



## Kidshelp Kambodscha e.V. Newsletter, Issue December 2019

Dear members, dear godparents and supporters,

because there is a lot to tell, we want to get straight to the first topic without a big introduction:

### We are looking for new sponsors for our school children

In our last newsletter we presented this year's university scholarship candidates. To our great joy, within a few weeks, sponsors contacted us for each candidate.

Every year we ask ourselves whether it is realistic to find sponsors for the increasingly expensive studies here and we are always surprised by your readiness to help. Especially in times when populists all over the world try to maintain or even increase the division between rich and poor by building walls in their heads and at various border crossings, we are happy to see how many of you want to contribute to overcoming the injustices in the system.



Fig. 1: Scholarship holders 2019/2020

So, on behalf of our new students and all those returning for another year, many thanks to all of you!



The university students are, however, not our only sponsorship program. As many of you probably already know, our programs start much earlier. Usually when a child attends first grade primary school or when the parents of a talented and needy child contact us during school and ask for support. We then visit the families and the child, assess the neediness and prepare a first report on the child.

If someone contacts us and tells us that they want to support a child, we will forward this report to them. If they have children of their own, we can try to accommodate requests for a godchild of the same gender/age. What we will not do is make a more precise selection according to special criteria. Every child for whom we want to find a sponsor has the same right to support. We send pictures of the children, but usually only of the one child we have selected. We will never support one child being preferred over another applicant because of their appearance or other criteria.

The sponsorships cost 17 Euro per month. Of this amount, 12 US dollars go directly to the child's family. The balance we need to cover the other project costs and our administrative expenses.

The condition for the payment of the sponsorship money is that the children regularly attend the state school. Unfortunately, education in Cambodia is still often not as important as it should be. In addition, many children and young people often have to help out at home because their parent's income is not sufficient to support their families. Only about 80% of all children finish primary school (1st-6th year) and the figures are even worse for the higher age groups. Only about 40% of children attend ninth grade and only one in five students graduate<sup>1</sup>.

The payment of the 12 US dollars is made once a month directly by our local employees. Before the payment is made, we check the schoolbooks of the sponsored children. In these notebooks the class teacher enters the days of absence and the grades of the respective child. If a sponsored child does not show up to collect the sponsorship money or if the notebook shows poor attendance or lack of effort, we contact the families and teachers and ask for the reasons. Depending on the situation, we can either give the all clear (e.g. if the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORT: [Public Education Statistics & Indicators](#) 2016 – 2017.  
Last accessed: 29.11.2019



child was away at the time of payment), provide additional help and support (e.g. if the child is ill) or we may terminate the sponsorship prematurely.

If a sponsored child has successfully graduated from high school, the sponsorship is automatically terminated. We then talk to the fresh graduates and ask them about their plans for the future. If they want to study, they are free to apply for a place in our scholarship program for students. The sponsors who supported them during school are not obliged to continue to support them in any way, but many are happy to do so.

Overall, it is easier for us to award university scholarships to former godchildren. This is not because we prefer these children but because we are in a better position to assess the family situation due to our many years of contact. Motivation and work ethic also play an important role when awarding a scholarship. If we are not convinced of a candidate, we usually refrain from awarding a university scholarship.

The school sponsorship programme is therefore more than just a small financial incentive for parents to keep their children in school. It is also an opportunity for us to exchange ideas with the parents and the children and thus be able to react early to various crisis situations that would otherwise end in dropping out of school.

While the number of university scholarships awarded by us has steadily increased in recent years, the number of school scholarships has decreased by about 30%. This was intended because during the same timeframe the number of local Kidshelp employees has remained stable and we can only hire more employees if we further increase the fees for administration (which we do not plan to do at the moment).

As we only accepted a few children last year, the current number of applicants for a school scholarship is pretty high. In addition, because some of the former godchildren graduated from high school in August and therefore completed their sponsorships, we have now reached a total number of sponsored children that is below the level we would like to maintain in the future. We would therefore now like to introduce new school sponsorships.



If you are interested in supporting one or more children<sup>2</sup>, please complete a [Child Sponsorship Form](#) and if you are a UK tax payer, a [Charity Gift Aid Form](#) and contact [Patrick@kidshelp-kambodscha.org](mailto:Patrick@kidshelp-kambodscha.org) for UK bank details.

If you have further questions about these sponsorships, simply write us an [e-mail](#).

### **Christmas Cards - Made in Cambodia**

This year we once again want to advertise the [Christmas cards](#) designed by our school children in loving handwork. We know that many of you are active at Christmas or flea markets. Also, at schools, universities, in associations and all sorts of other institutions there are various possibilities to collect money for a good cause during the Advent season.

It would be great if you took a few cards from us to sell them during the festive season. The proceeds from each sale will go to the children and students and allow us to make additional purchases for our schools or dormitories.

If you order cards from us now, they will arrive in time for Christmas. You can find more information about the purchase on our [homepage](#).



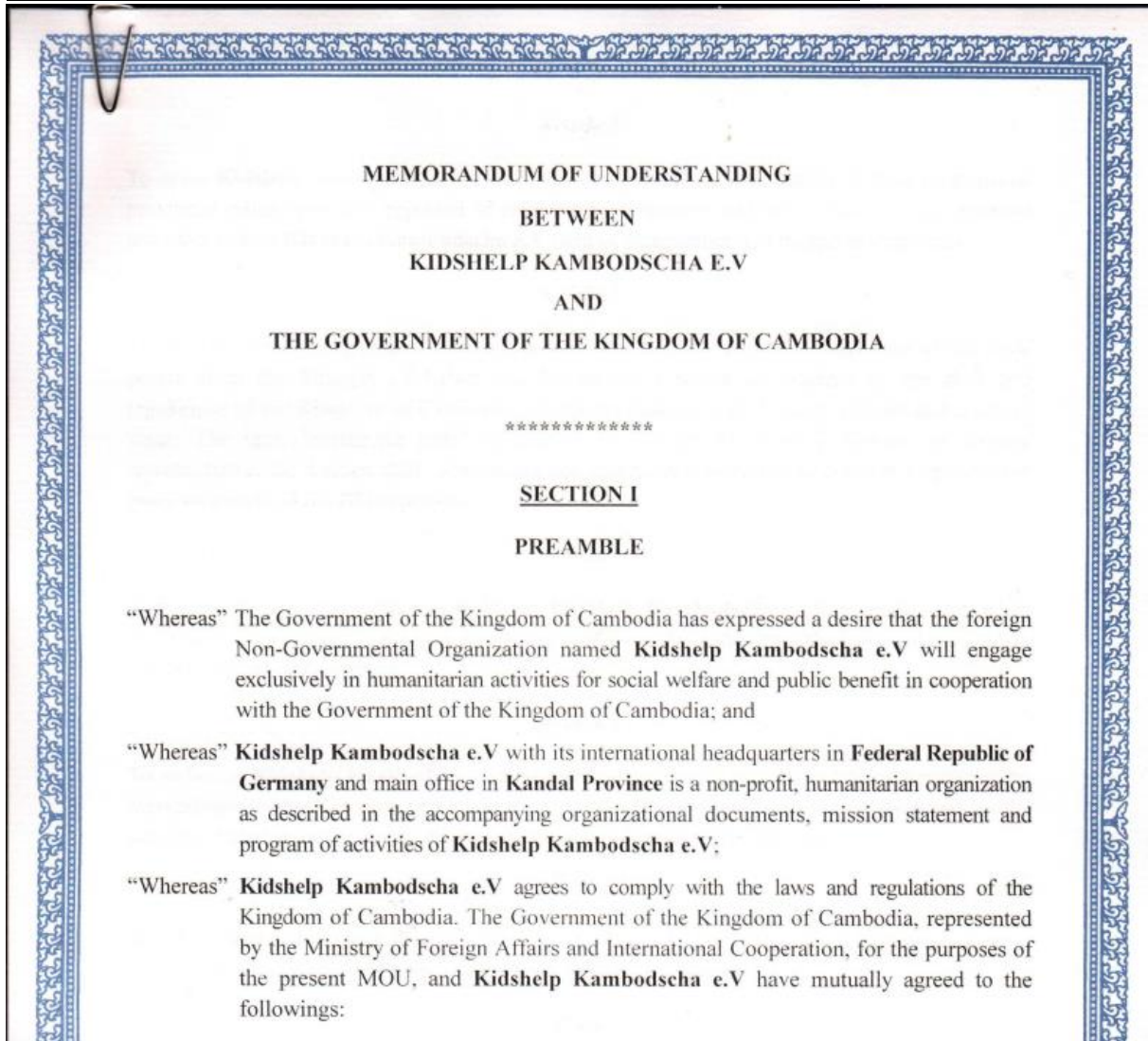
**Fig. 3: Snapshots of the Christmas card handicraft workshop**

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<sup>2</sup> Sometimes companies, foundations or individuals take up multiple sponsorships.



## Successful renewal of our memorandum of understanding



**Fig.4: Excerpt from our new memorandum of understanding**

Every foreign aid organisation operating in Cambodia must register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Only those who have registered are allowed to work locally, apply for visas for their employees and hope for tax or import benefits. After the introduction of the mandatory procedure, Kidshelp successfully registered with the government for the first time in 2013.

These registrations are only valid for three years and then have to be extended in a very bureaucratic process. Since the regulations and requirements for aid organisations are constantly changing, re-registration tricky and involves a considerable amount of work for local staff, we are all the happier to announce that we successfully renewed our registration in August 2019.



For organisations based abroad, a further agreement is necessary with the ministry that best corresponds to the focus of their work. In our case this is clearly the Ministry of Education and we are currently in the process of renewing this registration. In the past, we have always had good experiences in cooperation with the Ministry and are confident that this extension can be signed soon.

## Facebook donations

We are very happy to announce we were able to register ourselves with the Facebook donations team. This means we are now able to create calls to action and raise funds via Facebook. Diversifying our means to collect funding is crucial to ensure that we have enough money to pay for one off expenses like renovations or the increasing overhead costs for things like the above mentioned registration.

If you want to contribute to our first fundraiser, please follow [this link](#).

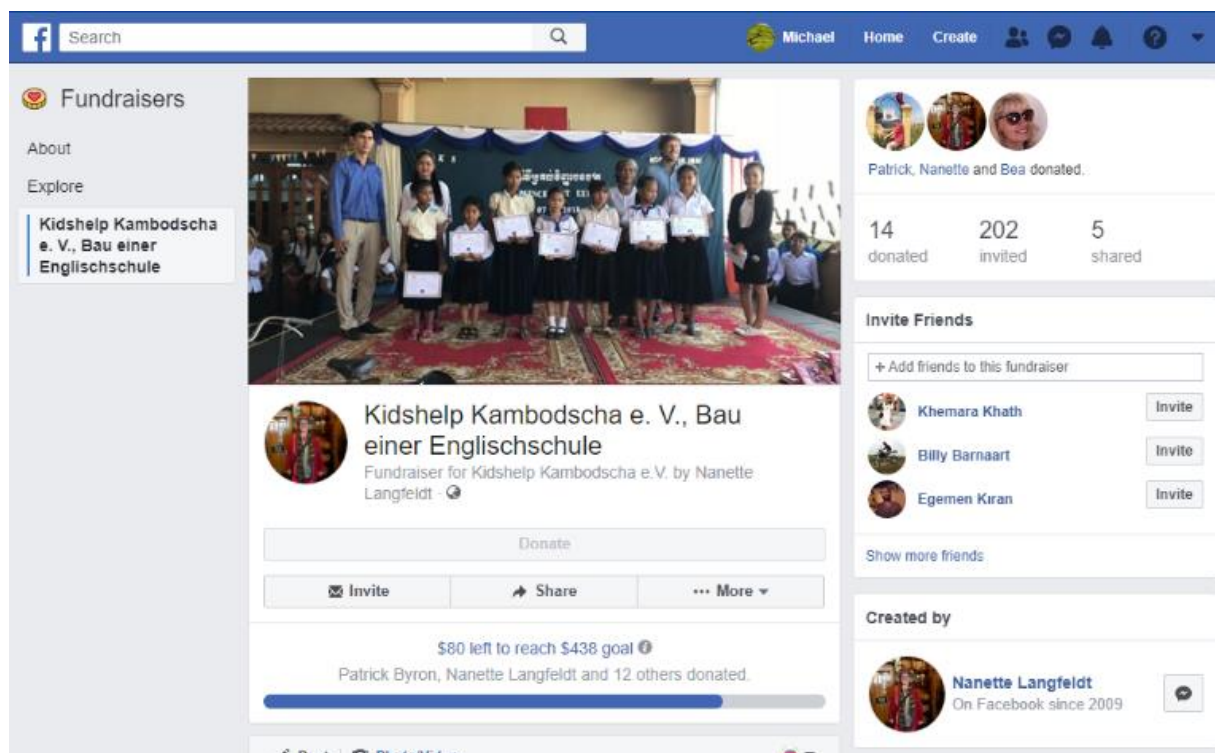


Fig. 5: Screenshot of our first fundraiser through Facebook



## **A big thanks to Isa!**

From September to the end of November we had Isa Rechenberg, another so-called "Granny" volunteer at our school. Isa has never let power failures or other inconveniences get her down and with untiring dedication she has incorporated great ideas into her lessons. Based on the experiences from her home business, Isa also discussed the topic of fire protection with the teachers and showed them how to use a fire extinguisher and how to react in the event of a fire.

We wish Isa all the best for the future say thank you very much!



**Fig. 6: Isa and Tharith with some of their students**

We would like to once again express our sincerest thanks to all of our supporters

Our whole team, the students and the pupils wish you, your friends and family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

