

Educate Girls and Help End Poverty

Friendship with Cambodia is continuing its campaign to educate rural students, primarily girls, through high school and university.

Statistics show that educating girls is key to ending the cycle of poverty. Women who are educated have fewer children; immunize their children; improve nutrition, sanitation, and income for their family; and they make sure their children get a good education.

Without an educated population, Cambodia cannot progress or solve its problems. One serious problem is that 45% of the children are malnourished. Only 6% of the children finish high school - the rest drop out because of poverty.

When girls are sponsored in school, they are not vulnerable to being sold as sex-slaves. One out of 10 girls is sold into prostitution. Mothers who cannot feed their children allow their daughters to be taken to the city to work as housekeepers, not knowing they will be sold to a brothel.

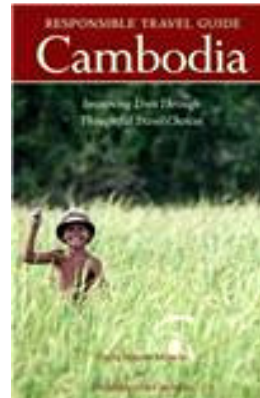
Rural students understand the problems facing rural Cambodia and are better able to find appropriate solutions. Eighty-five percent of the population is rural. Very few rural students are able to go to university. Their families, who earn an average of \$1 a day, cannot afford it.

Our students become role models in their village. Their success stories show rural families the value of education and inspire other students.

For \$30 a month you can sponsor a student.



Lay-Chheang wants to be a teacher



Our New Book is Available: Responsible Travel Guide Cambodia

*Improving Lives Through
Thoughtful Travel Choices*

by Pujita Nanette Mayeda and
Friendship with Cambodia

"If you have traveled in the Third World, you have likely faced the ethical challenge of vacationing in a place where most people can't afford food or school tuition. Responsible Travel Guide Cambodia is unique in its approach to travel in a country where tourism has the potential to make a positive difference in so many lives. Travelers with a desire to give something back to the people of Cambodia will find all the information they need for making sure their vacation dollars are well spent. I finished reading this with the hope that someday a book like this will exist for every country in Southeast Asia."

Carol Pucci, Travel Writer, Seattle Times

Responsible Travel Guide Cambodia gives helpful suggestions about how to support Cambodia's communities, economy and environment. It includes:

- Hotels and restaurants that are training programs for disadvantaged youth
- Fair-trade craft shops that employ landmine survivors and destitute women
- Volunteer opportunities and eco-tours that help local people and the environment
- Tips for responsible travelers, itinerary suggestions and detailed maps
- Background information about Cambodian people, history, culture, religion and holidays

The book is \$14.95, plus \$3 shipping/handling, and can be ordered through our website www.friendshipwithcambodia.org Profits from the sale of this book support the humanitarian projects of Friendship with Cambodia. Consider buying a copy and donating it to your local library.

Our enormous thanks goes to Pujita Mayeda. Without her tireless volunteer effort, this book would not have come into being. Many thanks also to the other contributors listed in the book.

Travel with us to Cambodia...more details inside.

What Does Women's Empowerment Look Like?

When Friendship with Cambodia works with people living in extreme poverty in rural villages, we take a long-term approach.

The greatest challenge is changing a woman's attitude toward herself. Women who are poor and who live in thatch huts without enough food to feed their children properly or pay for their schooling don't feel good about themselves. Other people in their village look down on them because they are poor. These women feel trapped and destined to live in poverty.

Our social workers invite the women to join self-help groups where the women teach and support each other. They learn how to set small goals at first, like buying a bicycle. Later they set larger goals, like building a new house.

The women are given small loans to start their



own income-generation projects, such as raising pigs. They learn how to save money and turn their lives around through their own efforts. It is this series of successes, of setting and achieving their goals, that improves their self-esteem.

The process usually takes 3-4 years. In the end, the women have become empowered and are able to address other problems in their lives and communities. The women teach each other about family planning, sanitation, improving health care, the value of education, and immunizing their children. They work together to end domestic violence.

We invite the women to come to leadership training workshops. Many of them start working together to address problems in their village, such as illegal land grabbing. Some become community leaders and travel to other communities to help more women.

Love is wanting others to be happy.

What Your Donations Accomplished Last Year

Women's Empowerment Through Micro-credit and Training



- 1575 rural women joined self-help groups, credit and savings programs
- 280 women trained in community leadership
- 96 women received seed grants for houses, cows, motorbikes, fishing boats, and smaller items

Education for Rural Youth Living in Poverty

- 77 secondary school students sponsored
- 27 university students funded

Care for Orphans and Street Children

- 25 street children received safe shelter, food, schooling, and help from a social worker
- 47 orphaned children were given loving care and higher education



Campaign Against Trafficking Women and Children

Promoted respect and safety for women through national radio shows, brochures, posters, and theatre performances.



Fair-Trade Craft Program for the Disadvantaged

Provided training and employment for land-mine survivors, families with AIDS, and destitute women through craft sales. Provided the equivalent of 20 full-time jobs.

Join one of our Responsible Travel Trips to Cambodia

For an experience of a lifetime.

Our trips allow you to go beyond the tourist sites and learn more about life in Cambodia by visiting our humanitarian projects. A portion of your trip fee is used to support these organizations that are empowering disadvantaged people to improve their lives.

You will eat in restaurants that are training programs for former street children and have delicious food. You will visit fair trade craft shops that employ landmine survivors trained as artisans. You will stay in locally-owned hotels that treat their staff well and prohibit sex tourism.

In addition to visiting unique cultural sites such as magnificent temples of Angkor Wat and floating villages on the Tonle Sap Lake, you will meet people who are transforming their lives and communities.

When you return home, you will know that you did something to help people in Cambodia. We encourage trip participants to share their trip experiences with others, to help create a kinder world.

Inside Cambodia Meeting the People – Making a Difference

Jan 17 – 29, 2011

Nov 21 – Dec 3, 2011

Yoga Teaching Trip

for Yoga Teachers and Practitioners

Nov 7 – 18, 2011

Trip cost is \$2500 plus airfare
\$1000 is tax-deductible



Orphans give a shadow puppet performance (view from backstage)

Good Aid vs Bad Aid – How to tell the difference

We want to help Cambodia, but what is the best way to do this? Here is a scenario: A kind-hearted person visits Angkor Wat. After three days of exploring temples, his wonderful guide offers to take him to visit his home. The next morning they hire a taxi and after a five hour bumpy car ride they reach the remote village.

They walk around the village of thatch huts, escorted by skinny barefoot children. When the visitor returns to his home country, he remembers the poverty he has seen and wants to do something to help. The following year he goes back to Cambodia and builds an elementary school for the village. He also builds a nice house for his guide's mother. Everyone seems very happy about this.

Was building the elementary school good aid or bad aid? At Friendship with Cambodia, we have some concerns. There are plenty of similar aid projects that fail. Now there is a school but there are no desks, no books, and no money to pay the teacher. Everyone is looking to the foreigner for more help.

What would have been a better approach? Do you remember what happened to Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea*, when he arrived with the building supplies for a school? The village chief gently told him, "What we really need is a bridge."

So the first step is to ask the community what they want. Let's say they ask for a school. The next step Friendship with Cambodia would take is to make an offer. "We'll pay for the roof, if you provide the labor and the rest of the building materials." The community enthusiastically agrees and builds the school and the desks, and pays the teacher. They are invested in the success of this project – it was their dream. Friendship with Cambodia has helped many communities build schools this way.

Typically, the community first builds a simple 2-room school. In the future, the villagers expand the school to accommodate more classrooms. When you visit the village and ask who built that school, the villagers say with much pride, "We did."



An additional benefit to this approach is that the community members have reconnected with each other and learned to work together for the common good. This is critical in Cambodia, because after the trauma of the genocide, many people have stopped trusting each other and tend to keep to themselves.

What about building the house? Good aid or bad aid? We have some concerns here as well. In this case, the visitor returned the following year and was surprised to see his guide's mother living in a thatch hut next to her new house. What happened? "I needed food and had to sell my house," explained the mother. "Besides, my neighbors were jealous and treated me poorly. I felt miserable." The well-meaning foreigner lacked knowledge about what makes aid effective. Empowering people to help themselves creates long-term solutions.

Friendship with Cambodia uses these guidelines for our aid: 1) Ask the community or individual to set a goal, 2) Provide the tools (education, loan, incentive grant) to help them get started, 3) Use Cambodian staff, because they understand the culture, language, and local customs, and 4) Use a trusted independent person to monitor the program, to assure that funds are used properly.



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Please let us know if you wish to be taken off our mailing list.

Our work in Cambodia is funded by individuals who make tax-deductible donations. Thank you!



*Killing Fields
Memorial*

Genocide Trial News

Leaders of the Khmer Rouge are currently being tried for the genocide that took place in Cambodia from 1975 to 1979 when 1.7 million people died from execution, starvation, or disease.

This August, the first sentence was handed down. "Duch," who ran S-21, the prison and torture center (now Toul Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh) where approximately 17,000 people were killed, was sentenced to 35 years. Duch has already served 11 years in prison, so he will be released when he is 86 years old. The court said the lenient sentence was due to the fact that he was not one of the top leaders and was following orders, admitted wrong doing, and reformed himself. He was working for a charity at the time of his arrest. Many Cambodians were shocked by the news that he might live to be a free man.

One of our volunteers, Channary Bill, remembers Duch as her high school math teacher. "He was a very nice and gentle person. I was very surprised [when I found out who he was]," said Channary.

Friendship with Cambodia

Founded in 2003 as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to provide humanitarian aid to Cambodia and education about Cambodia.

Board of Directors

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(equivalent of 2 full-time paid staff)

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Carol Gleason, Cambodia Trips
Karen Molleson, Student Sponsorship
Linda Young, Fair-Trade Crafts

www.friendshipwithcambodia.org

What does it take to turn someone's life around?

The cost of **dinner for two in a restaurant (\$30)**

- Provides food for a month for a child living on the street

The cost of **new clothes (\$60)**

- Provides a loan for a destitute mother to start a small business

The cost of **one latte a week (\$160)**

- Helps a community build a well for clean drinking water

The cost of **a weekend trip (\$360)**

- Sponsors a youth in high school for a year

Your donation is tax-deductible.

Many thanks to our generous and caring donors.

