

26 March 2018

Scholarship 2017 – Pilot Programme

Impact and Evaluation Report

Kosal and Chhengtay have found a job!

We are thrilled to say that both Kosal and Chhengtay, who you supported, coached and inspired during their three months stay in London have secured full time employment in Phnom Penh.

Kosal works in a construction company as a site engineer on a new development. Chhengtay is a finance officer in an international management company. Both employers said their English language skills were one of the reasons they got hired.

We believe both scholars measured how privileged and lucky they were to live this experience and as a result, both of them are still in regular contact with us. In addition, as a way to sharing their news, they are writing a regular blog on their life in Phnom Penh which I invite you to read on our website www.childrenofthemekong.org.uk.

Scholarship Impact

Objectives & Measurement

The original objectives of the Scholarship were to:

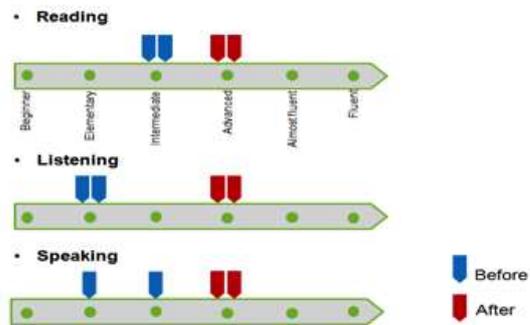
- Inspire and coach selected students to become mission-driven leaders who can make a difference;
- Immerse them in an international English speaking environment to accelerate and improve their English language skills;
- Provide them with new skills and competencies;
- Give participating companies and volunteers the opportunity to actively take part in a global corporate social responsibility initiative.

Against this background, measurement of impact focuses first and foremost on Kosal and Chhengtay's 1) English language skills, 2) professional exposure and competencies, 3) personal development and 4) work prospects.

We developed a number of qualitative and quantitative tools to measure these metrics and a full list is included in Appendices.

1) Evaluation of English language skills

Kosal and Chhengtay had three months of total English language immersion. Their reading, comprehension and language skills improved markedly. By the end of their stay, both were more confident in speaking and were able to write and express complex feelings.



2) Professional Development

The following activities and experiences helped acquire key life skills:

- 33 work shadowing days over 3 months
- 8 participating companies, large and small
- Industries relating to their field of studies (engineering, construction, business / finance)
- HR, sales & trading, IT, Comms
- 9 public speaking engagements
- Exposure to senior management and executive committee level
- **Work ethics**
- **Punctuality**
- **Reliability**
- **Team work**
- **Adaptability**
- **Confidence**
- **Public Speaking**

See full table in Appendices

3) Personal development

- Both scholars showed unwavering enthusiasm, commitment and a willingness to learn throughout their stay.
- They both found acclimatising to the British winter, local food and cultural/business practices generally “quite easy”. See questionnaire in Appendices.
- Living with host families proved to be essential. It increased the quality of the “living abroad experience” and became a source of inspiration.

4) Work prospect

Both scholars found full time, paid entry level jobs corresponding to their field of studies under 2 months of returning to Phnom Penh, which is below average compared to their cohort of Centre Merieux. Kosal's salary is above the average and Chhengtay is very slightly below (but accommodation is granted by the employer).

Their respective employers said they were recruited partly thanks to their English skills.

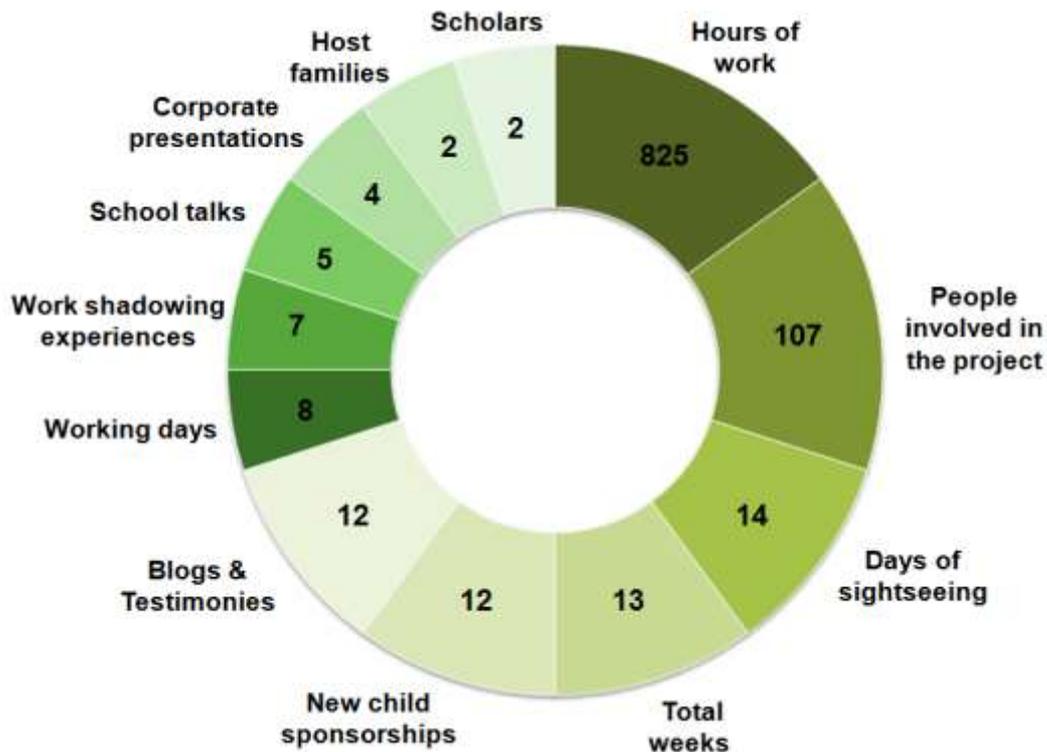
	Kosal	Chhengtay	Centre Merieux student average
% of student who found a job	yes	Yes	100%
How long did the job hunting last on average?	1.5 month	1.5 month	4 months
% of students who have a job corresponding to their studies	yes	yes	100%
Average wage	\$350	\$270+ accommodation	\$281

It is beyond doubt that in relations to their peers, both scholars feel a responsibility to lead by example. Their presentation in front of 100 students of Centre Merieux on 4 February showed passion and energy. Children of the Mekong representatives in Phnom Penh have noted increased motivation amongst the students as a result of the Scholarship.

5) Scholarship impact – secondary benefits

To ensure the smooth running of the Scholarship, the small team of Children of the Mekong has had to dedicate a very significant proportion of its resources on the project. The Board of Children of the Mekong justified this in light of secondary benefits of the Scholarship: increased general awareness of Children of the Mekong, new child sponsorships and potential new partnerships.

The Scholarship in numbers



Increase in child sponsorships and partnerships

As a direct result of Kosal and Chhengtay's presence in London, Children of the Mekong has secured 12 new child sponsorships and is developing a long term partnership with the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle's charity, Justice au Coeur.

The scholarship has contributed to an increased general awareness of child sponsorship and widened Children of the Mekong's network of volunteers, supporters and potential sponsors. And for this, Children of the Mekong is hugely grateful.

Impact on participating companies and volunteers

Although it is difficult to quantify, the Scholarship had a significant impact on corporate participants and volunteers.

Kosal and Chhengtay's stories deeply touched all those who crossed their paths. Based on the feedback questionnaire completed by companies, we have found that **100%** of corporate participants would like to renew the experience in 2018.

"We agreed at our Senior Management meeting that it was both an educational exercise, not only for Kosal and Chhengtay, but also our colleagues that met them both."

"It's a great initiative that shows [our company's] involvement in social responsibility efforts on a global level that actually can change someone's life and not just make a small dent."

6) Planning and implementation process – some lessons learned

- The overall selection process, the balance of activities and general schedule proved to be good.
- Four weeks of English classes prior to time spent within companies is essential. Perhaps more basic IT training could be provided prior to the scholarship.
- More “down time” might be necessary for scholars on week-ends and more involvement in the organisation of activities.
- Family hosting: proved to be essential and very positive on scholars
- Work shadowing: 3 days within a company is probably the minimum time to maximise impact. Anything under 3 days might feel rushed.

7) Acknowledgements

One cannot underestimate how life changing the experience was for Kosal and Chhengtay. The contrast between their rural family background and their London experience could not have been greater and Kosal’s family pictures sent in January 2018 was a powerful reminder (see Appendices).

The 8 companies who welcomed Chhengtay and Kosal for job shadowing experiences. You significantly contributed to making the Scholarship a success and we are hugely grateful. Thank you for your time and giving them this opportunity. We could not have wished for better partners.

Naturally, the Scholarship would never have happened without the support of our principal sponsor, CA-CIB, who have shown huge commitment, dedication and passion. We are delighted to say that they have accepted to renew the experience in 2018.

Throughout their stay, which coincided with Autumn and Winter 2017, Kosal and Chhengtay suffered no colds or illness, no food allergies, no depression or visible home sickness. This is largely thanks to the incredibly warm, welcoming and generous **host families** who opened their homes to Kosal and Chhengtay throughout their London experience.

Miraculously, Kosal and Chhengtay who had never taken the underground before, let alone an airplane, never got lost on public transport, arrived at meetings on time and at the right place. This is entirely thanks to our intern, **Lucile Caba**, who ran their schedule like clock work and supported and chaperoned them through their stay.

Deep and grateful thanks also go to **Justice Au Coeur** of the Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle who embraced this project with open arms. They not only opened their



network but also embraced the opportunity to educate and raise awareness amongst their pupils. We look forward to a long and fruitful partnership.

We are also immensely grateful to the **French Chamber of Commerce** for leveraging their network on our behalf.

And last but not least, thank you **Duet Football Academy** for letting both Kosal and Chhengtay take part in their weekly football training sessions.

In summary, the Pilot Scholarship 2017 helped achieve the following:

- Kosal and Chhengtay found a job in under 2 months, within their field of studies. This is shorter than the average length of a job search of Centre Merieux students.
- Their life skills and English level improved beyond recognition.
- Their experience increased the motivation of students in Centre Merieux.
- 100% of UK corporate participants and volunteers would like to get involved again.
- Children of the Mekong gained 12 new child sponsorships and new partnerships.
- The Scholarship contributed to increasing general awareness of the impact of child sponsorships.

It was a pleasure working with you all on this project and we looking forward to continuing working with you and further developing our partnership in 2018.

With very best wishes

Laure Lagrange
Trustee
Children of the Mekong

Eugenie Munakarmi
COO
Children of the Mekong

Appendices

Assessment tools

A combination of qualitative and quantitative surveys and questionnaires were used to gather feedback. This included:

- General questionnaire and final interview of the scholars prior to departure
- Every 2 weeks, a blog testimony focusing on every-day life experiences and feelings
- Feedback questionnaires from corporate participants at the end of the shadowing period
- Feedback questionnaire from K&C at the end of each work shadowing experience
- Questionnaire to host families on the home sharing experience and their views about K&C's personal development prior to departure
- Verbal English language assessment by Children of the Mekong
- Regular coaching sessions by Children of the Mekong while in London and post their return to Cambodia via skype calls
- A testimony of Kosal & Chhengtay about their London experience to students at the Centre Merieux (January 2018)

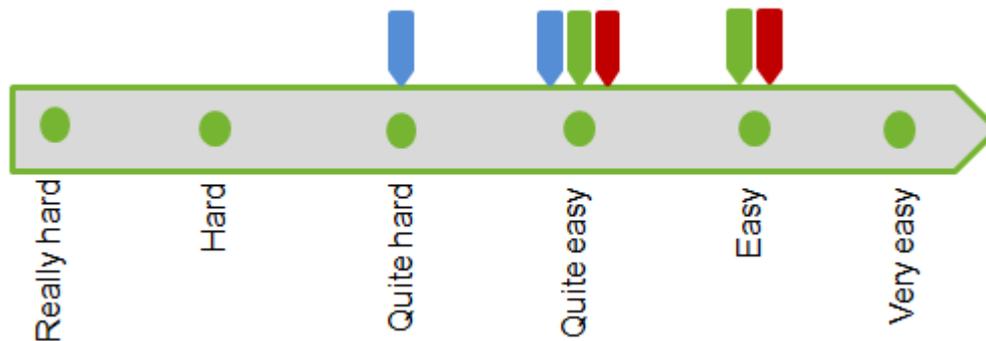
Professional Exposure

Companies	Industry	Department Exposure		
Credit Agricole CIB	Finance	Sales, trading, HR, Communications, Strategy, IT, legal	16 days	16 days
Barclays	Finance	Finance, support services	1 day	1 day
Bouygues Construction	Construction	Sales, HR, IT, construction site	8 days	/
Air France	Aerospace	HR, Finance, engineering, operations	2 days	6 days
FMR Investment Management research	Finance	Finance, equity trading, research, HR, Legal, compliance	3 days	3 days
CFTE	FinTech	Start-up, Technology, innovation, R&D	2 days	2 days
Ernst & Young	Accounting	Project management	/	1 day
Bradley VanderStraeten Architects	Architecture	Site visit	1 days	/
Total days			33	29

Personal Development

Self-Assessment questionnaire:

Q: How easy was it to acclimatise to **British weather**, **local food** and **cultural and business practices**?



« I didn't really feel homesick as I could keep in touch with my family and friends with social networks. »



"I felt homesick but I could manage it. "

Both scholars were very pleased to be living with a host family as opposed to a hostel.

Q: What did you learn and what general competencies did you gain during the Scholarship ?



- ✓ Increased ambitions
- ✓ Improved English skills
- ✓ Developed interpersonal skills « I listen to people more than before and I learned to build and maintain strong relationships. »
- ✓ Improved self –confidence
- ✓ Sharper critical and strategic thinking
- ✓ Increased adaptability
- ✓ Enhanced autonomy



- ✓ Improved English skills
- ✓ Improved self-confidence
- ✓ Raised self-knowledge
- ✓ Enhanced determination *“I used to think I was hopeless. From now on, whenever I fail, I will try again.”*
- ✓ Increased adaptability
- ✓ Insights into family life: *“Daily family life particularly impressed me. Parents encourage their children and people are open-minded. It is a lesson for my future. “*



Left: my mother, sister and nephew, and the material

Above: my sister's bed

Above right: my parents' bed

