



Situation Update

After an extremely successful vaccination drive, with adults and students over the age of 12 now fully vaccinated, Siem Reap was full of hope. Talks of officially reopening public schools were taking place at the beginning of the month. Nonetheless, COVID-19 continued to spread in our community.

Similar to the spread of the delta variant in other countries, Siem Reap's daily case count rose to a reported 400 cases a day, quadruple the previous daily counts. Consequently, we re-entered lockdowns. On September 17, Siem Reap city was divided into red and orange zones. Red zone residents are not allowed to leave their homes for any purpose. This includes food shopping. Orange zone residents are allowed to leave their homes once or twice a week for food. All markets have been shuttered. To get food, residents must organize delivery through the provincial authorities and delivery services. As a result, some food prices are much more expensive than our families are accustomed to when they buy at the local market.

For families that rely on day-to-day income, a single week of lockdown can be detrimental to their finances and food security. We have now entered into the second week. While restrictions are scheduled to be revisited on September 30, it is doubtful they will be reduced considering Cambodia's largest holiday, Pchum Benh, is around the corner. School reopenings will also be delayed further as many are used as quarantine centers. **Last week marked the 52nd-week of school closures in Cambodia. In comparison, schools in the UK were closed for 27 weeks, 18 in Vietnam, and 33 in Laos.**



Blocked roads and extensive road constructions have filled the scene in Siem Reap

Anjali in Action

We successfully organized emergency cash transfers to 50 families last week. In some instances, we were not able to organize the transfer because of lockdown restrictions, **so we purchased food and had it delivered to 7 families** from the province authorities. Our team is in contact with all our families to continue to monitor their needs during this trying time.

Weekly homework distribution has stopped due to the restrictions. **Teachers are working hard to find other ways to provide students with lessons and worksheets.** This includes taking photos of worksheets, messaging them to parents for students to complete on their own paper, and sending a picture of the completed work back. **Daily online classes have continued like normal.**



Last week, teachers connected with all their students and parents to collect feedback for the online classes. We are consistently trying to improve the students' experience to keep them engaged. **We want them to know that their opinions and voices matter.** The most consistent feedback was the frustration with slow internet connections. Some students expressed the need for teachers to explain things slower. They also told us the lesson's activities they liked. Fruits and veggies were a hit in the kindergarten classes while the older primary school students enjoy the Friday activity of drawing. The students are challenged with a theme and then they share their drawings with the others. They say it helps them feel relaxed and have fun during this stressful time. **This feedback circle is crucial to help teachers design their lessons and teach effectively.**

This month was certainly a hit to morale. Now we reset and look forward. Our mission to empower our students is becoming more critical every day and we will adapt and overcome. We are extremely grateful for your interest and support in keeping this dream alive.

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