



## **Kidshelp Kambodscha e.V. Newsletter, October/November 2020**

Dear friends and supporters,

instead of our usual newsletter we had shared more frequent COVID-19 updates with you over the last months. The reason for opting to send a "regular" newsletter this time, is the sheer number of topics we wanted to address. Since pretty much nothing else is "regular" in 2020, we hope that this will come as a welcome surprise.

We have updates on all of our current projects, which is why we will go through them one by one:

### **1) Khemara Kidshelp English School**

As you may have read on Facebook, our school is now open again. On the one hand, this is due to the untiring efforts of the teachers and students, who had cleaned the school together before the reopening, and on the other hand to the school's sanitary facilities, which are clearly above standard. These were upgraded and renovated thanks to donations from the DHL Living Responsibility Fund in 2017 and 2019. The new outdoor wash basins are one of the main reasons for the Ministry of Education giving us permission to reopen the school.

Of course, strict rules on distance and hygiene still apply. Operations cannot take place as they did before the pandemic. Because of the distance rules, for example, classes were divided into two and now come to school on alternate days. This is



**Figure 1: Schoolgirls washing their hands at the outdoor washbasins**



not ideal, but everyone involved is happy that a certain normality has been achieved.

## 2) The Sponsorships for School Children

Unfortunately, only 75% of the students have so far returned to our own school. We don't have exact data on the state schools, but so far only the ninth and twelfth graders have been allowed to attend daily classes again (because they have their final exams in December). Children from grades 1 to 6 only come to school on a few days a week and then in small groups. All other levels will continue to study from home until January.

We spoke to a number of older children recently and found out that some of them do not plan to return to school. This is because some families are currently experiencing financial difficulties and they cannot afford to send their children to school at the moment.

Since the local government has agreed to cover part of the costs per child and the school's income is just about enough to cover the costs of the school thanks to the donations

of the [supporters of the English school](#), no child has to pay school fees with us at the moment. State schools are also free. However, it is still common practice for teachers to offer so-called tutoring hours. These cost money and it is often very difficult to get good grades if a child does not attend them. In addition, every student needs at least a few dollars per month for school materials and food. We are therefore still in urgent need of new sponsors. If you or your company can



Figure 2: A pupil during a COVID-19 -19 related health check at the school gate



afford to [sponsor a child](#), take a look at our homepage. There you will find more information about the project and a registration form.

### **3) Kidshelp Membership**

What we are also urgently looking for are supporting members. Due to deaths and the corona crisis we have lost some permanent donors. These are extremely important, because without regular donations we have difficulty in paying the salaries of our employees and building up reserves. As you already know, we need the latter not only to have planning security but we also use these funds to finance new activities and projects like the second English School. In contrast to the sponsorships, the amount for a sponsoring membership can be chosen freely. We are also happy to receive small amounts. Every Euro counts!

Regardless of where in the world you live, if you wish to subscribe to Kidshelp membership, please complete [German membership application](#) and make payment to Kidshelp Kambodscha e.V. in Germany.

If you would like to make a one-time donation please contact [Patrick@kidshelp-kambodscha.org](mailto:Patrick@kidshelp-kambodscha.org) for UK bank details. If you are a tax payer in United Kingdom, please also complete a [Charity Gift Aid form](#) which will allow us to reclaim tax paid in the UK. If you are a tax payer in Germany or would rather pay direct to Germany follow this [link](#).

### **4) Student Sponsorships 2020/2021**

High school examinations in Cambodia normally take place at the end of the twelfth school year in August each year. As we mentioned above, these exams have been postponed to the end of December this year. We can therefore not present the new applicants for our [university scholarships](#) in Phnom Penh until January 2021.

Due to the reports of early school dropouts we were concerned about the situation of the twelfth-graders among our sponsored children. We therefore as a precaution, visited and interviewed them individually over the past few weeks. Although we heard many worrying reports of unemployment among the older family members, we were only able to identify a few godchildren who had actually accepted temporary jobs during the school closures. They all assured us



that they would return to school as soon as it reopened. As school has now reopened, we will follow-up all cases in the coming weeks.

The first study counselling session for pupils of the eleventh and twelfth grades took place on Saturday 10 October. In addition to an introduction to the application process by our school principal Khemara, two of our current scholarship holders spoke to the potential applicants. The purpose of these presentations is to prepare the participants for life as a student. Many of them only know a few subjects and universities. Our study counselling sessions are meant to not only show them the options they have, but also make clear what they have to research over the next few weeks.



Figure 3: Gallery of students who successfully applied for a Kidshep scholarship in 2019

Apart from the study topic and the university they want to attend, we expect them to tell us about things like the costs per year, deadlines for registration and payment of fees, and potential entrance examinations. The situation is likely to be particularly confusing this year due to the pandemic and the late completion of grade 12 exams. We are glad that the delayed high school exams give us additional time to advise and prepare the applicants.

If you might be able to consider financing a scholarship student, please look for our special newsletter and the corresponding announcements in the [blog](#) and on [Facebook](#). As long as the examination dates do not change, we will publish the list of candidates in January 2021.



## 5) Second English School

By now most of you will be aware that we are in the process of planning to build another English school. In the meantime, an architectural office has been commissioned to take soil samples and determine the load-bearing capacity of the land for the new school. The results of these tests are already available and currently being used to draw up plans for the foundation. We already have the basic plan for the layout of the individual floors. In the next steps, plans for the foundation and the water and electricity lines will follow. As soon as all construction drawings are ready, we will be able to come up with an accurate and detailed cost estimate for the construction and fitting out of the school.

How quickly the school can become a reality will depend above all on how quickly we can identify major donors for such a project. Thanks to your support and our own research, we already know about the Schmitz Foundation and Bengo's programmes. However, we cannot and do not want to rely on the latter offers or crowdfunding alone. So, if you know of any foundations or companies that support larger educational projects, please send us an e-mail to [info@kidshelp-kambodscha.org](mailto:info@kidshelp-kambodscha.org).

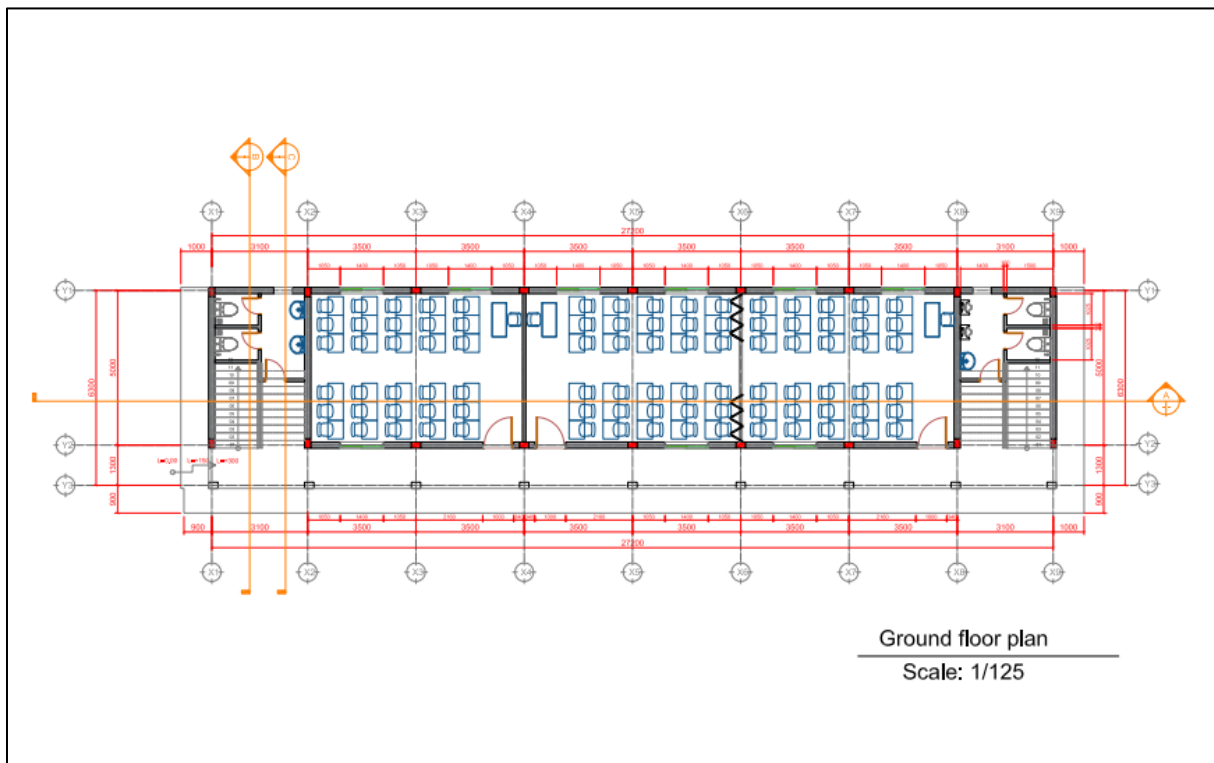


Figure 4: Extract from the draft floor plan of the school.



If we do end up collecting more money than we need, we would invest it in additional equipment for the school and set aside reserves for repairs. As with all our projects, project-related donations are only spent on specific projects. So please continue to promote our crowdfunding with [BetterPlace](#).

Before we finish this long newsletter, a short but important note about the possibility of organising [fundraisers on Facebook](#) for the benefit of Kidshelp. This has been possible for more than a year now and with a few clicks of the mouse you can arrange for your guests to donate to us on the occasion of your birthday or other family celebrations. Through this modality alone, several hundred Dollars have already been collected in 2020. A big thanks to everyone who made use of this to help us to raise much needed funds!

Time to wrap this up. Please write to us if you have any questions, comments or criticism.

---

More news about Kidshelp and pictures from our recent activities can be found at [Facebook](#) and our [Homepage](#).

- Your Kidshelp Team in Cambodia and Germany -

---

<sup>i</sup> Bengo is the abbreviation of the consulting services on funding opportunities for charities and NGOs of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)