

## The JWOC Community Centre



### **The role of education in development**

Since arriving at JWOC at the very end of 2008, we have gone about our work at JWOC under our firm belief that education is the key ingredient in promoting sustainable development. With the exception of emergency aid, giving people the tools they need to make positive changes in their lives is a central responsibility in the work of any development organization.

In 2009 JWOC has been given a wonderful opportunity to grow into an organization that prioritizes education amongst all its programs. The community centre, made possible by the Collette Foundation and the Richard O'Connell Family, which is located amongst the communities we help in Siem Reap, Cambodia, is a space that can be used to make a lasting and sustainable difference. This versatile new space, which can be divided into one, two or three different rooms, will expand and improve our existing ability to deliver a high quality of extracurricular language classes to adults and children. Crucially however, the Community Centre gives JWOC the chance to branch out in many more directions, providing a whole host of services and benefits to Cambodians struggling to change their circumstances.



See a Problem,



Solve a Problem...

### Consolidating and expanding our existing programme

JWOC currently runs free language and computer training classes offering Cambodians the opportunity to learn new skills and broaden their abilities to find jobs. The JWOC community centre allows for an expansion to our language program now and potentially provides the space in the future to be able to expand our computer literacy classes. All JWOC language classes are in the process of being standardized so that students can steadily improve the languages they study through recognized courses. We are also starting training for all our scholarship student teachers giving them access to practical ideas to help them in their lessons.

### Growing in new directions

In an area where **children** play around polluted water sources or fly plastic bags as kites, the centre will offer a place to come together and learn creative skills such as painting, dancing, and photography. Twice weekly reading hours will give children the time, support and resources to discover the joy of reading.

**Local entrepreneurs** with our micro-finance program will be required to attend regular business workshops where they can learn about good business practices and the benefits of bookkeeping.

With the help of outside professionals volunteering with JWOC, the community centre will also play host to an expanding set of **vocational training** possibilities that will aim to provide much needed practical skills to local members of the community, particularly women. A sewing workshop is one example of the type of training that may be conducted in the new centre.



The Centre will also be a place where **JWOC scholarship students** learn new skills and develop their knowledge and their ability to assist in JWOC's community projects which they help in as part of their scholarship. Teacher training, social research techniques and finance seminars are just a few of the many educational possibilities which the community centre will be home to.

Finally, even a short time in the marginalized communities surrounding Siem Reap clearly exposes a lack of some of the simplest things in life that many of us take for granted. Activities like going to the cinema are things that so many people have no access to. Having the community centre creates a place where JWOC can offer these types of activities where people can come to **relax and unwind** for free.

Our vision for JWOC's new community centre is that it can be a place that puts education at the core of all our projects. It should enrich each program by giving them a space to offer and explore the educational possibilities that are needed to make JWOC's community work truly sustainable for the people of Cambodia.

Andrew Piner and Camilla McArthur – JWOC Managing Directors