



# Newsletter

*Clean water, a human right not a luxury*

WFC Newsletter Issue 12 February 2020

## *Water for Cambodia celebrates...*

**15 Years      25,000 Filters      150,000 People**

*Water for Cambodia* moved from a vision to the germ of reality in 2004 when the dreams of Gunther Hausen became a series of planning discussions then a steering committee of 8 individuals who believed that this aspiration was possible. *Water for Cambodia* became a reality on the ground in Cambodia in February 2006 with installation of 30 bio-sand filters acquired from an existing bio-sand filter program centered elsewhere in Cambodia. 2006 also saw the hiring of our first full time staff members and commencement of actually building and installing our own product.



One of the original filters installed in February 2006 still in daily use



Board Members inspect the 25,000<sup>th</sup> filter being installed at the WFC office in Siem Reap

Since 2006, *Water for Cambodia* has grown to a staff of 15, created a full-service water testing laboratory serving both this organization's clean water mission as well as the broader business and NGO community of the region and installed 25,000 filters in hundreds of villages and schools across 10 Provinces serving at least 150,000 people. This has been accomplished through the generous support of **YOU** and hundreds of other individual, Rotary, corporate, charitable foundations and family donations.

*Water for Cambodia* is focused on using clean water and hygiene education to make lives better and to help effect a basic culture change resulting in better health for families.



Community Mobilizer giving initial community orientation for families requesting a bio-sand filter.

Bringing clean safe water to villages whose only source of water is contaminated by bacteria, animal waste, insect larvae and iron creates the means to a different future. As an integral part of providing a bio-sand filter our staff provides training in the filter's care and maintenance.

They also teach how to protect filtered water



from recontamination, and simple and effective hygiene methods. This training is reinforced over several months and each family is given a way to contact the *Water for Cambodia* office for further support as they feel the need. Their filter soon becomes an important addition to their homes and family pride.

Children are the key to making real long-term changes in a community's behavior and thus effectively changing old cultural norms. However, by installing filters and where necessary



reliable secure sources of water at the schools plus providing education in the classroom our staff brings the message directly to the future generation. This approach has been integral to the *Water for Cambodia* approach from the beginning. Students are eager to “get their hands wet” and participate in the excitement of getting filters in their school.





Schools will continue to remain a very important focus for projects in 2020. The impact of these installations resonates across the entire community. Village demand for filters is consistently highest where schools are equipped.



Since 2007 *Water for Cambodia* has included local schools when planning community filter projects. Each local school was surveyed and filters were allocated depending on population. Our field staff learned very early in the process how quickly the students began to appreciate the clean, fresh tasting water and saw that the children began to carry it home with them in their own plastic bottles. Once children began to experience clear, untainted water in school more families came forward to ask for filters.

In January several members of the Board of Directors, along with the local Operations Director and Community Mobilizer visited several community primary schools that have been equipped with filters. They are located in a group of villages in the Duon Kaev Commune that exemplify the goals *Water for Cambodia* strives to achieve across the areas served. The synergy developed as a result of working closely with the local leadership, a sophisticated donor, very receptive students and teachers has resulted in between 50% and 92% of households now have bio-sand filters. It is our goal to increase this to a minimum of 80% of households in 2020. This is just one of several communes across the Siem Reap Province where 15 years of diligent and persistent effort has paid off by bringing villagers to expect having clean safe water and healthier children. It will take continued support from **YOU**, *Water for Cambodia* and local leadership to continue to bring this success to many more villages in the future.



The 25,000th bio-sand filter as designed and created by the local staff of Water for Cambodia to recognize the people and contributors that made it all happen.



*YOU can help our team continue giving this gift of clean safe water.*

Visit us at: [www.waterforcambodia.org](http://www.waterforcambodia.org) or contribute directly at

Water for Cambodia P.O. Box 1121 Bristol, RI 02809