



Our Mission

To empower marginalised communities in the Mekong Sub-Region to shape their own future. We achieve this by working with communities to improve health and education for children and socioeconomic opportunities for families.

Our principles

- Focus on the needs of the beneficiaries
- Promote and protect the rights of the child
- Use resources efficiently and effectively
- Acknowledge and value diversity
- Maintain full transparency and accountability
- Reflect on and continually improve our work

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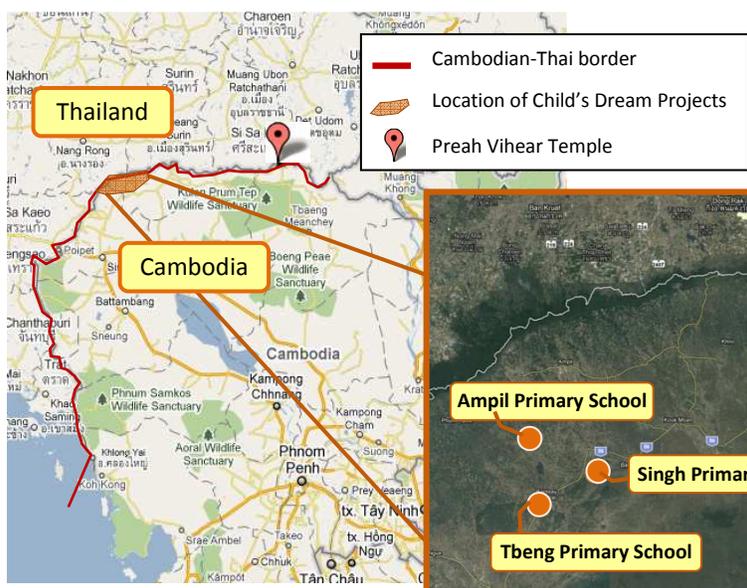
Thai/Cambodian border dispute

A long drawn conflict between Cambodia and Thailand, the border dispute over the area around the Preah Vihear Temple exists since the very late 19th century. Built by the Khmer empire between the 9th and 11th century, the Preah Vihear temple has witnessed the gradual decline of the Khmer empire and the rise of the Ayutthaya kingdom over the centuries and the eventual transition from Siam to Thailand. At various trajectories in history when nation-state boundaries were redrawn (f.e. during the French colonialism and World War II), the temple in question often formed part of the many areas that were disputed over between Cambodia and Thailand. It was only in 1962 that the International Court of Justice finally ruled that the Preah Vihear temple belonged to Cambodia. Even though Thailand had reluctantly handed over the Preah Vihear temple to Cambodia, Thailand continued to control the land around the temple. They claimed, that the border had yet to be officially demarcated.

The recent ownership disputes over both the Preah Vihear temple and its surrounding area resurfaced in 2008, when Cambodia applied to UNESCO for the Preah Vihear temple to be listed as a World Heritage site. In response, Thailand contested Cambodia's application, as they would have to give up their ownership over the land surrounding the temple. Although the application to UNESCO was eventually withdrawn by Cambodia, the issue of ownership over both the Preah Vihear temple and its surrounding area, has become the subject of nationalist political posturing in both Cambodia and Thailand ever since.

Since the Thai-Cambodian border dispute was reignited again in April 2011, our team in Cambodia is monitoring the situation at the border closely. We keep frequent contact with the communities of the five schools, which we are supporting in the Oddar Meanchey province of Cambodia. In four of our schools in the district of Banteay Ampil, classes were disrupted by the recent exchanges of fire between the Thailand and Cambodia militaries. The schools are: [Ampil Primary School](#) which is located closest to the Thai-Cambodian border (approximately 12 km), [Singh Primary School](#), which had to be closed as the compound was converted to a military base on 25 April 2011, [Tbeng Primary School](#) and [Kdol Primary School](#). Many villagers had to evacuate their homes, taking with them only basic essentials as they fled from the conflict zone. Even though the situation at the borders calmed down over the past weeks, some villagers are still afraid to return home. Some villagers have set up temporary shelters such as health centres, schools and pagodas in safer areas, others remain in the conflict zone and try to carry on with their daily lives.

Likewise, some children continue to attend school, even though their teachers fled to safer areas. Since 16th May 2011 classes resumed for the students from Kdol Primary School, but most of the time, the daily attendance rate is below 70%. The classes are often disrupted by news of possible conflicts at the border, as the situation is still very volatile. It is still unclear, when lessons will resume as normal for some of our affected schools, as the situation varies from community to community.



Your Child's Dream Team

