

Kone Kmeng



“Churches throughout Cambodia responding to children at risk in their communities”

**Annual Report on Kone Kmeng
January – December 2006**

**Reported by:
Pang Sophany, Director**

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History

While working with Tearfund in 2000-2005, Kone Kmeng co-founders, Glenn and Siobhan Miles decided to use some funds given to them by churches in the UK and USA to provide support for small churches in Cambodia. The first project to receive support was for in a slum area outside of Phnom Penh, which needed a playground and wanted help to support orphans and very poor children.

After Tearfund closed its office in Cambodia in June 2005, the Miles' planned to return to the UK, yet Glenn continued to have a heart for the church projects. At this time, he asked Pang Sophany (Phany), then overseer of the project, to consider assuming leadership of the ministry.

Phany began to prayerfully seek God before making a decision. Twenty days later, a vivid picture came to him while in prayer: he saw a big mouth staying over a community and in the community there was a church, and a child was standing near that church. As he sought to understand the meaning, he eventually turned the picture into words, noting four specific things: big mouth, church, child, and community. As he considered the meaning of each,

- Big mouth represents God's call
- Church is God's representative to the world
- Child is a victim – crying to God
- Community is the place where God wants to show His love and compassion

The vision quickly became clear: "God is calling His church to respond to children at risk in their community!"

With the vision clear, Phany felt confident to assume directorship of Kone Kmeng.

What have we done in 2006?

1- Administrative Office

Kone Kmeng developed its internal systems and official documents: its mission statement, the core values, objectives and activities; and policies including a Child Protection Policy, the Staff Policy, Church Proposal Guidelines, Church Report Guidelines, Constitution, and a Master Action Plan (MAP). Kone Kmeng has set up a structure with a 3-member Board of Directors, an advisor, and a 3-member Executive Committee: Director, Church Partnership Coordinator and Admin/ Accountant. Staff Behavior and Staff Capacity (SB and SC) are important for Kone Kmeng.



Discussion on KK Strategic Planning in 2007

2- Capacity Building for Staff

Kone Kmeng has sent the Church Partnership Coordinator to various trainings on different topics which were conducted by World Vision, ICC-Hosea project and recently, joining in the Celebrating Children Course by the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia – Children’s Commission (EFC-Children Commission). It aims to improve the staff capacity in order to contribute to the experiences and knowledge of church leaders and children workers in serving the Cambodian children and families in difficult circumstances.

3- Capacity Building for Partners

Trainings for Church Leaders and Children Workers

Kone Kmeng co-facilitated the trainings with Chab Dai on Child Trafficking and child sexual abuse in Siem Reap with 60 pastors and in Battambang province with 18 children workers and church leaders. It also co-facilitated training on Safe Children Karaoke Video Pack in Phnom Penh with 25 children workers from various Non-governmental organizations under sponsorship by the British Embassy in Phnom Penh. These trainings help church leaders and children workers to understand better about the forms of child trafficking and child sexual abuse so they can inform and share within their own communities.



Training for church leaders and children workers

Kone Kmeng has conducted workshops with church leaders and their congregations such as Beoung Tompon Church of Christ in Phnom Penh, Samaritan O’dum Pailin Church and Methodist Pailin Church in Pailin city, Sydney Khmer Good News Christian Church in Banteay Meanchey and Independent Church in Battambang province to help them understand God’s heart for children and to fire up the vision to help children in need in their communities.



Workshop with individual church at Beantey Menchey province

Kone Kmeng was invited to share on the topic of Child Protection in the Celebrating Children Course training which was conducted by EFC-Children Commission. Kone Kmeng also presented the “Stop Violence Against Us Report” researched by Glenn Miles, Children at Risk Facilitator, Tearfund – Cambodia to a Child Welfare Group meeting and at a Micah Networking Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Strengthening the partners

In order to improve the capacity of partners to work with children more effectively, Kone Kmeng sent the club manager from Little Friends of Jesus Club to participate in the

Aftercare For Trafficked and Sexually Exploited Children in Cambodia trainings which were conducted by World Vision.

Two pastors from Independent Light of Christ and Bright New Life of Grace were sent to participate in the Celebrating Children Course by the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia Children's Commission. Its purpose is to equip the children's ministers with great and deep understanding of children and an ability to help those children.

4- Church Funding Project Partners

1- Little Friends of Jesus Club (LFJC)

Little Friends of Jesus Club has implemented 4 programs to meet the needs of the children in Prek Tapov village, Takhmau district, Kandal province. These include:

Sunday Program

There are 50 children from the community participating in the program. These children



Children are learning to draw pictures

are divided into two groups, older children and younger children. For the younger children, ages 5-10, crayon drawings, singing, storytelling and children bible teachings are provided. For older children, ages 11-17, basic training about safety for children, children's rights, HIV/AIDS awareness, avoiding child abuse and drug use, vocational training and bible classes are provided.

Foster Home and Poverty Support

This program supports four children with basic needs such as living costs, clothes and schooling. These children are at risk of AIDS, orphans or very poor. When Pastor Sokha knew about their great needs, he set up the program in order to restore their future. Below is the story of VannCheavin, one of the four children who are living in the foster home.



The four kids are living in the Foster Home

Vann Cheavin is 12 years old. His parents have AIDS. He has a brother and a sister. He is the oldest one in the family. When he was 8 years old, Cheavin started hanging around a gangster group in his village who were 3 or 4 years older than he was. Later on, he started sniffing glue and became a group member. His life had no hope. He has to survive by himself. The family couldn't support him for either school or food. In 2004, Pastor Sokha met him.

Then he took Cheavin into his foster home where Cheavin started his new life with hope. Now he is in grade 6. He is an active boy in the church. He is part of the worship team and reads Bible

verses to the children in Sunday school. Cheavin said “*I want to be a pastor. I want to help many other children to believe in Jesus and have good lives.*” Pray for him that his dream will become true.

Playground and Sports Program

This is a place where community children can enjoy their time playing and interacting with one another. More and more children are participating in this program. It is open every evening from Monday to Friday and the whole day on Thursdays.



Mothers provide extra-food for the children

Malnutrition and Health Care Support Program

The program provides dietary supplements (formula- Dumex) to 12 children who suffer from severe malnutrition. It also educates parents on health care and caring for children. Most of these children are Muslim Cham Cambodians. The staff monitors the process of physical child development every Friday to make sure the children’s health is improving.

Beoung Tompon Church of Christ

Beoung Tompon Church of Christ is located in the urban site of Phnom Penh near the city landfill. Children are faced with a hostile environment, living in poor conditions and under social influences such as gangster groups, robbery, alcoholism, violence and drug use.



Fixing motor bike training

The church set up a “*Children at Risk of Drug Program*” to re-establish their hope and future. This program provided a motorbike fixing vocational training to 10 older children who used drugs. It ran a 6-month course for a term. The last course ran from November 2005 to April 2006. That ended the two-year agreement, 2004-2006 with Kone Kmeng. After receiving the skills, these children went back to their hometowns to start businesses there.

Among these children, three still remain in the city. They began to use drugs again after two months.

5- Seasonal Gift

Seasonal gift is a project that runs only in the winter which usually starts in the middle of November and ends in the middle of January.

The project buys used coats and sweaters for the poor who don’t have enough to keep warm.

Each year, Kone Kmeng gets sweaters and coats to give to the poor children through working together with churches. This year, Kone Kmeng



Tribal Community in Steng Treng province

had funds to buy 2100 sweaters and coats compared to 1150 sweaters and coats in 2005. Seven churches participated in distributing these sweaters and coats in their communities:

| No | Name of Church | Name of pastor | Numbers of sweater and coat | Location |
|----|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Sydney Khmer Good News | Laing Phearom | 100 | Banteay Meanchey province |
| 2 | Independent Bright Church | Sreng Sophal | 250 | Kandal province |
| 3 | Grace Baptist Church | Mechael Veldes | 120 | Phnom Penh |
| 4 | God's Word of Life | Kouv Kosal | 850 | 13 tribal villages, Stung Treng province |
| 5 | New Life Tonle Bati | Ty Pros | 450 | Takeo province |
| 6 | New Life Krang Thnong | Sopheap | 200 | Takeo province |
| 7 | The Love of Christ | Meas Samon | 130 | Takeo province |

Emergency Relief (ER)

This is a program which provides relief to people who are in an emergency need situation.

In 2006, Kone Kmeng helped two cases with emergency needs. The stories are described below:

A Blind-In-One-Eye Boy

On Monday 28th August 2006, Pastor Prum, of Bright New Life of Grace took a young boy to the eye hospital. His church is in Kandal province along the Mekong River. It is 25 km from Phnom Penh city to his village. Through his desire to help children in need in his village, on the 11th July 2006, Pastor Prum was introduced to Kone Kmeng. Then he set up a meeting with Phany to share what he had done and what he hoped to do. Finally, he invited Phany to visit the village.



Ry and pastor Prum at the hospital

I was very impressed to see how the church is ministering to their community. Their house church does an excellent job with children, such as a Sunday School, teaching children to dance and a home for 10 children who have been orphaned by AIDS or other children who had been living on the streets. The home provides new hope for these children spiritually and physically. Finally, the pastor took us to visit the families where the cell groups are. There, we met Sun Ry, a young boy who couldn't see with one eye for 7 years.

Sun Ry is 9 years old. He lives in Knong village Prek Tamak commune, Ksach Kandal district, Kandal province. One of his eyes couldn't function when he was two years old. At six, he went to primary school for a year, then he stopped. At school, he was bullied

by other children because of his one blind eye.

Sometimes, he got beaten up by them.



Ry at the hospital before having an eye check

Ry never saw his father. His father died when he was a little child. He lives with his mother who has mental health problems. Nowadays, Ry's brother works in construction to support the family. Also, his grandmother, who is 70 years old, sells some things in the village to help their family. Even with that, the family could not take him to the hospital to get treatment.

Recently, Ry began to feel pain in his one functioning eye. It was a sign that he needed to get it checked and treated before it got worse or even caused him to become blind.

Kone Kmeng was able to help through the church for him to be taken to the hospital to get checked for the infection. The doctor recommended that he take medicines to kill the pain. If the pain went away then he could replace a lens of the blind eye when he is 15 years old. So then both eyes would be the same size. But if the pain didn't go away, then he would need to get an eye operation soon, which would mean that one of his eyes would be bigger than the other one.

After taking medicines for fifteen days, the pain went away. Praise God! His family was so happy. They appreciated the church for helping him and praised God for the blessing in his life.

A pregnant young woman

On Wednesday morning, December 13, 2006, there was a call from the manager of Little Friends of Jesus Club (Kone Kmeng's project partner) to Kone Kmeng's office. This club runs four programs including providing foster care to 4 orphans.

The call was about a young, pregnant woman, 19-year old, with a 1-1/2 year old daughter and a 7-year old boy traveling from Kratie province to Kandal province. The young woman, Sophary, asked if she could leave her daughter there at the center; then asked for some money. About 8 months ago, Sophary's husband's moto was stolen. So her husband, her father-in-law and another person from their village followed the thief to get the motorbike back. They ended up in Banteay Meanchey province in northwest Cambodia near the Thai border.



Sophary, her new baby and Phany at the hospital

For some reason the police stopped them. They found some old rice, poison and something else on the stolen motorbike. The police said it looked like they were planning to commit a crime, so they were all arrested and jailed. The police asked for \$2200 to get them released. Sophary didn't know how to get that kind of money. There were even people telling her to sell her baby for \$1000. But she wouldn't do it. Eventually, she went to Takhmau, a town just south of Phnom Penh. Her sister lived there and works in a garment factory. Sophary tried to get her to help. Her sister had a chance to borrow \$700, but since it wasn't enough, passed up on that chance. Later, the police said they would release her husband if she could pay \$1500, then \$1200, \$700, and finally \$300. But even that, she did not have. There were many times when she felt so hopeless and wanted to kill herself. But her sister had heard of this Little Friends of Jesus Club, so they decided to go there. Maybe they could take care of her child for her. Maybe they might be able to give her some money so she could get her husband out. Maybe she could eventually get her child back. Still, she had no plan for where and how she would have her baby. Anyway, Phany advised the manager who called: don't do anything because she could end up in jail as an accomplice to child trafficking. Then Phany cooperated with World Hope International and police in Kandal province to arrest her, charging her with child trafficking.

We were at the police station for hours, with lots of questioning by the police. In fact, her husband was imprisoned unjustly. Hearing all that happened to her and the family, Phany felt mercy for her. So he kept begging the police and Mr. Thon at World Hope International to release her. It didn't look like anything could be done for her. Yet, God in His mercy, must have been totally involved when at the end of the day, they agreed to release her. Then we agreed to take her to World Hope Center to care for her until she

delivered her baby. The plan was to then place her in a program where she could learn some skills to support herself and her children.



Phany and Sry Ckouch

The next morning, Phany got a call that Sophary had delivered a beautiful, healthy baby boy. The center was taking care of the expenses for her to be in a hospital for five days. They named the new baby, Phanith. Her one-and-a-half year old daughter could stay at the center, too.

However, five days later, before her release from the hospital, when told she needed to commit to staying at the center for 2 years, Sophary decided she couldn't do that...6 months was ok, but she wanted to find a way to release her husband, as well as, take care of her two young children. So she couldn't go back to the center and the case was given to Phany; Kone Kmeng would be responsible. There was still a small amount of money in the Emergency Relief Fund. It was not enough for medicines, things for the newborn baby, and living expenses for the mother and her other child. I believed that God would provide for all her needs and that He led us to be involved with her. So she was brought to the Kone Kmeng office on Monday, December 18th. She stayed at my house with my family. None of us knew for how long she would stay, but just knew she needed care and help for now. Various options were considered, but after almost a week at my place, Sophary thought maybe she should go to her sister's place, even if her sister would be at work and wouldn't be able to help out much. She was even considering placing her daughter in an orphanage, knowing she wouldn't be able to manage with the two children. In the meantime, with much prayer, God opened the hearts of some friends to help meet these immediate needs.



Sophary, her two children, her husband, Phany and Laura Fok

Then on Christmas Eve, in the late evening, Phany got a call. It was Sophary's husband. He had been released from prison two day earlier, though no money had been paid. He didn't know what happened; they just said that he didn't do anything wrong so they were letting him go. He was in Phnom Penh and was trying to find his wife.

Sophary was overjoyed to hear of his release and that he was close by. The family was reunited that evening and spent the night at my place. Early the next morning, Christmas Day, they went back to their home province.