



Peace Corps

PEACE CORPS CAMBODIA



Annual Report 2017



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11 YEARS of partnership and service at a glance

573

Volunteers have served in
19 of Cambodia's 25 cities and provinces since 2007

2017



K11 Swearing-in

71 Volunteers, 34 in Education and 37 in Health, swear in on September 15, 2017 and serve in:

- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kratie
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo
- Tbong Khmum

2016



K10 Swearing-in

69 Volunteers, 34 in Education and 35 in Health, swear in on September 16, 2016 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Koh Kong
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo
- Tbong Khmum

2015



K9 Swearing-in

63 Volunteers, 34 in Education and 29 in Health, swear in on September 25, 2015 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Koh Kong
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo
- Tbong Khmum

2014



K8 Swearing-in

53 Volunteers, 29 in Education and 24 in Health, swear in on September 12, 2014 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Koh Kong
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap

2013



K7 Swearing-in

46 Volunteers, 29 in Education and 17 in Health, swear in on September 6, 2013 and serve in:

- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kandal
- Koh Kong
- Phnom Penh
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo
- Tbong Khmum

2012



K6 Swearing-in

58 Volunteers, 29 in Education and 29 in Health, swear in on September 7, 2012 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kampot
- Koh Kong
- Preah Sihanouk
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo

2011



K5 Swearing-in

59 Volunteers, 40 in Education and 19 in Health, swear in on October 3, 2011 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kandal
- Koh Kong
- Phnom Penh
- Preah Sihanouk
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo

2010



K4 Swearing-in/First Health Education Volunteers

49 Volunteers, 31 in Education and 18 in Health, swear in on September 23, 2010 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Speu
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kampot
- Koh Kong
- Phnom Penh
- Preah Sihanouk
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo



MoU with Ministry of Health
Signs MoU with Ministry of Health on May 25, 2010, officially starting our Community Health Education Project.

2009



K3 Swearing-in

42 Education Volunteers swear in on September 20, 2009 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Phnom Penh
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo

2008



K2 Swearing-in

34 Education Volunteers swear in on October 4, 2008 and serve in:

- Banteay Meanchey
- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampong Chhnang
- Kampong Thom
- Kampot
- Kandal
- Prey Veng
- Pursat
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo

2007



K1 First Group Swearing-in

The first group of 29 Education Volunteers swear in on April 2, 2007 and serve in:

- Battambang
- Kampong Cham
- Kampot
- Prey Veng
- Siem Reap
- Svay Rieng
- Takeo



Volunteers Meet the King

Peace Corps Volunteers and Country Director meet His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni at the Royal Palace.

2006



Peace Corps

Office Opens

Peace Corps officially opens its office in Cambodia.



Peace Corps



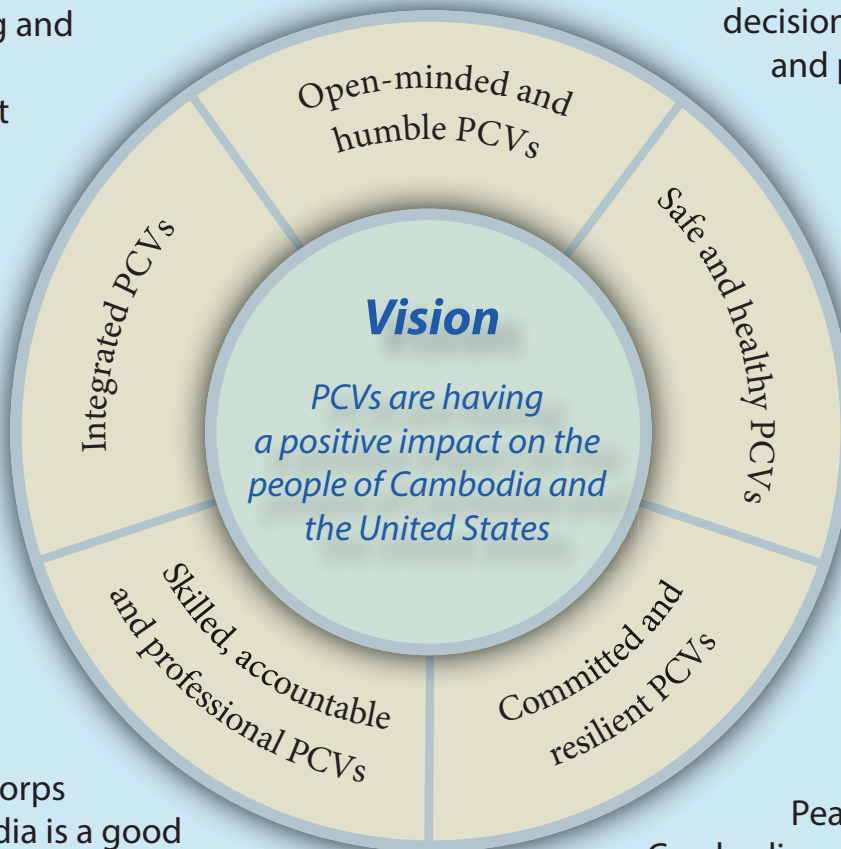
MoU with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport

Peace Corps Cambodia signs Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport on December 25, 2006, officially starting our English Teaching and Teacher Training Project.



Peace Corps Cambodia offers gold standard training and holistic support

Peace Corps Cambodia Khmer staff are frontline decision makers and problem solvers



Peace Corps Cambodia is a good partner to the Government of Cambodia and the communities in which we work

Peace Corps Cambodia safeguards Peace Corps global and Cambodian reputation

our **Vision and Values**

Message from the Country Director



Country Director visits Peace Corps Volunteer and health center staff.

It is an honor to present the Peace Corps Cambodia Annual Report for 2017. In these pages you will see the faces of Peace Corps Volunteers who spend two years in Cambodia, living with Cambodian families, teaching English at local schools, and working at community health centers, all as part of their service.

Volunteers must have determination and dedication to succeed, but their experience would not be possible without the many Cambodians who welcome and support them throughout their service. This report is not only about our Volunteers but also about all the Cambodians who have made these Volunteers' service possible.

This year marks the eleventh year Peace Corps has been in Cambodia, with over 570 Volunteers having served in 19 provinces. We are grateful to our hosts, the Royal Government of Cambodia, who make this possible by working in partnership at the national, provincial, district, and commune levels.

Peace Corps invests in our Volunteers to build their language skills, cultural understanding, and technical knowledge so they can share their skills effectively and become members of the community. Only when they understand the community can they contribute and provide support.

Peace Corps Volunteers build bridges, connecting people from different cultural, economic, and social backgrounds. Peace Corps' mission is to promote world peace and friendship – and Peace Corps Volunteers do this by bringing people closer together.

No words or numbers can truly capture the impact these Volunteers have, but in these pages we share a few of the stories about what Peace Corps Volunteers have learned from their Cambodian communities, and what our Volunteers have shared with those communities in return.

Paula Albertson
Country Director
Peace Corps Honduras Volunteer 1992-1994

Peace Corps Global Overview

Peace Corps sends the best and brightest Americans abroad on behalf of the United States to tackle the most pressing needs of people around the world. Volunteers work at the grassroots level to develop sustainable solutions that address challenges in agriculture, community economic development, education, environment, health, and youth development. Through their service, Volunteers gain a unique cultural understanding and a life-long commitment to service that positions them to succeed in today's global economy.

The agency traces its roots to 1960, when then Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country by living and working in some of the most remote corners of the world. He ignited a movement among young Americans that inspired the nation and led to the founding of the Peace Corps. In an ever-changing world, the agency has become a dynamic, forward-leaning champion for international service defined by its innovation and compassion—yet, its original mission remains the same:

THE PEACE CORPS MISSION

To promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals:

- ① To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
- ② To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
- ③ To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.



President John F. Kennedy and Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver greet departing Tanganyika and Ghana Peace Corps Volunteers in the Oval Office.



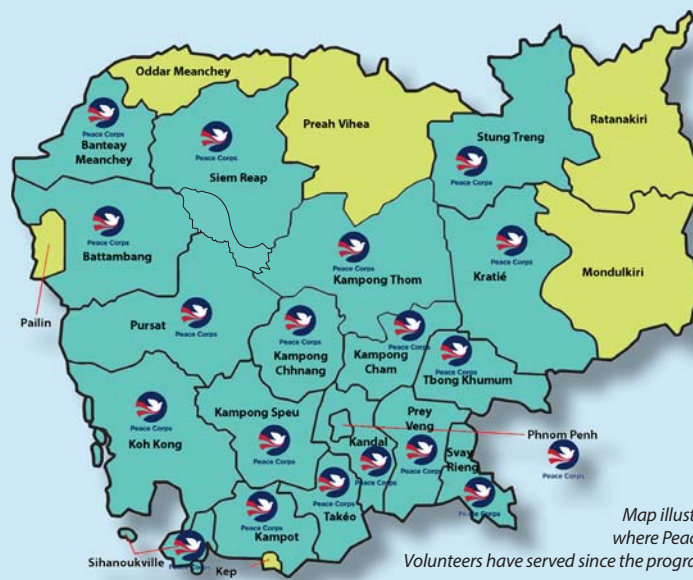
John F. Kennedy greets Volunteers on August 28, 1961.

HISTORY

Officially established:	March 1, 1961
Americans who have served:	More than 230,000
Host countries served to date:	141

PEACE CORPS TODAY

Current number of countries served:	61 posts, 65 countries
Current number of Volunteers and trainees:	7,376
Gender:	63% female, 37% male
Marital status:	98% single, 2% married
Minorities:	32% of Volunteers
Average age:	28
Volunteers over 50:	6% of Volunteers



Map illustrates the provinces where Peace Corps Cambodia Volunteers have served since the program opened in 2007.

Peace Corps in Cambodia

Individuals who serve as Peace Corps Volunteers are carefully selected through a competitive application process. Peace Corps Volunteers range in age from 20 to 75, and represent diverse ethnic and minority groups. All current Peace Corps Volunteers in Cambodia hold university and/or advanced degrees. Volunteers come to Cambodia to contribute their skills and knowledge to the development of the country through direct action at the local level. Upon arrival in Cambodia, Peace Corps Volunteers receive extensive language, cultural, health, safety, and technical training. Peace Corps provides training opportunities to Volunteers to improve their

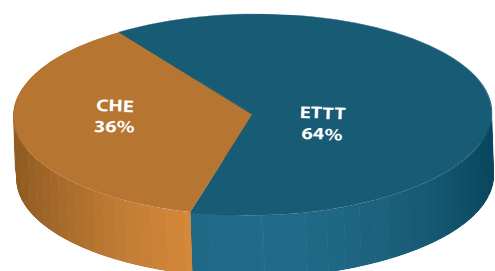
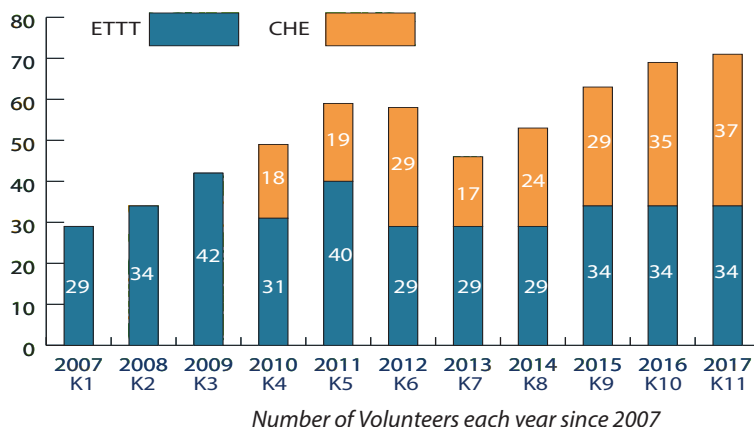
language and technical skills throughout their service. Peace Corps also trains community members, health center staff, and high school teachers on topics such as program management, food security, and working well with Volunteers.

Volunteers live with Cambodian host families for two years at a standard of living comparable to Cambodian citizens in their communities. They work side-by-side with Cambodian people to assist them in carrying out meaningful work towards a better future for their community and for Cambodia.

CURRENT PROJECTS

English Teaching and Teacher Training (ETTT)

Community Health Education (CHE)



Percentage of Volunteers in English Education vs. Health Education to date

Cambodian Government Support



In 2015, Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet met with H.E. Dr. Mam Bunheng, Minister of Health.

The partnership with the Royal Government of Cambodia is the fabric for much of Peace Corps Cambodia's work. Our partnership began with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport under a 2007 Memorandum of Understanding to send Peace Corps Volunteers to high schools to provide support in English teaching. Our partnership expanded to the Ministry of Health in 2010 with a Memorandum of Understanding to send Peace Corps Volunteers to rural health centers where they provide health education. These partnerships make it possible for the programs to work, reaching over 100,000 Cambodians.

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, and the Ministry of Health guide Peace Corps Cambodia's strategic direction and geographic reach. Provincial and district level officials in these Ministries assist with identifying Volunteer placement sites. Health center and school directors supervise the Peace Corps Volunteers.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation provides permission for Peace Corps to work in Cambodia and visas for the Volunteers. The Ministry of Interior at the national, provincial, district, and commune levels assist us in keeping the Volunteers safe and offer emergency support.

Peace Corps Cambodia is grateful for the Royal Government of Cambodia's guidance, collegiality, and encouragement.



In 2015, Peace Corps Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet met with H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport.



Newly sworn-in Volunteers, September 15, 2017.

Our Volunteers Today

2017 Statistics

PCV Numbers	112 : Volunteers serve in 16 provinces	between 20 to 29 years old: 91%	Age
Projects	51 : English Teaching and Teacher Training 61 : Community Health Education	between 30 to 39 years old: 5% between 40 to 62 years old: 4%	
Gender	70 : female 42 : male	Our current Volunteers come from 38 of the 50 United States.	U.S. States

Pre-service Training

Language hours	:	162 hours for education Volunteers 185 hours for health Volunteers
Number of technical hours alongside Cambodian counterpart	:	60 hours education Volunteers 44 hours for health Volunteers
Cross-cultural training	:	33 hours
Practicum hours	:	46 hours for education Volunteers 40 hours for health Volunteers
Daily life	:	living with Cambodian host family



English Teaching and Teacher Training Volunteers gather for their in-service Training at Peace Corps head office.



Community Health Education Volunteers gather for their In-service Training at Peace Corps head office.



English Teaching and Teacher Training

The English Teaching and Teacher Training (ETTT) project has been cooperating with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport in Cambodia since 2007. The project has worked to develop the English language of Cambodian students, teachers and community members to help them gain access to personal, professional, and academic opportunities.

Volunteers teach at high schools and teacher training centers. Volunteers co-teach with a Cambodian national teacher as requested by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport. This practice benefits not only the students but also enhances the Cambodian teachers' language

capacity and builds their technical classroom skills. By teaching alongside a Cambodian teacher, Volunteers share innovative teaching practices, help design and deliver lessons, build communicative English language skills, and introduce effective classroom management techniques. Volunteers also develop and enhance teaching and learning resources for the classroom, including the introduction of new technologies.

Since the project opened in 2007, more than 365 English Teaching and Teacher Training Volunteers have served in Cambodia.

Project Goals:

- ▲ Goal 1: Improve Teaching
- ▲ Goal 2: Increase Student Success

Project Activities:

- ▲ Co-teach with Cambodian counterparts in the classroom.
- ▲ Develop lesson plans and teaching materials that use the communicative approach to teaching English.
- ▲ Facilitate student activities and clubs.
- ▲ Develop libraries and resource centers.

Education Accomplishments of 2017

Goal 1: Improve Teaching

Teachers will improve their English proficiency and implement student-centered teaching techniques.

Improve English Teachers' Instructional Practice

 **44%**

of co-teachers increased their use of student-centered teaching techniques.

 **40%**

of co-teachers introduced improved structures or routines to manage classroom interactions more effectively.

 **41%**

of co-teachers increased their use of classroom-based assessments to monitor and inform student progress.

 **100%**

of teachers increased their use of learning resources or classroom materials by creating, improving, or managing items such as lesson plans, posters, handouts, library books or other materials that support classroom learning.

Improve Teachers' English Communication Skills

 **62%**

of co-teachers improved their English teaching methodology.


 **42%**

of co-teachers increased their participation in teacher professional development activities in English.

 **43%**

of co-teachers conducted a higher proportion of their class procedural language in English.

Improve Teacher Trainees' English Teaching Skills

 **42%**

of teacher trainees increased their use of student-centered teaching techniques.

 **52%**

of teacher trainees improved their English skills by at least 10% as measured by formal assessments.

 **43%**

of teacher trainees created, improved, or managed items such as posters, handouts, lesson plans, or other materials that support classroom learning.

Goal 2: Increase Student Success

Students/youth will improve English language proficiency and develop leadership skills in the English classroom (formally and informally) or in extracurricular activities.

Improve Leadership Skills

 **1,498**

students demonstrated leadership in or out of the classroom through activities like peer teaching, coaching, or homework help.

Improve Achievement and Participation in English Class

 **5,047**

students demonstrated improved English proficiency based on class content through formal or informal assessments.

 **4,119**

students demonstrated increased confidence or motivation in a class, club, or youth camp.

Expand Use of Library and/or ICT Resources

 **4,522**

students gained access to more reading materials or were better able to use and access electronic resources due to the creation or expansion of a school library or computer center.

Education Success Story

English Students Nourea and Khan

James Dyer and Khoy Vanak
Banteay Meanchey Province



Students practice speeches they prepared.

“

When I wrote a letter it was my first time to let foreigners know about my country. Now when I go to visit in Siem Reap I always talk to the foreigners and tell them about my country. Writing to a foreign student in America about Cambodia helped me feel proud about my own culture.

– Nourea

”

Students Nourea and Khan at Hun Sen Mongkol Borei high school in Banteay Meachey remember when their teacher Vanak, working with Peace Corps Volunteer James, began dividing the classroom into smaller groups. At first, the groups felt strange, different, and new. Eventually they learned how the mixed-level groups helped them all learn. Within each group, the advanced students would help the beginner level students. Advanced students, like Nourea, also received advanced language instruction that matched their level as they took on leadership roles by helping the others in the group. The small groups also allowed students like Khan, who required additional support, to receive task-based instruction at a level they could absorb. Both student groups benefitted from this strategy.

Soon everyone could see the benefits and the increased English absorption in the classroom. Vanak and James then decided to create new opportunities for the students to apply what they had learned. One such activity allowed students to connect with high school

biology students from Lowell, Michigan through a Peace Corps pen pal letter exchange program between students in America and Cambodia. Through these letters, Nourea, Khan, and the other students in the class read in English about things like the Michigan forest ecosystem and American football games. They then replied in English sharing information with the students in Michigan about Khmer culture and the Khmer language, especially the history of Angkor Wat and different Cambodian holidays and ceremonies.

Integrating authentic texts like letters into the language classroom spiked overall student motivation, something that was especially noticeable among students who otherwise hadn't been very interested in studying. Khan, a male student in 10 B, had never shown much interest in English before last year, but now he is a fixture at the school's weekly English club.



Students work together with teachers to plan a videotaped presentation to send back to America.

Education Success Story

The Learning to Live Together Olympics

Megan Boundy and So Somborey
Kampot Province

The Learning to Live Together Olympics motivates students in the classroom through student-centered teaching techniques so that learning can be fun. The Learning to Live Together Olympics received a \$770 grant that was complemented by a community contribution valued at \$ 2,618.

“*My counterpart So Samborey, a teacher at the Provincial Teacher Training Center, and I discussed ways to motivate students and make learning fun. During one of our daily discussions we came up with the idea to create a competition based on world knowledge and team-building. This idea flourished into a training, club, and a half-day competition.*

– Megan



Primary school director presents the winning team with prizes for their hard work.

were separated into different teams and completed academic tasks and activities. Over the course of these four months, over 100 students participated.

In addition, Megan and So Samborey worked with teachers to paint a world map on the school's wall. With a community contribution of 77% of the total budget for the project, they purchased supplies for the map. The teacher trainees plan to paint the map on the wall at the Provincial Teacher Training Center soon.

The Learning to Live Together Olympics improved the teacher trainees' general world knowledge, built on their team-building skills, improved their motivation to learn and teach, and showed teacher trainees that learning can be fun.



Everyone involved with the Learning to Live Together Olympics 2017.

What Peace Corps V

Teaching English, English clubs, girls empowerment, health education,



Volunteers are Doing

, taking vital signs, art clubs, building relationship with communities...





Community Health Education

The Community Health Education project has been cooperating with the Ministry of Health in Cambodia since 2010. The project has worked to assist Cambodian individuals and communities, particularly women and children, to improve their overall health and well-being and increase their capacity to address health-related issues.

Volunteers work at health centers selected by the Ministry of Health. They work with health center staff, local village health volunteers, and schools to help people address their health needs. Since the project opened in 2010, more than 208 Community Health Education Volunteers have served in the Community Health Education project.

Project Goals:

- ▲ Maternal and Child Health
- ▲ Healthy Behaviors

Project Activities:

- ▲ Conduct health education sessions at community health centers and through home visits.
- ▲ Promote positive nutrition practices through community and home gardens, and cooking and feeding demonstrations.
- ▲ Promote ante/postnatal checkups, immunizations, and family planning throughout the community.
- ▲ Educate community members on water and sanitation issues such as proper handwashing, hygiene, diarrhea prevention and treatment, hydration, and appropriate treatment and storage of drinking water.
- ▲ Engage individuals in activities such as group exercise, healthy cooking demonstrations, anti-smoking information, and drug and alcohol awareness campaigns.
- ▲ Educate community members on reproductive health.

Health Accomplishments in 2017

Goal 1: Maternal and Child Health

Community members will improve their knowledge and skills of, and adopt healthy behaviors for, maternal and child health.

Antenatal Care, Checkup and Delivery

 **8,826**

women received health education messages on the importance of antenatal care and postnatal checkup, immunization, family planning, and delivery services.

 **4,384**

women are able to identify signs and symptoms indicating the need to seek immediate care during pregnancy.

 **2,205**

community people were educated on modern contraceptive methods.

 **2,293**

pregnant women received four antenatal visits during their last pregnancy.

Nutrition

 **8,489**

people were trained in child health and nutrition.

 **8,098**

children from 6-59 months old received a growth card and were weighed at least once over a three-month period.

 **4,256**

caretakers identified one or more actions they can take to prevent malnutrition in their family.

 **47%**

of women reached are able to demonstrate how to prepare safe and nutritious weaning foods.

 **88%**

of households trained by Volunteers reported increased access to fresh food six months after establishing a garden.

Water Sanitation Hygiene

 **603**

community people are able to demonstrate how to correctly treat water.

 **957**

community people were trained to purify and properly store drinking water.

 **5,545**

community people are able identify three or more critical times when they must wash their hands.

Goal 2: Healthy Behaviors

Community members will develop greater life skills and adopt healthy behaviors.

Non-Communicable Disease

 **4,987**

people were educated on non-communicable diseases.

 **1,974**

people were educated on the harmful effects of alcohol and other substances.

 **6,258**

people were educated on healthy diets.

 **1,625**

people were educated on non-communicable disease risk factors related to tobacco use.

 **537**

exercise events were organized by Peace Corps Volunteers and their counterparts.

 **2,563**

people are able to identify ways to incorporate physical activity into their daily routine.

Reproductive Health

 **1,921**

people are able to identify at least 2 behaviors to prevent unwanted pregnancy or prevent STIs.

 **507**

people are able to demonstrate the steps to correctly use a condom.

Health Success Story

Sandan Open Defecation-Free Campaign

Ben Rost and Chan Savet

Sandan Village, Sandan District, Kampong Thom Province

Located eighty kilometers northeast of Kampong Thom provincial town, on the southern fringes of the Prey Long forest, Sandan Village is a vibrant community of some 110 households. It is home to the district seat, a health center, high school, and administrative offices – and will soon be the district's first open defecation-free (ODF) community.

Leading this effort is Chan Savet, a local village health volunteer and Sandan Village resident. Savet describes the ODF campaign as strongly rooted in the community.

“

At first, we didn't have a plan. I attended the Peace Corps training in March, and then set out to work on sanitation, vegetable gardens, and wells.

– Chan Savet

”

Village-wide meetings identified sanitation as a community priority, and subsequent planning sessions led to the creation of the ODF Sandan campaign. Savet and Ben have worked with a local builder to provide a discounted latrine design for the 32 households that currently lack adequate sanitation, and have held several education sessions on the



Savet shows the map of her community.

linkages between sanitation and health. Plaques for each house in Sandan Village will visibly demonstrate the community's commitment to maintaining its ODF status.

“Once the latrines are built, villagers will not have to defecate in the open,” Savet explains, “meaning germs will not be transmitted by flies and such. Villagers will not have to spend so much money receiving care from the health center and clinics.”

Through her role as community organizer, Savet has assumed new responsibilities within her village, and acquired new skills that she intends to continue using.

“It doesn't have to be my village,” she says. “If we do a similar project in another village, I will work with that community as well. I am able to think through projects and come up with ideas because I have now done it once before.”



Savet meets with community members.

Health Success Story

Health Through Trust

Kelsey Swalwell and Pich Vuth
Takeo Province

When I first arrived at the health center, nervous and barely able to speak Khmer, vaccinator Pich Vuth was my first friend and teacher. Other staff members didn't know how to interact with me and didn't understand my role and neither did I, thus we were very shy with each other for many months.

“Vuth’s energy, motivation, and passion have made him the perfect counterpart. He has been an incredible community liaison, project promoter, budget overseer, health educator, friend, and mentor in this community for years.”
– Kelsey ”



Kelsey joins a meeting with her health center staff.

Vuth, however, believed in me and had faith that if I would trust him enough to join him for community vaccination outreach, meet local officials and patients in their homes, and try to observe the various types of jobs throughout the health center, I would find and create roles for myself. He was correct. He readily calls me his “partner” when we do vaccine outreach because I help him with the work: encouraging mothers to weigh babies, recording their child’s weight on the growth card

and reviewing their vaccine schedule, providing health and nutrition education pertinent to their child’s age, and ensuring that they understand their child’s next vaccination date.

Our work together is in no way limited to the health center or vaccinations. This past spring, Vuth accompanied me to Peace Corps’ food security training, i.e. organic garden training. We currently have a garden project in which all ten local village chiefs will participate in trainings regarding organic fertilizer and pesticide production. They will then lead similar trainings with families in their respective villages. Additionally, to support our construction of a water tower to improve handwashing practices among the health center staff, Vuth constantly advocates and explains the importance of the tower’s construction and health education.



Kelsey and her counterpart Vuth at health center.

Small Grants Program & Accomplishments

The Peace Corps Cambodia small grants program enables Volunteers and their counterparts to access funds and resources in support of initiatives and projects that meet the priority needs of their communities and contribute to the achievement of Cambodia's development goals. Projects focus on a range of areas including maternal health, water, sanitation and hygiene, food security, nutrition, youth leadership, education, and school resource development. Prior to project development, Volunteers and their Cambodian counterparts receive 24 hours of project design and management training facilitated by Peace Corps staff.

In fiscal year 2017 the Peace Corps Cambodia small grants program awarded nearly \$110,000 to 49 grant projects. All projects are co-designed and co-managed by community partners and Volunteers with an emphasis on capacity-building and sustainability. During the 2017 fiscal year the Peace Corps Cambodia small grants program reached approximately 15,000 direct Cambodian beneficiaries and over 45,000 indirect Cambodian beneficiaries. Through grant projects managed by Volunteers and their counterparts the capacity of more than 750 Cambodian service providers was increased in the health and education sectors across 17 provinces.



Primary school students wash their hands with clean water at a handwashing station built by a Peace Corps Volunteer and the community.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Projects

- ▲ Peace Corps Volunteers work with community partners to improve hygiene and sanitation conditions in their communities through the construction of facilities and education on topics such as handwashing, water treatment and storage, and the harmful effects of open defecation.
- ▲ Through these projects handwashing stations, latrines, and water filters are built at health centers, households, and schools.
- ▲ These projects often ensure access to a reliable water source through the construction of wells and water towers.
- ▲ WASH projects aim to reduce the incidence of waterborne illness in target communities, ultimately leading to longer, healthier lives for community members.

Accomplishments

• Water Sources established:	11
• Latrines restored:	26
• New Latrines built:	119
• Handwashing Stations built:	103
• Water Filters distributed:	43

Small Grants Program & Accomplishments

Gardens for Nutrition

- ▲ Peace Corps Volunteers work with community partners to establish gardens at health centers, households, and schools to improve the dietary intake of community members. These projects always include education on nutrition and the importance of a healthy diet for both children and adults.
- ▲ Gardens at schools are created and maintained by students to provide an experiential learning opportunity that complements the content of their agriculture classes. Students and teachers learn organic farming practices and take vegetables home to integrate into their meals.
- ▲ Home gardens are created to increase the dietary diversity of families, especially those with children under the age of five. Families are trained in organic farming practices and participate in cooking demonstrations creating nutrient dense meals using garden outputs.
- ▲ Gardens for nutrition projects aim to improve the nutrient density of meals in target communities through increased access to fruits and vegetables.

Accomplishments

- **Gardens established:** 21



Andrew's school garden and counterpart.



Teigen and her counterparts at her school's library.

School Resource Development

- ▲ Peace Corps Volunteers work with community partners to improve and refurbish resource centers at their schools. These projects also train teachers and school staff how they can effectively use these resources.
- ▲ Resource development projects involve the acquisition of books, computers, projectors, and other learning materials. They also include renovations of classrooms and libraries to establish environments conducive to learning.
- ▲ Resource development projects focus on improving education through access to learning resources and incorporation of these resources into the classroom.

Accomplishments

- **Libraries refurbished:** 5
- **Computer Labs refurbished:** 4
- **New Books:** 2,000+
- **New Computers:** 30

Small Grants Program Success Story

My Host Family's Garden

Maddy Lapatra and her Host Family
Pursat Province

Som Mao and Hean Soun, the father and mother of a family hosting a Peace Corps Volunteer in their home, wanted to build a garden, but they didn't know how. Together with Maddy, they attended a Peace Corps training on how to build vegetable gardens to improve nutrition. During the training, Mao and Soun absorbed all the information provided and Soun diligently took notes. Six months after the training, a garden has blossomed and grown at their home.



Maddy and her host dad Som Mao making organic rice husk fertilizer.

“

Our garden is very sustainable as we dry our own seeds from previous harvests, sell the excess vegetables and in turn do not have to purchase vegetables.

– Maddy

”

Hean Soun and her mother both have high blood pressure and vegetables were a luxury. They had to be purchased. Since the training, the family has diligently worked in their garden, and expanded it to grow more. Soun has learned about the three food groups and how it is healthier to cook with less salt and without MSG. Mao and Soun understand the benefits of eating vegetables and why vitamins are important for good health. Soun's blood pressure has gone down and she is now a resource in the community teaching others how to incorporate more vegetables into their meals in a cost-effective way.

Som Mao and Hean Soun share the garden with their community. Friends and neighbors come by asking to see the garden and learn about it.

Mao sits them down with the books he received during the training and teaches them about implementing a garden at their home. A few new gardens have started in the community as a result of the model home garden.

The family sells the excess vegetables at their Aunt's home shop. Neighbors regularly come by asking to buy vegetables straight from the garden. Mao and Soun are proud of the garden and the chemical-free, natural vegetables it produces, as Cambodians are very concerned about where the fruit and vegetables come from and value produce that is chemical-free.

The garden is sustainable. The family dries their own seeds from previous harvests, sells the excess vegetables and does not have to purchase vegetables. They will also be able to save more money for their daughter to go to university because of the income generated from the garden.

Together the family and Maddy have replanted and harvested the rows many times and eat home grown vegetables with every meal. Mao and Soun's increased confidence and leadership will support a healthy community in the future.



Maddy, host sister, and her host mom Soun in their garden.

Small Grants Program Success Story

Latrines for Equitable Education

*Lindsay Bownik and her School Director Khem Sokhom
Tbong Khmum Province*

A high school in Tbong Khmum province had only two functioning bathrooms for 2,000 students from 15 different villages. Due to an unreliable water source, bathrooms installed over 10 years ago were no longer usable. Only 9% of female students felt comfortable using the bathrooms while at school. The situation was so bad that students left the school's campus each time they needed to use the bathroom.



Restrooms built for the school community.

“

The students seem so much happier now that they have a clean place to go to the bathroom and clean off.

– Khem Sokhom

”

The high school director, teachers, and Peace Corps Volunteer Lindsay Bownik collaborated on a project to improve the sanitation and hygiene facilities to make it easier for students to stay at school to learn. The project received \$4,657 from a grant and over \$2,210 in community contributions. Initially, the plan was to repair two of the old bathrooms and construct four new bathrooms and four new handwashing stations. Due to the overwhelming community support and

positive student response, the project built two additional bathrooms and two additional handwashing stations, establishing a total of 10 operating toilets all connected to a reliable water source, and six newly installed handwashing stations at the high school. As a result of this project 80% of the school's 2,000 students reported spending less time away from class to the use the bathroom.

Additionally, 166 female students were educated on menstrual hygiene management with 100% of workshop attendees able to accurately identify misconceptions about menstrual health following the day-long workshop. Student leaders trained by Peace Corps helped coordinate and facilitate the workshop providing them an opportunity to employ their leadership skills.



Education session on menstrual hygiene led by a teacher.

Homestay Experience

My host family invited me to be a part of their lives

By: Karina Lichtman



Karina with her host family.

The moment I stepped out of the van to meet my host family for the first time, they greeted me with big smiles and open arms. From day one, they have made me feel welcome and a natural part of their lives. Throughout the course of a year, a lot can happen – personal family struggles, deaths in the community, weddings, babies being born – these moments left me feeling guilty, like I was an added stress. Yet, my host family included me with incredible compassion and patience through all of the ups and downs. They invited me to be a part of their lives. They never cease to remind me that I am their fourth child, that they are my adopted parents, and me their adopted “kon” (child).

They have managed to make me feel like I belong exactly where I am. In moments of self-doubt, I’ll overhear my host mom defend my ability to speak Khmer, eat Khmer food, and live here to anyone who asks about me. My three host sisters are quick to help me pick out my outfit for special events and regardless of what I choose to wear,

insist on lending me everything they own – doing my hair for me, putting their make-up on my face, lending me their shoes, jewellery, and handbags.

They’ve taught me that love transcends language and culture; that it’s given and received through the arm squeezes as they pass by me, their smiles and giggles as they say my name, the persistent questions asking: if I’ve eaten rice yet, where I’m going, if I’m happy or not – I could go on! I feel so incredibly thankful that my family took an equal leap into the unknown, allowing Peace Corps to place an American Volunteer in their home – allowing me a permanent place in their lives.

I have them to thank for my community reciprocating their welcome and accepting me so warmly, and know that my Peace Corps experience wouldn’t be the same without them.

I love my host family like my biological family

By: Leah Wood

When I reflect back on the past year and a half, my relationship with my host family stands out as one of the things I am most proud of and grateful for from my service.

This is my host family’s first year working with Peace Corps, and none of us knew what to expect. We’ve had some clumsy moments, but my host family has gone above and beyond to make me feel welcome in their home and community by taking the time to explain the significance and value of certain aspects of Khmer culture, as well as their own personal stories and experiences.



Leah with her host family.

I love my host family like my biological family, and I can’t imagine this experience without them. My host parents refer to me as their “daughter” and I’ve had the opportunity to travel with them to their home village in a neighboring province for various weddings and funerals, and to meet their extended family. Saying goodbye to them will be the most difficult part of leaving my community here.

Homestay Experience

Host families are forever

By: **Samantha Hokanson**



Samantha with her host family.

In the beginning, I felt like my host family was the most difficult aspect of my Peace Corps service. There were many frustrating moments—language barriers, cultural barriers, awkward moments and misunderstandings.

But over time, these trying moments occurred less and less frequently until suddenly one day, I realized there hadn't been a difficult moment in what felt like forever. We were unexpectedly and amazingly in-sync. All of a sudden, I could talk to them about anything that was bothering me—they understand the intricacies of working in my village better than anyone else.

They know the place, the characters, and its past. What has shocked me even more is how fast my host-mom got to know me as well as anybody else. She has started calling me out for the same things my mom in America calls me out for. "She forgets everything!" "She's in her own world!" I often think, "If only my American and Cambodian families shared the same language, they could have a field day together sharing stories and laughing at me."

I realize after more than a year of living with my host family how much we truly know and love each other. I know we will be a part of each other's lives forever. "Don't forget to call us once a week when you go back to America!" I could never forget them. My relationship with my host family has become the most special part of my service.

I received so much love from my host family

By: **Shaniqua Smith**

I was nervous to meet my permanent host family. I was worried they wouldn't like me considering our very different backgrounds. They were agreeing to take a stranger into their house for two years. A stranger from a different background including: ethnicity, religion, cultural beliefs, language, and family dynamics.

Fortunately, I have received so much love and affection from my host family. The patience they afford me, especially with me learning Khmer, encourages me to push myself harder. Being a black female has been difficult in Cambodia. When I had my interview with the Peace Corps Cambodia staff I informed them that I wanted a host family who was understanding of my skin color. Honestly, I was wary that my request would/could be fulfilled, but I kept my faith. To this day, I have a family that shows me unconditional love despite our differences. Community members think it is okay to tell me to bleach my skin, that I am too dark, ugly, burnt, etc. When I bring my frustrations to my host family because of these relentless comments, they are always ready to listen to me and give me advice and reassure me of their love for me. I wouldn't have it any other way! They will be my life-long family. The memories I have with them will be with me for the rest of my life.



Shaniqua with her host family.

Homestay Experience

Living with my Khmer host family has been a tremendous treat and journey

By: Brian Donatelli



Brian with his host family.

The emotions of meeting and living with my Khmer host family are something I will never forget. I had plenty of reservations and anxiety leading up to meeting them. Questions about communicating, culture and day-to-day interactions rattled around in my head. When I had dinner with my Khmer host family for the very first time, I was left confused, and feeling awkward, and uncertain. I asked myself, "How am I going to translate everything that they are saying, especially my host grandmother?" As many Volunteers know, it's a step-by-step process, or one spoonful by one spoonful of rice in a silent process. As uncomfortable as the silence was, my ears got adjusted to the familiar sound and the days got easier. Everyone's warm, caring smiles welcomed me into their world. The silence, previously so deafening, became a welcomed comfort. The questions and awkwardness that left me uncomfortable were quickly erased by my host family's caring and loving nature.

Today, I do not know where I would be without my Khmer host family. My host mother is my role model. She is a caregiver to her three sons, raising them to be polite and healthy. She always invites me to cook or help her cut the vegetables, creating a comfortable place for me within her cooking environment. I can see that including me in her daily life is important for her.

Every meal that she makes is different and special (I am a big fan of "somla: ka:ko សៀងក្អែក"). She puts a lot of care and love into her cooking, "to feed and give strength to all her four boys now."

My host family's love and compassion was at its greatest during a difficult personal time for me. Unfortunately, during my service with the Peace Corps, my grandmother back in America passed away. In a selfless act of compassion, my host mother decided to hold a small ceremony/funeral at the temple in honor of my grandmother. It was beautiful and heartfelt. Neighbors, teachers, nuns, other grandmothers, and my newly found brothers all joined us in her memorial. Everyone said prayers and kept repeating my grandmother's name in lamentation. The energy was incredible. Although I started to cry, I started to feel warm, grateful, and not alone. Even though it was emotionally the hardest part of my service, it was the best part of my service. When I reflect I still cannot believe a family I just met a year ago performed such a selfless act for me.

Living with my Khmer host family has been a tremendous treat and journey. I do not think there is any other way to experience someone else's livelihood. We, as Peace Corps Volunteers, all became a part of their world and they welcomed us with open hearts.



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