



Newsletter

Clean water, a human right not a luxury

WFC Newsletter Issue 15 February 2021

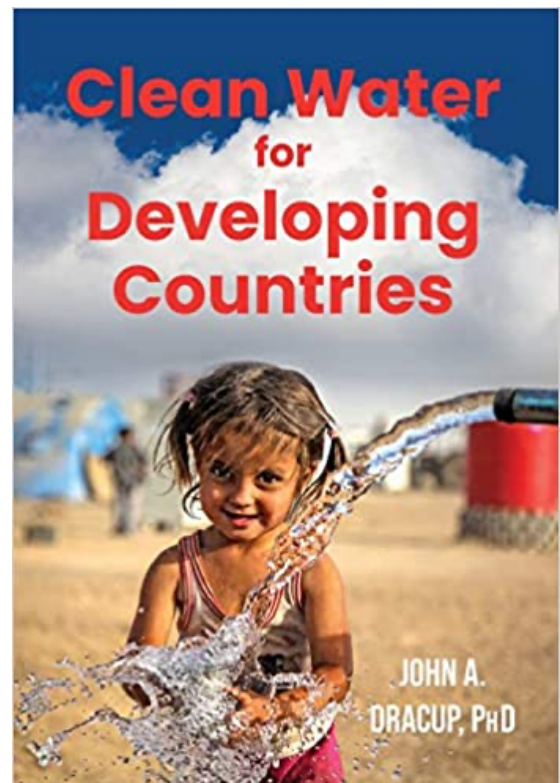
Water for Cambodia is recognized as “a unique model of how NGOs should provide clean water in developing countries. They focus on only one country and have just a single product” (Dracup p.222).

Dr John A Dracup PhD, is a civil engineer and hydrologist who has taught at both UCLA and UC Berkley for more than 50 years. He has recently published a book, **Clean Water for Developing Countries**. The book’s purpose is to assist the reader in choosing the best method for providing clean and safe water in developing countries.

Dr Dracup has high praise for ***Water for Cambodia***’s chosen bio-sand filter technology provided by the CAWST design. He recognizes ***WFC*** for their direct family focused work within target villages as well as the follow-up provided to the families. Dr Dracup also cites the rarity of our laboratory:

“Remarkably, ***WFC*** has its own water testing laboratory, the only such facility outside the municipality of Phnom Penh. This laboratory tests bio-sand filter effluent and also performs commercial water testing.

“It is highly unusual to find water testing laboratories in developing countries that are outside main cities.”



Our water testing lab continues to broaden its testing capability to serve the local needs and address community and business health issues.

Water for Cambodia's water testing lab, now officially registered as a business in its own right called *Rikreay Laboratory*, strives to strengthen its methods and capabilities through training, equipment upgrades and attention to customer needs. It also continues to serve its original mandate to assure the integrity of the *Water for Cambodia* promise of clean, safe water for village families and schools, while growing to meet the needs of the local community. The technicians have been effectively evaluating the fresh-water service within hotels and restaurants and testing and assuring the safety of hotel swimming pools for several years. More recently lab personnel can now evaluate food microbiology to protect the health of restaurant and hotel guests. This is certainly a major milestone for those of us who regularly visit Cambodia!

The newest capability to be offered is testing for the presence of the bacteria strain causing Legionaire's Disease (legionella). It is found commonly in the cooling stacks employed in commercial cooling systems typical to hotels. In July the lab techs were able to isolate legionella colonies in several water samples. Once isolated and identified, the affected business can then be advised of the appropriate methods for effectively cleaning their systems to eliminate the danger of a Legionaire's Disease outbreak.



Legionella Pneumophila Culture

The Seim Reap area is home to several hundred hotels and guest houses most of whom have some kind of air-cooling system. Due to the COVID pandemic many of these systems have been idle for months providing a fertile breeding ground for the legionella bacteria. This capability is being marketed to these businesses as the need to return to normal business moves forward.

In the November 2018 Newsletter we reported on the success of **WFC's** first **Getting Water Right** partnership to bring safe, clean water and improved sanitation to the villagers of Slaeng Spean commune. In 2020 Rich and GWR donors returned to continue to honor their promise.

In 2018 *Water for Cambodia* partnered with Maine Rotarian, Rich Cromwell, to mount a carefully planned and predictably successful project to bring clean water, improved sanitation and better community hygiene awareness to residents of Slaeng Spean commune in remote Northwestern Siem Reap Province. Rich returned in February 2020 accompanied by Jen Clarke, a fellow Rotarian and Shelby Kaplan, a donor and devotee to women's health challenges. They were joined by **WFC** staff: MEAS Samley, **WASH** promoter, and HUCH Hak, the assigned **GWR** project officer and BON Sea, who handled village logistics and local translation.



Samley, Rich, Shelby and Jen



This talented team worked closely with local leaders to carry out the second phase of **Getting Water Right**. They facilitated installing 160 more bio-sand filters, 6 new wells and 32 more family latrines. In addition, 5 existing wells were refurbished. This work was done in the villages of Kandal, Romeat, Char, Sala, Leap and Kouk Phnouy.

Today, as a result of the hard work, planning and fundraising, 428 families have access to clean, safe water and are enjoying much improved family health.

Further, the age-old practice of open defecation has been substantially reduced by the installation of a total of 132 new latrines. These villages also have a total of 25 new and 5 refurbished wells providing greatly improved water security to the families. The health and cultural changes resulting from this project will be permanent.

Getting Water Right team members also try to bring a broader influence through actively participating in school training events, working directly with groups of village women and even joining the children in spirited soccer games. By actually living in the village during their weeks in-country it allowed them a closer more personal way to develop this connection. Water for Cambodia values this unique approach and insight into making better health, hygiene and safe water a reality.



Rich and Shelby meeting with women to explore improving health issues most important to them

As we anticipate returning to a time we can comfortably come together again...

Please mark your calendars for Water for Cambodia's celebration of fifteen years of clean water!

September 9, 2021

At the Squantum Club

Visit us at: www.waterforcambodia.org or contribute directly at

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