

# Cambodia Mission Trip 0117

## Refreshed after initial doubt

I wanted to go on mission trip years ago but was not given the opportunity to do so by my previous church. When the announcement for a mission trip to Cambodia came in July, I felt the calling to go and signed up after hearing that my kakis Jacq, Pauline, Vandi & Suan will be going too.



After several weeks of preparation and packing, we seemed ready to proceed. However, it wasn't so for me. A few days before departing, I began to doubt if this was really what I was prepared for. I shared this with sis Esther Ang who told me that this could be a spiritual attack for doing God's work. I asked her to uphold us in prayer for God's leading and protection. Just 2 days later, news of flooding in Cambodia put me

into panic mood again. I wanted to buy a pair of PCK boots but was advised against it by Jacqueline due to the difficulty of walking in it. One day before the trip, thoughts of PCK boots still lingered in my head but I was too busy clearing work in office and too tired after work to go hunting for one.

The most memorable takeaway for me on this trip was the community service on the second day of camp. None of us had any idea what it was till Patrick told us just minutes before it started. This was the equivalent of CWO - corrective work order – for littering in Singapore, except that we were expected to pick up litter along the village with



our bare hands for 1 hour.

Though it was optional for the SG team, many of us braved the hot sun to do the 'unthinkable'. The 'kiasi city folk' mentality in me kicked in and I told Jacq I might turn back if it should become unbearable. It was a bit hard initially picking up



Conducting a game

litter without any tool, but it became easier once I started to do so. Along the way, I sang with a Cambodian youth volunteer and soon some other children and youth joined in too. Strangely the fear of dirt and hot sun disappeared and the 1 hour of 'hard labour' ended with a fire lit to burn those bags of rubbish collected. Some of the youth and children started to warm up to us and called us teachers when they saw us working alongside with them. One of them gave me a flower too.

My reflection: People don't care how smart, successful or rich you are but how much you care and your humility to integrate with them.

Will I go on another mission trip? YES, I will (but no flooding please, otherwise PCK boots will be in my suitcase).

Praise and all glory to God for His leading, protection and good weather throughout the 4-day trip. The Lord will empower those who are willing.

The Bible says, "Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." Proverbs 11:25

At the end of the mission trip, I felt very much refreshed. Praise God!

In His Service,

**Alice Quah**

## Make Real Friends



The mission theme was "Make Real Friends". We went to Cambodia with this dance song "Jesus is my Best Friend", hoping to impart the true meaning of friendship with Jesus. Though the children enjoyed every bit of it, we also tasted friendship with our fellow mates and the Khmer hosts.

Before going to Cambodia, I was warned not to touch the children as they might have illnesses which we were not aware of. It was in the last day of the camp that I met this boy who had just recovered from chicken pox. Dried scars were seen on his face and hands. He was so happy that he gave me a High-

Five which I returned with. How would I not go along with the flow? Surely God would protect me.

The 7 Khmer dance coordinators had practised their song steps every night for a week. Their interest and spirit of responsibility deserved a thumbs up. The children readily followed their dance steps with ease and energetically. “Oh, Hallelujah!” – They sang and danced with actions. Praise the Lord! They even took this song dance as morning exercises.



As the Tang Krang Community Centre is a place of learning for the children, it will carry some influence on the parents. The parents were receptive of the efforts made by Pastor Vibol and Sister Sreyleak. The children were taught personal hygiene (including correct toothbrushing explained by Pauline) and safety awareness (“Beware of the threat of the wolf in lamb’s skin”). We also had a village clean-up by picking up litter and burning it at a safe place. The villagers would discover God’s love in action. Whoever loves God must also love his environment.



In any mission trip, we would be Christ’s ambassador, and our ways would be observed. We need to set good examples, walk the talk by showing kindness and love. We were called teachers and little flowers were given to us, showing that what we did were appreciated. Love and friendship were in the air.

A mission trip is an opportunity to spend time with spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ in another country. The physical distance between the places might be great, but the spiritual bond makes us feel close to one another.

Dear JCCians: Though you may think your ability to contribute is little, you should know that your presence with the people in the mission field counts a great deal. So why not grab the next opportunity to join the next mission trip and be a blessing?

”The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” – Matt. 9:37

**Vandi Choo**

## ***Nine men & women of Little Faith***



Nine of us arriving at Phnom Penh airport on the afternoon of 14<sup>th</sup> Oct. Thank God for the smooth passage of luggage through customs.

**Thank God that nine of us – men and women of little faith – survived Cambodia!**

With little faith, we signed up for the mission trip, expecting the opportunity to submit to just a little “hardship” and in the process do some good for the people in Tang Krang Village while also gaining insights into the works of our mission on the ground.

Few days before the trip, we read news of unrelenting rains and floods in provinces nationwide. We were cautioned about potential difficult conditions if the weather was not welcoming, to prepare a second set of footwear, to bring bottles for drinking water. We brought everything “needed” to survive Cambodia – raincoats, toiletries, water bottles, torchlights, insect repellents ... Remember: we were men and women of little faith.

To much surprise (or was it no surprise at all?), I discovered at our daily devotions in Cambodia that quite a number among us had second thoughts after signing up for the trip.

To add to our concerns, we had so much luggage with items in large quantities that we were wary of encountering inconveniences at Cambodia customs. Decision having been made to go, nine men and women of little faith just had to trust God for the success of the mission trip. When we reached the Phnom Penh airport, we could see out of our aeroplane’s windows that the tarmac was very wet. It had rained heavily, we were later told; but at the point of our touchdown, the rain had stopped.

Throughout our days there, we were never hindered by the weather. Yes, there were occasions of rain, but these were limited and at appropriate times that didn’t interfere with our travelling from place to place or any of our activities.

It did not rain when we visited the remote village of Kandal on the first day.



Getting to know the work of Pastor Moses in Kandal Preaching Centre



Pastor Moses’ family, staff and volunteers

It did not rain when we had our activities going on at Tang Krang Community Centre, including the time we spent out in the open during community work. The rain came only briefly while we had our activity breaks in a sheltered area.

In brief, we, men and women of little faith, were overly prepared with all our paraphernalia of imagined “needs for survival in Cambodia” – The survival paraphernalia we brought along were mostly unneeded and unused.

Visiting Cambodia, we were impressed by the works of God’s servants on the ground – Pastor Moses in Kandal, Pastor Vibol in Tang Krang CC and their staff and volunteers who were either local or from overseas.



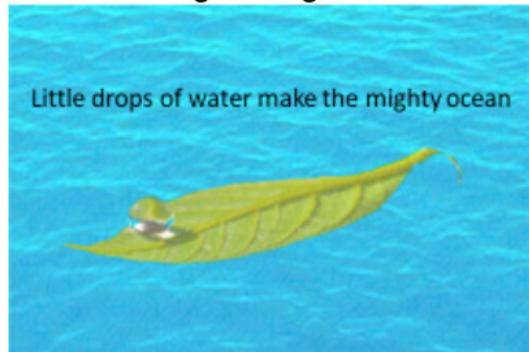
We, men and women of little faith, were much encouraged by the potential of our mission work in Cambodia to reach the villagers with the Gospel and at the same time bring them practical blessings through which they can see God's love

in the provisions.

Prior to the trip, our brother Zewen had highlighted to us the danger of a single story when contemplating the mission work in Cambodia. Simply put, we are often tempted to base our thoughts on a limited story that we hear when in fact there are many overlapping stories of the real situation on the ground. Now, as you have the opportunity to hear “nine different stories” from nine different observations and perspectives of the nine men and women of little faith who have made the trip to Cambodia, it will still be a different thing to you if you were to give yourself the opportunity to be personally there to take in the real scene on the ground, breathe in the real air of hope that both the people there and we have, and feel the spirit of God at work in driving the interest of the villager participants in the programmes set up for them.

The works of our brother-and-sister servants of God on the ground there are not easy, but their faithfulness in the Lord's service in simple environments and the satisfaction that the ordinary folk had without the excess of materialism of the city folk provide humbling lessons for us.

The Tang Krang CC is just 1¼ years old and it has drawn such enthusiastic participation by more than 70 in the first children's camp. It has regular Sunday worship and Bible Study sessions apart from English classes a few days weekly. The Kandal Preaching Centre is about 3 months' old but there is already a classroom with computers set up for English classes. Pastor Moses has also commenced a Bible Study group. There is hope in us that Kandal will follow Tang Krang CC in continuing spiritual growth to God's glory.



Obviously, our Cambodian brothers and sisters are not alone in God's service. They need and have our support. Are you among the supporters in prayers? Are you among the supporters who are able and willing to give practical help in any way, no matter how little but knowing that little drops of water make the mighty ocean? Are you like the

nine of us – men and women of little faith – who would someday somehow find the opportunity to pay a visit to our brothers and sisters in Cambodia, and to discover for yourself the live story on the ground?

*John Lee*

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