected to return to school by end of November 2020.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for your support and trust. Together, we were and are able to make a significant impact on the lives of many children. Thank you so much!

Chiang Mai, 11th November 2020

Child's Dream Cambodia



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