



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018

**The Angkor Tree Project**

[www.theangkortreeproject.org](http://www.theangkortreeproject.org)



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# A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

2018 was an important year for The Angkor Tree Project. The language lessons were further expanded and professionalised. We focus on quality: we do not have the ambition to be the biggest or most important school in Siem Reap, what we do want is to be the best, so that the pupils get what they are entitled to: quality and free education.

2018 was also the year in which we started with the teacher training. The didactic training proved to be a hit; the response was very large right from the start. The language courses for teachers were less successful. The formula, based on guided self-study using computers, did not lead to the expected result, and in 2019 this will be tackled differently.

Our organization was further professionalized: a (Cambodian) management team manages everything in the right direction; an international advisory group of education experts guides the project in terms of content; the 'community reference panel' guarantees that we keep our eyes on the local reality and that our activities are closely aligned with local needs and expectations; the policy towards volunteers was refined; ...

The website was also completely renewed, and we have tried to provide as complete a picture as possible of our activities through channels such as Facebook and the newsletter.

On the following pages of this report, you will find more detailed information about our activities and detailed financial statements.

We express our gratitude to everyone who supports this project and makes it possible! Without this support, nothing of what happens here would be possible.

January 2019

Mark Desmaele, coordinator, on behalf of the management team.

# 2018 IN DETAIL

## English classes for children and adolescents.

The English lessons, as a supplement to the curriculum of the official schools, were further expanded and improved in 2018.

120 primary school children get a few hours of extra English lessons every day, some in the morning, others in the afternoon (depending on whether they attend the official school before or in the afternoon).

In the late afternoon, starting at 4 pm, 100 pupils from the secondary school attend classes. For the first time, a parent contact day was organised.

More than 150 parents participated. A system of presence and absence monitoring was organised at the request of the parents.

The pupils who come to class in the morning are offered a breakfast (a simple rice meal as is customary in Cambodia); many of them come to school with an empty stomach! In 2018 more than 6,000 breakfasts were provided.

## English lesson for young adults

Siem Reap is a city that lives on tourism. It is by far the most important source of income. Tourism means language skills, English and Chinese are the most important languages required for a job and an income in tourism. Several NGOs provide vocational training for this sector. In 2018 we have set up a cooperation with these NGOs (Safa, Changkran, ...) and offer their 'trainees' an English course, with the emphasis on the needs of this professional group. Two groups (15 beginners and 10 more advanced) follow this program daily.

## Teacher training

The teacher training program, which was drawn up and planned in 2017, became a reality in 2018. 100 teachers from informal schools (NGOs and community schools), accounting for about 9,000 students, have followed training modules.

1. The training modules started in March 2018. Modules were organised around the following themes (didactics):
  - The basics of teaching English, from theory to practice
  - What elements are necessary for successful language learning in a classroom?
  - What if students are all at different levels? What if students keep using their language? What if students don't want to talk?
  - Teaching vocabulary to young learners
  - Teaching speaking to young learners
  - Teaching reading to young learners
  - Approaches to teaching grammar
  - Teaching pronunciation

Each of these training modules consisted of 3 phases, an active observation of the teachers/trainees in their own working environment, a series of 10 workshops, and a coaching session, again in their own working environment.

Each module is followed by 15 teachers/trainees, makes a total of 120 participations, the number of different participants was 98. All these participants are active teachers in NGO and community schools in and around Siem Reap.

The total number of hours of workshop is 160 (8 modules of 10 workshops of 2 hours each). The number of hours of observation (not including trips) is 96 (for two teachers/trainees we got no access to the school head, this problem has been solved in the meantime, these two participants are admitted to the training).

The number of hours of coaching is 360 (here we got access, the problem was cleared by now (lack of communication))

We have not been able to make a precise count of the number of pupils receiving lessons from the teachers/trainees; not all schools have precise figures (!). An estimate, based on the only partially verified information provided by the teachers/trainees gives a total number of students whose training is impacted by these training modules of approximately 9,000!

#### Obstacles:

- All candidate participants were asked to take a small language proficiency test. In about 1 in 3 candidates, the level of knowledge of English was far below the level that is acceptable to participate in the program (let alone to be able to teach English!). These candidates were not admitted but led to the language training for teachers (see below).
- There are few efficient communication channels. Facebook and word-of-mouth advertising are the only channels available, and we realise that we do not reach a certain audience sufficiently. In the meantime, a mailing list of headmasters and NGOs has been created, the courses have been presented at various meetings of 'Collaboration Cambodia' and of 'SEST' (Siem Reap Education Support Team). In the first three modules we only reached teachers from schools in the city, gradually we are also reaching more remote initiatives. We currently have many more applications for each module than available places, and until we no longer have the capacity to organise more workshops, we will not extend the promotion any further.
- The teachers from more remote schools cannot always come to the city to follow the workshops. Organising workshops in remote areas is not immediately a solution because there are too few participants. We have organised transport and accommodation for a limited number of participants (15). However, the cost is relatively high (transport costs). We have to consider for the future whether other formulas are conceivable.

## 2. Organising language proficiency training for teachers.

The language proficiency modules are based on guided self-study using PCs and customised programs. This turned out not to work well, most participants dropped very quickly (little stimulating, foreknowledge too low, little access to technology, too little support. ...) At the request of the community reference panel and of the participants this part was not continued and replaced by some 'classical' lessons (for those candidate participants in the workshops who do not have sufficient basic knowledge of English). 20 blocks of 4 hours of intensive lessons were organised. This is not enough, however, and from 2019 this program is offered for a full year, at a rate of 8 hours/week (2 levels, each level 4 hours per week on Sundays, the participants are active as teachers and are not available during the week). Going to training or other work-related activities on a Sunday is not seen as a problem here, it is rather the normal course of events)

## 3. Setting up follow-up meetings

Three follow-up meetings were organised to bring former participants back together. The collaboration portal (<https://angkortree.onmicrosoft.com>) has also taken shape and has been put into use.

## The Outreach Program

- Our local teachers attended various training courses, of course in our Teacher Training Program, but also abroad at First Step Cambodia, a program for the prevention of sexual abuse of boys (important in a tourist area).
- In conjunction with Cambodia Mentoring Organization, game afternoons and sports activities were set up, one in January and one in July.
- The pupils have participated twice in activities of 'Plastic Free Cambodia', an awareness program to prevent the use of plastic.
- Secondary school pupils have participated in clean-up campaigns, in which tons of litter are being cleaned up.
- The first aid kit is used well, in 2018 the material was used 116 times to treat small wounds (only 2 of these injuries were sustained at school). Fifteen times a student was taken to the local children's hospital for further care.

## Employees and trainees/volunteers

- Teacher Nika left us at the end of November. She will further expand her career in the embassy of the United Kingdom in Phnom Penh. We wish her much success! Teacher Ann will join our team from 1 January 2019 onwards.
- Interns and volunteers from Northern countries often assist our local teachers. In 2018 we were able to welcome students from UCLL (Leuven-Limburg) and KdG (Antwerp). Volunteers came from Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Australia.



## Collaboration

Both locally and internationally, cooperation with other organisations was further expanded.

Perhaps most important is the development of a 'community reference panel', a group of people from local NGOs, schools, but also parents of pupils and former pupils. This panel meets a few times a year to evaluate and adjust our operations. This meeting has grown into a real steering group from which direction the local operation is given. In this way, we want to say to all these people a sincere 'thank you' for their extremely valuable input. This ensures that we remain embedded in the local community and that our activities are closely aligned with local needs and expectations.

A lot of time and effort was invested in participating in 'SEST' (Siem Reap Education Support Team), a consultative body created by the government and where all actors from education come together. The meetings of Collaboration Cambodia (consultative platform of NGOs) are also closely monitored.

Internationally, we are working on a deepening of relations with teacher training institutions in Belgium, but also abroad (especially the Anglo-Saxon world).

These collaborations include the seeds of the future focus points: training for headmasters (collaboration with academics for development-Leuven), pronunciation and speech-learning (collaboration with Vives-West-Flanders), setting up TEFL certification (collaboration with KdG-Antwerp),...

# WHAT'S AHEAD?

In the coming years, the emphasis will be more and more on teacher training. The English language classes are retained, and further investments are being made in improved quality. There are no plans to expand the number of classes.

The teacher training offers a much higher return on investment. If we succeed in training 200 teachers, this has an impact on the school results of more than 15,000 students!

After consultation with the local community reference panel (a committee representing local NGO's, community schools, alumni, parents and other stakeholders) and with reputed specialists from various universities and teacher training colleges, The Angkor Tree Project is now ready to take teacher training to the next level.

## More modules

The modular approach, where trainees can choose from different topics, depending on their interest, background and experience has proven to be very effective. It allows the trainees to easily combine professional duties, family life and the teacher training modules. These are spread over the year, and cover a wide variety of topics, such as “Teaching Speaking to Young learners”, “Teaching vocabulary”, “What elements are important for successful language teaching?”, “Differentiation” ...

The background, training level, working context, needs and interest of the trainees being very heterogeneous the number of modules will be increased from 8 in 2018 to around 20 in 2019. The variety of topics will be broadened, allowing more differentiation and more in-depth study of certain aspects of teaching. Some modules will only be available for trainees who completed previous modules.

What remains unchanged is that each module includes a pre-workshop observation, 20 hours of workshop and post-workshop on-site coaching (the number of hours of workshops may vary upon the topic).

### **Implementation of the 'Cambridge English Teaching Framework'.**

The Cambridge English Teaching Framework has been designed to encapsulate the key knowledge and skills needed for effective teaching at a variety of levels and in different contexts. It aims to help teachers to identify where they are in their professional career and to help teachers and their employers to think about where to go next and identify development activities to get there.

The framework describes teacher competencies across four stages and five aspects of teacher knowledge and skill.

Trainees will be provided with a questionnaire and will be interviewed to establish their current level of competencies with regard to this framework.

By mapping both trainees and training modules to this unique framework, the effectiveness of training will increase.

### **More coaching**

The post-workshop coaching is currently limited to half-a-day per trainee per module. This is insufficient; the trainees are left to themselves too much. This will be solved by introducing the concept of mixed local and international trainee teams. Every module will consist of 10 local and five international trainees\*, the international trainees being last year students from European, Australian or American Teacher Training Colleges. During the full five weeks of the training (workshops held on Saturdays) the local and international trainees will co-teach in their respective schools, trying to put into practice the knowledge and techniques acquired during the workshops. International trainees have a better pre-training and generally have a better knowledge of the English language (most are native speakers); bringing them in the same workshops as the local trainees smoothens this difference and makes co-teaching, as equal partners

easier. Moreover, international trainees will be more aware of cultural differences and the impact this has on teaching in schools in developing areas, but also in their own country where coping with differences between students is imperative. A local trainee will be coached 25 days, that's 50 times as much as what we can offer today!

And the international trainee will work in a structured framework, as a part of a larger project, with clear objectives and deliverables, rather than being dropped and left to himself in an unknown and unmonitored environment.

As for the mentors of the international trainees, they will be given the opportunity to actively participate in workshops and coaching sessions.

### **Headmaster coaching**

Headmasters play an important role when it comes to training and coaching teachers, they support the teachers, give guidance, monitor progress, encourage.

Several headmasters requested for guidance and help in this. In 2019 we will dedicate some workshops specifically (and exclusively) for headmasters, looking into best practice to assume their responsibilities.

## Language proficiency

For many teachers in the non-formal education sector, language proficiency remains a major issue. We have tried to remedy this by introducing computer-based self-study packages, but it did not work. Trainees were not interested, felt left on their own, dropped out quickly.

From early 2019 the EFT-program (English for Teachers) program will start with two level-groups: pre-intermediate and intermediate. A high-level language trainer will be available for leading the various modules: reading, writing, speaking and listening, with a special focus on pronunciation and conversation.

## Teacher Community of Practice

Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. English teachers can jointly solve problems, request information, seek experience, reuse assets, grow confidence, discuss developments, ... Microsoft's SharePoint (Office 365) and regular meetings will be used as catalysts for community building.

# SUSTAINABILITY

Smaller organisations have the great advantage that they can respond very flexibly to sometimes changing circumstances and needs and that they have a much more transparent and simple cost structure. Indeed, the financial costs at The Angkor Tree Project are limited to about 200 Euro per year (the cost of transferring money from Belgium to a Cambodian bank account), and the administrative costs don't exceed (publications in the Belgian Official Journal, Domain names, web hosting ...) 300 Euro per year. That is less than 1.5% of our budget!

However, smaller organisations run the risk of being less sustainable than the large NGOs. Often these (also called micro- or grassroot-) organisations are supported by one or a few people, and when these, for whatever reason, disappear, there is a great risk that the whole project does not exist very long.

Large organisations often have some specialised staff members, as a result of which the organisation has a great deal of expertise and know-how.

However, we are well aware of the risks and limitations and try to deal with this consciously.

The Angkor Tree Project invests in the professional training of the employees on site. The local members of the management team assume an increasing number of tasks and responsibilities, both pedagogically and organisationally. Sopheak Ngo, the head teacher, follows an "Executive certification in School Management" course (modules: Principalship, School Administration-Management, Principles of Curriculum Development, School Financial Management, Educational Leadership, Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills). From 1 January 2019, he bears full responsibility (also financially) for the local school operation. Nat Son has final responsibility for teacher training (he holds a Master in Tesol from the University of Canberra, Australia). The role of Mark Desmaele is increasingly becoming more of a facilitating than a guiding one: expanding a network with foreign schools for teacher training, relationship with sponsors, donors and subsidy providers ... Once the relationships are established, they are also transferred step by step to the local team.

We acquire expertise through cooperation with other organisations, each of which is expert in their field. We share our expertise with them, and they share with us. We are thinking of 'Child Protection', 'First Aid', 'Ethical behaviour', ....

# WHO ARE WE?

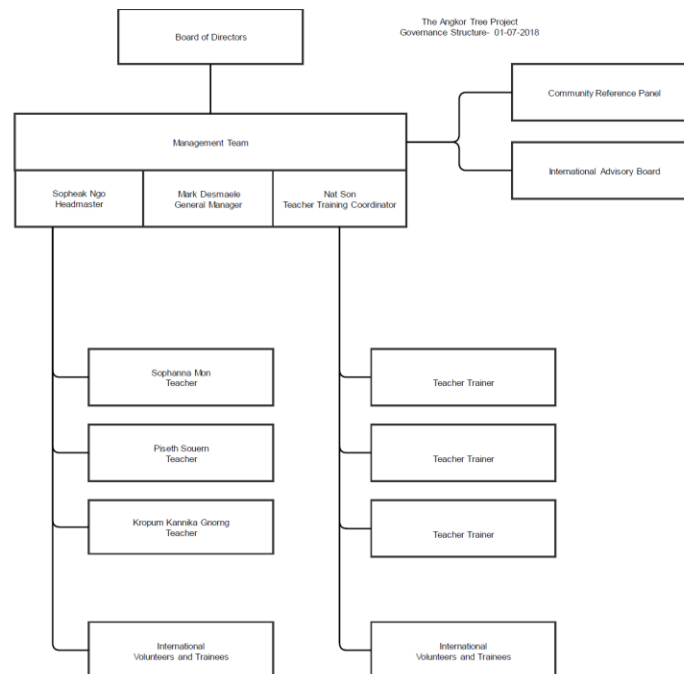
## Board of directors

- Dr Pieter Thiels, Chairman
- Mr Ludwig Jegers, Treasurer
- Mrs Marie Desmaele, Board member
- Mrs Sandra Van Hooydonck, Board member
- Mr Mark Desmaele, Board member

## Management Team Cambodia

- Mr Sopheak Ngo, Headmaster
- Mr Nat Son, Head of Teacher Training
- Mr Mark Desmaele, general coördinator

And also many trainees and volunteers.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

Full details, including justification of each issue, is available online at [www.theangkortreeproject.org](http://www.theangkortreeproject.org)

Below an overview (in USD and EURO):

Figures subject to approval by the Board of Directors

## Expenses:

Description	USD	EUR	Total in EUR
Rent	2.400,00		
Building Maintenance	1.197,91		
Utilities	1.087,30		
Salaries	24.789,00		
Other staff cost like insurances,	2.482,00		
School supplies (Inclusive purchase of some computers)	7.834,77	385.34	
Breakfasts	1.759,62		
Costs for volunteers	3.335,20		
Financial and adm costs	166.62	451.99	
Exceptional costs	2.200,00		
Total	USD 47.252,42	Euro 837.33	Euro 41.956,46

- Income

Description	USD	EUR	Total in EUR
Gifts and allowances	50,00	38.792,37	
Contributing volunteers	2.602,00		
Events		8.730,00	
Total	2.652,00	47.522,44	Euro 49.854.80



# THANK YOU

The Angkor Tree Project is an educational project. No educational project can exist without the support of governments and/or sponsors. Government support in Cambodia will probably be impossible for many years, which is why we are very grateful to our many sponsors. Our operation in 2018 was possible thanks to your support!

Thank you Johan, Tars, Leo, Ludwig, Steven, Patrick, Veronique, Sylviane, Erik, Ingrid, Marcel, Rudi, Elvire, Erwin, Kathleen, Hort, Marie, Robrecht, Herman, Luk, Goedele, Didier, Jan, Suzanne, Guy, Wies, Rene, Dirk, Lutgarde, Rolf, Dieter, Alain, Frederik, Christine, Alberte, Andrea, Andre, Magda, Kato, Stijn, Dirk, Danielle, Erik, Martine, Rita .....

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# VARIOUS

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Behind Wat Preah Enkoase

Treang Village - Slorkram commune

Siem Reap

Cambodia

Registration pending

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