

Report from Kampong Thom 9-13 July 2012

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This program of professional development for Cambodian teachers and school directors was authorised and supported by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS) and the Kampong Thom Provincial Office of Education (POE).

The workshops were hosted and supported by the Kampong Thom Regional Teacher Training College (RTTC) and the Director, Madame Phally. Teachers Across Borders Australia was ably and warmly supported by four members of Teachers Across Borders USA.

The Teachers Across Borders' five day workshops were for practising teachers, school directors (principals) and MOEYS staff. This program ran alongside a three day program coordinated and presented by six teachers from Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg, and two from Teachers Across Borders. This program was designed to provide all second year student teachers at the training college with three distinct workshops over three days. The costs associated with running this program were funded by Our Lady of Mercy College.

Prior to arriving in Kampong Thom it was anticipated that there would be seven workshops run over the five days. On arrival we were informed that the two workshops in literacy and maths that were to be part of the student teacher program were in fact student teachers had been specially selected for a five day intensive program in either literacy or maths. These were run as part of the regular TAB program funded by TAB (but no stipend was paid).

This then expanded the program to nine five day workshops and three by three day rotation programs for student teachers.

| Five Day Program Workshop Title | Presenters | Translators | No. of participants |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Activities and Resources for the Khmer Language Classroom: Years 7-9 | Mrs Liz Mildenhall Ms Kate Mildenhall Ms Bek Bates Ms Maggie Mildenhall | 3 | 19 |
| Leadership Development Program | Mrs Sharne Turpin, Mr Justin West Sok Samnang | 1 | 20 Primary School Directors |
| Activities and Resources for the Khmer Language Classroom Years 7-9 | Mrs Anne Turpin | 1 | 20 |
| Activities and Resources for the Khmer Language Classroom Years 10-12 | Mrs Elvira Rossimel Mr Sivuthy Ho | 0 | 19 |
| Activities and Resources for Years 7 & 8 Science Teachers | Ms Julia Duffy Ms Maria Howard | 2 | 20 |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---|----|
| Resources and Activities for Year 3 & 4 Math Classes | Ms Nicola Duncan, Mrs Jodie Williams | 2 | 21 |
| How to create Child Friendly Schools for all children | Ms Rachel Rochlin, Ms Sasha Shlyamberg | 2 | 20 |
| Teaching and Learning Strategies for Primary Mathematics Year 5 & 6 | Mr Alan Drayton | 2 | 20 |
| Useful Literacy Strategies that Engage Children | Mrs Clare Davies | 2 | 20 |
| | | | |
| 3 Day Program Workshop Title | | | |
| Art, Music | Mr Mark Jenkinson, Ms Felicia Adams | 1 | 20 |
| Geography | Ms Rowena Thomson, Mr Michael Ryan | 1 | 20 |
| Science | Ms Catherine Burke, Mr Christopher Spencer | 1 | 20 |

In unusually hot and humid weather, the program was opened by the Assistant to the Director of the Provincial Office of Education, who provided a diverse and comprehensive range of statistics relating to education in Kampong Thom. A major emphasis in his speech was his hope that Teachers Across Borders would provide some professional development to Khmer teachers at the outer and less resourced areas of the province.

Across the range of workshops over the five days, the RTTC was filled with a diverse range of inspiring learning and teaching activities. The Teachers Across Borders' personnel bonded well with one another and with the teachers from Our Lady of Mercy College, both in the workshops and socially. This was due to the support given by Alan, Clare, Anne and Sasha who had participated in previous workshops. This was repaid by all of the first time presenters who were just outstanding in a new and unknown environment and with people that they had barely met previously. All were fine ambassadors for their home schools and Teachers Across Borders. They will hopefully attend future workshops as their contributions were outstanding.

Three Cambodian people deserve a special mention:

Madame Phally who provides such important support to TAB.

Mr Sivuthy Ho who once again proved what a wonderful copresenter he is and who assisted Elvira greatly.

Sok Samnang for his administrative expertise in Cambodia prior, during and after the workshop program and his contribution as a translator in the leadership workshop.

To the best of my knowledge, all workshops were outstanding and all involved returned safely to their homes in Cambodia, Australia, the Philippines, China and the USA. The highlight for me was the way the program ran and the energy and enthusiasm of all the new TAB presenters.

Thanks should go to the Mildenhalls and the AEU for the 150 AEU red shopping bags which held all the participants materials and the sets of pens provided for school directors.

Thanks also to Alan Drayton for the TAB key rings and fridge magnets (prototypes from the Philippines) were a big hit. I would suggest that TAB explore the possibility of producing a TAB bag in Cambodia for future workshops. Samnang thought this could be produced at a reasonable price in Siem Reap. Similarly I would suggest that TAB authorise Alan to have key rings and magnets made in the Philippines at a reasonable price.

Thanks to Emily and Isabel Turpin, Sharne's daughters, who set up an informal crèche for the children of some teachers who were present due to school holidays.

At the conclusion to the program it was quite apparent that all of the participants had found the workshops both professionally rewarding and personally enjoyable. Similarly all TAB presenters found the workshops stimulating and demanding.

Madame Phally requested that the program for student teachers continue. She is keen that a workshop be in Health and Horticulture as part of Life Skills be offered.

The white boards at the PTTC are in a poor condition which makes it difficult to read and I would like to suggest that some of the funds remaining from the Wheeler Foundation Project be used replace some of the boards.

Geoff Osler 1/8/12

