



The Vision

A newsletter of *A Vision for Clean Water*

Providing clean water and sanitation to those who need them through education and collaboration

Spring 2020

Vol. 9, Issue 1

AVFCW Helps Mitigate Virus Effects

As this newsletter goes out, AVFCW would like our readers to know that our volunteers are working in different ways to assist causes that will help mitigate the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. Please let us know if AVFCW can assist you or your organization in any way.

April Workshop Cancelled Due to Pandemic

Our spring workshop on water storage and testing that was to be held in Ridgetown, Ontario unfortunately had to be cancelled because of the Coronavirus outbreak. A Vision for Clean Water is working now to reschedule this.

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A Vision for Clean Water Board Member Scott Brills Visits Cambodian Clean Water and Sanitation Projects

Following is Scott's account of his experiences.



Scott with two children who now enjoy proper sanitation in their village.

I was recently invited to Cambodia by *Banyan Tree*, a Canadian-run organization supported by Southeast Asia Support Organization (SASO). **A Vision for Clean Water** has helped SASO raise over \$50,000 so that Banyan Tree can build schools, latrines, and well systems in impoverished areas of the country. My mission as AVFCW Board Member was to see first-hand the results that Banyan Tree had accomplished in Takeo province, just south of the capital of Phnom Penh.

Arriving via Bangkok, I was met by the coordinator of the programs, Savin Tim, as well as the Assistant Director of Education for the schools we'd be visiting, Phonn Meas. They drove me three hours or so south to the village of Angk Ta Saom, which would be our base of operations for the coming days.

Arriving at the Meas Homestay (run by the daughter of Phonn) I was greeted warmly by the staff and other foreigners staying there. I was thinking I'd be by myself in the middle of nowhere, but apparently the homestay itself is quite the attraction, having been the very first to ever operate in the country in the mid-aughts. Even though it was by this time past 9:00 pm, the air was still thick and humid, so I appreciated the cold drinks and home cooked meal placed in front of me soon after arrival. After a bit of conversation with the other guests and the staff, I headed to bed to get some rest before our first day of touring the countryside.

The next few days were filled with site visit after site visit, as we tried to see as much as possible in the span of just three days. After leaving the homestay and reaching the home of Savin via car we would jump on the back of his motorcycle in order to reach the areas where the car couldn't go. The first day we focused on the washroom structures that were built for numerous families in the area, with a focus on providing for families with adolescent girls. Open defecation is so prevalent in the area, and girls in particular are at-risk when they go into the fields due to cobras and occasional assaults. The structures that Banyan Tree builds for the families consist of a concrete shell topped by a corrugated steel roof, with a wash basin and squat-type toilet inside. A definite improvement in both sanitation and safety for all members of the family!

The following days we split our time between water and sanitation projects and some school visits, where we were able to see some of the work Banyan Tree had done in regard to wells. Each school had a well dug, a pump installed, and a concrete structure built with multiple taps available for the schoolchildren to use for washing their hands. These were usually positioned nearby the latrines, which of

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course had also been built in a fashion similar to those that had been built for the individual families.

It was a hot, sweaty few days -- Cambodia is definitely one of the hottest places I have ever been -- in the nearly hundred countries I've visited -- but it was very educational and moving to see how life has progressed in the country ever since the atrocities of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge (and related aftermath) decimated the country from the 1970's through the end of the 1990's.

My takeaway after my short visit to Cambodia is that the locals are amazingly kind and eager to improve their lives through hard work and education. Banyan Tree is doing a great job of providing a leg up for the families and communities most of need, and it appears as if the people there are truly appreciative of the assistance given. You can learn more about Banyan Tree by visiting <http://banyantreeorganization.com>.



One of the attractive and sturdy latrines built in a Cambodian village by Banyan Tree in collaboration with A Vision for Clean Water.

Water Panel Planned for July 29

A Water Panel is in the planning stages. **AVFCW** is working with Troy Rotary to organize a coming together to talk about how we can be nudged to do some little and some big things both locally and internationally to further clean water goals. This panel will be held at The Bank of America Building, 2600 West Big Beaver Rd. in Troy on **July 29th** starting at 11:30 a.m. **Save this date and join us!** The cost will be \$12 and includes lunch. Details will be available in early July at troyrotary.net and on our web site at avisionforcleanwater.org.

