

Australian Ambassador's visit to **SeeBeyondBorders**

September 2020



SeeBeyond|Borders



Welcome



Dear Ambassador Kang

A very warm welcome to you and your team. We are delighted to have you come to Battambang to visit SeeBeyondBorders. Kate and I are only sorry that we will not be there to welcome you in person, but are secure in the knowledge that the team will do an excellent job. We hope there will be a chance for us to meet you when we return.

The funding we receive through the ANCP program, with whom we have base accreditation, has provided a cornerstone to what we can spend in Cambodia underpinning our work in education. We have also invested significantly in developing our systems and processes so as to be eligible for full accreditation and right now are deliberating whether or not our application adequately demonstrates that we have reached this next level and can be put forward this year. Meeting the high standards as demanded acts as a benchmark across all our activities and has guided us in a very positive way.

The global pandemic has profoundly impacted Cambodia, as it has every country. Wealthy countries will be considering their options. There are many loud voices exclaiming how one source of the claw back should be the foreign aid budget. You will see in your work what impact poverty has on the access families have to the basic qualities of life and understand how cuts in aid at this time will be devastating to those who have no platform. Cambodia faces many challenges, including whether to strive for a basic level of education for all. Prudent use of funding and supportive educational expertise could deliver much to communities such as the one you will visit today although this community is far from the most vulnerable in Cambodia.

Please do contact us if there is anything we can do to help you to advocate for further support from Australia to its neighbour with the weakest education system in the region. There is much we can learn about how to incorporate better advocacy strategies that will be welcomed in our efforts to influence the overall education system, the development of which as a whole needs to accelerate if our own work is to be sustainable.

We wish you a safe and enjoyable visit and hope you will have a chance to witness something of what could profoundly impact the prospects for the next generation of Cambodians, if only there were to be a chance to make these initiatives available more widely.

With our warmest and best wishes,
Kate and Edward Shuttleworth – Founders SeeBeyondBorders



Introduction

SeeBeyondBorders welcomes a visit from the Australian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia, Ambassador Kang.

This booklet is intended to be a guide to your visit with us today, give you an introduction to SeeBeyondBorders and our work, and to familiarise you with the key people you will meet.



About SeeBeyondBorders

At SeeBeyondBorders, we train Cambodian teachers so that they can provide children with a quality education. In a country still recovering from civil war, our investment in education is providing a simple and proven route out of poverty.

SeeBeyondBorders has been accredited by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), responsible for managing the Australian Government's aid program, since 2017. We receive support through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

We are the only organisation in Cambodia that supports teachers to train their peers, and provide mentoring to sustainably develop teachers' skills. This simple and effective approach has been recognised internationally by the UNESCO-Hamdan prize for outstanding contributions to improving teaching quality.

To ensure children can access the quality education they deserve, we also work in partnership with local communities to improve school facilities, and to encourage children to attend school and value education.



About Your Visit

By meeting with key members of the SeeBeyondBorders staff and teachers from one of the schools that we work with, there is a great opportunity to witness first-hand the challenges and opportunities facing education and development in Cambodia today and how, with the support from the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), change begins with education.

Itinerary

06:55 - Meet Country Manager (Pov) and Director of Development (Colm) at Classy Hotel. Orientation and sign Code of Conduct and Child and Vulnerable People Protection Policy

07:05 - Depart Battambang for SeeBeyondBorders' program school

07:30 - Arrive at school and meet school leaders and teachers. Coordinated by Project Manager (Boumy)

07:40 - Educational Technical Manager (Sophen) will escort you to observe a grade 2 Khmer literacy lesson

08:05 - Observe grade 1 maths lesson

08:30 - Photographs at school entrance

09:00 - Presentation on Australian Aid and SeeBeyondBorders. This presentation will take place upstairs in Kinyei Café

09:40 - Video messages from some of our Australian staff overseas

09:45 - Depart Kinyei Café

Staff You Will Be Meeting



Pov Pheung – Country Manager

With over 15 years' experience in education, Pov joined SeeBeyondBorders in 2013. He became Country Manager in 2016.



Boumy Thang – Project Manager

Joining SeeBeyondBorders in 2016, Boumy is based in Battambang Province. Her responsibilities include engaging communities and parents in education.



Sopheh Phan – Education Technical Manager

Sopheh has worked in the Cambodian educational sector since 2004. Joining SeeBeyondBorders in 2011, he now manages the Quality Teaching Program.

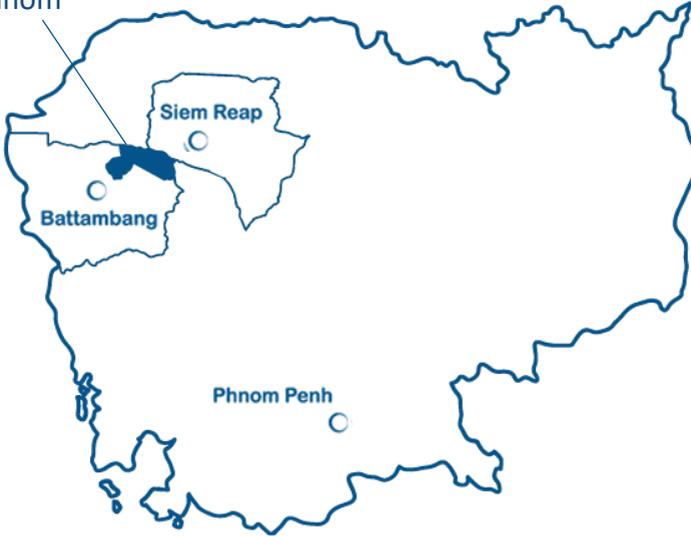


Colm Byrne – Director of Development

Colm has been living in Cambodia for over four years and is a qualified teacher. His responsibilities include Communications.

School And Teachers To Be Visited

Ek Phnom



Grade 2 Teacher

"I've worked as a teacher for 20 years. I decided to become a teacher as I love working with children and I want to see them have a brighter future. My wish is to see all schools in Cambodia have this [SeeBeyondBorders] program like my school."



Mentor / School principal



Grade 1 Teacher

Background Information on the School

Today you will be visiting a school in the Ek Phnom district of Battambang. Rice farming and fishing are two of the main local industries. There are 294 children in the primary school. There is likely to be some background noise from the local pagoda during your visit today. We appreciate your understanding on this matter.

Mentoring

SeeBeyondBorders began working in this school in 2017 with an initial focus on maths and mentoring within our Quality Teaching Program. Teachers' teaching quality has improved steadily since. In the academic year 2018-2019, 78% of children in grade 1 and 64% of children in grade 2 passed the end of year maths test. This is vastly better than typical Cambodian schools.

Literacy

The Ministry conducted Early Grade Reading Assessments in 2017. It found "half of children in grades 1 and 2 are unable to read a single familiar word". The teaching of reading in Cambodian schools typically focuses on memorising vast numbers of letter combinations and words in isolation (rather than in the context of a piece of writing, such as a book). The goal of SeeBeyondBorders' Literacy Program is to improve the teachers' teaching of literacy. This Program has been in operation at this school since 2019. It incorporates reading, writing, listening and speaking. The approach taken has the potential to revolutionise Khmer literacy teaching.

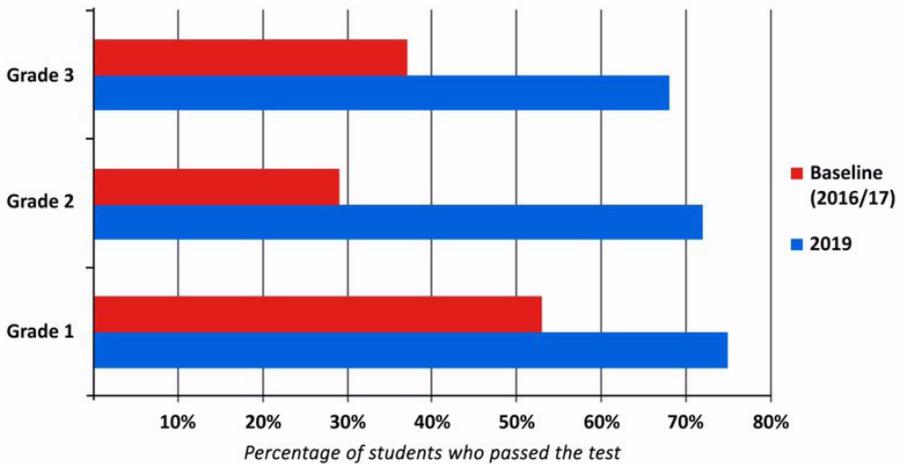
Communities for Change

We work with the local community to engage them in activities that support school development and the improvement of children's learning. Information meetings were held at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year to introduce the parents to SeeBeyondBorders and the crucial role they play in improving learning for their children. With community members engaged in children's learning we can keep children in school and transform educational standards.

Change begins with education. Change begins with action. Change begins with Australian Aid funded SeeBeyondBorders.

Our Impact

Students' Maths Pass Rates 2019 Siem Reap and Battambang



Independent testing is conducted each August.
A student must score 50% or more to pass the test.
The number of students assessed in 2019 was 11,756.

Figures for SeeBeyondBorders' programs' reach for the academic school year 2019 - 2020.



81
Schools



390
Teachers and Mentors



10,056
Children

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4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



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