

## A busy few months in SeeBeyondBorders Ireland

It has been a really busy and fulfilling few months at SBBI and with your ongoing support and generosity we were able to continue supporting educational change in Cambodian classrooms.

### April



We welcomed four of our SBB colleagues from Cambodia, together with two lecturers from the Phnom Penh Teachers Education College (PTEC) to Ireland on a learning exchange trip. To shake off any jet lag, a guided tour of Howth Head was the first item on the agenda - just in case anyone needed some help getting to sleep that first weekend! Scheduled visits to some of our Solidarity Schools across the island of Ireland created great opportunities for global citizenship education particularly on the Sustainable Development Goals 4 Quality Education, 5 Gender Equality and 17 Partnership for the Goals, and in the observation of

classroom management techniques and learning methodologies in primary school classrooms. Further collaboration and learning took place between our colleagues in Dublin City University (DCU) and in the National College of Ireland (NCI). We also visited Mary Immaculate College (MIC) Limerick, where our colleague Pov Pheung undertook his Masters in Education (22/23).

### May

After a busy first week, the May bank holiday allowed time for some shopping and sightseeing with a visit to Glendalough and a walk around the lake to build up an appetite for some Guinness Pie!! We had additional opportunities to share educational learning with visits to Dublin Technological University and other progressive schools in our Solidarity Schools network. We visited Dublin West Education Centre where the concept of creating centres of educational excellence were explored. Our SBB colleagues also had an opportunity to meet with The Irish National Teachers Organisation who have been longtime supporters with a reunion of friends John O'Brien and John Driscoll who visited Cambodia



in November 2022. Our colleagues from Cambodia also had a wonderful opportunity to present to ElectricAid in their state-of-the-art, sustainable S7 building, on the impact of their funding of Educational Technology across 11 schools in Cambodia. At that presentation, ElectricAid Chair Judith Doherty announced their continued support of educational technology in Cambodian classrooms for a further two years - we were absolutely thrilled and so grateful for their ongoing support. Having just arrived in Ireland, we were joined at ElectricAid by our colleagues from PEPY (Empowering Youth) who gave a Khmer Thank You in the form of a Ceremonial Dance which was a very fitting end to a wonderful afternoon.



During May we also became members of Dóchas, and we look forward to learning from our colleagues and sharing our knowledge over the coming months and years.

May also saw the signing of a major grant for SBBI. Supported by the Sunflower Charitable Foundation through the Community Foundation of Ireland, over the next three years we have funds to develop the Irish organisation and build capacity and contribute to the formation of communities of practice in Cambodia that promote the sharing and continuous professional development of Khmer teachers. We would like to express our deepest gratitude for this support to the Sunflower Charitable Foundation and the Community Foundation of Ireland for this trust and the opportunity for a three year collaboration.

## June

In June SBBI and colleagues from SBBC had the opportunity to meet Director General of Irish Aid, Michael Gaffey in his office with some of his staff. This meeting allowed us to discuss the Irish Government's strategy for the Mekong Region (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar) with the aim of promoting support for the educational agenda in Cambodia. Of the overall budget sent to the Mekong Region to date, Cambodia has received very little - with most funds being invested in ordnance clearance. We are delighted to have the opportunity to speak with the Irish Aid team on the importance of investing in Cambodian education. We were greeted warmly by the Irish Aid team and it was an informative and positive meeting.

This month also saw the visit of Dr. Leo Casey, National College of Ireland to Cambodia to run the PIKT (Professional Identity of Khmer Teachers) workshops. This research is a collaboration between NCI, PTEC, The Ministry of Education in Cambodia, and SBB and will be invaluable to all in the promotion of Khmer teachers' professional development and moving the dial in how the teaching profession is viewed in Cambodia. It is a two year COALESCE grant supported by The Irish Research Council and is a wonderful opportunity to work with, and influence, those well placed to create real strategic change in Cambodian education.



## July

In July we welcomed a new SBBI Chair. We would like to extend a warm welcome to Catherine Byrne who has joined the board of trustees for SBBI as Chairperson. Catherine brings a huge amount of experience in development and education. She has previously worked as Deputy General Secretary of the INTO, was Senior Policy Advisor to Atlantic Philanthropies and has served on the boards of DICE, Oxfam, Abbey Theatre and VSO.



Maeve Corish remains on the Board and has taken on the role of Deputy Chair supporting the ongoing development of SBBI and we would like to thank her for her dedication and commitment over the last 3 years.

## August



This month has seen the first visit by four Irish teachers to Cambodia as part of the Connect programme. A busy schedule was determined with teachers spending mornings in schools observing and offering feedback to Khmer teachers, SBB staff members and the Educational Changemakers. Afternoons were spent delivering workshops on topics chosen by the staff to aid their professional development. August also saw a visit to SBB in Siem Reap from Irish Aid with a view to supporting a new pilot programme. We welcomed this as we hope to strengthen our relationship with Irish Aid and the Irish Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam in the years ahead.

Colleague Pov Pheung completed his thesis in August having left MIC in May to return home to his family after being in Ireland for almost 10 months. We are delighted to let you all know that Pov has now been appointed as SBB's first Managing Director having the key skills and experience to guide the team on the expansion of our programmes into Siem Reap and to support the path to localisation.

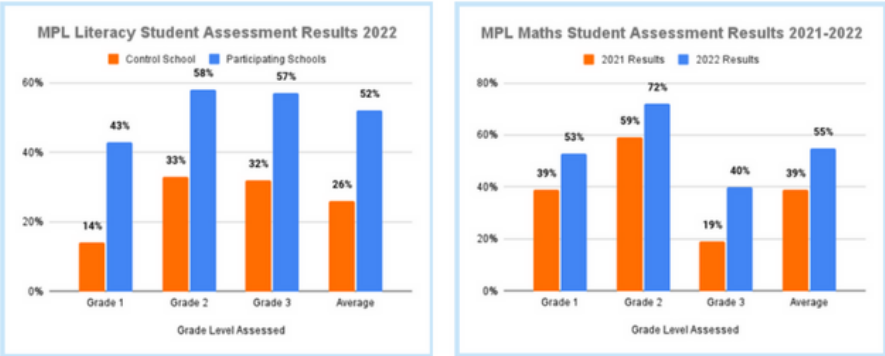




## Impact in Numbers

27 Schools   107 Teachers   49 Mentors   3,730 Children

### Test Results



## The next few months

See us continuing to build SBBI as an influential development charity here in Ireland and, with your support, we will continue to assist our colleagues to expand our programmes into Siem Reap, building staff capacity and ensuring that the Cambodian-led agenda for creating systemic and sustainable change occurs. A new programme in the months ahead will focus on supporting school leaders and creating communities of practice (Learning Together Schools) to positively impact children’s learning outcomes.

We also welcome our colleague Limon Bunn from Cambodia as she begins her Masters in Development at Maynooth University supported by the Irish Aid Fellowship Programme.



On the 26th of September we received news from our long term supporters the INTO that they will continue to fund our programmes over the next three years. We are most grateful for this support and trust which will make a huge difference in Cambodian schools. Thank you.

## Save the Date:

A date has been set for our fundraising WalkBeyondBorders which will take place in Dublin on Saturday 2nd December, more details to follow. We know how busy this time of the year gets so please put the reminder in your calendars!

Thank you so much for your kindness and ongoing support - it is making a positive difference every day to the lives of Cambodian school children.