



# Report on 3<sup>rd</sup> International Youth Exchange through Peer Learning (IYEPL) For Youth Volunteers from India

25<sup>th</sup> November - 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018

United Nations Volunteers, India & Cambodia



युवा कार्यक्रम और खेल मंत्रालय  
MINISTRY OF  
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS



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## **BACKGROUND**

As guided by the National Youth Policy (2014), the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MoYAS), Government of India (GoI), the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have been jointly implementing a project called 'Strengthening Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and National Service Scheme (NSS). The first phase of the four-year project (2014-17) came to an end and the second phase started from (2018-2020), with combined contribution from MoYAS, UNV and UNDP, aims to promote youth volunteering by strengthening two of the largest youth volunteering infrastructure in India – NYKS and NSS.

Within the framework of the project, the International Youth Exchange through Peer Learning (IYEPL) was initiated in the year 2016 & 2017 with an aim to strengthen youth knowledge and innovation on volunteering through international experience sharing. During the first year of the IYEPL, five rural youth volunteers were nominated through a competitive process were selected to visit Sri Lanka and learn about the grassroots community development initiatives, youth involved activities and a holistic approach towards charity.

For the second year of the IYEPL programme, five youth volunteers with experience in volunteering on social issues were selected to visit Indonesia for a one-month immersion and exchange programme. During the filed visit in more than 16 NGOs and youth groups, the Volunteers learned the actions and useful programs being organized for the empowerment of women, mobilization of providing education to children, vocational training in various courses for the youth to be self-reliant, sustainable development being given utmost importance in the daily chores of the people of Jakarta and the like.

## **OBJECTIVES**

At the third year of the IYEPL in 2018, UNV and UNDP India would like to organize the exchange visit to Cambodia, in the spirit of south-south knowledge exchange and with following specific objectives:

- Understand similar and different landscapes of youth and volunteerism in India and Cambodia;
- Learn the traditional form of volunteering present in Cambodia as well as the latest youth-led volunteering
- Exchange of innovative approaches and good practices related to youth volunteering and recommendations to improve the volunteer infrastructure of both India and Cambodia

## **PROGRAMME DESIGN**

With the idea behind empowering the youth by giving them the knowledge and skills to navigate their issues and help them in understanding their world, develop leadership skills for civic engagement, the 3<sup>rd</sup> IYEPL will have two weeks of extensive learning exchange which will not only result in cultural immersion of youth volunteers, but it will also promote exchange of ideas and values amongst youth which will broaden the perspective of the youth towards understanding the competitive edge in this interdependent world.

With the vision behind promoting youth engagement and cultivate the ability, confidence and motivation to make a difference in their communities, the 3<sup>rd</sup> IYEPL programme will adopt people-to-people approach towards promoting peace and understanding and aid towards strengthening friendly relations between the countries.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> IYEL will three key steps towards the programme which are mentioned below:

### **1. Nomination of rural youth volunteers working in field of youth development/volunteering experience with rural communities:**

As part of the selection process, the nomination of youth volunteers will be sought through competitive process which will include measuring the impact beyond volunteering - which will capture experiences of youth in the life-changing impact that volunteering has had on the volunteer in various fields.

### **2. Two weeks exchange of cultural immersion and exchange of ideas (through intensive field study) of youth volunteers:**

With the idea behind promoting exchange of ideas and values among youth from India and Cambodia, the youth volunteers will travel to Cambodia and spend two weeks to understand the different approaches towards youth-led volunteering innovations in Cambodia and share their learnings and best practices from their communities with the larger audience. The two weeks exchange will have pre-designed activity and projects as designated by UNV/UNDP Cambodia. The 3rd IYEPL's two weeks immersion will be divided into three phases:



### **3. Sharing of Post Exchange report after two weeks of immersion:**

After the successful completion of the two weeks immersion programme, the youth volunteers will share their learning through a post-exchange report. Furthermore, the youth volunteers will also prepare a Plan of Action; which will include the strategies for executing various initiatives for organizing Youth related activities in specific domains. In addition, the youth volunteers will also arrange a learning and sharing session within their community through different platforms.

## **ABOUT CAMBODIA AND VOLUNTEERISM**

Cambodia is a nation located in the southern portion of the Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. The official religion is Theravada Buddhism, practised by approximately 95% of the population. National politics in Cambodia take place within the framework of the nation's constitution of 1993. The government is a constitutional monarchy operated as a parliamentary representative democracy. The Prime Minister of Cambodia, is the head of government, while the King of Cambodia is the head of state. The largest ethnic group in Cambodia are the Khmers (speaking the official language Khmer), who comprise around 90% of the total population in Cambodia and are indigenous to the lowland Mekong sub region in which they inhabit, and the country's minority groups include Vietnamese, Chinese, Chams and diverse hill tribes. The Kingdom of Cambodia is the most youthful country in South East Asia with more than 50 percent of the total population below 25 years of age and 20.6 percent between 15 and 24.

Volunteerism is intrinsic to Cambodian culture. It is present in Buddhist structures and traditionally, local volunteers in communities have fulfilled a range of day-to-day duties. For instance, they guarded community forests or served at the commune council. In present times, various local and international civil society organization (CSO) volunteers are present and supporting diverse events or specific projects. They are involved in raising awareness on environmental and social issues through advocacy events and seminars, and many volunteers are mobilised in response to emergencies. Strong motivation to achieve their vision for the future of their communities has been influential in expanding individuals' volunteering opportunities and drive them in developing their professional and soft skills. More and more volunteers are beginning to improve their communities. Local youth groups take part in commune council meetings to address issues which concern them and advocate for their causes. This has been effective in fostering a culture of sharing, establish youth clubs, clean the environment, plant trees in their settlements and promote ways to save energy and water. Mostly volunteers are working and gaining experience in public and civil society institutions in education, health, environment, agriculture, gender, research, community development, and other spheres. They are involved in charity and awareness raising campaigns. Many of them assist in organizing events, running projects and administrative work. By helping others, they are exposed to experiences which paid work cannot provide. They gain professional, technical, and soft skills (creativity, leadership, critical thinking) that are crucial for employability.

Taking on the history and culture of volunteerism, it has now become a part of the policy arena in Cambodia because of several years of advocacy work undertaken by UNV in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, VolCam – the network of international and national volunteer sending and volunteer involving organizations in Cambodia, and other stakeholders.

However, there exists a potential to improve the volunteer sector in Cambodia for better coordination and efficiency like volunteers are often involved in projects, but there is a need to integrate volunteering opportunities into national development planning to help reach long-term national development goals, Greater investment in human and financial resources is required to create space and opportunities for volunteers, develop their skills, promote their voice, and recognise and value their work. These efforts will ultimately create an enabling environment that will motivate and equip volunteers to better contribute towards the social and economic future of their communities, the research shows that an efficient way to cultivate volunteerism in Cambodia would be through schools. Moral and civic education was included in school curricula in 1994 as part of the National Rehabilitation and Development Programme and introduced in 1996. Since then, the curriculum has been enhanced, yet volunteerism for development at large remains outside of its scope. The curriculum has been under change and be enriched by including an active practice of volunteerism

and community development. Countrywide, cultivation of volunteerism through civic education can be a means of promoting integration of volunteerism in the youth related national policies and national development strategies.

Cambodia is a member of the United Nations since 1955, ASEAN, the East Asia Summit, the WTO, the Non-Aligned Movement and La Francophonie. According to several foreign organisations, the country has widespread poverty, pervasive corruption, and lack of political freedoms, low human development and a high rate of hunger. One of the largest challenges facing Cambodia is still the fact that the older population often lacks education, particularly in the countryside, which suffers from a lack of basic infrastructure. The country is struggling to create decent and productive employment opportunities for the estimated 270,000 new entrants (Youth) to the labour market every year while at the same time ensuring that young people have access to skills and to quality education and business training in an environment that ensures the respect of their rights at work. Despite the low unemployment rate of 3.8 percent among persons aged 15-245, young people are systematically more likely to be unemployed than adults – up to three times more so while working poverty and informality persist: 81 percent of all jobs are considered vulnerable; 80 percent of enterprises are informal, and most people employed in agriculture rely on subsistence farming. As a result, rural-to-urban migration in search for better paid jobs is showing no signs of weakening, as is formal and informal external migration.

#### **UN AND UNV FIELD UNIT IN CAMBODIA**

Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UNV volunteers, throughout the world.

The first UN Volunteers arrived in Cambodia in 1991 and UNV opened an office in Cambodia soon after the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992. Since 1991 over 1,460 UN Volunteers served in Cambodia in different sectors with almost all UN agencies, NGOs as well as with some Government bodies. During this period over 90 Cambodians served as International UN Volunteers with different UN missions and programmes overseas. Various national UN Volunteers with the Partners for Prevention Joint Programme in Cambodia have successfully engaged local adolescents and their caregivers to transform negative gender norms, prevent violence and sustain these community-based initiatives through volunteerism. One of the projects entitled, “Building Our Future: Developing Healthy and Happy Relationships” was initiated in Kampong Cham, a province with the second highest prevalence rate of domestic violence in the country. The project is implemented by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the United Nations Population Fund, the P4P programme and UNV.

Furthermore, UNDP in Cambodia continues to work closely with development partners to assist the country in its efforts to clear landmines and explosive remnants for war (ERWs) that still pose obstacles to development. Climate change continues to be a key priority area, along with gender and disaster risk management in Cambodia. In this regard, the Climate Change Trust Fund, which is managed by UNDP, has awarded grants to various line ministries, local government and civil society organizations working to build community resilience in different priority sectors. Additionally, projects funded

through GEF-Small Grant Programme are working to improve livelihoods of rural households, enhancing their abilities to cope with impacts of climate change.

Through an innovative youth multimedia programme, UNDP is working with the BBC Media Action to encourage greater participation of young Cambodians in the civic life, in local development to help make a difference in their communities. Youth is Cambodia's largest asset over the next decade as an economic, social and cultural driving force. They offer new perspectives, new ideas and willingness to build a bright future.

As a means of ensuring strong engagement in and ownership of the project by Cambodian partners and stakeholders, UNV facilitated a national consultation process to provide inputs for the project document and strengthen networking between partners and stakeholders to better facilitate project implementation. The process included a National Consultation Workshop and follow-up feedback by the participants, and a Government consultation for the draft Project Document led by the MOEYS. The consultation identified three broader 'pillars' Opportunities for volunteering in Cambodia government, NGOs, private sector, community, religious organizations etc. Access based on gender, disability, rural youth, lower socio-economic status etc. Recognition for skills acquired through volunteerism.

In recent years, to address the critical issue of youth employment in the context of the rapidly growing, Export-led Cambodian economy, a United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP) proposes to provide assistance to the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC). It intends to focus on facilitating young people's entrance to the labour force while reducing inequalities – particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups- and ensuring young women and men are better able to meet labour demand.

A joint programme has been initiated in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme and the Republic of Cambodia For Youth Employment in Cambodia with the objective of increasingly obtaining productive employment opportunities Young women and men in the country. It aims to provide Young women and men access to quality formal and non-formal education including volunteerism to develop relevant technical and vocational skills. To equip Young women and men, both in-school and out-of-school, with adequate entrepreneurial and business skills to create and develop sustainable enterprises and benefit from a better condition and fair treatment at work.

The United Nations Volunteer along with resources from India, Brazil and South Africa Fund and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports have been major stakeholders in initiating this pilot programme under the title 'Poverty Reduction Among the Youth in Cambodia- Development of Youth Volunteers' Skill Sets for increased Employability' to develop an innovative approach on youth skills development through volunteering. The project as explained above aims to leverage the skills developed through volunteering as a tool for employability.

Similarly, within this The National Policy on Cambodian Youth Development (2011) incorporates the Promotion of Volunteerism. Also, the Youth Action Plan, designed to provide the strategic path for the implementation of the National Policy on Youth Development, currently has as one of the priorities its focus and emphasis on volunteerism. To support the implementation of the recently launched National Employment Policy, which intends to increase decent and productive employment opportunities by coordinating implementation of activities with relevant actors that have been involved in the National Consultation on Youth Employment and Volunteerism in Cambodia and others.

The policy aims to create a favourable environment for the creation of decent jobs by putting equal importance on the number of jobs created or secured by young people; supplemented by further

employability and entrepreneurship training and exposure to youth rights at works (with a specific training module). It aims to enhance the conditions that are necessary for young people to succeed in the formal economy as well as enhancing their ability to employ themselves, by minimizing the risk for young people to become trapped in the vicious cycles of poverty, vulnerability and informality through generation of opportunities that will connect their skills acquired through volunteering with employment opportunities. It aims towards facilitating the improvement of current education and skills training programmes and become more relevant to the rapidly evolving labour market needs which demand core employability skills (i.e. a combination of technical knowledge and soft skills), by partnering and building innovative programmes with academia, civil society and private sector organizations and assist the MOEYS General Youth Department for the development of the implementation strategies, such as the establishment of National Youth Service in Cambodia provided through consultation with the private sector for development of volunteer placements targeting skills transferable to the labour market.

It is also involved in assisting and capacity building to the MOEYS and other relevant Government agencies in developing a conceptual approach for the network of Career Building Resource Centres (CBRD) for providing quality information/networking support and tailored training to young people; assist and capacity build to the MOEYS and other relevant Government agencies for the development of accreditation frameworks and other recognition mechanisms for skills acquired through volunteerism and fine tuning the policies with a special focus on inclusiveness and access provision to in remote provinces, especially for those with low educational attainment and changing the public attitude towards young people with special needs.

Furthermore, the Government has developed a National Youth Action Plan that shall serve as a framework to ensure the implementation of the National Youth Development Strategy. In a first stage, this plan brings the interventions of individual United Nations agencies together in the areas of education and vocational training, health, labour market strategies and volunteerism.

The project has contributed in facilitating effective volunteering programmes for the Cambodian Youth and to ensure that skills developed are transferable to the job market by enhancing the cooperation with the private sector, civil society, and promoting South-South Cooperation in ASEAN and beyond.

#### **Additional values of IYEPL collaboration between India and Cambodia**

This collaboration will serve as a south-south exchange on volunteerism promotion between two countries, channelled through the UNV and UNDP. Cambodia and India have not had laws or regulations which specifically govern volunteerism nationwide. Yet both countries are progressing to promote volunteerism and leverage the benefits out of civic and youth engagement in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Since UNV and UNDP in both countries are jointly working with the Government on the youth volunteerism promotion, volunteer infrastructure development by focusing Youth Policy of the country, this IYEPL will be a good opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience, as well as suggest ideas to take forward.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November 2018, four volunteers along with Management Associate, Ankit Jaiswal, left for Cambodia for Youth Exchange Program.



## **IYEPL- India and Cambodia**

### **Orientation for International Youth Exchange through Peer Learning (IYEPL)**

On 26th November, UNV provided orientation to the four volunteers. During the orientation the Indian Volunteers introduced themselves and highlighted UNV background, field work assignments & placement in the province, and background & structure of youth centre. Also, the session focused on Cambodian tradition, working environment, and community adjustment. One local volunteer representative presented the three best projects of National School Holiday from Kampong Thom, Kampong Cham, and Takeo.

Mr. Clark, UNV project manager, also informed the International Volunteers Day to be held on 5th December 2018. In addition, Mr. Ankit Jaiswal, Management Associate, introduced to the UNV Cambodia the Indian model of volunteerism, emphasizing on the block, district, state, and national level of certified volunteers and promotion of Volunteerism into a large scale.

In the afternoon, they attended orientation of safety and security in Cambodia context which was given by Mr Sokun Prak (Security Associate UNDSS Cambodia). He introduced Indian Volunteers the threat of living in Cambodian and safety protection on pickpocketing, bag snatching, motorbike accidents and frequent activation of land mines. They were provided with emergency contact numbers and were advised to be our own saviours.

After the session, all Indian volunteers along with Mr. Ankit Jaiswal and Ms. Kagna visited Mr. Manoj Kumar Pujari who is Head of Chancery, Indian Embassy. They introduce themselves and their assignments giving to Mr. Kuma and after that they had a small city tour and a group dinner.

### **Field Immersion of Volunteers**

Youth engagement and participation is increasingly recognized as an important development objective. The opportunities for participation that young people experience in their communities may influence their development and the kind of transitions they make to adulthood. For example, evidence that comes largely from developed countries indicates that youth who participate in community activities or are connected to their communities are less likely than others to engage in risk-taking behaviours<sup>1</sup>.

Different statistics over the years have shown that one of the key hindrances towards youth participation is lack of accessibility to basic amenities that are essential to modern scenario like information on education, career, employment and technological aspects like internet and other e services which are nowadays one of the essential element in the development process. This is more prominent for youths coming from the rural background.

As a part of strengthening the capacity of youth, Ministry of Education and Sports, Cambodia run Youth Resource Centres developed with the aim of providing wholesome services to youth for their better present and future. It provides a participatory and open learning space for youth. It runs various programs which include tutorial classes for children to help them with their studies, English classes for youth, scholarships for students who have immense potential but cannot afford higher studies, covering of school fees for students who are not financially stable, seminars and workshops on various topics like job and education opportunities, personality development, good teaching methods etc., Youth

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<sup>1</sup> Youth in India: Situation and Needs, Policy Brief Number 30, 2010

gatherings or kids club for developing good morals, self- confidence, dignity and values through fun activities, exposure visits to different parts of the country and to organise sports events to inculcate the interest in physical fitness. Their overall objective is to provide a wholesome service to youth through education, recreation, discipleship and vocational training.

Keeping the importance of volunteerism and impact of youth centres in mind, four Indian Volunteers were placed in three Youth Centres for a two-week assignment from 25th Nov to 12nd Dec 2018. Ms. Manisha Bezbaruah & Mr. Rojan Pradhan were placed in Kampong Thom, Ms. Priscyla Shongwan in Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, and Ms. Rachana Shetty in Takeo. The placement of volunteers in each Youth Centre is based on the expertise of each volunteer and demands from provincial Youth Centres.

### **Debriefing Workshop**

At the end of their assignment, the volunteers were invited to present their results at Debriefing Workshop to be held from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm, 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2018, at UNV Office, Phnom Penh. The objectives of the workshop are to present the result of Indian Volunteers; to gain new insights and feedback of exchange program; specially to exchange experiences and best practices, and ideas related to volunteering services accreditation framework UNV India. The workshop was useful method to explore general timeline of reciprocate visits of Cambodian government officials and young volunteers to India next year, as part of the Cambodia-India volunteer exchanges.

In the workshop, it was very special honoured that H.E. Chiv Ratha, Deputy Director-General, General Department of Youth, and Mr. Or Samoeun, officer from department of youth, MoEYS, participated. There were India representatives from India to join by online. Mr. Arun Sahdeo, program officer from UNDP presented the volunteerism accreditation framework by skype along with Ms. Shreya Baruah, National Project Manager, UNDP and Mr. Ankit, management associated from UNV. Then, each Indian volunteer presented their project in the workshop. Their presentation was going well. H.E Chiv Ratha showed the strong interest and appreciated their hard and active work in the site.

### **NATIONAL FORUM AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY 2018**

Before IVD, the volunteers had a meeting with Mr. Nick Beresford, Country Director of UNDP with Mr. Clark, to introduce themselves and their assignments at the Provinces. Mr Clark showed deep interest in the youth exchange program where Cambodian volunteers will visit India in the future. He further initiated in appreciating Indian model of volunteerism as explained earlier by management associate Ankit Jaiswal, UNV India.

The Indian volunteers attended the 8th National Forum and International Volunteer Day 2018 with the theme of “Volunteer for our Communities”, which was celebrated at Institute of Technology Cambodia (ITC). The event was a sharing platform for both knowledge and experience on volunteerism in Cambodia and across the world. During the event, they could meet with Ms. Pauline Tamesis, United Nations Resident Coordinator and other relevant speakers and partners such as AIESECs, YRDP, HFHC, Youth Star, VSO and MoEYS.

In the afternoon, two Indian volunteers, Mr. Rojan and Ms. Manisha, along with two local volunteers from Kampong Thom and Ms. Kagna and volunteers from AIESEC Organization went to Sisowat High School to conduct sharing session on volunteerism for grade 12 with 90 students. There, the volunteers spoke about discipline and promotion on volunteerism and advise them to do volunteer. While the local volunteers

from Toul Kbeul High School presented the best project on “rubbish recycle and slogan message on environmental protection”. They shared them to do recycling methods. The main purposes of sharing session are to encourage students to organize the project, to make the school environment more comfortable, and to promote students to do volunteer work.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Ms. Rachana Shetty, Takeo Youth Centre**

Ms. Rachana Shetty was placed in Takeo Youth Centre. In her first day, she conducted workshop on “Major Career Guidance”, cooperated with local volunteers and VSO through the supported by Youth Centre. During the workshop, she also shared the spirit of volunteerism to the students at Po Ompel High School. She was also assigned to teach computer skills on history of computer, basic skills and functions to the students in the youth centre. More, she taught English classes for the students of grade 10 and 11 on teaching English (grammar).

Before starting up of community project, she did a field study and did a research to find out social economic background of the community in which the VSO and the youth centre at Takeo gave information regarding the community. Later, she conducted her community project with the local volunteers and community people on zero waste management related to waste management, segregating waste, and street play to the students.

She gave inspirational talk about environment and how it can be maintained well and asked them to keep their surroundings clean and motivated them to take initiative to pick up the plastics thrown around and even the volunteers too supported and joined hands with the community to pick up the wastes around. The awareness was focused to the local volunteers, community people, and students at Hun Sen Chheu Teal High School about reducing the use of plastics in return planned to prepare paper bags and succeeded in preparing 17 paper bags and offered these bags to shopkeepers and had a cleanliness drive around youth centre at Takeo. She chose this project because Cambodia is beautiful country, but it has been ruined by wrong disposal of wastes because people are not aware how to manage their household wastes.

### **Ms. Priscyla Shongwan, Kampong Cham Youth Centre**

Ms. Priscyla Shongwan had a meeting with school director of Toul Thmor High School to share her experience on forming group club and teach English at Bright British School. Apart from these, she also conducted workshop on leadership skill at youth centre. She taught computer at the basic level and creating email for students in grade 10 and 11. During the workshop, there were 93 students actively participated with male 34 and female 59 students.

She and local volunteers organized community project on reading skills in Sambour Meas Primary School. Her main experience, she achieved very much in the activities and project as it is also like a learning process for her as teaching is not her profession but through the help of the VSO and the local volunteers, she learnt in the process of teaching, but the only gap between them is the language barrier so because of this there is a communication gap and time constraints as most of the volunteer are busy with their studying and the students with their exams. She would have achieved more if there was surplus of time, participation of the youth and students and fixing of the venue and timing earlier.

### **Mr. Rojan Pradhan, Kampong Thom Youth Centre**

First Day in the Kampong Thom Province, he met the Youth Director, staff and VSO Volunteers and discussed about the activity which must be done and the main problems of the Youth. He joined career guidance workshop with youth centre at Tang Krosang High School along with Ms. Kagna, Youth Director, VSO Volunteers, and Job Centre by sharing International Market, Tourism, Entrepreneur, IT sector, E-Commerce and Organic Farming, Market and Skill Development and importance of English and Computer a competitive world.

In Kampong Thom High School, he witnessed the election of the Youth Council of the School and he was able to speak about HIV & AIDS in the World AIDS Day on 1st of December. Also, he was able to share about the importance of Youth Clubs, Youth Council and process of preparing the club. Additionally, he advised them to add the sports activities plan in the School because playing sports which is balanced mental and physical growth. The sport taught the students leadership, patience and discipline and it prevented from chronic disease such as, heart disease, cancer, control weight etc.

Also, he advised them to promote the culture, tradition, customs and other by organizing the cultural activity which is the platform for the students to showcase their talents. On IVD 2018, Mr. Rojan along with Manisha, Kagna, local volunteers from Kampong Thom and the Volunteers from AISEC organization went to Sisowat High School, Phnom Penh. The participants were the students of grade 12. There, he spoke about discipline and promote volunteerism and advise them to be volunteer. At last, he shared his working experience in India like as a volunteer, blood donation, HIV&AIDS, substance abuse etc.

### **Manisha Bezbaruah, Kampong Thom Youth Centre**

At the beginning of her assignment, she provided a career guidance about international job market and motivational talk for provincial students for being outspoken and confident at Phnom Santuk High School. The international job market demands for three qualities in an individual these are efficiency, accuracy, and skill competency.

At the school, she had a meeting with principle director, Mr. Kan Sitha and other board directors of the school and asked them about the basic problem of the institution in which she identified the certain problems as dropping out of school, lack of technical education, lack of English teaching and many more. Economic condition of the Cambodia students leads them to migrate to other countries like Korea, Malaysia and Thailand for seeking job opportunities as they mostly belong to family backgrounds of farmer and labors.

She supported local volunteers to organize best project at Toul Kbel High School at Kampong Svay district along with VSO team and Phnom Penh-based volunteer. She shared her experiences about volunteering to promote volunteerism with Grade 11 students and to speak how to plan a mini community project. She also motivated the students not be shy and asked them to motivate their juniors as well as to their community by doing awareness programs and conducting door-to-door awareness in far flung areas. In addition, she came up with the analysis on her project which helped her to understand that the basic objectives of youth centre and student community. Both are totally different. Youth centre tries to uplift the society through volunteerism and different services while basic objective of students is to get benefits from these kinds of volunteering task. To meet both these requirements, she did her community project emphasizing on volunteerism in community children through their personality development.

Province	Name	Accomplishments	
		Activities	Community Project
Takeo Youth Center	Ms. Rachana Shetty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teach Computer to students at Youth Center</li> <li>2. Conduct workshop in major career guidance and volunteerism</li> <li>3. Teach English to students in class 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup></li> <li>4. Support youth and community</li> <li>5. Motivate students and promote volunteerism</li> <li>6. Help Volunteers in their community project and International Volunteers Day</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create awareness in zero waste management</li> <li>2. Reduce plastic use</li> <li>3. Segregate dry and wet waste</li> </ol>
	140 Beneficiaries	40 (25 F and 15 M)	100 (70 F and 30 M)
Kampong Cham Youth Center	Ms. Priscyla Shongwan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teach English to Bright Future Kids school</li> <li>2. Teach computer to local youth and students at youth center</li> <li>3. Provide workshop on leadership skills</li> <li>4. Support community service project</li> <li>5. Help volunteers in making their community project and International Volunteers Day</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reading Skills in English</li> </ol>
	93 Beneficiaries	93 (34 M and 59 F)	
Kampong Thom Youth Center	Mr. Rojan Pradhan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize Career counselling and guidance</li> <li>2. Promote Volunteerism in HIV and AIDS and blood donation</li> <li>3. Introduce '5 minutes on Earth'</li> <li>4. Support youth and community</li> <li>5. Help volunteers in making their community project and International Volunteers Day</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create awareness about environment</li> <li>2. Protect and promote on conserving forest reserves</li> <li>3. Segregation of wet and dry waste</li> <li>4. Reduce use of plastics</li> </ol>
	Ms. Manisha Bezbaruah	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form youth clubs with VSO and local volunteers</li> <li>2. Cleanliness and Plantation drive in youth center</li> </ol> <p>Help volunteers in making community project and International Volunteer Day.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create awareness about environment</li> <li>2. Protect and promote on conserving forest reserves</li> <li>3. Segregation of wet and dry waste</li> <li>4. Reduce use of plastics</li> </ol>
	408 Beneficiaries	Sharing session of IVD: 90 Community Project: 18 Awareness drive in Kampong Thom: 300	

## **TAKEAWAYS AND LEARNING**

### **a. CHALLENGES**

The four Indian Volunteers had encountered some challenges as the following:

- **Language barrier:** It is limited connected with students, community people and youth centre staffs. They had to deal with challenges with the help of VSO Volunteers, UNV Cambodia, local lead volunteers in term of interpretation. In Takeo province, there is only one staff and one local lead volunteer who can communicate English with the volunteer. Also, they are requested to speak English slowly with the students in school while doing activity and tried to make them understand before as much they can, and they also learn the basic Khmer language to communicate with local people.
- **Busy schedule of students:** due to exam period for the students, it was difficult to get students to conduct activities and to participate the activities together. To arrange community project is quite challenging to get students on working days because of their exams.
- **Time constraints:** the duration of assignment is short to organize community project and to plan a project in the large scale. Most are only focused on planning and working in the long-run and will not give instant results.
- **Some local-lead volunteers live far from rural community with limited participation from community project, especially the case of Kampong Thom province.** It is required lot of motivation to engage for volunteering for the community while some more money oriented and tries to reach foreign land for better monetary gains.

### **b. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Youth Centre is happy to host volunteers and thank for their volunteer and support to Youth Centre and local volunteers. The YC request the program to take at least one month so the volunteers can do large scale project and have more time to learn more from Youth Centre and as well as from Cambodia culture.
- Youth clubs are the strength in the school, but it is required a long plan to set up the club. The duration of creating youth club is short to do in the school. Even if cannot be done in school, Youth Centre can implement and follow up this work.
- The exchange program should be conducted during school holiday of Cambodia students, so the timing is not conflict with student exam and class. Most of the students in Takeo have class and busy with their exam which is the main constraint to join the community project.
- To improve more in the community project, there is a need of active participation from the local youth and community. They expect that the beneficiaries can apply the knowledge sharing and practice it. They hope that their sharing experience and community project in the field of environment protection, cleanliness drive, and reduce in the use of plastics will be able to apply and extend these to other people. Since some community project are related on environment and on zero waste project which is the sustainable project, they request support and dedication from local volunteers to work on it which can make Cambodia a clean country.

### c. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES/ REFLECTION/LESSON LEARNT

- **Time management:** The major lesson learnt for them is to manage time well and to be punctual. Time management is yet another important part of exchange program. They know how to divide all the tasks on daily manner and how to organize activities to complete the project within given time. They learn that being punctual with work is important in Cambodia which help them to be good responsible and to earn a good reputation at work. In the sharing session, generally the students arrive on time and even before the event start.
- **Become independent:** It would be a challenge to work and live alone in the province. The volunteers have the sole responsibility for a community project and activities. There would not be anyone else to help with it or even shoulder the responsibility. Based on this experience, they learn to work independently and manage their work effectively.
- **Try new things:** they can explore a new thing, try a new food, adjust with different culture in Cambodia.
- **Acceptability of Cambodian community:** it is remarkable too as they accepted their ideas and try their best to communicate with us. This exchange program was a new horizon of experiences, working in a distant land brings them with it some challenges like language and acceptability of ideas and thought too.
- **Soft-Skills development:** being part of the exchange program help them develop interpersonal skills and communication skills such as speaking and listening as well as team working skills, leadership and working with and motivating others. Especially, it helps them to build self-confidence and to inspire other to promote volunteerism. From this IYEPL, they could upgrade themselves personally and professionally.

UNV Cambodia had supported and take care them well from the beginning till the end specially Kagna Mourng. They would like to sincerely thank to all the team of UNV Cambodia. During the stay, they said that Cambodia people are very generous and their hospitality towards them are extremely passionate. From the Youth Centre, local Volunteers as well as from UNV Cambodia have a bond friendship, love, and care. Thank you MoEYS, UNV Cambodia, Youth Centre, VSO Volunteers, and all Cambodian the love and hospitality.

## ANNEXURE

### Profile of Volunteers

#### RACHANA SHETTY



With the aim of creating a conducive environment for youth participation and inspiring the society to work with youth, Rachna is a 21-year-old volunteer, who has been associated with National Social Service (NSS) for the last 2 years. With an education background in development field, Rachna is currently pursuing her master's in social work from Mangalore District.

Rachna was also awarded this year as the best NSS Volunteer by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. She has also represented India last year in the Youth delegation to China which was organized by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. She has been an active volunteer who has also participated in various national and state level NSS Camps.

On her personal front, she is a trained Bharathanatyam Dancer who has been representing her district in various competition.

Rachna is fluent in English, Hindi and can speak other languages such as – Kannada, Tulu and Konkani.

#### MANISHA BEZBARUAH



Ms. Manisha Bezbaruah, 20 years old, is currently pursuing her graduation in political science from Assam University. Ms. Bezbaruah is currently heading a youth club as youth club leader. Manisha have been volunteering with various organisation and particularly with Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) Nalbari and NSS. She has been engaged in various activities such as blood donation camps, awareness rallies and community interaction.

Manish have also won a lot of awards in various debating competition and she has represented her district in the state level Declamation contest organized by Ministry of sports and youth affairs & NYK in Delhi.

Manish is fluent in speaking English and Hindi beside her mother tongue which is Assamese. She also has her expertise in using her IT skills which she believes is one of her asset. Manisha has a vision of creating a society wherein everyone can participate fully without any fear and she believes that given the opportunity youth can make a huge contribution in the nation building process.

#### PRISCYLA SHONGWAN



Ms. Priscyla Shongwan, is 24 years old who is currently pursuing her Master's in Education. Ms. Shongwan is currently working as a National Youth Volunteer in Nehru Yuva Kendra, in Ribhoi district.

As a National Youth Volunteer, Ms. Shongwan, has organized various training for community leaders and facilitated youth leadership programmes for the district. She has also been actively engaging with the various youth clubs across Ribhoi district wherein she has supported in registration of local youth clubs and reviewing their relevant documents for registration. As part of her profile, Ms. Shongwan has also supported in the



community in forming various self-help groups and facilitated youth participation in various community activities.

She has also facilitated various skill development programs for women in coordination with NYKS. She has also participated in both National and Northeast Youth Festival under Leadership of NYKS/DSO Office. She can fluently speak in English and has good understanding of Hindi language beside her mother tongue Khasi.

### **ROJAN PRADHAN**



Mr. Rojan Pradhan, 24-year-old who is currently pursuing his master's in social Work from South Sikkim believes in youth power to harness change in the community. Passionate in voicing opinion on issues pertaining to gender equality and social inclusion, Mr. Pradhan have been actively involved in youth activities wherein he has volunteered with NYKS, NCC and Youth clubs.

Mr. Pradhan is currently working as General Secretary at STEP Youth Organization wherein he is leading in coordination work. He was also involved in working on Environment and Disaster Management. Prior to his experience as a General Secretary, Mr. Pradhan was working as an Assistant Program coordinator at Voluntary Blood Donor Association of Sikkim. Rojan can speak three languages, English, Hindi and his mother tongue Nepali.

## Province Introduction

- 1. Kampong Cham:** It is a province in Cambodia located on the central lowlands of the Mekong River. The population of Kampong Cham is 928, 694. It has 10 districts and 916 villages. The population is comprised of 80% farmers, 1% craftsmen, 14 % service providers and 5% engaged in other businesses. The literacy rate of Kampong Cham is 80.0%. There are more females than males in the population of this province. This is owing to heavy mortality among men during the Khmer Rouge holocaust years. However, it has been showing gradual improvement since that time. In Kampong Cham province, since the volume of international migration is very few, it doesn't have any marked impact on the sex structure of the population. On the other hand, the rate of internal migration also is about a half of 26.5%, that of the whole Cambodia. The proportion of the working population (age 15-39 years) is 59.5%. In the age group 15-19 normally one should have completed lower secondary level of education. Looking at the literate population, it is seen that only 28.5% has completed that level of education or higher at the age 15-19. 44.0% in this age group has completed only the primary level and 27.4% has not even completed that level.
- 2. Kampong Thom:** *Kampong Thom* in Khmer means "great port" or "great harbour". *Kampong* in Khmer translates as port or harbour. Kampong Thom is Cambodia's second largest province by area. The provincial capital is Stung Saen, a town of approximately 30,000 people on the banks of the Stung Sen River. Kampong Thom Province is rich in tourism potential, attracting tourists with its exotic lakes, rivers, forests, mountains and more than 200 ancient temples. The province has a variety of natural resources including fertile land and an abundant water supply, enabling it to develop various agricultural products such as rice, cashew nuts and peanuts as well as rubber. The literacy rate here is 69.9%. School enrolment rate of children in the province is 97%. In the whole province, there are about 40 development NGOs, working in different development fields such as road, water, community development, agriculture, forestry, health care and disease education, human right, religion and education, etc. Health care and energy are a development priority in the province.
- 3. Takeo:** Takéo is often referred to as the "cradle of Khmer civilization" due to the former kingdom of Funan its successor, Water Chenla, being centred in the region. It is subdivided into 9 districts and 1 municipality. Its population is 927,896. The adult literacy rate here is 80.0%. Takeo's economy centres around agricultural farming, fishing, and rice and fruit cropping. The major investment fields in Takeo are agri- industries, light manufacturing industries, infrastructural development of electricity and water supplies.