

# Youth Star News

March 2016



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## A Happy Community – by LAY Sopheak



Children Club led by Youth Star Volunteer LAY Sopheak

Trach Village is located in Kampong Chen Chueng Commune, Stoung District, Kampong Thom Province. In the past, this village was set up in a wide field. The houses were dispersed, located far from one another. There were many wild animals and dense forest. Later, due to the logging and land encroachment conducted by the powerful people, the local authority moved the village to the current location, along national road No. 6. The total population of Kampong Chen Chueng Commune is 7,740 (3,539 are female), 90% of them are farmers and the rest are social workers. 99% follow Buddhism and only 1% are Christian. Most residents in this rural community are not highly educated, they do however, value and respect those with knowledge and education and are highly moral.

Prior to my service here, some children were forced by their parents to drop out of school when they finished primary education. Despite the efforts of school principals and teachers, some parents still decided to stop their children's education. As a Youth Star volunteer, I committed to contribute to positive change by carrying out the following activities:

- Community mapping
- Enrollment campaign
- Urging people to get birth certificate
- Searching for out-of-school children (OSC)
- Visiting and intervening OSC and urging them to return to school
- Conducting reading sessions
- Establishing and maintaining youth club

My hard work paid off and the results are beyond my expectation. I arrived this rural community on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015. I spent some time going to the fields where the school dropouts looked after their cows. Then I asked and inspired them to return to school. I provided different

examples and reasons for them to consider, helping them make a decision whether or not to return to their studies. I also started teaching English, setting up a children's comedy team and organizing an enrollment campaign. All those activities really effected the decisions of the OSC. As a result, 9 children showed up and re-enrolled, some came by their own and some accompanied by parents. I have observed that educational perspective has changed in this community, not only the students themselves but also parents. It all started with their willingness to build local library, to read and borrow books for their children and urging their children to come to school...etc. Since the commencement of my intervention, 37 over-aged children and 15 OCS re-enrolled at school.

Lay Sopheak – March 2016

## Bicycle Ride in Support of Volunteerism



Youth Star volunteers riding their bicycles in the streets of Phnom Penh

Former Youth Star volunteers and other citizens undertaking volunteer work gathered together for a bicycle ride on Sunday March 6, 2016 to encourage volunteerism in society. This event was organized by former Youth Star volunteers who have completed their 12-month volunteer service helping to educate youth and children in marginalized rural Cambodian communities. These former volunteers, maintain their support for the Youth Star model of promoting and undertaking volunteerism in Cambodian society. The ride was aimed at hoping to maintain awareness of how important volunteerism is to the future development of Cambodia. The bicycle ride departed from Youth Star Cambodia's office located in the Tuol Kork area. The first 'pit stop' was at the National Library, to help raise awareness of the importance of developing good reading habits. Volunteers then headed to the Royal Palace and the statue of Cambodian Supreme Monk Samdech Chuon Nath, the statue of the Former King and headed back to Youth Star office. The green T-shirts and a banner says it all "**Bicycle Ride in Support of Volunteerism**" the riders attracted much public attention.

## Cohort 22 Recruited, Trained and Placed in the Field

10 new Youth Star volunteers have been successfully recruited, trained and placed in the target communities of Kratie and Prey Veng Provinces.



Volunteer cohort number 22 during their placement

An announcement was posted on Youth Star website, Facebook page and Bongthom.com for 2 months during January and February 2016. Graduate applicants from different universities in Phnom Penh and provinces applied. The main activity of the selection process is the assessment of applicants to see if they are qualified. There have been multiple assessment days as each time there is limited number of applicant invited. Pre-Departure Training (PDT) began in middle of March. This two-week training provides needed skills to ensure our volunteers have the tools they need to successfully complete their one-year service in rural communities.

Some of the training sessions provided include the facilitation and communication skills, public speaking, child protection policies, how to establish and maintain youth clubs. There are both internal and external trainers invited to the sessions. During the PDT, local partners, who will work closely with our volunteers are also invited to join the session they introduce themselves and get to know their volunteer partner. PDT is followed by a closing ceremony, which is organized to celebrate the successful completion of course and the beginning of their volunteer journey.

## Cohort 20 Completed Service



Cohort 20 during their placement

Volunteer cohort 20 who began their journey in early 2015 have now successfully completed their one-year service. The group was placed in Kratie and Prey Veng Provinces. To guide the way for our graduated volunteers for their future careers, an End-

of-Service training is provided. The training ensures that volunteers know how to prepare themselves with their CV's and at interviews. External trainers who are experts in HR fields are invited to provide this activity.

The volunteers who finished their service in March 2016 are:

1. Mr. Ek Seungem: Vattanak Commune, Sambour District, Kratie Province.
2. Ms. Som Sophors: Vattanak Commune, Sambour District, Kratie Province.
3. Ms. Hien Samphors: Da Commune, Chetborei District, Kratie Province.
4. Mr. Ouch Sovann : Da Commune, Chetborei District, Kratie Province.

5. Mr. Ea Chanheng : Thnal village, Svay Chras Commune, Snoul District, Kratie Province.

6. Mr. Chhun Voeun: Angkrang village, Cheang Dek Commune, Kampong Trabek District, Prey Veng Province

## Focus Group Dialogue Training and Peer Listening



Volunteer group 21 during the training

Youth Star volunteers work in educational sector directly with the out-of-school children (OSC). Within the first semester of their placement, July - December 2015, one core achievement that cohort 21 produced was

the identification of and intervention on 110 OSC

to get back to school. However, during the identification process more OSC, (approx. 270) needed to be reached and interventions made for them to get access to education. Parents are also the target trainees as they play a big role in solving OSC problems. As a matter of policy, Focus Group Discussion training is provided in order for the volunteers to be competent and capable enough to work with parents in the community, raising their awareness and to prevent any intentional out school activity. The training was organized on 01 February 2016. The participants, Youth Star volunteers and youth club member representatives are expected to:

- Have a basic skills and understanding in conducting and organizing Focus Group Discussion (FGD)
- Be familiar with the tool used in FGD activity
- Understand how to use the tools and initiate their own FGD
- Have knowledge and skills in Inter-personal Communication
- Have better understanding of OSC groups and the identifying those targeted
- Be more capable in writing proposals for OSC Funding
- Be clear in, and familiar with the main activities they are going to do in the second semester
- Be knowledgeable in writing a Story of Significant Change

## Support Us

### Donating to Youth Star Cambodia

Help us to grow Good Citizenship in Cambodia by giving young people an opportunity to serve as volunteers in underserved rural communities. Your donations will support education programs for students at risk of dropping out of school, youth led community sanitation, and youth led prevention of gender based violence activities, amongst others. At a time of global economic difficulties Youth Star relies more than ever on donations and has an urgent need to raise more funds. The cost of training, supervising and supporting one volunteer alone is \$3,000. Please see our [Get involved](#) section on our website for information on different ways to donate or contact us at  
Email: [admin@youthstarcambodia.org](mailto:admin@youthstarcambodia.org).

Or you can donate through:



Thank you!