

Sustainable Cambodia

2012 Program Manual



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Introduction

Overview of Sustainable Cambodia

Sustainable Cambodia is an international nonprofit organization that is working to empower the residents of rural Cambodian villages to create sustainable improvements in their quality of lives through community development and education programs.

Funding & Use of Funds

Sustainable Cambodia is funded through public support provided by child sponsorships and contributors from around the world, through the generous support of Rotary clubs from around the world and by other organizations that provide grants. By our founding principles, only native Cambodians may be employed as paid staff, and all international officers, directors and consultants are unpaid volunteers, ensuring that 100% of funding goes directly to Cambodia and our rural village programs.

All non-Cambodians involved with Sustainable Cambodia, including Board members and officers, are unpaid and pay 100% of their own expenses. This ensures that we train and empower Cambodians to help fellow Cambodians. Due to the large salary differential between Cambodian and western nations, we are able to accomplish much more with our financial resources, resulting in dramatic results on-the-ground in the villages in which we work.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to help the Cambodian villages in which we work become self-sustaining communities where people want to live, with healthy water and facilities, good food, health care and education for the residents, where there is environmental and social responsibility, and employment that allows them to sustain and continually improve their quality of life.

Vision Statement

Sustainable Cambodia's long-term vision is to create a model which is so successful in creating self-sufficiency and quality of life that the village residents in the program will assist Sustainable Cambodia in spreading the model to other communities throughout the country.

Village Family Empowerment

We are not an "aid" organization: We work with the village families through a unique participatory empowerment model, providing resources, assistance, training and education. The families do the hard work. This empowers the families to revitalize their community and economy, creating a self-sustaining quality of life. In return for the assistance from Sustainable Cambodia, the families commit to passing on the gift by helping other families and communities. Sustainable Cambodia works through this empowerment model at the grassroots level, effecting change community by community.

Participatory Development Model

Sustainable Cambodia utilizes a participatory development model: The village families create a Village Development Committee, which works with our staff to prioritize the programs that will have the most impact on the village. Nothing is "given" to the villagers. The villagers must commit their

time and labor to make the programs happen, while Sustainable Cambodia typically provides the training and nearly all the first-year financing for the programs. The amount of assistance is reduced over a three-year period, as the villagers become more and more self-reliant. At the end of the three year period, the quality of life in the village is dramatically improved, and the villagers have the self-created resources to continue to improve it.

The programs that the Community Development Committees may choose to become involved with include; fresh water wells (usually the top priority), irrigation, gardens, alternative agriculture, a village school, a village preschool, vocational training, micro-loans and micro-business, and village healthcare.

Sustainability

Sustainability is an essential part of our vision. We are NOT an "aid" organization that simply provides money to Cambodian villages. Instead, we partner with the villagers, helping them to change the quality of life in their community. We assist the villagers in prioritizing the programs that will have the most impact on the village. Then the villagers commit their time and labor to those programs, and we assist with training and financing. The programs we support include fresh water wells, irrigation, gardens and alternative agriculture, childhood education and schools, pre-school daycare learning centers, vocational training and village healthcare.

Our definition of "self-sustaining" is when the residents of the villages have become empowered enough to maintain and improve the quality of life in their village with a minimum amount of outside financial assistance. A community in which this occurs will have many residents who choose to stay in the community or return to it because of the high quality of life created there.

Comprehensive Village Development

Sustainable Cambodia's development and empowerment model is based on the "best practices" concept. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we utilize the most successful development models from around the world, including the Grameen Bank Microloan Program from Bangladesh, the Animal Pass-On Program developed by Heifer International and the participatory empowerment model of Care. We also believe in a comprehensive program that provides the villagers everything they need for successful development. Each of our village programs includes the following programs:

Sustainability Programs:

- Community Development Committee
- Self Help Groups
- Community Health Committee
- Agricultural Training Center

Community Development Programs:

- Wells
- BioSand Filters
- Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters
- Community Rice Banks
- Community Fishponds
- Agriculture & Vegetable Gardens
- Fruit Trees
- Rice Intensification
- Irrigation
- Microloans
- Animal Pass-On
- Sewing & Fair Trade
- Vocational Training
- Biogas Digester
- Hygiene Training
- Latrines
- Village Preschool Food Supplements

Education Programs:

- Village Preschools
- Village Primary Schools
- Sylvia Lasky Memorial School
- University Scholarships
- Youth Club
- Village Mobile Library

Finances Overview

Sustainable Cambodia has a unique management model, employing only native Cambodians and requiring all international directors, officers and managers to work free of charge, be volunteers who pay their own expenses. This model allows us to accomplish a great deal with extremely modest administrative costs. Sustainable Cambodia's combined administrative and fundraising costs are under 5%, meaning that 95% of our funding goes directly into the on-the-ground programs.

Our funding comes approximately from the following sources:

- Approximately 25% from the founders & directors
- Approximately 25% from Rotary Clubs and Rotary Matching Grants
- Approximately 30% from Child Sponsorships, Village Gifts & various donors
- Approximately 20% from foundations and other grants

We are a U.S. 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, registered with the State of Florida, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and the Nation of Cambodia. We are audited by independent Certified Public Accountants in the US, and our IRS Form 990 tax returns and past audits are available online at our website at www.sustainablecambodia.org.

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Sustainability Programs

PROGRAM AREA OVERVIEW

As evidenced by the name, sustainability is the foundation upon which all of Sustainable Cambodia's programs are built. To ensure this, Self Help Groups, Community Development Committees, Community Health Committees and the Agricultural Training Center were established. These programs form the Sustainability Programs, and serve as the foundation for many of the other programs. For example, before a Microloan is issued, Self Help Groups are established to ensure that community members help themselves by holding each other accountable. Another example is the responsibility given to Community Development Committees to make decisions for their communities in regards to the various programs.

The current Sustainability Programs include:

Community Development Committees: Creating leaders to self govern community programs

Self Help Groups: Establishing groups of community members to truly empower themselves

Community Health Committees: Forming a group to manage the well-being of the villagers

Agricultural Training Center: Designed as a medium for training effective agricultural practices

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Overview

Before many of Sustainable Cambodia's programs may be implemented, a community's Community Development Committee must give its approval. Comprised by a community's elected leaders, a Community Development Committee (CDC) serves as an intermediary between Sustainable Cambodia and the villagers. The CDCs work closely with SC staff throughout the implementation of a program, and are responsible for its management thereafter. The CDCs therefore serve as an essential part of establishing the sustainability of any given program. The Community Development Committees are also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the various programs, and are expected to help Sustainable Cambodia improve them over time. If ever a CDC faces an issue it cannot handle itself, SC staff members are always available for consultation.

Creating a CDC

Whenever Sustainable Cambodia is interested in implementing programs in a new community, the first step is to create a Community Development Committee. SC staff members organize a community wide meeting to introduce themselves and the programs they wish to implement. Afterwards, SC staff members describe the purpose and responsibilities of Community Development Committee members. Those willing to participate are identified, and a general vote is held to determine who will become the members of the Community Development Committee. After the votes are tallied, the 5 community members with the most votes immediately become the new Community Development Committee.

Responsibilities

Serving as the intermediary between Sustainable Cambodia and the members of their community, the Community Development Committee is responsible first and foremost for accurately representing their community. The CDC is in charge of determining whether a certain program would prove beneficial for their community members. The Community Development Committee

members play an integral role in the implementation of a program, as they are the ones who determine which community members are able to participate in the various programs. The CDC is also responsible for running the various programs post-implementation. In this way, a community avoids becoming dependent on Sustainable Cambodia, and instead becomes self-sufficient.

Training

To ensure their ability to manage the programs in which they become involved, the Community Development Committee members receive training. Dependent upon which programs are implemented within their community, CDC members may receive training ranging from Safe Water Programs to Income Generation Programs. If CDC members ever desire to receive additional training on a certain subject, whether to refresh previous training or to learn something new, they are encouraged to contact Sustainable Cambodia.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

The weekly and monthly procedures of the Community development Committees vary depending on which programs their individual communities are involved with. At the onset of any program, the CDC is responsible for working closely with SC staff in planning and implementing. Once programs have been established, the CDC is responsible for their maintenance. This includes either bi-monthly or monthly meeting with SC staff to ensure everything is running smoothly. It also involves resolving any issues that might arise on a day to day basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation

With substantial day to day experience running the various programs, the Community Development Committees serve a crucial role of monitors and evaluators of the programs in which their community is involved. The CDC members are encouraged to express any thoughts they may have on how programs can be run more efficiently and effectively in the future.

SELF HELP GROUPS

Overview

Loosely based on the Grameen Bank's group-based credit approach, Sustainable Cambodia's Self Help Groups (SHGs) were designed to empower community members by working together. The Self Help groups have proven essential for the implementation of several Income Generation Programs, such as the Microloan, Community Rice Bank, and Animal Pass-On Programs. SHGs rely on the ever effective method of peer pressure to ensure that borrowers use caution in conducting their financial affairs and follow through with their repayments. Self Help Groups are the epitome of sustainability, as they encourage community members to rely on each other instead of any sort of outside help. The Self Help Groups have also shown to establish deep bonds of trust among their members, further increasing the quality of life in a community.

Creation of a SHG

The first step in creating a Self Help Group is determining the community members interested in the Income Generation Programs in which SHGs are necessary. This may include any person or family living in a village in which the Microloan, Community Rice Bank or Animal Pass-On Programs have been implemented. The Community Development Committee is then responsible for assisting the interested members to form groups of ten to fifteen individuals or families. This newly formed group is an official Self Help Group.

Operational Policies

In order to apply for a Microloan, a community member must be part of a Self Help Group. Although each group member of a SHG is responsible for developing their own business plan, the Self Help Group as a whole applies for a Microloan. In case of default by any member, the remaining SHG members are responsible for the repayment of the loan. No member of a SHG may receive a new loan until the all the other members have repaid theirs. This creates an immense 'peer-pressured' incentive for all members to use caution in conducting their financial affairs and to follow through with their repayments. A Self Help Group has the right to remove a member who is financially incautious.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Staff members from Sustainable Cambodia are responsible for periodically meeting with the Community Development Committees to review the progress of the Self Help Groups. While the CDCs manages the SHGs own their own, they are encouraged to reach out to SC staff if ever an issue arises that they believe they cannot handle on their own. The individual SHGs meet with the CDC on a monthly basis to ensure that things are running smoothly. In these meeting, SHG members are encouraged to express any suggestions as to how to make the program run better in the future. This information is then conveyed to SC staff members, who discuss whether or not to implement the suggested changes.

COMMUNITY HEALTH COMMITTEES

Overview

Community Health Committees work within their communities to provide health education and training and to assist with monitoring and evaluating their community's health. The committees are also responsible for registering and distributing the vitamins and food supplements to the children in their communities. The Community Health Committees are given training and education about community health issues by medical professionals from both the medical staff members at SC, as well as volunteer medical professionals. The Community Health Committees play an important role in providing access to education for the community. It empowers community members and greatly contributes towards community self-sufficiency. Through their health monitoring activities, the Community Health Committees also help the Community Development Committees in gauging the impact that other programs have on community development, such as water sanitation activities and latrines.

Planning

Before SC staff promote the program to the Community Development Committees, a plan is created that illustrates the health education/training capabilities of the organization based on access to materials, information, health professionals, and sustainability of the program at the community level. At this stage, organizational experience has shown that it is important to develop a realistic outline of the scope of work for the Community Health Committees that will be clearly shared with the Community Development Committees and the community members. Reiterated is the fact that under no circumstance should community members rely solely on the Community Health Committee for serious injuries.

Promotion

SC staff meets with the Community Development Committees to share information about the program, including an overview of the program, the benefits of having a Community Health Committee, general roles and responsibilities of the committee members, and examples of trainings that the Community Health Committee members would have the opportunity to participate in. If the Community Development Committee decides to implement the program, SC staff member organize a community wide meeting to promote the program. At the meeting, community members interested in participating in a Community Health Committee are noted. Also during this phase, Community Development Committees decide how to provide financial compensation for Community Health Committee members. SC staff assists the Community Development Committee to create a plan using community funds generated from other programs, donations from community members, or materials that the committee may receive.

Selection

The Community Health Committee members are selected using a method chosen by the Community Development Committees. In the past, communities have gathered to nominate members and hold a ballot vote. In other communities, SC staff has worked with Community Development Committees to select the most qualified and responsible members of the community.

Preparation

Once the Community Health Committee members have been selected, they meet with the Community Development Committees and SC staff to review the trainings that they may receive, and discuss suggestions for other trainings. They then develop a training plan that includes target dates and health education subjects that will ultimately be covered in the training. Also at this meeting, the committees generate a list of needed materials such as documents to record information, community education materials, and first aid supplies.

Training

Based on the training plan developed during the preparation meeting, the Community Health Committee members receive various trainings. The training is conducted by SC medical staff members as well as medical professionals that volunteer with the organization. Training is interactive, where community members share their own knowledge about community health practices. The initial training may be several hours over the course of a few days. The training offers the Community Health Committees general health education and information about educating the community about good health practices. The subjects covered may include nutrition (including malnutrition issues in the community), hygiene (including practices to minimize the spread of illnesses), and sanitation. The second phase of training goes more into depth about specific community health issues and may include information about maintaining good health during pregnancy, treating minor diarrhea, caring for minor wounds, etc. These trainings occur on a monthly basis, or more frequently, if the Community Health Committee members are able to commit more time.

Responsibilities

The Community Health Committees are responsible for: coordinating the distribution of vitamins and food supplements to the children in their communities, educating the community about general health care, nutritional health, hygiene, and basic sanitation issues, providing education about caring

for minor wounds, prevention of infections, treating minor diarrhea, and understanding the signs and symptoms of fever, becoming trained in basic first aid, including CPR or rescue breathing and sharing this knowledge with community members, and lastly collecting information about general community health and providing the Community Development Committee with this information.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

Community Health Committees are responsible for distributing vitamins and food supplements on a daily basis to children in the villages. During the initial phases of the program, SC staff works closely with the Community Health Committees on a weekly basis. As the program progresses, SC staff check in with the committees on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, unless issues arise and SC assistance is requested. Once the Community Health Committees begin training, the regular training schedule is generally on a monthly basis. Certain training may take place over the course of two or three days, depending on the material covered and time available per day.

Operational Policies

Community Health Committees are not trained in, nor held responsible, for any type of direct health care of community members. This includes the distribution of any type of medication and medical advice about treatment of illnesses that community members have. If community members seek this advice or treatment, the Community Health Committees' role is to refer the member to a medical professional. A scope of the Community Health Committees' roles and responsibilities must be clearly stated, shared with the community and recorded by SC staff. Once the Community Health Committees are trained to educate the community, SC staff support and advise the committees, as needed, however the Community Health Committees lead all education efforts.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the Village Preschool Food Supplement Program which the Community Health Committee leads, the height, weight, reports of illnesses and observations/comments about the children's health is recorded on a monthly basis. These records are then reviewed by SC staff and compiled for reports to the National Coordinator and Board of Directors. SC staff monitors the progress of the program on a monthly basis through conversations with Community Health Committee members and through reviews of the child health records. As the program evolves, SC staff will begin to create reports of overall community health, based on information gathered by the Community Health Committees. These reports will assist SC and health agencies in working to improve health conditions in the villages with the Community Health Committees. The Community Health Committees set up their own monitoring and evaluation process to track community health and report to the Community Development Committees.

AGRICULTURAL TRAINING CENTER

Overview

The Agricultural Training Center, also known as the ATC, serves a crucial role in the implementation of various Community Development Programs. It essentially acts as a model example of how various agricultural techniques could and should be implemented. The Agricultural Training Center includes a community fish pond, a wide variety of fields full of crops, various animal shelters, and a biogas digester. To ensure that villagers are able to effectively manage their programs on their own, various trainings are provided by Sustainable Cambodia's staff. An integral part of these trainings is the experience gained at the Agricultural Training Center. Instead of documents or photos, the ATC allows villagers to see what an efficiently run program looks like with their own eyes. Staff members

on site explain and, more importantly, demonstrate to the villagers the most up to date agricultural techniques. The Agricultural Training Center hosts multiple trainings throughout the year, ensuring that modern practices slowly but surely become the standard throughout the villages in which we operate. The ATC remains available to villagers even once trainings are completed, in case any questions or curiosities might arise.

The ATC is used in the training of the following programs:

- Community Fish Ponds
- Agriculture & Vegetable Gardens
- Fruit Trees
- Rice Intensification
- Irrigation
- Animal Pass-On
- Biogas Digester

Safe Water Programs

PROGRAM AREA OVERVIEW

The Safe Water Program is a critical centerpiece to Sustainable Cambodia's community development strategy. Given the essential nature of water in daily life and its ability to affect the health of both individual families as well as communities, the Safe Water Programs provide a necessary base upon which other community development programs such as Food Security and Healthcare can build. Before the Safe Water Programs, many of the communities in which Sustainable Cambodia operates had no source of clean drinking water, forcing the villagers to carry water over long distances and/or gathering dirty water from nearby scum-covered ponds. This significant workload is often the responsibility of school age students, and thereby reduces, if not eliminates, the time available for studies. It was therefore apparent that access to a steady source of potable water was the first priority of the community development team.

The current Safe Water Programs include:

Wells: Providing communities with a steady access to water, opening doors to many other programs
BioSand Filters: Supplying villagers with a cheap and reliable method to render most water potable
Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters: Further increasing communities' access to clean water

The Safe Water Programs are designed to work in conjunction with one another to address each aspect of water resources, from availability to safe household use. Wells and Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters are installed, granting access to a steady supply of water for a community. A BioSand filter is then used to treat the water, removing most of the disease-bearing bacteria. Once a community is confident with its access to potable water, many other community development programs may be introduced.

WELLS

Overview

Access to potable water has proven to be a significant problem for the communities in which Sustainable Cambodia operates. Prior to the Wells Program, some community members, for lack of better options, would resort to collecting water from ponds shared with cattle and pigs, or worse – relying on water from scum covered drainage ditches. This water, more often than not, was contaminated with fecal matter, resulting in various illnesses. Throughout the dry season, many of the existing open water supplies would dry up, greatly reducing the communities' access to any water source. This would force community members to travel long distances to find water, requiring a great deal of time and effort, as water was transported manually.

Sustainable Cambodia's Wells Program was designed to offer solutions to the various problems faced by a lack of potable water. An effectively run Wells Program reduces the exposure to waterborne diseases by providing water from below-ground sources that are less susceptible to contamination. Additionally, it provides access to water during the dry season when above-ground water sources often evaporate. The Wells Program also provides water for agriculture such as the irrigation of vegetable gardens during the dry season and the maintenance of farm animals. It also reduces the amount of wood used for fuel in the purification of drinking water.

Promotion

SC staff members meet with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to explain the basics of

the Wells Program, as well as the benefits it can offer. If committee members choose to implement the Wells Program in their community, they then hold a meeting to describe the program to the rest of the community. The CDC then selects a 'well coordination team' that is responsible for managing the implementation, training, and maintenance efforts of the wells within the community.

Selection

The CDC then makes a list of community members interested in participating in the program. From these participants, user groups are formed with one chief and one assistant per group. These user groups are then trained on well construction and maintenance. The user groups also recommend well locations.

Implementation

Once the user groups and the 'well coordination team' have determined the locations of the wells, a well contractor ensures each proposed well site is appropriate i.e. has water. If everything checks out, contracts are written to secure the land for the wells.

Well Construction

Community members begin by participating in the digging of the hole for the well. SC provides for and arranges all necessary construction supplies to be delivered by the contractor to the well site. The well is then constructed, by the community members, supervised by the well contractor. The contractor also trains the community members how to maintain and repair the well, if necessary. Once the well is completed, the community members are also responsible for providing materials for, and constructing, a fence for the well.

Types of Wells

There are three different kinds of wells that may be installed in a community, depending on the depth of the water table. A shallow well is any well less than 5 meters in depth. A multipurpose well is a well between 5 and 7 meters in depth. If water still cannot be reached at these depths, a deep well may be provided, reaching as far down as 100 meters.

Operational Policies

Every family with access to a well will pay an initial amount of either 3000 or 5000 riel based on the family's ability to pay. This will form the base fund to pay for well maintenance and repair. Families are also expected to pay a monthly fee of 500 riel, to further contribute to the growth of the well maintenance fund. Within the first 6 months of a wells operation, any issues that may arise are the responsibility and liability of the well contractor. After 6 months, the responsibility of maintaining the well lies on the community members. No more than 15 families will have access to any single well, as recommended by the World Health Organization. The land used for each well will be contracted for permanent community use.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the initial stages of the program, SC staff works closely with the CDC. After construction is completed the majority of the responsibilities of the well lie on the community itself. SC staff is available for consultation for any problem that the CDC feels it cannot solve itself. Through continual

conversations with communities, SC learns how to run the Wells Program more effectively and efficiently in the future.

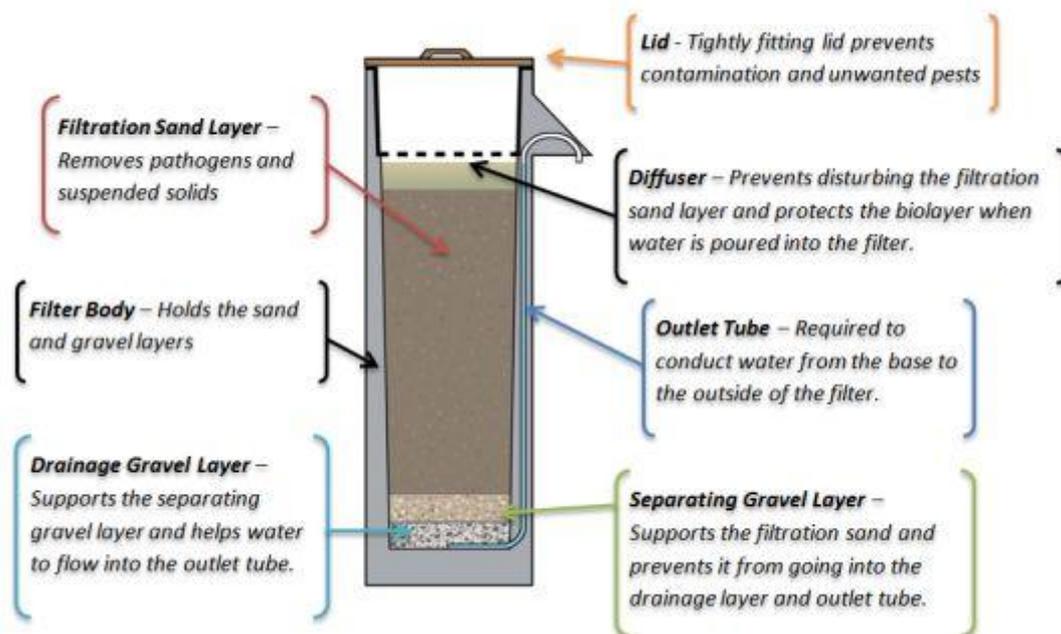
BIO SAND FILTERS

Overview

In many villages the water level is high enough that “shallow wells” can be installed. The shallow wells provide ample water, but the water must be filtered or boiled before drinking. The BSF water filter is a low-cost water treatment option designed for use in rural and developing areas where resources such as electricity, technology, and running water may not be available. The BSF technology is a water treatment option that addresses World Health Organization concerns of sustainability and program effectiveness for water programs in developing countries.

The BSF is simple structure consisting of nothing more than a concrete container filled with layers of sand, gravel and a copper pipe. As uncomplicated as it may, the BSF is a highly efficient water filter. The sand and gravel effectively remove dirt, bacteria, viruses, parasites and other impurities from the water. The BSF, therefore, renders turbid water drinkable. As much water in rural areas is contaminated by human and animal fecal runoff, especially during the rainy season when flooding spreads contaminants into wells, BSFs provide an economic and effective solution to removing such bacteria borne contaminants.

BioSand Filter Diagram



How It Works

The process of filtration through a BioSand Filter is a very simple combination of physical and biological processes. The process begins by pouring untreated water into the top section of the BioSand Filter. The water then begins to filter through the filtration sand layer where pathogens and suspended solids are trapped. Most of the untreated water’s organic material is trapped at the surface of the sand bed, effectively forming a bio-layer which actively removes pathogens and

contaminants through predation. Once the water has been filtered through the Filtration Sand Layer, it makes its way through the Separating Gravel Layer and the Drainage Gravel Layer. Through the pressure provided from above, the water is then moved up through the outlet tube and out of the filter.

Effectiveness of a BioSand Filter

BioSand Filters have proven to be inexpensive, easy to construct and simple to maintain. They have also proven to be highly effective at filtering water by removing dirt, bacteria, viruses, parasites and other impurities. Studies have shown that a properly working BioSand filter may remove:

- More than 90% of fecal coli form
- Up to 98.5% of bacteria
- Up to 99.9% of protozoa
- Up to 95% of turbidity
- Up to 90 -95% of iron
- Most suspended sediments

Implementation

Sustainable Cambodia strives to adhere closely to the CAWST organization's manufacturing, installation and training guidelines. This ensures quality, cost controls, training and installation expertise. Most importantly, it fosters the confidence of knowing that SC is providing a safe water supply to the villages.

SC provides BSFs to village households for a nominal fee of \$2 per filter. This fee offsets the cost of the filters and gives the recipients a sense of ownership. Poor families who show a real desire and need for a filter but cannot afford the fee are asked to contribute labor in place of the fee.

The equipment (filter molds, tools, generator. etc) are owned by Sustainable Cambodia but the filters are owned by individual families, schools/health clinics, etc that receive them. The filter recipients must also attend training sessions on sanitation and hygiene education and filter maintenance, and each recipient must provide one day of labor to assist with filter construction.

Promotion

SC staff members meet with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to explain the value and use of the BSFs. If the committee members choose to implement the BSF program in their community, the committee then selects a BSF coordination team responsible for managing the implementation, training, and maintenance efforts within the community.

Selection of Recipients

The CDC members assess the local families' access to clean water, number of vulnerable persons in the families (for example: families with elderly people, handicapped individuals, and/or infants) and decide which families are high priorities for receiving a BSF.

BSF Coordination Team

The appointed BSF coordination team in a village is trained on BSF construction, water-borne diseases and pathogens, and the means to safely treat water so that it may be used for household usage. Once the coordination team has completed all practical and theoretical classes, they receive an orientation on BSF along with key community leaders. In return for their long-term voluntary

commitment, the members of the coordination team are eligible to receive a BSF without the \$2 cash contribution.

Community Water Education Campaign

SC applies a community-to-community based approach for its Community Water Education Campaign. Once the CDC and the coordination team have completed training, the committee hosts a “question and answer” session for the community. At the session, community members can learn about the BSFs, ask questions and offer their opinions. Based on past experience, this session typically lasts about three days. To improve community attendance, SC offers incentives such as kitchen items, buckets, mosquito nets, soap, traditional scarves and children’s clothing for participating families. In addition, teaching aids such as posters, relevant water source pictures, disease and visual tools, lesson plans and monitoring tools have been developed and used as part of the education program.

Check for Adequate Training/Education

After education and training has been given to the village members, the CDC and coordination team follow-up with community members who receive a BSF to ensure that they received adequate training (use and maintenance of the BSF, general water sanitation practices, etc.) to promote the sustainability of the program. The CDC leads education efforts in their community and surrounding communities, as SC programs expand from village to village.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

SC staff members meet with CDC members and the BSF Coordination Team members on a weekly basis to check the progress of the program. SC staff collect information about how the families think the BSF is working, any problems the community has had with the program, how the CDC and coordination team is solving any problems, what kind of support, if any, the community needs, and any reduction in the amount of illness in the community.

Operational Policies

SC provides BSFs to village households for a nominal fee of \$2 per filter. This fee offsets the cost of the filters and gives the recipients a sense of ownership. Poor families who show a real desire and need for a filter but cannot afford the fee are asked to contribute labor in place of the fee.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of the BSF Program should be divided into 2 parts. First, the fundamental reason for installing BSFs is to reduce water-borne diseases and improve the health of villagers. A comprehensive and ongoing health-related study (pre-BSF and post-BSF) is essential to this program. Second, there must be a comprehensive and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the BSF manufacturing through testing processes. The proper manufacture and installation, in addition to end-user training, will almost certainly ensure the decrease in water-borne diseases. Studies have shown that properly built and installed BSFs (with an associated training program) are more effective at removing pathogens and improving water quality. Additional data collection will be conducted to determine compliance with educational training (such as consistently using a clean container to collect the water) and any reduction in the amount of illness within the household. This information will be collected approximately 6 months after BSF installment using a standardized questionnaire which uses the same information as gathered during the base line data collection.

ROOFTOP RAINWATER HARVESTERS

Overview

The Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters Program was designed to grant a community even more access to clean, potable water. While the Wells Program provides access to water below the earth's surface, the Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters (RRHs) provide access to the wet season's ever abundant rainwater. For those families without access to a well, the water a RRH can provide has proven crucial. Even for those with access to a well, a RRH provides an important additional source of water for cooking, cleaning, and bathing. With a capacity of 4,000 liters a single Rooftop Rainwater Harvester holds sufficient water to provide a family's drinking water throughout the dry season.

Promotion and Selection

SC staff members meet with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to explain the basics of the Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters Program, as well as the benefits it can offer. If committee members choose to implement the Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters Program in their community, they then hold a meeting to describe the program to the rest of the community. The CDC then makes a list of community members interested in participating in the program. The villagers are then ranked based on a previously conducted needs-assessment study.

How it Works

A Rooftop Rainwater Harvester is essentially a hollow two meter tall concrete sphere, sitting atop a small concrete base. It is connected to a slanted metal (typically zinc) roof, through a traditional gutter system, in order to collect the rainwater. If a family has a roof constructed with straw, Sustainable Cambodia may help them purchase a zinc roof. Full, a Rooftop Rainwater Harvester can hold up to 4,000 liters, enough to supply a family with enough potable water to last the dry season. The water is finally accessed through a small pipe at the bottom of the sphere.

Financing

The total cost of a single Rooftop Rainwater Harvester, including construction, transportation and installation, is approximately \$230. To help cover this cost, the families are asked to contribute \$10 per month for 10 months, effectively generating \$100. In addition to easing the financial burden on Sustainable Cambodia, this cost helps to foster a sense of ownership. It also allows Sustainable Cambodia to construct and deliver more RRHs to more families in need.

Construction

The Rooftop Rainwater Harvesters are built at Sustainable Cambodia by Sustainable Cambodia staff members. Once the dome and the base have been constructed, and the families have been selected, the disassembled RRH is transported to the selected village. There, the SC staff members assemble the RRH to its final form.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout the initial stages of the program, SC staff members work closely with the CDC. After construction is completed the community is responsible for the maintenance of a RRH. SC staff members are available for consultation for any problem that the CDC feels it cannot solve itself. Through continual conversations with communities, SC learns how to run the Rooftop Rainwater Harvester Program more effectively and efficiently in the future.

Food Security Programs

PROGRAM AREA OVERVIEW

Food security is essential and has proven to be the key to success for any community. Without adequate food for the families in a community, little else is possible. Confidence in the availability of food, both in the wet and dry season, opens up countless possibilities that previously would not have existed. The Food Security Program Area involves a variety of programs that focus on community-based solutions to meet the nutritional needs of community members. In addition to meeting nutritional needs the Food Security Programs emphasize education, greatly contributing community empowerment and self-reliance, as the communities gain information and experience, allowing them to duplicate and expand programs in the future.

The current Food Security Programs include:

Community Rice Banks: Providing villagers access to a cheap source of rice in times of need

Community Fishponds: Increasing the food available for consumption

Agriculture & Vegetable Gardens: Educating villagers on the most efficient agricultural techniques

Fruit Trees: Adding another source of nutritious food for the communities

Rice Intensification: Training villagers on modern methods to cultivate rice, increasing yields

Irrigation: Allowing community members to efficiently use water in the dry and wet seasons

Through this variety of programs, Sustainable Cambodia aims to increase the confidence of the communities to feed themselves, thereby expanding the realm of program possibilities in the communities.

COMMUNITY RICE BANKS

Overview

The rice harvest period in the Pursat province of Cambodia is between December and January. Due to a lack of irrigation infrastructure, Pursat (unlike many other provinces) has only one harvest per year. The Community Rice Bank Program is designed to offer participants a cheap source of rice when a family is unable to provide enough rice for themselves. The Community Rice Bank Program utilizes rice contributions provided by both SC and the community members. The result is a bank-like deposit of rice that is available for borrowing by the community members involved. Unlike middle men who may charge up to 50-100% interest on rice borrowed, the Community Rice Bank Program charges only 20%.

Promotion

SC staff introduces the program to the Community Development Committee (CDC) members. If a committee decides that their community would benefit from the program, the CDC begins by organizing and recruiting the families who will take part in the program.

Selection

The CDC first seeks the community members interested in taking part in the program. The committee then conducts a needs-assessment of the members in their community, determining which families would benefit most from involvement with the program. As the rice bank is entirely voluntary, there is no assurance that the poorest families will partake. It is the responsibility of the CDC to encourage the poorest families to get involved.

Rice Bank Committee

The CDC, with the support of SC Staff, is responsible for establishing a Rice Bank Committee that will be in charge of the Community Rice Bank Program. Rice Bank Committees generally consist of a leader, an assistant, and a treasurer. The occupants of these positions receive training so that they can efficiently lead the implementation, maintenance, monitoring and evaluation of the program. The Rice Bank Committee is also responsible for ensuring that the participating community members are familiar with the operational policies of the rice bank.

Implementation

The first step to implementing the Community Rice Bank Program is the construction of the physical rice bank. The Rice Bank Committee determines an appropriate location, designs a basic building plan, collects building supplies from community members, and organizes a labor force. If the community is unable to raise sufficient materials or funds for the construction process, SC contributes the remaining amount. During the construction of the bank, the Rice Bank Committee begins to collect rice from the community members for the bank. Each participating family is expected to donate between 12 and 24 kilos of rice. Sustainable Cambodia also contributes between 1000 and 2000 kilos of rice to help get the bank started. Once the bank is constructed and the rice is collected, the Community Rice Bank Program is ready to give loans.

Loan Process

If a participating family finds that it does not have enough rice to support itself, it may withdraw rice from the rice bank. The Rice Bank Committee takes note of the withdrawal, and is responsible for seeking its repayment, and 2% interest, during the next harvest season. Approximately 36 to 200 kilos of rice is lent out to participating community members per year. After three years of operation, the interest earned on the initial rice deposited by the community members is returned to them. This effectively creates an incentive to invest even more surplus rice into the rice bank, in turn growing the bank and its potential loan amounts.

Operational Policies

- Participants must agree with and comply with the rules set by the Rice Bank Committee.
- Each harvest season, participants must contribute rice to the bank and repay the any withdrawals from the previous year, including interest.
- If a participating family is unable to contribute during a harvest season, the family must meet with the Rice Bank Committee to decide if and how the family can continue with the program. A popular solution is for the family to contribute labor to the program and agree to contribute to the bank when they are able to later in the year or during the next harvest.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- In the programs initial stages, SC staff meets with Rice Bank Committee on a weekly basis
- Once the program is up and running SC staff meets with the committee on a monthly basis
- SC Staff plays the role of a consultant or advisor for the Rice Bank Committees, responding to the committees' requests for advice or assistance in resolving program issues
- SC staff creates monthly reports on quantity of rice deposited and withdrawn from the bank by the community members, based on data gathered by the Rice Bank Committee
- The Rice Bank Committee is responsible for tracking the rice supply and reporting any issues to the CDC

- The Rice Bank Committee and the CDC define the parameters they will use to measure success. Their evaluation of the program allows them to learn from past experiences, assisting them continuously improve and expand the program

COMMUNITY FISHPONDS

Overview

The Community Fishpond Program has proven to provide community members with an affordable and sustainable way to improve their family's food consumption, as well as to contribute in supporting other programs within the community. The Community Fishpond Program involves the construction of a large community pond, which essentially serves as a "fish bank". The community pond is stocked with baby fish, which are extracted by families in the community, who then raise them to maturity in their own family fishponds. The families also agree to take out a certain number of baby fish, and then return a percentage of that number to the pond once the fish reach maturity to ensure sustainability. The fish that are returned to the pond also contribute to the communities' communal resources. The money gained by selling excess fish is used to support other programs, such as food supplements for preschoolers. Therefore, through the increased food security and additional funds for programs, the Community Fishpond Program successfully improves the standard of living for the community members involved.

Promotion

SC staff meets with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to describe the program and its potential benefits. If the CDC decides that the program would be beneficial for its community members, they continue on to the next phase of implementation. The CDC then presents the program to the rest of the members of the community, noting who is interested in participating.

Creating a Plan

An important aspect of the Community Fishpond Program is the community involvement in the development of the local operational policies. The CDC, along with interested members in the community, discuss the process through which the current pond can be prepared to support a healthy fish stock, the need for proper training about how to care for/maintain the pond, how the community can work together to maintain a high number of fish in the pond, possibilities of how to use any excess in stock, and program funding. The following list is a summary of the decisions communities have reached in the past:

- Each family will receive 70 baby fish from the pond. They will be obligated to return 10 mature fish to the community pond.
- Wood collection and fencing around all ponds will be carried-out by the community
- Community members will provide the land for the community fishpond
- SC provides the fish required for initial stocking and the metal wire to bind the fencing
- The large community pond serves a dual purpose of providing fish for the community and water for cattle. The water will also be used to irrigate small garden plots during the dry season, and/or garden plots will be created around the pond area.
- Excess fish generated in the pond will be used to support other development programs

Training

The training process in the Community Fishpond Program is of the utmost importance. The community members are instructed on various techniques including; creating natural food for the

fish, maintaining cleanliness of the pond water, raising the fish properly, and transforming the surrounding soil into productive vegetable gardens. Only once the members are familiar with these techniques can a community fishpond be constructed.

Pond Creation

Organized by the CDC, members from the community begin to dig and prepare the community pond. The dimensions of most community fishponds are 13m x 17m x 2.5m. The community uses a variety of techniques to fill the fishponds, depending on the accessibility of water (i.e. rain collection, pumping from rivers/streams, etc.). The fence surrounding the pond is also constructed by community members. Once construction is complete the pond is stocked with baby fish provided by Sustainable Cambodia.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

The CDC hosts meetings about the fishpond, with the support of SC staff, on a weekly or bi-weekly basis during the initial phase of the program. SC staff follow-up with families on a weekly basis as implementation begins and the fishponds are being created. As the program develops, SC staff checks the progress of the program on a monthly basis. The CDC leads the maintenance efforts for the community pond; delegating the responsibility of feeding the fish to the community members. They also monitor the fish population and make adjustments to how many mature fish are to be returned if need be.

Operational Policies

- Once the program is implemented, SC staff act only as support to the CDC. SC does not continue to contribute financially once the program is implemented.
- The CDC is responsible for maintaining and sustaining the program.
- Participating families in the community agree to follow the rules set by the committee about the number of mature fish that must be returned to the community pond.
- Each family is responsible for maintaining their own family fishpond.
- If any family has a problem with their fish population due to disease or other issues, they must report to the CDC and agree on a plan of action to resolve the problem and make a contribution back to the program for the fish that were extracted.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- SC staff monitors the progress of the program by meeting with participating families on a weekly basis (during initial stages) and monthly follow-up discussions as the program develops. Information gathered by staff members is compiled and included in a monthly report to the National Coordinator and the Board of Directors.
- SC staff assists the CDCs in resolving program issues, ensuring program knowledge is shared with all participating, and monitoring the program at a community level.
- If issues with the program arise, the CDC organizes problem solving meetings, with the support of SC staff (if requested).
- Evaluation of program progress is done at the organizational level during overall program evaluation periods, which have occurred in 6-month increments in the past.

AGRICULTURE & VEGETABLE GARDENS

Overview

As subsistence farming is very prevalent among the communities in which Sustainable Cambodia operates, the Agriculture & Vegetable Garden Program was deemed crucial to increasing food security. Training is provided to community members on the best agricultural techniques on raising organic vegetables and the use of composting. Community members benefit not only from the additional information, but also from the newly created vegetable gardens. SC provides participating families with seeds that are returned once the family is able to successfully grow the vegetables. An experimental “model garden” has been established that showcases these vegetables for community members that are interested in learning more about the program and trying new gardening practices. Sustainable Cambodia’s Agriculture & Vegetable Garden Program effectively combines the benefits of training and implementation, resulting in increased food security for the community members involved.

Promotion

SC staff members meet with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to introduce the agriculture/garden program and discuss the communities’ ideas about the quantity and quality of foods found in the community and at local markets. Additionally they discuss the barriers commonly faced in regards to accessing the necessary food for their families. If the committee supports the idea of implementing the Agriculture & Garden Program, they then conduct a meeting with the community to describe the program. Community members interested in participating are noted.

Training

A plethora of training opportunities are available to the community members interested in participating. They are trained in the proper techniques to grow various vegetable throughout the different seasons. They are instructed on the proper utilization of fertilizer, and the potential provided by composting. They are also given general nutritional education in regards to the nutritional value of certain vegetables (such as vitamin A-rich varieties). This information serves to empower the community members, not only in their ability to provide food for themselves, but also in their vegetable purchasing and consuming practices.

Seed Distribution

Once the various trainings are completed, the community members are eligible to receive seeds from Sustainable Cambodia. The CDC determines who in the community receives the seeds based on their on a needs-assessment and their ability to repay the seeds once a significant yield is produced in their garden. The type and amount of seeds given is also determined by the CDC based on their judgment of each member and their land.

Vegetable Production

Once a family has received their seeds, they begin the process of building and planting their gardens. The family is also responsible for putting up a fence around their garden. When a garden has been prepared and planted by a family, past experience has shown that showcasing a family’s garden as a “model garden” assists the community with learning more about different gardening techniques and seed choices. There is a potential for certain vegetables like carrots, lettuces (various varieties), cauliflower, broccoli, and other vegetables that are popular with expatriates in Cambodia, to yield a substantial profit in certain markets in Phnom Penh. As the garden program expands, SC may be able

to provide a link between the vegetable producers in the communities and these markets in Phnom Penh. Further development of the community gardens is needed, as well as more extensive research about interested markets in Phnom Penh.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

SC staff members follow up with families after they begin to create their family gardens. Advice and additional information is given to families by SC staff, as needed. SC staff meets with participating families on a weekly basis when they first begin the program. As the program develops, SC staff members check-in with families on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. SC staff report program information to the National Coordinator on a monthly basis.

Operational Policies

SC staff meets with the CDC and the participating families to discuss how many seeds are required to begin a garden. Once the families receive training and education, and the seeds from SC, they agree to pay back the seeds to SC during harvesting time, or when a significant amount of vegetables have been produced. The amount of seeds each family receives depends on the need and the availability of seeds. If a family has problems with their garden, such as flooding, soil quality, or other problems that will have a negative effect on the family's ability to have a healthy garden, they must report the issue to the CDC. The CDC works to solve the problem with the family, with the support of SC staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

SC staff report program progress to the National Coordinator and the Board of Directors on a monthly basis. CDCs hold meetings about the garden program, as needed, and report any program problems to SC staff. SC staff meets with participating families and the committee regularly to follow-up on program progress and address any questions or concerns the community has about the program.

FRUIT TREES

Overview

The Fruit Tree Program contributes to community food security by providing families with another sustainable food source that contributes to a nutritional daily diet. The fruit trees are also valued for the shade they provide in the communities, their beauty, as well as another possible income source for families as they can sell the fruit in the market or to neighboring communities. SC provides the CDCs with the seeds/seedlings, with which they create a fruit tree nursery. The CDC then distributes fruit trees to the participating community members. Numerous trainings are provided, where community members learn techniques to best raise their fruit trees. Included in the trainings is a description of the benefits of chemical-free fruits. In the past, fruit trees that SC has distributed to the committees have included lemon, jackfruit, and sapodilla trees.

Promotion

SC staff introduces the fruit tree program to the Community Development Committee (CDC) and if the committee is interested in implementing the program in their community, a community meeting is organized. At the community meeting, the CDC and SC staff inform the community about the program and note the community members interested in participating in the program.

Training

Participating families receive training from SC staff that informs them of the most efficient and up-to-date techniques to plant and care for the trees. Community members are also given individual advice, if asked, from SC staff once they are ready to plant their tree(s).

Family Contracts

Once a participating family has received training, they read through and sign a contract which outlines the responsibilities they have as a participant in the program. Written by the CDC, the contract includes the following things a family must do once they receive a tree.

- Every family must care for the tree to the best of their ability
- Participants must agree to use organic fertilizer and pest control methods
- If a problem arises with the tree, they must report it to the CDC
- If the tree is cared for and dies, the family is not responsible for bearing its cost
- If the tree is not cared for and dies, the family is responsible for bearing its cost. Decided by the CDC, the repayment may be in the form of labor, seeds, or money.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

Initially, SC staff visit the program sites on a weekly basis to offer advice and follow-up with participating families. Once the program is established, SC staff meets with participants on a monthly basis, unless problems arise.

Operational Policies

- Program participants do not have to repay SC or the CDC for the fruit seeds, unless the tree dies because the family did not care for the tree properly
- CDCs lead all program activities and report any program issues to SC
- The CDCs are responsible for determining whether or not a family fruit tree died because the family did not care for the tree

Monitoring and Evaluation

- SC staff record program progress on a monthly basis and include this information in a monthly report for the National Coordinator and the Board of Directors.
- CDCs monitor program progress during committee meetings and visits with community members.

RICE INTENSIFICATION

Overview

Considering its role in Cambodia's history, culture, and economy, rice is without a doubt the most important crop. Sustainable Cambodia's Rice Intensification Program therefore aims to increase the value derived from the harvesting of this valuable crop. The program introduces new and efficient methods of cultivating rice, resulting in an increase in the amount of rice that a family can produce. Through the use of rice intensification techniques, a family can produce at least the same amount, but often more, rice in a plot of land using only 1/10th of the seeds that traditional planting practices require. This allows families to produce more rice for personal consumption and the ability to sell additional rice in the market.

How Rice Intensification Works

The general processes for planting rice involves seeding one plot of land, removing the rice seedlings and transplanting them into the families' rice fields. Using traditional practices, a small bundle of these seedlings are planted in the ground together in rows in the field, while rice intensification practices require that the family only plant one single seedling at specific points along the rice row. Rather than bunches of seedlings that often include seedlings with damaged roots from the previous harvesting season, rice intensification uses healthy single seedlings that are more able to quickly increase in size. This practice also minimizes seeds/seedlings needed to produce a large yield of rice, and allows the families to keep more rice for consumption during each planting season, rather than storing it to seed the fields. SC staff members received training on rice intensification, and provide interested families with training about this planting technique. The organization has also worked with community farmers who are interested in experimenting with the practice on a small plot of land, which is then used as a demonstration plot for other families who are interested in exploring rice intensification practices as an option.

Promotion

SC staff meets with the Community Development Committee (CDC) to introduce the Rice Intensification Program, to offer a general overview of how rice intensification works, to discuss basic labor required, and to answer any questions posed by the committee. If the committee decides they are interested in the program, the CDC organizes a community meeting to share program information and to determine which community members are interested in participating.

Training

SC staff offer a series of trainings for interested families that describe exactly how to use rice intensification practices in the rice fields. The trainings include information about the technical process, the reasons for using rice intensification, the challenges and benefits of the process, the reasons for using natural fertilizer, and most importantly, the opportunity to learn hands-on. The training process has proven difficult in some communities as its members are skeptical as to how the rice intensification process will succeed, as it requires significantly fewer rice seedlings as compared to the traditional method. There are also negative historical connections to the process, as many farmers were forced to use rice intensification during the Khmer Rouge years.

Modeling the Process

In order to work towards gaining community trust and understanding in the process, SC creates a model rice plot with a local community member to demonstrate how the process works. Program participants and other community members are then able to see the process in action and confirm its results during the harvest.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

SC staff follow-up with program participants on a weekly basis as the program begins, then on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. This also allows SC staff to answer any questions that participating families have as they begin to do rice intensification on their own. Numbers of participating families and their progress are tracked by SC staff and recorded in a monthly report to the National Coordinator and the Board of Directors.

Operational Policies

Families receive free training about rice intensification. If there are problems with the program, the participants report to the CDCs, who work to solve the problem with the families and report to SC staff if assistance or support is required.

Monitoring and Evaluation

SC staff monitors the progress of the program by visiting family plots. Information collected from these visits is included in the monthly staff report. CDCs assist in monitoring the program and report program information to SC staff and share the information in committee meetings. Post-harvest evaluations allow the CDCs and SC staff to determine the effectiveness of the program.

IRRIGATION

Overview

The amount of water within Cambodia can be characterized as too much and too little. During the rainy season, there is often an abundance of water resulting in flooding. However during the dry season, there is often a shortage of water, especially in accessible above-ground sources which evaporate. The wells that SC helps families to install provide not only fresh, clean drinking water, but can also provide water for the irrigation of vegetable gardens during the dry season. Due to the constant abundance/shortage of water provided by Cambodia's rainy and dry seasons, farmers are often limited in their capacities. The proper irrigation allows fruits and vegetables to be grown year-round, resulting in significantly more production. Once the community members provide for the nutritional needs of their families, they are free to pursue other endeavors such as vocational training, adult literacy and community programs. Without the fear of starvation, the families are able to keep their children in school and out of the fields.

Promotion

SC Staff meets with the Community Development Committee (CDC) and introduce the Irrigation Program. If they are interested in implementing it in their community, a meeting is held with other community members to explain the program and its potential benefits. Community members interested in participating are noted by the CDC.

Training

The CDC determines who is to participate based on the interest shown, the ability to implement, and the general need of the community members. Once selected, community members receive trainings on how to properly irrigate their fields. Hands-on training is provided to ensure that the lessons are understood by the participating members. By the end of their trainings, community members should understand the benefits of irrigation and be able to properly irrigate their fields in all seasons. Upon implementation of the techniques, SC staff will assist with any issues that may arise.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once the training is completed and the irrigation techniques are implemented, the only procedure to be completed is the monitoring and evaluation of the program. SC staff meets with the CDC on a monthly basis to check on the progress of program. If any problem arises, SC staff is available to help determine an appropriate solution.

Income Generation Programs

PROGRAM AREA OVERVIEW

Once the basic needs of the community members have been met, through the Safe Water and Food Security Programs, the community can then strive to increase its standard of living. This is where the Income Generation Programs fit in. Sustainable Cambodia's community development team has implemented various programs to help the villagers help themselves. These Income Generation Programs are designed to increase the villagers' abilities to support themselves and their families through income generating activities.

The current Income Generation Programs include:

Microloans: Granting access to cheap loans to start small businesses, expand farming activities, etc.

Animal Pass-On: Providing villagers with animals, whose offspring they 'pass-on' to other villagers

Sewing and Fair Trade: Offering would be drop out students the opportunity to master a useful trade

Vocational Training: Training community members in various income generating activities

Biogas Digester: Converting villagers livestock's natural waste into productive fuel

The goal of these programs is to assist the community members to increase their potential to make money to support themselves and their families. With a steady access to clean drinking water, sufficient nutritional food, and various income generating ventures, a community is well on its way to becoming entirely self-reliant.

MICROLOANS

Overview

The Microloan Program was established on the premise that poverty is not necessarily the result of a lack of skill or effort, but rather a lack of opportunity. The aim of the Microloan Program, therefore, is to provide financial resources to community members who otherwise would not have had access to them. With these available funds, Cambodians will be able to start small businesses, engage in new trades, and/or expand their farming activities. The interest charged for the Microloans is significantly less than that of regular banks or middle men, making the loans substantially more affordable. The ultimate goal of the Microloan Program is to guide Cambodians in poverty to help themselves by empowering them to create sustainable income generating programs.

Sustainable Cambodia's Microloan Program was inspired by the Nobel Peace Prize winning Grameen Bank. It is similar in that it is a program based on trust, not on collateral. Additionally, potential borrowers must first assemble in into a multi-member group, aka Self Help Group. SC's Microloan Program differs in that it does not process the individual loans; rather it delegates the responsibility to Community Development Committees (CDCs). Once capital is transferred from Sustainable Cambodia to the CDC, it stays there. The principal and interest, once paid by the borrowers, goes into the Microloan Fund, where it becomes available for new loans. This way, the Microloan Program effectively creates a sustainable source of funds for the future.

The Microloan Fund

The Microloan Fund is the pool of money which is available to the village residents for microloans. Sustainable Cambodia starts a Microloan Fund by transferring money into a bank account. The total amount deposited depends on the estimated number of participants in the community. The money which Sustainable Cambodia initially deposits into the Microloan Fund forever remains available to

the residents of the community for future loans. The principal plus half of the interest paid by borrowers is added to the Microloan Fund, thereby increasing it over time, effectively creating a self sustaining process. The Microloan Fund is owned by the community. The Microloan Fund may only be used for Microloans; any other usage is prohibited. Sustainable Cambodia manages the Microloan Fund until the community is able to do so.

Promotion

Sustainable Cambodia staff begins the Microloan Program process by hosting an information meeting with a CDC. Once they are informed of the program, the CDC decides whether they believe the program is a good fit for their community. If they do decide to be part of the Microloan Program, the CDC starts by holding its own information meetings with the other community members.

Family Analysis

The Community Development Committee, with the training and support from SC staff, does a needs-assessment of the families in the community, in order to determine how much money is required. A generic assessment of household welfare is conducted. The families are then grouped based on their level of poverty. This assessment allows the CDCs to better determine which families should have priority access to not only Microloans, but to all of Sustainable Cambodia's community development programs. The assessment is repeated annually, as part of our monitoring and evaluation, to measure any positive or negative changes in qualities of life. The generic assessment of household welfare includes;

- Education: public school and SC classes
- Current Assets: vegetable gardens, rice fields, land, livestock, motorcycles and cars
- Annual Income
- Social Cohesion
- Health
- Responsibility in community
- General Satisfaction

Community Development Committee Training

The Community Development Committee is trained on the most effective methods in which to plan, implement, and manage the Microloan Program for the participating families by SC staff.

Self Help Groups

Once the committee has received training from the SC staff, they determine the families interested in participating in the program and assist them in forming Self Help Groups. As mentioned previously, these groups consist of ten to fifteen members or families. Any person or family living in a village in which Sustainable Cambodia operates may apply to be in a Self Help Group. Each group member is responsible for developing their own business plan. Together, the Self Help Group may apply for a microloan, ranging from \$15 - \$80 (60,000 – 320,000 riels) per member. Sustainable Cambodia's staff members work alongside the CDC to determine which Self Help Groups should receive loans and the appropriate microloan amount for each.

Business Analysis

An important assessment is that of the business analysis. In order to receive a microloan, each

Microloan Group member is expected to create a business plan. The CDC is responsible for analyzing the business plans and determining whether the proposed businesses are economically viable. Included in the plan is the Microloan Group's proposed monetary requirement. If approved, all party members meet to finalize the terms.

Microloan Group Meeting

Before a loan can be issued, a CDC member meets with the Microloan Group members to ensure that the terms and conditions of the loan are clear. This process helps to eliminate any lingering confusion on the part of the Microloan Group members. The CDC member confirms the expected payment amounts and their respective due dates.

Contract

Microloan Group members agree to the following rules:

- All members must follow the date of return that has been set by the committee
- Members are not allowed to borrow again until they repay the existing loan
- In case of default by any member, the remaining members are responsible for the repayment of the loan
- Members may return the money in monthly instalments or in one final lump sum
- Members must use the loan for the purposes stated in their business plans
- CDCs may request immediate repayment if they discover members breaking the rules
- A fine of 500 riels (≈ 12 US cents) is charged for each day a loan is late in payment

Community Development Committee's Management Role

If the CDC approves the Microloan Group's business plan, the committee proceeds by creating and submitting a proposal to the SC National Coordinator. If accepted, the committee acts as the loan manager and leads all problem solving, decision making, and money management. SC staff act as supporters for the CDC, and are available to assist the committee solve any problems that might arise. SC empowers the CDC by providing them with complete control over the microloans.

Processing the Loan

There are several stages in processing the loan. A set amount of money is allotted to the villages depending on their size. The SC accountant draws up two accounting sheets. The internal account details the repayment schedule for the villager or family. This is maintained through monthly meetings. The external sheet details the total amount of loan money in each village. Withdrawals are managed by the CDC and are monitored by a SC accountant.

The interest (2%) and principal is paid on a monthly basis over a six-month period. The interest is charged based on a declining balance basis, where interest payments are based on the amount of principal remaining in a loan. The monthly amount to be delivered, therefore, is $1/6^{\text{th}}$ of the principal and 2% of the remaining balance (an example may be found below). The Microloan Group is responsible for delivering both the interest and principal to the CDC. A monthly interest rate of 2% with the declining balance basis method is equivalent to 7% interest over the 6 months. Of this 2% monthly interest, 1% is deposited into the Microloan Fund, over time steadily increasing the amount of capital available to the community for microloans. The remaining 1% interest is divided in half; 0.5 % is contributed to the CDC for administrative work, while 0.5 % is contributed to the CDC as an incentive to increase the number of loans.

Declining Balance Basis Example

A community member receives a loan for 60,000 riel from the Microloan Fund. After the first month they pay the principal of 10,000 riel ($1/6^{\text{th}}$ of 60,000 riel) and an interest of 1,200 riel (2% of 60,000). In the second month they pay 10,000 riel in principal and 1,000 riel in interest (2% of 50,000 riel). This same procedure is repeated for the following months. The final payment will be the remaining 10,000 riel in principal and 200 riel in interest. The six 10,000 riel payments account for the original 60,000 riel issued, while the additional 4,200 riel represent the monthly 2% interest payments.

Default

A Microloan Group may remove a member from the group who defaults on their loan. The Microloan Group is, however, responsible for making up the loss. This creates an effective social incentive for individual members to avoid default. To continue receiving loans, the Microloan group must repay the amount defaulted upon.

Microloan Pickup

At the expiration of the loans, typically 6 months, an SC staff member collects the total principal and interest payments from the CDC. The staff member checks to make sure it is the correct amount, fills in the appropriate paperwork, and delivers the money to the SC finance department. From there, it is deposited into the corresponding ACELEDA bank account, also known as the Microloan Fund.

Monitoring and Evaluation

An essential part of the Microloan Program is ensuring that the loans issued are having a positive effect on the communities and their members. To effectively judge whether this is occurring, we rely upon the Family Analyses conducted before the Microloan Program was implemented. We track changes in current assets and general satisfaction levels to determine the positive impact that the Microloan Program has had.

ANIMAL PASS-ON

Overview

Based on the successful Heifer International program, Sustainable Cambodia's Animal Pass-On Program empowers villagers by increasing their ability to provide for themselves. The concept is simple. We provide villagers with a water buffalo, a cow, a pig, chickens or ducks. We also provide the villagers with training to ensure that the animals are taken care of in the most efficient way. This opportunity grants the villagers increased income and/or food security. When the animal(s) begin to breed, the villagers donate the first few offspring to other community members. When those animals begin to breed, their owners continue the process by donating a set amount of their offspring. Barring extenuating circumstances, this process should continue forever. Therefore, this pass-on technique is not only sustainable, but in fact expands over time.

Promotion

SC staff begins the implementation process by introducing the Animal Pass-On Program to a Community Development Committee (CDC). It is entirely up to the committee whether they would like to engage their community in the program. If they decide to participate, the CDC holds a

meeting with the community members to determine who is interested in participating. The committee also appoints certain members of the community to be responsible for the program.

Participation

Any person or family living in a community where Sustainable Cambodia is involved with programs may apply to take part in the Animal Pass-On Program. They must also be part of a Self-Help Group. In order to apply a community member should apply to their local CDC. The CDC then begins the selection process.

Selection

The CDC, typically supported by SC staff, creates an appropriate pass-on list, where the community members interested in partaking in the program are ranked both by their interest and their needs. Therefore when an animal is granted to a community, the CDC is able to determine who is next in line for the Animal Pass-On Program. The CDC members are careful to match the needs and abilities of a member or family to the type of animal being given.

Training

An essential part of the Animal Pass-On Program is the agricultural training of the community members. Before any community member is able to receive an animal they are trained in the most current and appropriate techniques of raising the animal. This training includes; constructing a home for the animal, cleaning and caring for the animal, feeding the animal, and learning the economic importance of the animal. This training ensure that the community members use the animals given to them in the most effective manner.

The Pass-On Process

Once a community member has undergone the appropriate training for their respective animal, they are rewarded with the animal itself. Animals are provided by individual donors, specific grants, and general SC funds. The acceptance of an animal is an acceptance of the animal pass-on process, basically, that they must give away their animals first few offspring. Each animal has specific rules on the quantity of offspring to be passed along. There are also differences in policies for Buffalos and Cows between the two districts (Kravanh and Pursat) in which we operate. It is important to note that the procedure for the additional families involved in the process is identical to that of the first family.

Water Buffalo Pass-On

Pursat:

- A female buffalo is provided by SC to a 1st family
- The 1st baby of the 1st family's buffalo remains with the 1st family but mother buffalo of the 1st family is provided to a 2nd family
- The 1st baby of the 2nd family's buffalo remains with the 2nd family but mother buffalo of the 2nd family is provided to a 3rd family

Kravanh:

- A female buffalo is provided by SC to a 1st family
- The 1st baby of the 1st family's buffalo is provided to a 2nd family
- The 2nd baby of the 1st family's buffalo remains with the 1st family (Therefore the 1st family receives 1 female buffalo and 1 baby of buffalo)

- The 3rd baby of the 1st family's buffalo is provided to the community through the CDC (40% for SHG, 60% for CDC)

Cow Pass-On

Pursat:

- A female cow is provided by SC to a 1st family
- The 1st baby of the 1st family's cow remains with the 1st family but mother cow of the 1st family is provided to a 2nd family.
- The 1st baby of the 2nd family's cow remains with the 2nd family but mother cow of the 2nd family is provided by to 3rd family

Kravanh:

- A female cow is provided by SC to a 1st family
- The 1st baby of the 1st family's cow is provided to a 2nd family
- The 2nd baby of the 1st family's cow remains with the 1st family (Therefore the 1st family receives 1 female cow and 1 baby cow)
- The 3rd baby of 1st family's cow is provided to the community through CDC (40% for SHG, 60% for CDC)

Pig Pass-On

- A baby female pig is provided by SC to a 1st family
- 2 babies of the 1st family's pig are provided to another 2 families

Chicken Pass-On

- 4 hens and 1 cock are provided by SC to a 1st family
- 10 babies of the 1st family's hen are provided to 2 families (5 female chicks per family)

Duck Pass-On

- 4 female ducks are provided by SC to a 1st family
- 10 babies of the 1st family's duck are provided to 2 families (5 duck babies per family)

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

During the first phase of the animal pass-on program, SC staff visit the program sites on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to support the CDCs and families that are starting the program. Results of the site visits are recorded and shared with the National Coordinator and included in a monthly program report. Once the CDCs and program participants have shown and communicated that they clearly understand the program and are confident in their ability to run the program, SC staff begin visiting the program sites once a month, unless the CDCs request SC staff advice on the program or guidance in solving certain challenges. Results of these visits are recorded and incorporated into a monthly program report. Any issues that arise during the month are shared with the National Coordinator. The CDC meets on a regular basis to discuss the status of the Animal Pass-On Program, as well as the other village programs. SC staff is generally invited to attend and co-facilitate the meetings. Results of these meetings are recorded by SC staff and included in staff reports. The CDC reports any major animal health problems or other program issues that they would like support from SC staff.

Operational Policies

- Before receiving an animal, all training sessions required by SC must be attended
- The other families involved in the program are selected by the CDC
- If a receiving family fails to pass-on their animals offspring due to the death or loss of the animal, the family is responsible for paying the value of the animal, unless they can prove:

1. The animal died from disease or natural causes
 2. The family did not neglect the animal or fail to care for it properly.
- If an animal dies before having babies, the family must report this to the CDC *before* the animal is skinned, eaten, buried or disposed of. It is the family's responsibility to prove the animal died of natural causes and that they did everything they were supposed to do to care for the animal.

Other Issues

CDCs have faced problems with animals that are in the pass-on program that are unable to breed. Based on this past experience, if a pass-on animal is unable to breed (after all attempts at breeding the animal have failed and/or a veterinarian confirms that the animal cannot breed) CDCs can call meetings between the family that has the animal and the two families that are scheduled to receive the offspring. The families meet to come to an agreement about how to solve the issue. If the solution is to sell the animal and purchase a baby animal or an animal that can breed, the families go together to select the new animal. This has proven to build trust in the pass-on process, as challenges are faced together through the use of the pass-on family group structure.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monthly reports are compiled by SC staff and turned into the National Coordinator that show: the number of animals in the program and their approximate age, any issues the community is facing with the program and the solutions that were chosen, and a brief explanation of the actions planned for the next month.
- CDCs should meet on a regular basis to discuss program successes and share any program concerns. SC staff's role in this process is facilitating the committee in arranging these meetings.
- SC staff members are responsible to set specific indicators that show the overall impact of the program on community health, income, community empowerment/self-reliance, school attendance, and other areas that demonstrate the affect the program has on the livelihoods of community members.
- CDCs monitor and evaluate program progress based on their own indicators of program success. The committees also respond to program issues, and facilitate a process through which participants can learn from each other's challenges and successes. This ensures that each family can learn from past experiences so that the program can continue to expand and improve in their communities.

SEWING & FAIR TRADE

Overview

The Sewing & Fair Trade Program was established in order to offer potential drop-out students an opportunity to learn a vocation to support themselves and their families. The sewing class graduates are not only trained in sewing practices, but also in running a small business. This is accomplished through trainings covering money management, marketing, and fair trade practices. The SC Sewing & Fair Trade Program is currently managed by a SC sewing class graduate. Trainees are trained to make a variety of souvenirs and clothing such as purses, shoulder bags, scarves, pyjamas, and dress shirts. Trainees learn best practices in creating high quality products that can receive a good price at the market. Graduate sewing students gain valuable skills and have income earning opportunities through self-employment or employment with another small business, as they will have experience with sewing, being involved in a small business, and marketing activities.

Sustainable Cambodia has received a 'Fair Trade' certification. With this accomplished, the program aims to sell the sewing products in the United States through Fair Trade organizations and co-ops that specialize in foreign Fair Trade crafts. Sales are also planned through the internet, via SC's website. Currently, orders are made whenever they are received, but future plans include the creation of a stock from which orders can be taken which will allow for faster delivery time. If stock can be kept in the United States for distribution, this will also make the process much easier.

Promotion

SC identifies at-risk youth from poor families nearby that could benefit from participating in the program. SC also offers the program to students as an alternative to dropping out of school entirely. The program and its potential benefits are introduced to the children, and it is left to them to decide whether or not to participate in the program. If interested, the students begin their training.

Training

Sewing training is conducted on campus by a former sewing class graduate. The products that the students create during lessons can be used as examples of items that can be made to order. The first phase of the sewing workshop will not generate income, as it is a learning phase. Once the students are comfortable creating a variety of products, orders can be taken and used to generate income. Along with the sewing instruction, the students are also trained in running a small business and receive education about money management, marketing, training other sewing students, and fair trade practices.

Sales & Distribution

The sewing shop produces products for sale locally and internationally. Local sales are distributed through the actual sewing workshop, where people can make and collect their orders. Popular products include student uniforms and study materials. International orders can be placed through the Internet, through board members who live in the United States or through a fair trade organization or co-op.

Example of an International Order

An order for 100 sets of pajamas was made by one of SC's board members. The price of the pajamas was figured out based on the cost of the materials, the cost of labor per pair of pajamas, overhead costs for the sewing workshop and a 100% markup for the fair trade profit. The sewing teacher purchased all of the fabric needed from the local market and kept track of it in the materials logbook. Each time a student began working on a new set of pajamas they checked out material using the logbook. The board member was updated on the progress of the order frequently and took the order back to the United States herself after a visit to SC.

Catalogue

When dealing with products that are created for an international market, it is vital to have a system in place that can be understood or used by people who speak many different languages. A catalogue serves as an easy to understand means to display the products offered by the sewing group and their corresponding prices.

Order Forms

The following data should be collected and stored for all orders:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| – Order date | – Total cost |
| – Target deadline | – Signature of the person taking the order |
| – Product number | – Amount paid (date and signature of person who collected payment) |
| – Description | – Method of payment |
| – Color | – Date of completion |
| – Quantity | – Date of delivery |
| – Unit price | |

Bookkeeping

A very detailed bookkeeping system is needed to keep track of expenses and income generated for each project and overall. At SC, all bookkeeping for the sewing projects is coordinated through the organization's accountant. Whenever money is collected for completed projects it is signed over to the accountant who makes a deposit at the bank. This ensures that money is not left sitting around the sewing room unnecessarily.

Weekly and Monthly Procedures

Every time a student takes out material to work on a project, it is recorded in the material log. Additionally, as projects are completed, they are recorded. The same is done for orders as they are placed and completed. Every week, the supply of material should be checked to confirm that there is enough to complete the current week's projects without unnecessary interruption. Every month, a report is created summarizing the month's activities, costs and items produced. It also documents labor and any significant events that occur throughout the month, such as graduation, or the beginning of new classes.

Operational Policies

The following practices are used as a guide for creating a safe, encouraging and educational work environment. Following these guidelines helps maintain a successful, productive environment by maximizing organization, minimizing extra costs and making every effort to create the highest quality product in the best working environment.

- Maintain a safe, clean and healthy work environment with respect for all
- Identify the most important rules to follow and post on a board in the workspace
- Maintain the highest quality of sewing skill and craft
- Before promising to complete an order:
 - Communicate and ask questions so that you understand all the details of the order
 - Make sure you know exactly how the finished product should look and work
 - Make sure materials are available when you need them and know the costs
- Calculate the costs of each item by following the cost guideline sheet
- Purchase materials for the entire job at the same time to assure quality control
- Plan ahead and minimize extra purchasing trips
- Work effectively as a team
- Make budgets and post due dates and reach those goals
- Follow measurement and size charts perfectly
- Know when a fabric will shrink when washed and adjust for shrinkage

- Take good care of equipment and repair as quickly as possible when repairs are affordable
- Protect the fabrics and finished items in clean, safe storage until shipment or delivery
- Ask for and provide help when needed
- Give an advanced or difficult task to the person who does that task well
- For clothing: use natural fabrics like 100% cotton, raw silk, or fine smooth silk
- For all items: choose high quality materials including fabrics, thread, lining, and fasteners
- Create designs with special details such as piping, trim, embroidery, beadwork, and pockets

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is very important to keep careful documentation of the progress of the Sewing & Fair Trade Program. Materials used, labor, expenses, income and products created are all documented in books kept in the sewing workshop. Monthly reports of current projects and other general information are reported to SC staff.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Overview

Highly motivated community members are encouraged to participate in Sustainable Cambodia's Vocational Training Program. Through this program community members will be able to gain knowledge and expertise in specific industries, allowing them to increase their income potentials. Another important aspect of this program is the 'giving back' aspect, where community members who have participated are expected to train others throughout their community. The following vocational training opportunities are currently offered by Sustainable Cambodia: Motorcycle and car repair, hair dressing and make up, stone sculpturing, and sewing.

Promotion

The first procedure in the Vocational Training Program is determining the interest of the community members in participating. SC staff meets with Community Development Committees (CDCs) to identify potential candidates. In addition to interest, community members must demonstrate that they are motivated and committed.

Training

Once the participating community members are identified, the type of training to be provided is discussed. The participating members decide for themselves which of the available trainings they would like to receive. This ensures that the community members are truly interested in the information they will receive. Once the type of training is determined, SC staff work to find a suitable trainer. Payment of the trainer is provided by SC, mainly through grants.

Operational Policies

The CDC makes a contract with the participating members to ensure that they will attend their training classes. SC provides a majority of the funding for the training, but asks community members to pay a small share. After the training is successfully completed by a community member, the money given for training will be returned. If, however, the training is not completed by the community member, the money paid will be kept by SC. This adds even more incentive to complete the training. Once completed, the community members are expected to share their newly earned information with other members in their community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The CDC is in charge of reporting to SC staff. Information provided includes; the current status of relevant trainings and any problems that may arise. Exams are given at the completion of provided trainings to make sure the community member received the necessary information. The CDC should also monitor how many people did not finish the training and their reasons for incompleteness.

BIOGAS DIGESTER

Overview

Recently implemented, the Biogas Digester program was designed to offer villagers a means to convert typically useless manure into a valuable natural gas. This gas is then used for cooking and lighting, effectively eliminating one of villager's biggest household expenses. In addition, the biogas digester process produces natural fertilizer which can be productively used in the fields, providing yet another benefit. By reducing a family's expenses on wood to burn, natural gas and fertilizer the Biogas Digester Program increases the amount of disposable income available, in turn increasing the family's income generating potential. Another benefit worth noting is the reduction of Greenhouse Gases (dioxide and methane) naturally emitted into the atmosphere.

Promotion

Sustainable Cambodia staff members introduce the program to the Community Development Committee (CDC). If the committee agrees to implement the program in their community, they set about searching for potential candidates.

Selection

There are four main criteria a village family needs to meet before they can be selected to receive a biogas digester. First is a large enough number of livestock to produce the required 20 kilograms of manure per day. This figure can be met with a handful of pigs and/or a few cows. Secondly, there must be a sufficient area of land for the construction and placement of the biogas digester (approximately 5 – 10 square meters). Thirdly, a family must also be able to help pay for the construction of the digester (more details can be found in the financing section). Finally, a family must demonstrate interest and responsibility.

Financing

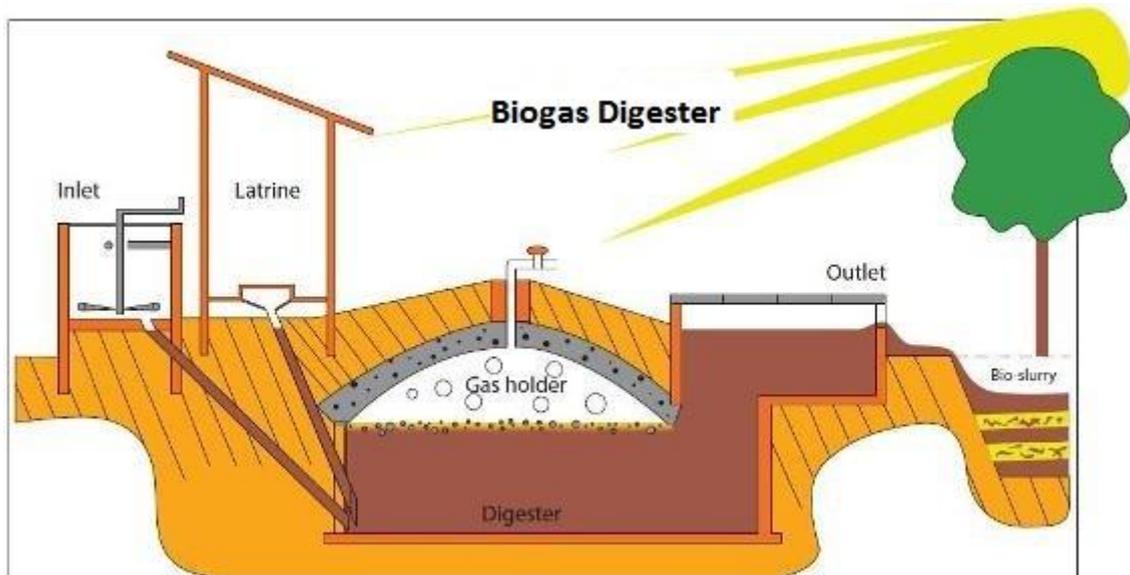
The Biogas Digester Program is unique in that Sustainable Cambodia has partnered with the Department of Agriculture to provide funding. Therefore, all Biogas Digesters must be approved by a member of the Cambodian Government. If and when approved, a portion of the cost of each biogas digester is provided by the Department of Agriculture. The remaining cost is partly covered by contributions made by the individual families (as determined by the amount they can afford to pay). Any cost that remains is covered by Sustainable Cambodia.

How it Works

Manure is collected and inserted in the inlet. It is combined with an equal amount of water, 20kgs of manure = 20kgs of water. Latrines may also be connected to increase the yield, but our biogas digesters typically are not. Gravitational forces will lead the water and manure into the digester, where natural fermenting procedures produce natural gas. As pressure mounts in the digester (from the releasing of gas), the newly fermented manure is pushed up into an outlet, where it becomes

once again available to the family as natural fertilizer. The natural gas can be accessed by a pipe directly connected to a household stove or lamp. In addition, as 36 C° is the optimum atmospheric temperature, Cambodia proves to be an ideal location for the Biogas Digester Program.

Biogas Digester Diagram



Construction

Once a family has been selected, an approval request is sent to the Department of Agriculture. If confirmed, the family receives training at the Agricultural Training Center on the appropriate usage of their biogas digester. Only when all of this has been completed can construction begin. Once the contractor has completed the installation of the biogas digester, the family and the CDC are responsible for its maintenance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Community Development Committee and the individual families are responsible for the maintenance of the biogas digester. Sustainable Cambodia, however, remains available for any issues that might arise that cannot be handled alone. An SC staff member checks the operation of the biogas digester on a monthly basis and reports the results to the National Coordinator. The villagers, along with the CDC, are always encouraged to share their experiences with Sustainable Cambodia to improve the program over time.

Healthcare Programs

PROGRAM AREA OVERVIEW

In addition to the other community development programs, Sustainable Cambodia's Healthcare Programs plays an important role in the sustainability of a community. The Healthcare Programs focus on facilitating community health education and training, as well as facilitating the creation of Community Health Committees. These committees provide sustainable community health education and training, work on monitoring community health, and assist in linking community members with medical professionals outside the community. As the health of a community is dependent upon the health of its members, the Healthcare Programs are essential in improving the quality of life in the communities.

The current Healthcare Programs include:

Hygiene Training: Educating community members on basic health and hygiene matters

Latrines: Reducing the contamination of human fecal matter in local water supplies

Village Preschool Supplements: Providing food to the typically malnourished community children

HYGIENE TRAINING

Overview

The Hygiene Training Program follows the notion that information is power. The unhygienic practices of some community members tend to arise from a lack of knowledge. When informed of the health risks involved of certain activities, community members have, for the most part, changed their habits. It is for this reason that the Hygiene Training Program strives to educate community members on basic sanitation and hygiene practices.

Promotion

To begin, SC Staff introduce the program to the Community Health Committee (CHC). If the committee agrees to implement the program in their community, a meeting is held to introduce the program to the other community members. Those interested in participating in the training work together to determine the most convenient schedule.

Training

Over a period of several days, SC Staff educate community members on basic hygienic practices. This includes the washing of fruits, vegetables, and hands. Although effective hand washing techniques may seem like 'common knowledge' to the western world, they are far from common in remote rural villages. Villagers are also instructed on general health care, nutritional health, and basic sanitation issues. In addition, they are also trained in basic first aid. To supplement the material taught, SC staff also provides instructional posters and perform demonstrations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once the training has been completed, it is the responsibility of the CHC to ensure that the material covered is remembered throughout the community. SC staff is always available in case assistance is required. Additional trainings may be provided if community members are interested.

LATRINES

Overview

The Latrine Program works in conjunction with the Wells and BioSand Filters Programs to ensure clean water by reducing or eliminating the contamination of human fecal matter in local water supplies. While the latrines are built for individual households, it is often the community that works together to build each latrine in a cooperative effort. A majority of the costs and materials are provided by SC. Roofs, walls and doors however, are expected to be provided by the participating community members. This fosters a sense of ownership and accomplishment in the community members. It also follows SC's tenant of empowering, instead of creating dependence, in the communities in which it is involved.

Promotion

SC staff members meet with Community Development Committee (CDC) members to explain the value and use of latrines. If committee members choose to implement the Latrine Program in their community, the next step is the creation of a latrine coordination team that is responsible for managing the implementation, training, and maintenance efforts within the community.

Selection

The CDC then holds a meeting with the community in order to promote the program to the community members. As the Latrine Program tends to be very popular among the communities, it is very important for the CDC to carefully select the recipients of the latrines. Several considerations are taken into account, including: whether a family already practices good sanitation in their yard and home, whether the family has demonstrated good collaboration in other SC programs, whether they are considered an honest and reputable family, and of course, whether they are actually need of a latrine.

Training

Before a family may receive a latrine they must attend a training session. In this session, SC staff members educate the community members on the proper usage of the latrines, along with other basic hygiene information. Posters and pamphlets are distributed during this time to ensure that the information provided stays in the village.

Implementation

Once the community members to receive latrines are determined, SC arranges for the necessary supplies to be delivered to the community. These materials include the concrete to form the latrine base, the porcelain toilet, the PVC pipe, and the concrete waste holding tank (comprised of three concrete rings). A contractor is hired to dig the necessary hole, install the concrete waste holding tank, and construct the latrine base complete with the porcelain toilet and PVC pipe. The total cost of these materials, their installation and the appropriate training is approximately \$100. Once the basic base structure has been completed by the contractor, the villagers are responsible for providing materials for, and building, the above ground structure of the latrine. This structure includes walls, a door, and a roof.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Community members meet with SC staff once a month to discuss any problems that may arise with

the latrines. Maintenance of the latrines is minimal. On average, a family of five may use a latrine for five years before any additional work on the concrete waste holding tank is required. Local water quality tests are conducted regularly with the Wells and BioSand Filters Programs to track the progress of the cleanliness of local water supplies.

VILLAGE PRESCHOOL FOOD SUPPLEMENTS

This program came into existence after SC staff noticed that a majority of the children participating in the Village Preschool Program were malnourished. The Village Preschool Food Supplement Program, therefore, seeks to overcome the general lack of income and nutritional education of the communities to fulfill the dietary needs of the preschool children. Implemented by the Community Health Committee and supported by SC staff and the Community Development Committees, the Village Preschool Food Supplement Program has proven to be an effective way to reduce malnourishment among the communities' children.

Promotion

The first step is to introduce the program to both the Community Development Committee (CDC) and the Community Health Committee (CHC). The operational policies and benefits of the program are described in detail. After careful consideration, the committees decide whether they would like to implement the program in their community.

Implementation

To ensure the proper implementation of the program, the CHCs are given additional training on nutritional health. The CHC then collects information on the total number, gender, and age of the children in their communities that will receive the food supplements. The CHCs then work to incorporate the preschool teachers and other community members that will work together to create the food supplements. The CHC, with support from SC staff, also hosts meetings with community members to plan out how food items will be acquired within the community to create the food supplements. Together, the CHC and SC staff creates a distribution plan and a program monitoring and evaluation plan that will track the health of the participating children on a monthly basis. Food supplements are distributed to the registered children and records are kept by the CHC and SC staff.

Funding

Communities are expected to contribute as much as they are able to, through individual donations and the surplus of other programs, such as fish from the fishpond, vegetables from community gardens, interest from micro loans, and rice from the rice bank. More often than not, however, the communities still need additional funding to provide the necessary food and vitamins. This funding is provided by SC, through specific grants. The average cost is 800 riels (≈ 20 cents) per child per day.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Food supplements are distributed daily in each of the participating community preschools. Initially, SC staff and the CHC meet weekly. As things settle down, the meetings are reduced to once a month, unless the CHC requires assistance. A report is drafted monthly by SC staff and the CHCs outlining progress. Summary health reports are created by SC staff every 6 months. Progress of the program is tracked by the CHC through monthly records of the children's health that show each child's height, weight, any report of illness during the month and any observations or comments the CHC members record about the child's general health. Health tracking charts are used as they allow for easy record keeping.

Education Programs

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Sustainable Cambodia began as a small supplementary school for Cambodian children. Although it has grown over the years to encompass a wide variety of Community Development Programs, the Education aspect still remains as important as ever. Education has proven over and over to be an enormously effective means to raise a community's standard of living. Through the education offered by Sustainable Cambodia, students are able to greatly increase their potential income-generating abilities.

The Village Preschool and Primary School Programs offer Cambodian villagers access to previously inaccessible education. The Sylvia Lasky Memorial School and KBFC offer supplementary courses to bolster the students understanding of materials taught in State School. The Youth Club Program grants students the opportunity to work together on various leadership building projects. The University Scholarship Program provides students with the financial means to pursue higher education, further increasing their chances of success in the future. The Village Mobile Library Program gives villagers, both young and old, access to educational materials.

The current Education Programs include:

Village Preschools: Creating an educational atmosphere for young children

Village Primary Schools: Offering children access to previously inaccessible education

Sylvia Lasky Memorial School: Providing supplementary classes to improve understanding

Youth Club: A student led group, presenting students opportunities to build leadership skills

University Scholarships: Granting successful students with the financial means to attend university

Village Mobile Library: Providing villagers, both young and old, with educational materials

These programs aim to greatly improve the standard of living in the villages in which we work by empowering the villagers through the most valuable asset one can be provided: education. The Education Programs have thus far proven highly sustainable in that once students graduate from school, they tend to use their education in ways that were beneficial to others, whether it be extra income devoted to helping a community or time spent teaching, or volunteering, at one of Sustainable Cambodia's Schools.

VILLAGE PRESCHOOLS

Overview

The Village Preschools Program provides young children the opportunity of early education. Having been introduced to the basics of reading and writing Khmer, as well as English, the children will have an advantage upon enrollment in state school. A better start in school has proven to lead to better grades and subsequently, higher education, better jobs and significant increases in standards of living. The Village Preschool Program also grants the children's parents a few extra hours in the morning to focus on work, potentially increasing the family's income. The preschools have also led to increased community cohesion, as parents gather often to discuss other programs to enhance their standards of living. Therefore, the Village Preschool Program benefits not only the children involved, but the entire community. The locations of the preschools in the community are carefully selected to ensure easy access to the children. Most (if not all) of children involved live within walking distance of the preschools. In addition to basic education, the children receive education in hygiene and nutrition. Coupled with the Village Preschool Food Supplement Program, this program effectively nourishes both the mind and the body.

Promotion

Sustainable Cambodia's staff begins the program by identifying communities that lack access to early education. Once a community has been identified, the program is presented to the Community Development Committee. It is up to the CDC members to decide whether they believe their community would benefit from a preschool. If they decide that they indeed would like to implement the program, a community wide meeting is held to discuss the finer details of the program.

Construction

The community members are responsible for providing basic construction materials, the actual construction of the school, and its maintenance. Sustainable Cambodia provides the more costly items, such as the tin roof and the cement for the foundation.

Preschool Teacher

Potential pre-school teachers are nominated by community members, and then ballots are cast at a community meeting to decide upon a single teacher. Sustainable Cambodia pays the teacher's salary. The pre-school teacher serves two main roles. First, they are responsible for holding classes with the children every weekday morning. Second, they serve as a health representative, providing information about basic health and sanitation, such as washing hands and brushing teeth, and handing out food supplements. To effectively fill these roles, preschool teachers are trained by Sustainable Cambodia's education manager.

Monthly Procedures

During the programs initial phases, SC staff works closely with the community to ensure the program is implemented smoothly. After construction, SC staff meets with members of the community on a monthly basis. During these meetings, community issues are discussed, as are other potential development projects. The meetings also serve as a tool for the evaluation of the Village Preschool Program.

Operational Policies

The CDC is responsible for managing the preschool's budget, teacher, curriculum, facilities and students who are associated with the school. In addition to the teacher's salary, provided by Sustainable Cambodia, contributions to the school budget can be given through the success of other community programs, such as the Microloan Program.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The preschool teacher provides a monthly report to the CDC, which in turn is given to Sustainable Cambodia's education manager. The report details preschool attendance, number of absentees, activities and topics covered in class and the number of necessary home visits. Preschool teaching is monitored by parents, the CDC and visits from Sustainable Cambodia staff. Each year a comprehensive evaluation takes place.

VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**Overview**

Most children involved with Sustainable Cambodia's Education Programs have access to

Government funded state schools. Therefore, most of our Education Programs are designed to offer enrichment courses to supplement the education provided at the state schools. This has proven important, as state school teachers often teach half of the curriculum in class and the other half in private classes. The Village Primary School Program varies from the other programs in this regard. Implemented in remote areas far from the nearest state school, the Village Primary School Program aims to provide education to children that otherwise would not have been educated. As mentioned previously, education has proven to be a highly effective means of raising one's standard of living. It is for this reason that the Village Primary School Program is absolutely essential. By offering education in areas previously without access to it, Sustainable Cambodia is presenting a true opportunity for villagers to help themselves. It is also important to note that through this program, Sustainable Cambodia hopes to encourage the Cambodian government to add schools of their own to these remote areas. Sustainable Cambodia currently operates Village Primary Schools in the Kravanh and Bakan districts, offering 16 classes to over 600 students.

Promotion

Sustainable Cambodia's staff begins the program by identifying communities that lack access to government funded state schools. Once a community has been identified, the program is presented to the Community Development Committee. It is up to the CDC members to decide whether they believe their community would benefit from a primary school. If they decide that they would like to implement the program, a community wide meeting is held to discuss the finer details of the Village Primary School Program.

Construction

The community members are responsible for providing basic construction materials, the actual construction of the school, and its maintenance. Sustainable Cambodia provides the more costly tin roof, as well as the cement for the foundation.

Primary School Teachers

Potential primary school teachers are nominated by community members, and then ballots are cast at a community meeting to decide between the candidates. If the village lacks teacher quality candidates, Sustainable Cambodia helps to recruit them from elsewhere. The exact number of teachers needed varies per school, depending on the projected number of students. Once they have been selected, the teachers are trained by SC staff members on appropriate methods of teaching. Sustainable Cambodia is responsible for paying the teacher's salary.

Courses Offered

It is important to cater to the community's needs when determining the courses to be offered. Over time, courses may be added or dropped based on the student and teachers interests. The following courses are currently offered to the students of the two Village Primary Schools:

English: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced courses of English are offered to students

Khmer Literature: Courses bolster the students' knowledge of Khmer through reading and writing

Math: Ranging from simple multiplication and division to advanced algebra and calculus

Chemistry: Offering students interested in the medical field an early introduction

Physics: Granting early practice to those curious about the engineering field

Monthly Procedures

During the programs initial phases, SC staff works closely with the community to ensure the program is implemented smoothly. After construction, SC staff meets with the member of the community on a monthly basis. During these meetings, community issues are discussed, as are other potential development projects. The meetings also serve as a tool for the evaluation of the Village Primary Program.

Operational Policies

The CDC is responsible for managing the primary school's budget, teachers, curriculum, facilities and students who are associated with the school. In addition to the teacher's salary, which is provided by Sustainable Cambodia, contributions to the school budget can be given through the financial success of other community programs, such as the Microloan Program.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The primary school teachers are responsible for providing a monthly report to the CDC, which in turn is given to Sustainable Cambodia's education manager. The report details primary school attendance, number of absentees, activities and topics covered in class and the number of necessary home visits. Primary school teaching is monitored by parents, the CDC and visits from Sustainable Cambodia staff. Each year a comprehensive evaluation is conducted.

SYLVIA LASKY MEMORIAL SCHOOL

Overview

Sustainable Cambodia has its origins in a school designed to offer supplementary classes for local Cambodian students. What began as a single classroom with limited students has over the years grown to become a multi-classroom school, serving over 500 students and offering supplementary courses ranging from English to Physics. The Sylvia Lasky Memorial School (SMLS) has helped enrich the education of students in Pursat by supporting the information provided at the regular state schools. The 13 teachers at the SLMS are all native Cambodians with degrees or certified government teaching credentials. The children are chosen based upon the highest needs of the community, family commitment and the individual student's commitment.

The establishment and growth of the SLMS has served as a model for the creation of the Kravanh Bright Future Center (KBFC). Located in the Kravanh district of Pursat, KBFC serves over 300 students and offers courses such as Chemistry and Khmer Literature. KBFC is a brilliant example of how the SLMS model can be duplicated not only in Cambodia, but throughout the developing world.

Student Selection

Establishing a new school requires various procedures, the first of which is the selection of students. As the aim of the Program is to provide supplementary program to those most in need, the eligibility of the students is determined based on those who otherwise could not receive supplementary courses. Another factor to consider is the proximity of the student's homes to the school, as distance sometimes acts as a hindrance to school attendance. It is also important to analyze the commitment on behalf of a potential student's family; that they will support their child with his/her education and refrain from forcing them to miss class to work for the family. Finally, it is important to analyze the commitment to education of the individual potential student. The SLMS ensures that each one of the considerations is taken into account while selecting new students.

Teacher Selection

The selection of high quality teachers is a crucial procedure in the establishment of an effective school. All teachers will therefore be required to have either a university degree or a certified government teaching credential. Recruitment is based upon the number of projected students and the courses expected to be offered. Experience in teaching is invaluable, and is therefore highly considered when selecting a new teacher. In the past the SLMS has recruited teachers from state or private schools. The SLMS has also acknowledged the benefit of recruiting directly out of university, as the future teachers can be trained to teach in the manner that Sustainable Cambodia has determined is the most effective. The recruitment of high quality teachers has not proven to be a difficult task, as the higher wages offered by Sustainable Cambodia have attracted more qualified teachers.

Courses Offered

It is important to cater to the community's needs when determining the courses to be offered. Over time, courses may be added or dropped based on the students and teachers interests. The following courses are currently offered to the students at the SLMS and KBFC:

English: Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced courses of English are offered to students

Khmer Literature: Courses bolster the students' knowledge of Khmer through reading and writing

Math: Ranging from simple multiplication and division to advanced algebra and calculus

Chemistry: Offering students interested in the medical field an early introduction

Physics: Granting early practice to those curious about the engineering field

Computers: Giving students invaluable practice with essential programs, ex: MS Word & PowerPoint

Financial Sustainability

Unlike the Community Development Programs, Sustainable Cambodia's grade schools are not designed to be financially self-sustaining in the short and mid-term. They are, however, financially viable due to the unique nature of the child sponsorship program. Each grade school, holding about 300 students, costs approximately \$20,000-\$25,000 to run per year. Sustainable Cambodia's Child Sponsorship Program allows for donors from around the world to help fund the cost of schooling for an individual child. For \$150 a year, a sponsor can cover the 'school life' expense for a child. If a school succeeds in having half of its children 'school life sponsored' ($\$150 \times 150 = \$22,500$), it can effectively offset the expenses of running the school. Also available in conjunction with the 'school life' sponsorship is the 'home life' sponsorship, where proceeds are directed towards Community Development Programs. If a school is able to attract these sorts of sponsorships as well, it can effectively become a fund raising mechanism for the Community Development Programs.

Additional Support

As the SLMS aims to educate students from less fortunate circumstances, additional support has occasionally been required. For this reason, a scholarship program was designed to assist those who otherwise would not have had the materials necessary to attend school. They are provided with school supplies, school uniforms and back packs. As a means of transportation, students who live considerable distances from the school are provided bicycles. These measures are essential to ensure that even those in the direst circumstances are granted access to education.

Dormitories

While bicycles assist those students that live a few kilometers away from school, they are not an acceptable solution for those who live even further. For this reason, KBFC has created dormitories for a select group of committed students who live too far away to commute to school every day. These dormitories provide the students an opportunity to attend school when they otherwise would not have been able to.

Operational Procedures

Weekly procedures are classroom-focused. Teachers take attendance daily and classes include a variety of activities. The teachers at SLMS use a student-focused method of teaching, which involves designing activities based on student participation. Students are typically assigned readings and homework and are expected to come to class. Teachers are given the freedom to design their own syllabi and assessment schedules. Generally, however, tests are administered once a month. The results, along with other participation, are summarized in student progress reports. These reports are expected to be delivered to the Education Manager on the 27th of every month. The Education Manager deals with new students, disciplinary issues, new courses and other issues that present themselves on a daily basis. The Education manager is also responsible for preparing a monthly report, including activities, achievements (qualitative and quantitative), problems encountered, solutions and recommendations. This report goes to national director who creates a compiled monthly report, which is sent to the Board of Directors. In response the Board of Directors sends back any comments and questions that they might have.

UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP

Overview

In order to ensure a student's financial ability to pursue secondary education, the University Scholarship Program was created. Any Sustainable Cambodia student that completes grade twelve, and whose test scores are high enough to qualify for Cambodian University, are eligible to receive a university scholarship. This guarantee serves as a clear incentive for students to not only stay in school, but to also strive to attain high test scores. In the past, students have attended universities in Pursat, Battambang and Phnom Penh. An important aspect of the University Scholarship Program is the 'pass-on' element, whereby students are strongly encouraged to volunteer in their communities. This serves both to instill a sense of community service and to spread the education that they have been fortunate to receive. Over the years, Sustainable Cambodia has benefitted greatly from the services provided by our sponsorships students.

An effectively run University Scholarship Program will assist students in their pursuit of knowledge and personal growth to reach their highest potential as individuals and as contributing members of their communities. It will support the youth in pursuing academic degrees in areas that are essential to the sustainable development of their rural Cambodian communities. The program will assist students in creating viable economic opportunities that may bring positive benefits for their quality of life. Through the 'pass-on' element, the University Scholarship Program will inspire youth to give back to their communities by sharing their knowledge, skills and life experiences.

Implementation

The first step to implementing the University Scholarship Program is the collection of funds, as it is impossible to offer scholarships without the adequate financial means. Sustainable Cambodia offers individual donors the opportunity to provide scholarships to individual students at a cost of \$450 per

year. If this proves insufficient, then general education based funds are allocated towards ensuring that every eligible student may receive a scholarship. Once the financial means have been secured, an announcement should be given to the students, introducing the program. This will instantly motivate students to continue their studies and to improve their performance in class.

Operational Policies

Any Sustainable Cambodia student who successfully completes grade twelve and has university level test scores is eligible to receive a university scholarship. To apply, the students are required to complete a scholarship request form. Students must also agree to spend time giving back to their communities. Known as the Personal Community Service plan, this encourages students to spend some of their free time volunteering. This process ensures that students share the education that they have been able to receive.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once students have begun university, they are required to report their grades to Sustainable Cambodia's Education Manager. Every semester the grades are monitored to ensure that good performance is maintained. Students should also report their community service activities, in accordance to the rules set on in the Personal Community Service Plan.

YOUTH CLUB

Overview

The Youth Club has proven to be an especially important program in the personal development of the students. Run entirely by the students themselves, the Youth Club is an opportunity for Sustainable Cambodia's youth to engage in a broad array of activities. In the past, the Youth Club has partaken in songs, dances, plays, and various community service projects. Through participation in these projects the students are able to learn and develop in ways that they otherwise would not have through traditional classroom education. Past members of the Youth Club enthusiastically express their appreciation for their experiences gained through the different projects. By managing the projects by themselves, the members of the Youth Club gain a sense of responsibility. Working together on a single project teaches the invaluable lesson of teamwork. Organizing large plays and dances bolsters leadership qualities. Volunteering together promotes a communal affinity for community service. Finally watching their projects come to fruition instills a sense of confidence. Sustainable Cambodia acknowledges the importance of each of these qualities, and for this reason is proud of the work that the Youth Club has, and continues to, accomplish.

VILLAGE MOBILE LIBRARY

Overview

The Community Mobile Library Program was initiated to provide access to community members to reading materials. Maintained in participating communities, the mobile libraries are boxes containing various reading materials, including books, stories, manuals, and pamphlets. The reading materials are geared toward practical and applicable knowledge related to village life, hygiene, agriculture, animal care, as well as Cambodian folk tales and literature. Therefore, the mobile library provides access to materials not just to practice reading, but also to educate on important subjects.

Implementation

A volunteer librarian is selected by the Community Development Committee. This position is often

filled by a community's preschool teacher. To ensure proper management of the library, the librarian is trained on book management, communication, facilitation skills, and record keeping. After the training is completed, a bicycle is provided to transport the library box from house to house. The librarian arranges a group of readers, including a team leader. The team collectively makes a schedule of the readers. The length of time the library stays at each house depends on the proposal of the readers and librarian. On average, the mobile library stays at each location for one to two days.

Operational Policies

The librarian is responsible for delivering the box and also collecting it at the allotted time. The librarian is also in charge of recording and monitoring the condition of the books. Each family signs an agreement to ensure that they will care for the books appropriately. If a book becomes lost or damaged during a library session, it is the family's responsibility to replace the damaged or lost item(s). If the family cannot afford to replace the book, they may approach the Community Development Committee for assistance. The community leaders then hold a meeting to decide if the community will replace the books or if the family needs to take responsibility.

Volunteer Program

An important aspect of Sustainable Cambodia's operations is the Volunteer Program. Our International Volunteers play a significant role in helping to accomplish Sustainable Cambodia's founding principle: empowering Cambodians to improve their own qualities of life. Instead of performing manual labor for the village residents or undertaking other similarly physical tasks, our volunteers work alongside the Cambodian staff members to assist and often to impart new ideas about how to improve existing programs. The Volunteer Program, therefore, offers an opportunity for individuals around the world to participate in and share their knowledge with Sustainable Cambodia's various programs. It also allows the students and staff to interact and practice their language skills with English speakers.

Volunteers have proved to have a large impact on operations at Sustainable Cambodia by improving existing programs and implementing new ones. Volunteers have also left very positive impressions on the hearts and minds of the children, staff and families with whom they work. By working side-by-side with the Cambodian staff, children and families, the volunteers impart the most valuable lessons possible: kindness, caring and giving back to others through community service. These seemingly intangible and indirect qualities grow in the children and families, and over months and years they lead to lasting change. The result is Cambodians who are equipped and desirous to change the quality of life in their country and communities. Cambodia has also proven to impact the life of the volunteers as well. Working with Sustainable Cambodia may impart many lessons and mementos, both of which can be taken home, wherever that may be in the world.

Volunteers are un-paid; ensuring that all money donated to Sustainable Cambodia goes directly to Cambodians. Volunteers are required to stay a minimum of five months on site, as it takes some time to get acquainted with the country, culture, staff, language, etc. This requirement is occasionally lifted for individuals with a specific expertise who are unable to stay the five months. Volunteers are free to elect the programs in which they would like to assist. In the past, some volunteers have worked closely with the staff on the various Community Development Programs. Other volunteers have spent their time helping out in the village preschools and teaching classes at the Sylvia Lasky Memorial School. It is entirely up to each volunteer to decide in which way they would like to contribute to Sustainable Cambodia.

It is often asked how long a volunteer's impact actually lasts. This is a valid question that definitely should be brought up. The answer is that nearly every month we are reassured that the impact of our volunteers is lasting and valuable. Often mentioned in the "Student Writes" section of the Student Report is something learned from a volunteer 2 or 3 years earlier. Students receiving a university scholarship also often mention the importance to them of a particular volunteer they met years earlier. It isn't just the children either: We often hear from staff and families about the influence a particular volunteer has had on their lives.

Sustainable Cambodia's Volunteer Program effectively harnesses the energy and enthusiasm of individuals from around the world. The volunteers are given the chance to participate in the wide variety of programs offered by Sustainable Cambodia. At the same time, the students and staff on site in Cambodia benefit from their broad range of knowledge and positive energy. With this basic formula, the Volunteer Program has proven to be an extremely successful venture.