

Build a Primary School



Photos courtesy of ChildFund Australia

Do you walk three kilometres to get to school every day? Do you share with fifty other kids in a dark classroom without electricity?

The *Build a Primary School* Project is being implemented by the organisation ChildFund Australia. This Project involves the building of a primary school in Chouk Meas, Cambodia. The school will serve the needs of five hundred and sixty-nine primary school children and approximately three hundred kindergarten children from the local area. Nine teachers will be employed at the school.

The construction of the school will replace the original school building erected in 1979. The kids are no longer able to have lessons inside as it is too dangerous. See the top left photo above.

The school will include the following features:

All basic classroom resources:
desks, chairs, and blackboards

A school garden to improve knowledge about nutrition

A Child Club where kids have the opportunity to play sport, make art, participate in cultural events and have a voice in their own community

Background Information

Getting to school

Today, all primary school aged children in Cambodia only go to school for half a day. They must share because there are not enough teachers and schools for every child.

It may be three kilometres for a student to walk to the nearest school. This may even be along a rice paddy and it may be very difficult in the wet season! Some children have a bicycle to ride and brothers and sisters often walk together. There are no school buses in Chouk Meas.

Juggling home and school life

There is no kindergarten at Chouk Meas Primary School. Older children in higher grades often have to bring their kindergarten age (5 years) younger brothers or sisters with them to their classes at school. "Otherwise they have to stay at home and look after their siblings while their parents are away working in the paddy fields or work outside the village...", says Mr So Yann, Chouk Meas Primary School Principal.

When the children get home there are many jobs to be done. Girls must clean the house and boys must look after the buffalo, cows, ducks and chickens. The children are responsible for fetching water and firewood. They do not have clubs or sport teams to go to after school. Without electricity in the village it is too dark when the sun goes down to study. Some families use battery power for a short period of time.

School life

When children get to school, they will be in a classroom with more than fifty children sitting in rows at a wooden desk. No classroom at Chouk Meas Primary School has a computer and there is no electricity. The light is let into the classroom by opening the window shutters, but when it rains the children must learn in the dark classroom.

The building of Chouk Meas Primary School will provide the children a safe place to learn with enough classrooms to cater for the Government's request for all children to be able to go to school all day in 2010.

What has the *Build a Primary School Project* already done successfully?

Discussed what children and adults want from the new school

Plans developed with the community for the new school

Help kids in Chouk Meas get a new school! Check out the next page for how to start your action...

***Stand Up!* for this School Aid Project**

Step 1

Discuss the project with friends and get a teacher on board

Step 2

Register your school group on the School Aid website

Step 3

Browse the Resources section on the School Aid website and use them to help you plan, implement and keep track of your action

Follow these steps to *Shake It Up!*

Step 1

Sign in to create a profile for your group

Step 2

Keep your group profile updated after every group meeting and inspire other groups around Australia with your progress

Step 3

Check out what other schools are doing

Step 4

Create a film of your action and send it to School Aid for the chance for it to be showcased on the website!

Step 5

Send money raised (and any materials produced for the project) to School Aid

Step 6

School Aid will give feedback on each of the Projects via our website as they progress

Contact School Aid at admin@schoolaid.org.au if you need any help