

# SMILING GECKO PROJECTS 2021



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# WHY ENGAGE IN CAMBODIA?

Since the middle of the last century, Cambodia has been ravaged by decades of civil war and suffered terribly during the Vietnamese invasion and the terror regime of the Khmer Rouge. 1.7 million people were killed as a result of malnutrition, disease or execution during the reign of the Pol Pot regime. The majority of the nation's institutions and infrastructure were destroyed, leaving most of the population without any education, training and employment opportunities – resulting in a life of poverty. As a consequence, Cambodia is still one of the poorest countries in the world. The estimation of the number of people affected depends on the definition and the parameters used to measure it. Although neither reliable data nor consistent reporting trends are available, it is likely that around one third of the Cambodian population of 16.7 million are still affected by extreme poverty and forced to exist on less than 2 USD a day. The economic crisis unleashed by the pandemic poses a great threat to Cambodia's development. The decrease of the gross domestic product will probably increase the number of people living in poverty by up to 10%.

In the capital Phnom Penh alone, tens of thousands of children live on the streets, in the slums and on landfills where they are exposed to hunger, illness and abuse. Around a third of all children below the age of five suffer from growth disorders due to malnutrition.

Destitution in Cambodia takes on many shapes and forms, but it is primarily the rural population who bears the brunt of the fallout from an inadequate education system, infrastructure deficiencies and the lack of basic health care. Worse yet, most people cannot count on any social safety net that allows them to access essential services.

It is the purpose of Smiling Gecko to contribute to providing these children and adults with a life in better conditions and to offer support that will have a lasting effect and addresses the root causes of the hardship they face in their communities.







## ABOUT SMILING GECKO

Smiling Gecko is an Non-Government-Organisation (NGO) that has set the long-term goal of providing relief to children and families in need in Cambodia. To achieve this goal, Smiling Gecko is pursuing a holistic development approach with the objective to develop, foster and strengthen the ability of the rural population to live self-determined lives. Smiling Gecko consists of two main entities – Smiling Gecko Cambodia (SGC) and Smiling Gecko Switzerland (SGS) that are currently legally independent but which complement and collaborate with each other. Since 2014, SGC has purchased a total of 140 hectares of rural land in the northern province of Kampong Chhnang. This site is the heart of the organisation's cluster project.

The main pillars of the project today are schooling, sustainable agriculture, livestock and fish farming, vocational (technical) training and education as well as the setting-up and management of social enterprises in different crafts/trades in addition to the tourism and hospitality sector. All projects are systemically interlinked. In the medium term, the project is to become self-sufficient and therefore independent of external funding.

**The main objectives of Smiling Gecko are:**

- **To fight hunger and poverty**
- **To provide school education and vocational training for young Cambodians**
- **To support the neighbouring communities in their sustainable development**
- **To contribute to the livelihoods of the families involved in the project and the economic development of the communities and ultimately the country**
- **To protect the environment, use resources efficiently and prevent further biodiversity loss**

In order to ensure sustainability, accountability and inclusion of external expertise, Smiling Gecko works closely with renowned and experienced international institutions such as the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) Zurich (Department of Architecture and Construction), the Karlsruher Institute for Technology (KIT), Zurich University of Applied Sciences Wädenswil (ZHAW), Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH), University of Zurich (UZH), Vetsuisse Faculty, Centre for Development and Cooperation (CDC) of the Bern University of Applied Sciences (BFH), Department of Architecture, Forestry and Construction and the Agricultural Education and Consulting Centre (LBBZ) Schluechthof Cham. We collaborate with the mentioned institutions from the planning stage, during realization, operation and monitoring and evaluation of individual programmes as well as the overall project.

# SMILING GECKO SWITZERLAND

Smiling Gecko Switzerland (SGS) was founded in 2012, as a NGO under Swiss law, by Hannes Schmid, one of the most important Swiss photo-artists. SGS provides direct aid in the form of finance and other support to people in need in Cambodia, sponsoring projects that are sustainable - both from an ecological as well as an economic vantage point.

SGS is an NGO engaged in a number of development and aid projects. These include the following: humanitarian projects assisting children, families and village communities through campaigns and/or direct aid; mediation services, bringing the people behind projects (or the relevant sponsors) into contact with potential donors; allocation of donations according to the wishes of the donors; detailed information of donors on the progress of projects and how donations are spent. Furthermore, SGS is partnering with a network of esteemed Swiss institutions which support the projects by supplying funds and specialist know-how and/or by taking on such responsibilities.

## THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

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### Thomas Hemschemeier

CMO

SGS takes pride in the fact that all donations except for the administrative overhead are used directly on site. This overhead is and has remained very low over the past years. Smiling Gecko is audited - in Switzerland as well as in Cambodia - by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), one of the world's leading auditing and consulting firms as part of their pro bono initiatives.

# SMILING GECKO CAMBODIA

Smiling Gecko Cambodia (SGC) was officially registered as a local NGO in Cambodia in 2014. SGC is legally independent of SGS. It was co-founded by Sokleap Ngon, a Cambodian lawyer and Hannes Schmid. True to its mission of "Cambodians help Cambodians", the organisation provides direct aid to disadvantaged people in the country, supporting local job initiatives and promoting self-help among the rural population. Apart from providing direct aid and supporting other NGOs, SGC focuses on fighting the causes of poverty and on helping people to help themselves. To this end, SGC has launched the cluster project on a site acquired in 2014 in the north of Phnom Penh whose objective it is to provide several thousands of Cambodians with training and a regular income in the sectors of agriculture, tourism and hospitality, manufacturing and trade. The proceeds are intended to cover the operating costs of the innovative school, which is at the heart of the cluster and will ultimately provide education for around 1'000 children (from preschool to senior high school).

SGC receives financial support mainly through SGS and SGDe, but also directly from donors and supporters. Financial support requests are reviewed carefully in alignment with the submitted business plan and budget before funds are being transferred by SGS and SGDe. Overall and project monitoring and reporting are conducted with the support of SGS.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### Dr. h.c. Hannes Schmid

Co-Founder and Deputy Director

### Ngon Sokleap

Co-Founder and Director

### Horn Sreymom

Finance Manager

# SMILING GECKO GERMANY

Smiling Gecko e.V. was established in 2018 as a not-for-profit organization and is recognized as a charitable association in Germany. It provides direct aid in the form of finance and other support to the people in need in Cambodia, sponsoring projects that are sustainable both from an ecological and economic standpoint. Smiling Gecko is a non-governmental organisation engaged in a number of development and aid projects and collaborates closely with SGC and SGS. All donations to Smiling Gecko Germany (SGDe) go directly towards the organisation's projects. All members of the board of management of SGDe are volunteers who do not receive any salaries or wages. Their professional skills, connections and insights are invaluable to the charity. Board members pay their own travel and other expenses arising from their work for Smiling Gecko.

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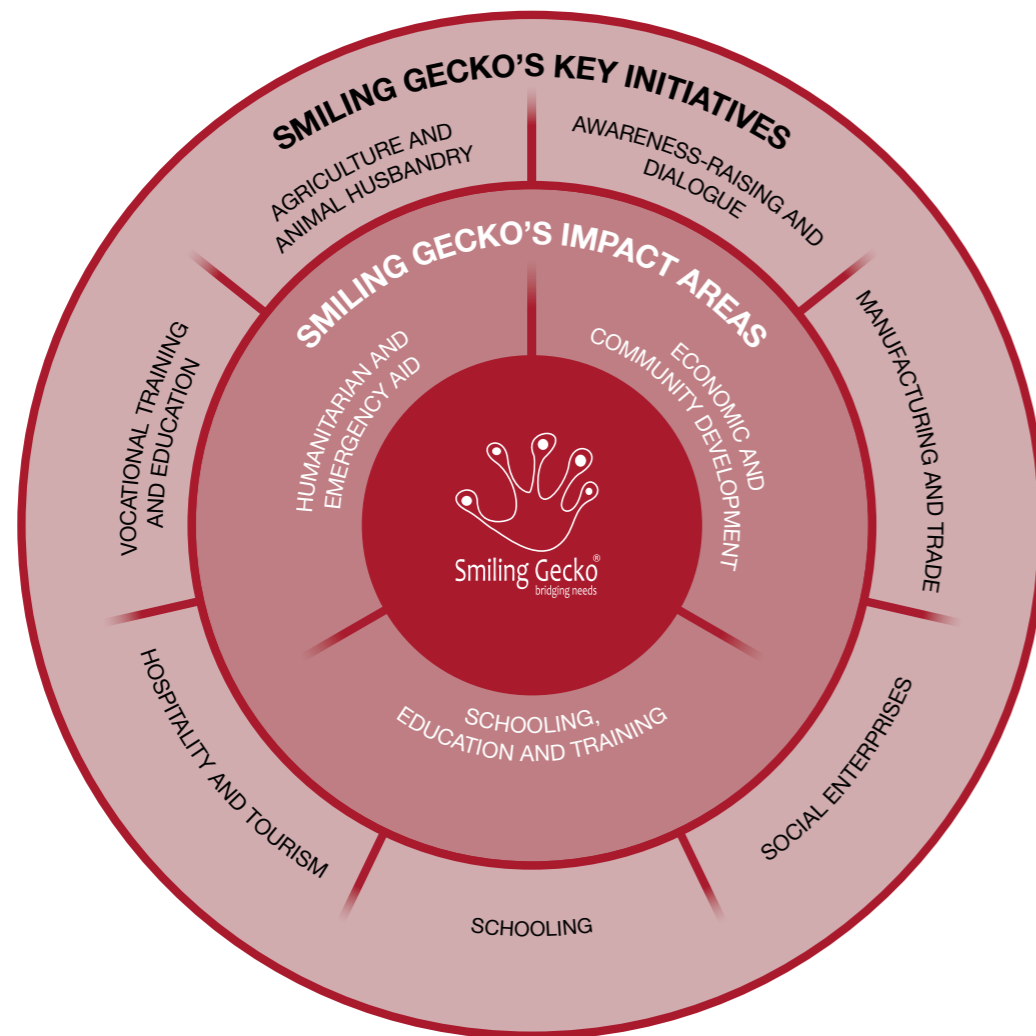
### Thomas Andresen

Board Member  
Managing Director  
Losan Pharma GmbH

# THE SMILING GECKO PRINCIPLE

Different to most traditional NGOs, SGC takes a holistic approach through its cluster project. This means that the individual elements share a common theme and are addressing the same issues and thereby form a cluster of excellence and deliver a shared strategic input to the overall success of the project. The result is a sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the individuals, families and communities that are directly and indirectly associated with the project.

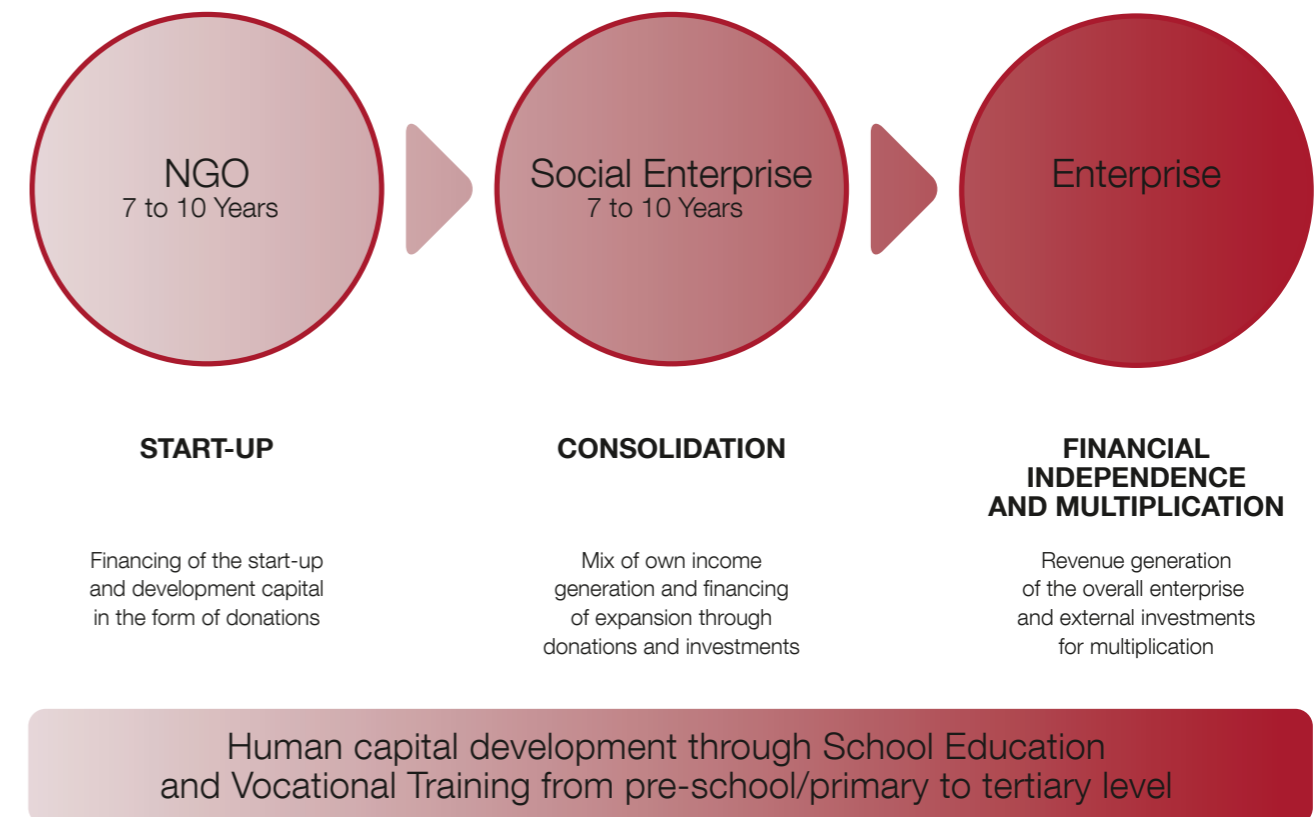
From the very start in 2014, this systemic vision was at the core of SGC's work. Since then, more than 250 jobs and apprenticeships have been created in the areas of agriculture, livestock and fish farming, tourism and hospitality and step by step, some of the projects are on track to turning into social enterprises. Currently, more than 400 pupils are attending the school - with one grade added every year – and approx. 3'000 people benefit directly from the project. The reach, however, is much broader and about 10'000 individuals benefit indirectly through community development activities. SGC's impact is further tangible at a national level, will contribute to sustainable economic growth in Cambodia and has the potential to be replicated in different regions of Cambodia as well as in other countries.



The vast majority of employees, teachers and trainers involved in the project are Cambodians and only a few expatriates are involved as technical experts. As coaches, they lead and guide the projects that make up the cluster, with the goal of being replaced by local staff after the initial start-up and training phase.

Every year, more projects and social enterprises in the different areas are to follow – current planning goes up until 2030 with reviews conducted according to the results of a continuous evaluation process. Due to the economic orientation of the individual cluster projects, they are meant to become self-sufficient and, additionally, will be able to make contributions to the financing of the school as a shared investment in the education of the rural children. This creates the exemplary model of a functioning rural community that offers its members education, decent livelihood opportunities and a sustainable income while at the same time protecting the environment and reducing the rural exodus.

For the organization, this means that SGC is progressing from an NGO to a social enterprise and finally to an enterprise in most areas of the project.



For the first development phases – Start-Up and Consolidation – we estimate a period of 7-10 years before the project reaches financial independence. It will be crucial during all this time to ensure the building-up of human capital by ensuring competent schooling and training from pre-school to tertiary levels as well as on-the-job training.





# VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONCEPT

Investing in the skills development through vocational education and training is a critical component of human capital development, which in turn makes an important contribution towards reducing poverty.

SGC focuses on fighting the causes of poverty and helping people to help themselves. In order to do so and to support the creation of sustainable livelihoods, vocational education and training is a crucial pillar of our cluster project and the basis for securing regular incomes for thousands of Cambodians. The concept of SGC encompasses all organized learning processes for the development of technical, social and personal skills and qualifications that contribute to sustainable long-term integration of trained people into the formal or informal economy under decent working conditions, either on an employed or self-employed basis.

By promoting vocational education and training, SGC aims at supporting young men and women to gain the qualifications that are relevant in the labour market of the future. Looking beyond the purely economic dimension, vocational skills development also plays a role in the personal development of poor and disadvantaged young people, thereby contributing to social cohesion.

SGC's concept is guided by the key elements of the Swiss dual system of theory and practice, such as the alternation between theoretical and practical training. Individual elements are singled out and adapted, taking existing structures in Cambodia into account. The program offers apprenticeships to school graduates and extensive training opportunities to school drop-outs and adults according to their inclinations and abilities – attaching great importance to the development of craft businesses and production facilities. Currently, a carpentry, a boutique bungalow resort, a restaurant with catering facilities, agricultural and animal husbandry projects, an industrial kitchen, a bakery, a butchery as well as Farmhouse Shops provide apprenticeships as well as training and employment opportunities. Other businesses that will enable young Cambodians to learn a trade in training programmes that combine practical skills with theoretical knowledge are under development.








**UN Noun Mariya**, 31, Executive Chef, Farmhouse Restaurant











I have been with SGC since 2013. In the beginning, SGC supported me with local cooking and English courses. Through the vocational training at SGC and the Hotelfachschule Lucerne in Switzerland, I was able to develop and refine my cooking skills. During the past years, I have been taken under the wings of top international Michelin star chefs and supported by the Swiss Uccelin Foundation. I have been able to advance a new Khmer cuisine which is a unique way of Cambodian cooking. I am the head chef of a kitchen team of 8 staff members. Daily vocational and language training are incorporated into the development process for our chefs, sous chefs and kitchen crew. All of us take pride in spoiling our guests with culinary delights.

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. Cambodia – in line with all other member states of the United Nations – committed to contributing to achieving these goals by 2030. In many ways, SGC responds to the same goals and targets and has adopted the content of the agenda as the basic principle for its work.

Consequently, SGC's innovative and exemplary projects contribute to Cambodia and ultimately the world community achieving these targets.

SDG	Official Goal	Objective of SGC's Cluster Project	SGC Activities
	End poverty in all of its forms everywhere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable participating individuals, families and communities to gain the capacity to help themselves</li> <li>To provide direct humanitarian aid in case of emergency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and employment in different economic areas</li> <li>Family and community livelihood projects</li> <li>Direct Humanitarian Aid</li> <li>Support of other NGOs</li> </ul>
	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support families in food production</li> <li>To contribute to food security sustainable agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticulture and Vegetable Farming</li> <li>Stockbreeding</li> <li>Fish Farming</li> <li>Food Processing Centre</li> <li>Organic Farmhouse Shop</li> </ul>
	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide first aid</li> <li>To monitor health data and implement mitigation measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medical screening of school children and employees</li> <li>Health Clinic and Dentistry</li> <li>Medicinal Plant Cultivation</li> </ul>
	Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide quality education from primary to tertiary level</li> <li>To provide apprenticeships, vocational training and on-the-job learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SGC HISF   Education Campus</li> <li>Vocational training programmes</li> <li>University of Applied Sciences</li> </ul>
	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure equal inclusion of women into the workforce and projects</li> <li>To conduct project specifically targeted at women as household heads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational training programmes</li> <li>Women in Aquaculture</li> </ul>
	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide clean and safe water</li> <li>To teach school children hygiene and sanitation basics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct Humanitarian Aid (drinking water)</li> <li>Campus sanitary installations</li> <li>Hygiene Education</li> </ul>
	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To use alternative forms of energy</li> <li>To generate renewable energy on the premises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solar Project</li> </ul>

SDG	Official Goal	Objective of SGC's Cluster Project	SGC Activities
	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide stable working conditions and fair wages to the SGC workforce</li> <li>To support the establishment of social enterprises with innovative business models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational training programmes</li> <li>Social Enterprise Projects</li> <li>Farmhouse Resort &amp; Spa</li> </ul>
	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To developing innovative business models</li> <li>To design infrastructure that caters to the country's climatic conditions and cultural heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carpentry</li> <li>Food Processing Centre</li> <li>University of Applied Sciences</li> <li>Advanced Bio-Based Construction Materials Lab</li> </ul>
	Reduce inequality within and among countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To integrate and increase number of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds into the workforce</li> <li>To be a driver of growth in rural areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational training programmes</li> <li>Social Enterprise Projects</li> </ul>
	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a smart "Eco-village" on the premises of SGC</li> <li>To report on experiences and learnings</li> <li>To engage in research on renewable energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advanced Bio-Based Construction Materials Lab</li> </ul>
	Ensure sustainable consumption and production pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To contribute to responsible food production by focusing on organic products</li> <li>To engage in research on production based on renewable sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medicinal Plant Cultivation</li> <li>Organic Farmhouse Shop</li> <li>Vanilla Cultivation</li> </ul>
	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce CO2-Emissions in all activities</li> <li>To replace fossil fuels by renewable energies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solar Project</li> <li>Awareness-raising for environmentally-friendly practices</li> </ul>
	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To introduce innovative ways of fish production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women in Aquaculture</li> <li>Fish Farming</li> </ul>
	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of ecosystems and forests, halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To engage in regenerative agriculture</li> <li>To conserve natural resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Horticulture and Vegetable Farming</li> <li>Vanilla Cultivation</li> <li>Medicinal Plant Cultivation</li> </ul>
	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To refuse to engage in bribery and corruption</li> <li>To contribute to the democratisation of the country</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness-raising and Dialogue</li> <li>Liechtenstein Dialogue for Development</li> <li>Millenials Circle</li> </ul>
	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To collaborate with national and international NGOs and institutions</li> <li>To conduct joint research with national and international academic institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liechtenstein Dialogue for Development</li> <li>Millenials Circle</li> <li>SGC HISF   Education Campus</li> </ul>



# PARTNERS

Smiling Gecko takes great pride in the fact that its vision is shared and supported by many renowned institutions, individuals and companies. Without their continued commitment and generosity, we would not be able to realise the projects in the way we have set out to do.

## UNIVERSITIES



## FOUNDATIONS / ORGANISATIONS



## SPONSORS



# PROJECT VISITS ON SITE

Supporters of Smiling Gecko are always welcome to visit the project site in Cambodia and personally experience the sustainable and efficient use of their donations.

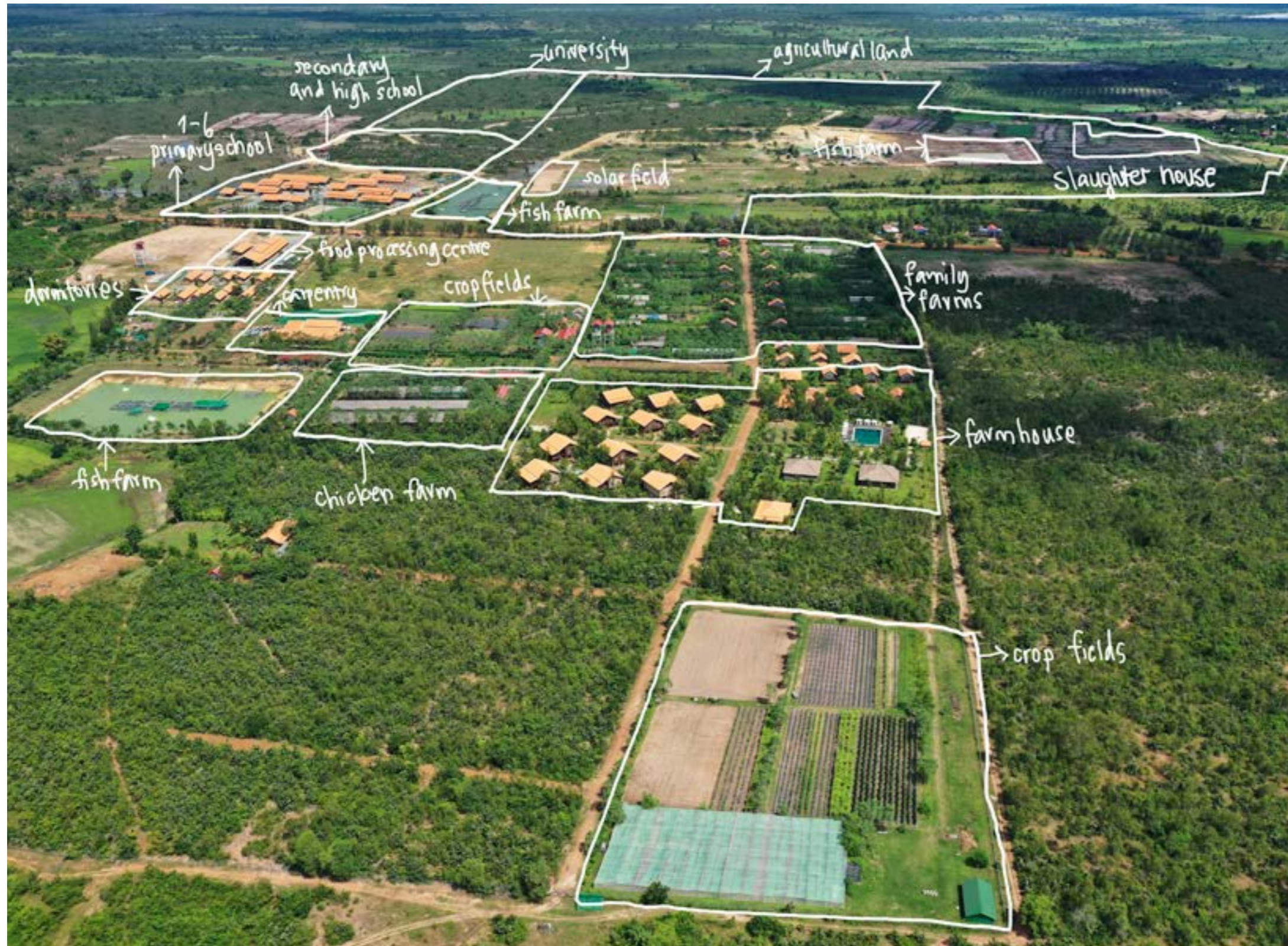


**KIT Samy**, 40, Facility Manager, Smiling Gecko Site

I graduated from management school and joined SGC in the beginning of 2020 as the project's Facility Manager. I am leading a large team of 36 staff members. I manage several units such as security, facility maintenance, dormitory housekeeping, driving services, waste management, and sewing and fabric repairs. As the Facility Manager, I am responding to the operational needs of all departments within SGC, according to their requests and the maintenance of the facilities as scheduled.



# THE SMILING GECKO CLUSTER PROJECT



SGC implements a development project that is breaking ground in many ways. It supports the establishment of economically and ecologically sustainable social enterprises in addition to providing basic school education and vocational training, resulting in a contribution towards increasing the quality of life as well as ensuring the livelihoods and food security of the rural population. All elements of the project are interlinked and mutually nurturing and backed up by education and training. By following this holistic approach to development, SGC aims to positively influence the long-term living conditions of the population in rural Cambodia with effects that are tangible all over the country. This approach also successfully de-risks the overall project as proven by past external crises experiences.

The main areas of the cluster project are Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Manufacturing and Trade, Tourism and Hospitality and Continuing Education. The cluster project is supplemented by health and education services, humanitarian aid activities and awareness-raising and advocacy.

The cluster project's area currently extends over 140 ha of land but in order to extend the areas of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, as well as Manufacturing and Trade, SGC needs to invest in enlarging its basic infrastructure on two additional plots of 20 ha and 13 ha respectively. This extension is necessary to scale project activities, which in turn contribute to the projected self-sustainability of the cluster. These land extensions will be conducted in an ecologically sound manner through developing already cleared land by planting bamboo. Bamboo planting will contribute to reducing CO<sup>2</sup> and loosening the ground surface, which in turn will facilitate vegetable cultivation. The bamboo plants further provide a natural fence and, once harvested, are a source of material for manufacture and construction.



# AGRICULTURE & ANIMAL HUSBANDRY



Food sits at the intersection of all 17 SDGs and to satisfy the future food needs of a growing population, a systemic approach – on a global as well as a local level – is needed. SGC's activities in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry follow such an approach and aim at developing products and solutions that optimally satisfy people's nutritional needs, contribute to food security and create sustainable livelihoods for farmers while focusing on solutions that guarantee environmentally friendly and sustainable ways of food production, noting that the food industry is the second largest contributor to climate change.

Furthermore, the pandemic has shown that local food systems have become of utmost importance and that there is a significant gap in logistical support (e.g. cooling and storage). In line with this, SGC also applies the principles propagated as part of the UN Decade of Family Farming (2018 – 2028) that increasingly insist on relying on local food production and contract farming.

Sustainable and regenerative agriculture is one of the main pillars of the SGC cluster project and the Agricultural and Animal Husbandry production units and farms are located on around 40 ha of the SGC land, making up about 30% of the overall project area. Producing only organic food, the farms that are part of the project currently concentrate on poultry, pig and cattle farming as well as the production of a variety of vegetables and fruits. The concept comprises the inclusion of small-hold farmers as well as the co-construction and scaling of solutions.

Our challenges are to improve skill levels and thereby the living conditions and income capacities of the farmers while ensuring a climate-positive, regenerative production and the integration of innovative digital technologies despite infrastructural limitations.





**SY Savat**, 32, Head of Department, Horticulture and Vegetable Farming

Holding a degree in Agriculture and Rural Development, I joined SGC in 2016 as Farm Manager. I am leading a team of 35 agriculture workers. I am supported by 3 additional volunteer Cambodian agronomy coaches. Weekly vocational and professional training sessions in different fields help to improve the knowledge of each team member. We are planting organic vegetables and fruits for the Farmhouse Restaurant and canteen, the Organic Farmhouse Shops as well as the external market. Additionally, we support nearby local farmers and families with techniques and resources to cultivate and raise livestock and poultry so that they can earn more income.

## HORTICULTURE AND VEGETABLE FARMING



Fruit and vegetables are the key to a healthy diet and make up a large proportion of the diet of Cambodian people. Unfortunately, most products have to be imported from neighbouring countries, and often contain harmful residues such as pesticides. To ameliorate the situation, the Cambodian government has decided to promote organic farming. In response to the growing demand for our products within and outside our project, SGC is constantly increasing the output of its agricultural enterprises and exclusively produces organic products. The vegetable farm and the stockbreeding activities are fully integrated into our circular biomass flow of human and animal waste. Pig manure, for example, is used as a fertiliser on the vegetable fields.





We produce about 32 varieties of fruit and vegetables on 6 ha of land, 10 of which were added in 2020. In 2020, we constructed a netted greenhouse of currently 4'500 m<sup>2</sup> to allow for production all year round of otherwise seasonal products. The current output of fruit and vegetables is around 300 kg per day, but we target to increase to 600-1'000 kg per day by the end of 2021. The planning is based on the availability of sufficient water for irrigation in summer and no flooding in winter. To increase the availability of irrigation water, we have five water reservoir ponds at our disposal that are filled during the rainy season and will be the main source for irrigation in the coming summers.



The produced fruits and vegetables are used directly on the SGC premises – in the Farmhouse Restaurant and the Industrial Kitchen – and sold to external customers directly or through the Organic Farmhouse Shops in Phnom Penh. We follow strict hygiene as well as organic farming standards – from the field to the point of use or sales and the demand for our products is ever-increasing.

Horticulture and Vegetable Farming currently provides stable employment to 28 field workers and is overseen by five agronomists. To extend the impact of SGC's farming activities, we engage in contract farming, generating livelihoods for local people, increasing incomes and providing farmers with the opportunity to learn how to grow a wider range of crops. Currently, 20 family farmers are associated with SGC through our Agriculture Family Project.





**SREU Tong Hak**, 33, Pig Production Manager, Stockbreeding

I'm a veterinarian by profession and have been with SGC since 2016. Martin Kramer, a Swiss professional coach on pig breeding, has trained me and my team of 3 staff members. Besides, we are supported by the Veterinarian Medicine department at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, with regard to the breeding of genetically healthy pigs and adherence to international animal welfare standards. My team and I take care of more than 32 sows, to be extended to 64. This means, that we will be able to produce more than 100 piglets per month.

## STOCKBREEDING



Stockbreeding – which today is an integral part of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry – was started in 2016 and consists of chicken, pig and cattle husbandry. The breeding of chicks and piglets is mainly managed by the reproduction team directly on the SGC farm while the raising and fattening of the animals is done by the farm families that are part of the Agriculture Family Project off-site.

In 2020, 12'000 chicks were produced on a quarterly basis. Of these, 7'500 were fattened by the contract farmers while the rest were sold to external buyers. We foresee a production increase to 20'000 chicks and 10'000 fattened chicks quarterly by the end of 2021. Pig farming experienced a major drawback in 2019 due to an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) that reduced our production to a small scale. In 2020, we had 16 gilts and 1 boar which produced 33 piglets per month. Over the course of 2021, we intend to increase piglet production to 80 – 160 piglets per month.





Cattle which include cow and buffalo is traditional domestic raised animals in Cambodia. Most of farmers use them as laborers in agriculture e.g. for carrying, transporting and plowing the soil, and on top, their manure is the best fertilizer component in organic farming. However, cow meat is commonly consumed by Cambodians, and recently buffalo meat is also becoming more popular. To preserve this tradition, cattle breeding and meat production and processing will be significantly expanded during 2021. In the first phase, we are currently fattening 15 cows and 9 calves. In the second phase, another 25 Kouprey- und Brahman cows and 10 buffaloes will be added.





**CHENG Samnith**, 31, Chicken Production Manager, Stockbreeding

I am a poultry veterinarian and joined SGC in 2018. The chicken farm is an important source of income for SGC and the farmers in the surrounding areas. We produce more than 80'000 chicks per year. My team of 3 staff members and I are responsible for hygiene, genetics and health standards. We are supported by the Swiss Agriculture Institute to improve the quality of our production. Vocational and professional coaching are essential to reach our goals.



The meat and other products derived from our stockbreeding activities are used in the Farmhouse Restaurant and the Industrial Kitchen, as well as being sold through the Organic Farmhouse Shops or directly to external customers and wholesalers. The demand for our products is very high because of their consistently high quality. The challenge is to sustainably increase our supply to guarantee a regular income for SGC and the affiliated farmers.

All Agriculture and Animal Husbandry activities are conducted on a strictly scientifically-backed basis and are supported by the Agricultural Education and Advisory Centre Zug (LBBZ) under the direction of Rector Martin Pfister and by PD Dr. med. vet. Xaver Sidler from the University of Zurich (UZH), Vetsuisse Faculty.









**SOEUN Theary**, 29, Grow-out Manager, Fish Farming

I studied at a state university, majoring in Aquaculture and Fishery and joined SGC in 2018. Coached and trained by the experts of the ZHAW Switzerland, I am responsible for ensuring that the tilapia fingerlings produced by our own hatchery can grow to the optimal size in our ponds. Collecting scientific data of water quality, oxygen saturation and other bio-chemical elements in the water etc. will improve the quality of hatching and fattening the fish. We are a team of 5 staff members, monitoring the fingerlings and the grow-out 7 days a week. Through vocational coaching and training, we instruct and train external fish farmers to improve their production.

## FISH FARMING



Fish is especially important in many developing countries because it is often the only affordable and relatively easily available source of animal protein. In Cambodia, fish is an important diet staple, accounting for about 60% of households' animal protein intake and the second most consumed after rice. The average annual fish consumption is about 63kg/person.





Since early 2018, SGC is producing Tilapia from the brood-stock fry that was purchased from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT Thailand). Tilapia is a fish that is well known locally and easy to farm. The main milestones of the SGC aquaculture activities were the start of the grow-out activities in March 2018 with 16 net cage cultures with purchased fingerlings and the completion of the hatchery building at the end of 2018. That allowed us to start our own hatchery activities in early 2019 and since March 2019, we use fingerlings from our own hatchery. Today, hatchery and grow-out work hand-in-hand and include a circulation system and a number of traditional fish farm ponds in which the fish can grow to the size preferred by the local market. This approach of combining the hatchery and the grow-out mirrors our livestock activities with chick/piglet production on the SGC farm and the fattening/grow-out conducted by contract farmers on their own land. Fish farming has become an integral element of the overall project and increases the efficiency of material flow – fish can be fed vegetable feed produced by local farmers and the wastewater from the fish tanks proves to be an excellent fertiliser.



The production from the grow-out supplies enough fish for our internal use and allows us to sell the excess to external customers. The customer feedback from farmers on the fingerlings and end customers on the fish regarding the quality and service is excellent and the demand is high.

SGC's objective is to increase the grow-out in order to be able to sell 22 tons of fish and to grow 1 million fingerlings by the end of 2021. To achieve this, we will need to further build up the infrastructure as well as intensify the skills and knowledge required for fish farming on a commercial scale. The knowledge transfer includes the addition of a large fish-rearing tank for training purposes, allowing SGC to train young Cambodians to run sustainable small to medium size aquaculture facilities on their own.

The challenge will be to reduce the costs for our aquaculture activities to make it possible to decrease the sale prices of our products to make them attractive in comparison to imported cheaper fish of lower quality and health benefits. The project is supported by scientists from ZHAW Wädenswil.



# VANILLA CULTIVATION



As a spice, vanilla is the most labour-intensive and comes second only to saffron in terms of high prices. The demand for natural vanilla products is going up significantly as more consumers push for “natural ingredients”. Nearly 80% of the world’s vanilla comes from small farms in Madagascar, followed by Indonesia, India, Mexico and Uganda. Challenging growing conditions due to catastrophic storms, labour exploitation, and deforestation put the tropical East African plant at risk, causing a worldwide shortage and skyrocketing prices. The price spiral has consequences – speculators are looking for quick profits and quality suffers as a result. The “bourbon vanilla pods” contain less and less of the valuable aromas and consequentially, the demand falls.

This, however, makes room for a second species, namely the Tahitian vanilla “*Vanilla Tahitensis*”, which occurs wild in Tahiti. This species is characterized by its aroma and highly sought after by gourmets around the world. It therefore commands high world market prices.

In search of products to diversify our agricultural output, we carried out tests in cooperation with the ZHAW Wädenswil and were able to establish that Tahitian vanilla grows very well under the local conditions, provided we grow the plants in a greenhouse that provides the original forest plant with the necessary shady and cooler microclimate. An aluminium net foil, a sprinkler system and drip irrigation are additional important elements for the cultivation.



The goal of SGC is to grow and produce vanilla in a sustainable and organic way and finally sell it vacuum-packed internationally. After the initial cultivation of 320 plants, growing on 250 m<sup>2</sup> with the first harvest expected in April to June 2022, we are planning to construct the greenhouse, covering approximately 1'000 m<sup>2</sup>, with a capacity for the growing of at least 900 plants by the end of 2022. According to our calculations, after a successful start-up phase of three years, we expect to generate profits with yields of up to 72'000 USD per 1'000 m<sup>2</sup>/year.

In the context of the vanilla project, new employment opportunities and apprenticeships will be created, providing additional sustainable livelihoods. Manual pollination as well as subsequent drying and fermentation processes are easy to learn but because of the required dexterity, this work is particularly suited for women. The shaded hall provides a comfortable workplace with a pleasant and cool climate. All of these conditions make vanilla production also particularly suited for the integration of persons with a disability. If the project proceeds as projected, we will create livelihood opportunities for more than 100 Cambodians from the local area over the next years, with direct tangible impacts on their families and communities.

The vanilla project is a further step towards the profitability of the cluster system as a whole and all tasks, from construction of the greenhouse to the cultivation, maintenance, and marketing are taken on by Cambodians.



# MEDICINAL PLANT CULTIVATION



## FUTURE PROJECT

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) evolved through thousands of years, is today practiced all over the world and has gained increasing popularity as an alternative to conventional medicine over the last decade.

As part of our sustainable agriculture program, we are producing a large variety of vegetables and fruits for our own consumption and for sale. Complementing our agricultural portfolio with medicinal plants used in TCM is a logical next step and an opportunity for SGC's development. The goal of our new project is to produce high-quality organic medicinal plants and herbs to enter the respective markets, which are already significant in China and steadily growing in Europe.



In 2020, we have started to plant about 10 different varieties of medicinal plants, including ginger, turmeric, mung beans and Mulberry trees on a cleaned and prepared 250 m<sup>2</sup> plot on the area of 5000 m<sup>2</sup> that is dedicated to the project. We will, in particular, use the roots, leaves and fruits of these plants which will be carefully dried in an air-conditioned room (the energy being supplied by our own solar panels) or food dehydrator and then sold either in pieces or powdered. We will also introduce agroforestry by planting TCM varieties between other fruit trees that are already planted on an area of 1 ha.

Our production will be organic without any use of synthetic chemically produced pesticides to ensure high quality and excellent health effects of our plants. Our entire value-chain is inclusive and involves local farmers and future entrepreneurs from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. This has a direct effect on the livelihood of the involved individuals and their families, as well as indirectly on the whole community, and ultimately on the consumers who are able to buy superior organic products. Target customers are wholesalers in China and Europe and local shops in Cambodia. The project is supported by the ZHAW Wädenswil and we are in contact with the Swiss Association for TCM plants which will support us in bringing our products to the market.



# MANUFACTURING AND TRADE



Cambodia's long-term vision towards 2030 includes the promotion of the country's industrial development that will help maintain sustainable and inclusive high economic growth. Today, and even more so given the backlashes caused by the effects of the pandemic, the industrial sector remains weak and narrow-based with a low level of sophistication. Key obstacles are a lack of diversity in the industrial base, an informal and missing middle structure, weak entrepreneurship, urban-centred industry and low value-addition and technology application.

SGC's contribution to achieving the country's industrial vision focuses on alleviating the scarcity of basic technical knowledge and skills that are crucial in transforming an unskilled into a skilled labour force that is capable of absorbing new and high-value technical and technological skills. Our efforts currently focus on the construction sector through the SGC carpentry and different food production units.





**KEO Pha, 24, Manager in Training, Carpentry**

I grew up in the suburban slums of Phnom Penh and dropped out of school during primary school. My family was offered the opportunity to live on the SGC farm in 2014. I was able to participate in an apprenticeship at the SGC Carpentry for 4 years. Under the guidance of Swiss wood engineers and through vocational and professional training, I became an experienced carpenter. At the Carpentry we work in a team of 26 operational staff members and trainees. I love working with wood. Currently I am training to become Carpentry Manager and I hope to be able to run parts of the Carpentry independently soon.

## CARPENTRY

Given the growing demand for carpentry products for our own use and in the local market, the Carpentry was constructed in 2016 to Swiss industry standards and extends over an area of approx. 400 m<sup>2</sup>. The machinery was recovered from a Swiss factory damaged by fire and donated to SGC. All pieces of equipment and machinery have been fully serviced and installed on site by Swiss specialists. The construction and start-up of the workshop was supervised by a Swiss master carpenter. Today, the workshop is managed by a Swiss timber construction engineer and qualified carpenter and employs 26 staff members. In line with our vocational training concept, the Carpentry offers apprenticeships and training in the carpentry trade with the objective to produce qualified carpenters that are trained on a theoretical and practical level. Training is conducted based on an elaborate curriculum that suits local needs, promotes the use of locally produced materials and takes the specific climatic conditions into account. Since none of the locally employed staff members are qualified carpenters yet, we continuously provide different training units in addition to the apprenticeship program, supplemented by English classes for our adult staff members.



The pre-pandemic demand for carpentry products was influenced by increased activity in the urban housing markets with a consecutive demand for high-quality and modern-style furniture, high real estate investments and a booming tourism sector. Traditional carpentry workshops were not able to meet this demand. After the pandemic, demand will most likely rise once again with an even higher need for technically skilled persons and products with a high quality and functionality. All products of the Carpentry are 100% made in Cambodia by Cambodians but Swiss engineered, under fair working conditions. They are eco-friendly and can be customized and personalized.





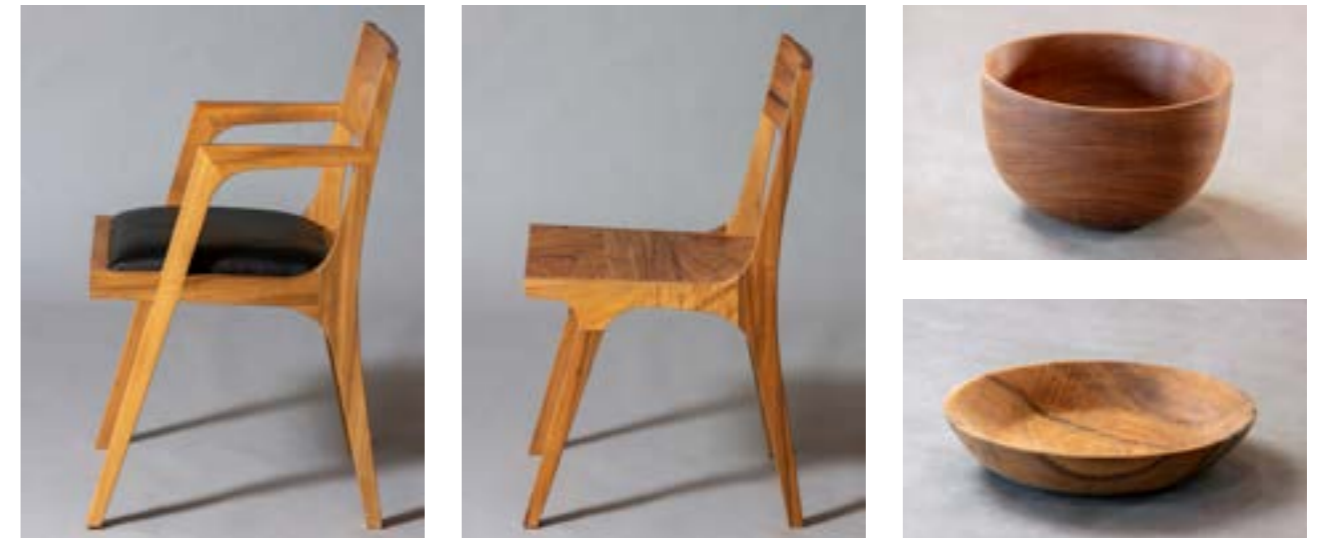
The practical tasks of the Carpentry include new construction, renovation and restoration work for the facilities of the cluster project, hereby reducing the overall costs of creating and maintaining the project's infrastructure. The Carpentry additionally produces in-house developed products such as pepper mills, a small range of furniture and includes a kitchen building unit. All products and services are offered locally while some of the products are marketed internationally.





For 2021, we want to grow the carpentry business to achieve a higher market share based on our newly developed market-penetration strategy. Challenges are the procuring of proper forestry material that must be legally logged and cannot come from protected forests. This requirement leads to an increase in raw material prices, in particular during the raining season which poses significant problems for suppliers in any case.

The Carpentry is supported by the Centre for Development and Cooperation (CDC), a section of the Technical College of Bern – Department of Architecture, Woodwork and Construction.







**NUB Chendorn**, 33, Head Chef, Industrial Kitchen and Canteen

I gained some first experience in cooking during a training program conducted by an NGO in Phnom Penh. Thereafter, I joined SGC at the beginning of 2019. Coached and trained by a Swiss master chef, I am now able to run the kitchen operation with my team of 32 staff members. We prepare over 1'200 tasty and healthy meals a day for the school children and staff of SGC, using only organic products from the SGC Agriculture and Animal Husbandry units. Thanks to constant vocational and professional training in hygiene and quality food processing methods, we are able to adhere to international health food standards.

## INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN AND CANTEEN



One of the foremost goals of SGC is to fight hunger. In this context, we make sure that the school children, all staff members and families that are part of the cluster project are fed sufficiently and in a healthy way. To guarantee this, we have, since 2018, included a fully equipped large industrial kitchen that supplies meals to the project's canteen that is used by the school children and staff. The industrial kitchen further includes a bakery and a butchery. In line with the principles of the cluster project, the kitchen and canteen employees are all local Cambodians and training and apprenticeship opportunities are offered. In total, the kitchen and canteen employ around 32 staff members and apprentices. The medium-term objective is to be able to provide around 4'000 to 5'000 meals per day.





**SIENG Tola**, 34, Head of Bakery, Industrial Kitchen and Canteen

I attended secondary school until high school and live just 5 minute walking distance from the farm. I became a trainee at SGC in 2016 and was first trained as a chef in the kitchen where I discovered my love for baked goods. Educated and trained in Cambodia and Switzerland by Swiss master bakers, I am today able to pass on my knowledge through vocational training to 3 of my colleagues in the SGC Bakery. Baking bread and making confectionery for the Farmhouse Restaurant and the Industrial Kitchen and Canteen, creating small healthy breads for our students and delivering freshly baked goods to our Organic Farmhouse Shops in the city is my passion.

## BAKERY



The Bakery operates since December 2018 and supplies the Boutique Bungalow Resort, the Farmhouse Restaurant as well as the Industrial Kitchen and Canteen with bread and other baked products. The demand for our goods is high and excess products are sold on the local market and through the Organic Farmhouse Shops. The Bakery employs 3 young local people who are trained as bakers.





**LAY Dim**, 31, Team Leader, Butchery

I dropped out of school in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In 2018, I joined SGC as a trainee and today work as a butcher in the Butchery. We produce delicious meat products such as sausages, meat loaves and chops, according to Swiss recipes, for our Farmhouse Restaurant and the Organic Farmhouse Shops in Phnom Penh.

## BUTCHERY



The Butchery also operates since December 2018 and is a logical addition to the agricultural production chain set up by the cluster project. The products of the Butchery mainly serve internal needs in the Industrial Kitchen and Canteen and of the project's farm families. Currently, the Butchery employs 4 Cambodian staff members and apprentices who are in training to become butchers. Plans foresee to increase this number to 6 by 2024.





# FOOD PROCESSING CENTRE



## FUTURE PROJECT

In order to further improve the hygiene standards and quality of our meat products, SGC intends to develop and construct a meat processing plant. This plant will produce a variety of meat products derived from the pork, poultry and cattle produced on-site and by the contract farmers and facilitate the access of these products to a wider local market. All animals are and will be organically raised on the farm or bought at fair prices directly from the farmers of the SGC Agriculture Community Project. Additionally, the plant intends to buy animals from other local farmers, thereby providing more farmers with a regular income. These local producers currently depend on wholesalers and middlemen and are often cheated and exploited. The meat processing plant will provide an alternative to the current supply-chain and contribute to stopping the exploitation of farmers.

The plan foresees the employment of 7 to 10 local people, who will be properly trained. As in all other areas of the cluster project, the workers will earn a fair wage that enables them to ensure the livelihoods of their families from the very start.





## SEWING WORKSHOP



A sewing and tailoring workshop was added to the cluster project on the SGC site during the fall of 2019. For this purpose, a training room with 6 sewing machines was set up, where up to 6 Cambodian women from the surrounding area are educated and coached in the use of the sewing machines and manufacturing of textile products by trained volunteer tailors. Currently, 5 women are employed in the sewing workshop at a fair wage, enabling them to generate income and contribute to the livelihood of their families. They produce uniforms for the SGC employees, bed linen for the Boutique Bungalow Resort, tablecloths for the Farmhouse Restaurant and much more. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, mouth and nose protection masks made of fabric are also part of the production range.

## ORGANIC FARMHOUSE SHOPS



The demand for our fruits and vegetables and other food products is very high. Hotel guests and restaurant patrons continuously inquire about the possibility to purchase products on site and from their homes. Therefore, since mid-August 2019, SGC is operating two small grocery stores in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh. The shops sell fresh produce by the farmers of the Agriculture Family Project. Apart from organic fruits and vegetables, the product offer includes meat from the Butchery, fish from the Fish Farm as well as bread and pastries from the Bakery. Each Organic Farmhouse Shop employs up to 5 local people at fair wages.

The stores are a new element of the SGC value chain that now covers not only production and food processing but also the local sale of the food products. Additional stores at prime retail locations are planned. The shops target the urban population of Phnom Penh and in particular wealthy Cambodians and expats living in the capital who value quality food.

Very recently, the shops are supplemented by mobile food stalls that are situated at different strategic locations in the vicinity of the cluster project. The objective is to sell fresh perishable products that experience a lower than normal demand because of the consequences of the pandemic to end consumers and to contribute to the alleviation of the current food shortage with healthy products at fair prices.





# TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY



Tourism in Cambodia has experienced consistent growth since the 1990s and tourist numbers surged from 450'000 international tourists in 2000 to an all-time high of 6.6 million in 2019. The government views the sector as one of the most important foreign exchange earners and employment provider for Cambodia's economic development. Generally, the tourism and hospitality sector is well placed to contribute to poverty reduction because it is highly localized and can provide direct benefits to communities where low-skilled workers in remote areas can participate and benefit.

Given the importance of the tourism sector for Cambodia's development, the SGC cluster project puts a strong emphasis on tourism and hospitality in terms of service offer and education and training. SGC's approach, however, stipulates that related services must be sustainable in terms of benefitting local communities. Following this approach, SGC ensures the appropriateness of tourism development in a cultural and environmental context, manages the environmental impacts of its respective activities and ensures that communities reap the benefits from tourism and hospitality in a way that will aid their social and economic development.

SGC operates a boutique bungalow resort with an excellent restaurant for internal and external guests, as well as an industrial kitchen for the operation of the school and staff canteen and the processing of food from its own farms.

As in all areas of the cluster project, special emphasis is placed on providing local people with education and training as well as employment and livelihood opportunities that enable them to earn a sustainable living for themselves and their families. In the tourism and hospitality area, young Cambodians are trained as chefs, bakers, butchers, service personnel, or in housekeeping.





**NHEB Pheara**, 31, Operation Manager, Farmhouse Resort & Spa

I have been with SGC since February 2019. I finished my education in Tourism and Hospitality Management from a university in Phnom Penh and have experience as a front desk and guest relationship manager at a resort near Sihanoukville. At SGC, I began as a manager in training and was then promoted to operation manager. I have been trained and coached by experienced and successful hoteliers. I am managing a total of 44 staff members and trainees at the Farmhouse Resort & Spa. We continue to learn and develop under the coaching and training of our Swiss General Manager. As a result we are able to handle client bookings using an IT-system, welcome arriving guests and host them professionally and warmly in our nice and clean rooms, and spoiling them with delicious food prepared by talented chefs.

## FARMHOUSE RESORT & SPA THE BOUTIQUE BUNGALOW RESORT



The Boutique Bungalow Resort is located on the premises of SGC and started operation in December 2015. It is constructed in a charming traditional Cambodian architectural style and is surrounded by paddy fields and rolling hills. The resort is a training hotel and located at the very heart of the agricultural area of the SGC cluster project. All 34 rooms situated in 17 stilt houses are built in the traditional local style with modern sanitary facilities and contemporary decorations. After several expansions over the recent years, the resort further offers a variety of leisure facilities such as a swimming pool, 2 yoga shalas and a wellness and massage centre. Around 42 Cambodians are currently trained and employed in the area of gastronomy and hotel management, once more creating employment and livelihood for local families.





The resort is managed by an experienced international hotel manager who leads and coaches the local staff and trainees and imparts his knowledge to a Cambodian hotel manager so that management responsibility can be taken over locally in the future.

It is the objective of the resort to become one of the leading eco-friendly and sustainable boutique resorts in Cambodia and to train the staff to a level where they can provide excellent quality and outstanding service to the guests.



**EK Phalkun, 36, Massage Therapist, Farmhouse Resort & Spa**

I trained as a massage therapist in Thailand. Upon my return I joined SGC in 2020. With my knowledge and experience as a basis and support from professional coaches, I am part of our spa team of 3 therapists. We ensure the well-being of the Farmhouse Resort & Spa guests and spoil them with massages and aromatherapies. We are very happy to contribute our visitors' wellness and relaxation during their stay with us.



# FARMHOUSE RESTAURANT AND CATERING



The Farmhouse Restaurant was opened in parallel to the Boutique Bungalow Resort in December 2015 and has since grown into one of the best restaurants in the country.

The restaurant's executive chef Mariya Un Noun is Cambodian and a success story on her own. The mother of 2, grew up in the slums of Phnom Penh and with only 3 years of schooling now works as head chef of the restaurant. As she states, she "puts love in her food" and lets local cuisine flourish in her own creative way. Her meals are varied, nutritious and diversified and she quickly gained national and international recognition for her passion and cooking talent. During her training, she spent several months in Switzerland at the Hotel Management School in Lucerne and completed internships with top Swiss chefs. Some of her special dishes have already been adopted by top Swiss chefs into their repertoire.





The restaurant is supported and professionally fostered by a number of international top chefs, such as the Swiss star chef Andreas Caminada, who is enthusiastic about Mariya's talent. The partnership with his foundation "Fundaziun Uccelin" allows young European chefs to work with Mariya at the restaurant and bring the beauty of Cambodian cuisine to the world.



The dishes in the restaurant are, to a large part, prepared with ingredients from the SGC farms. Apart from organic fruit and vegetables, eggs and fish, bread and pastries from the Bakery and meat from the Butchery are used. The superb quality of the locally produced food contributes to the great taste and nutritional value of all dishes.

Triggered by the consequences and limitations of the pandemic that has met with an ongoing demand for SGC food products and dishes, the restaurant started a catering business to extend its activities and adapt to the pandemic circumstances. Given the catering service's initial success, it is planned to further extend the catering activities after the pandemic, providing additional livelihood opportunities.



## CONFERENCES AND TOURS



The inspiring environment of the SGC cluster project site encourages creativity and allows innovative thoughts to flow far away from the hustle and bustle of the city. In combination with the modern infrastructure, the resort is an ideal meeting centre – be it for a business meeting, teambuilding occasion, an incentive event or a private celebration, such as a wedding. For conferences and events, the resort disposes of a total of 350 m<sup>2</sup>. It has 2 conference rooms for events, each of which can accommodate between 20-60 participants. The resort staff have been fully trained to arrange tailor-made events and development plans foresee to extend this offer and provide more training and employment in conference management.

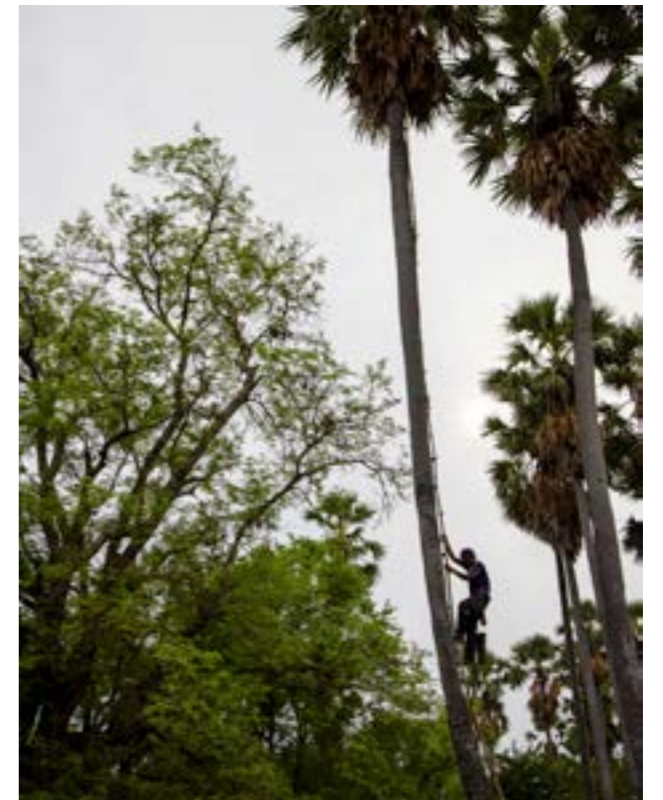




**MEA Danith, 38 and PHAN Sokphai, 27**, Tourguides, Farmhouse Resort & Spa

Both of us received training in hospitality management and joined SGC in 2020. We work as tour guides and guest relations staff. We show and explain the SGC project as well as the sights in the area during different tours. The history of Cambodia, which is impacting the lives of Cambodians still today, and the consequences of the Red Khmer Regime are very often unknown. We enjoy bringing Cambodian history tradition and culture closer to our visitors.

True to our mission to strengthen Cambodian traditions and culture, the resort offers organised excursions and tours to introduce the country and its people to internal and external guests. Half-day excursions give guests a deeper insight into the everyday life of the rural community. All tours are led by English-speaking guides. The offer includes a tour of the SGC cluster project as well as a Temple Mount tour, a rice paddy or palm sugar tour, a bamboo and charcoal tour, an ant nest tour as well as visits to textile factories.





# CONTINUING EDUCATION



It is generally accepted that education has the power to change a country. Cambodia is in utter need of this change and education plays the most crucial role in forming a generation of new Cambodians, not only at the primary and secondary school level but also at the vocational training and tertiary level.

In order to increase the impact of current educational activities, beyond primary and secondary level, and benefit an ever-increasing number of people, it is necessary to design tertiary level education in a way that is accessible and meaningful to improve the economic development of the entire nation. Through our network and partnerships all around the world, we are in a position to collaborate with renowned institutions to design tertiary education as well as research opportunities that are beneficial for the educational and economic development in Cambodia but also for the progress of the respective involved institutions.



# UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



## FUTURE PROJECT

In the spirit of our vocational education and training concept and expanding our activities to an even more professional level, a “University of Applied Sciences” has the potential to build on the expertise and experiences of the SGC cluster project as education provider. Such an institution can link the teaching of theoretical knowledge with practical skills and the application of this knowledge in the communities.

As part of the overall SGC cluster project, we successfully established and grew a primary school that now teaches pupils from pre-school and kindergarten to fifth grade. Every year a new grade is added. Additionally, SGC is successfully providing vocational training to young Cambodians in accordance with the Swiss Dual Vocational Training System in all areas of the cluster project. With the development of a “University of Applied Science”, we want to extend skills development and knowledge transfer to a new level. On the premises of the cluster project, 5 ha of land are therefore already reserved for its construction.



The main partners, Smiling Gecko and the ZHAW in Wädenswil, have been collaborating in the areas of sustainable agriculture and fishery since 2016. The collaboration consists of joint research (with students from Switzerland writing Bachelor theses on SGC projects, students spending internships and conducting research stays on-site in Cambodia), joint development on specific projects (Aquaponic, Women in Agriculture) and vocational training. The significant benefit of the collaboration to date is that the fieldwork provides an immediate short-term application of the research conducted by the ZHAW team. The SGC cluster project and the respective research are extremely interdisciplinary and bring together different courses of study. The combination of both, the expertise and experience of the partners, guarantees the wide application of the skills to the benefit of the people and the country and has the potential to contribute to the shaping of the tertiary educational system and of a new generation of Cambodians.

ZHAW and Smiling Gecko are joined by Atelier Oi for the architectural and design part of the project. Atelier Oi brings with it the ambition of creating a unique learning environment in Cambodia, entirely built out of local bamboo and in collaboration with the local community. The living and growing bamboo is planned to be used not only as a resource but as an integral part of the buildings. The architecture is designed and inspired by local, traditional knowledge - combining roof and platform to create bio-climatic environments.

The mission of the institution will be the provision of an innovative and impactful form of tertiary education that combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills and their application.

**The concrete objectives are:**

- **To provide high-quality education in applied sciences in the disciplines of sustainable agriculture and fishery**
- **To apply the knowledge and expertise that is taught at the “University of Applied Sciences” in the communities and thereby contribute to food security, poverty reduction and social development**
- **To educate students not only in the respective disciplines but also in the application of the knowledge that is accessible and available in abundance today**
- **To provide infrastructure that builds a bridge back to the ancient knowledge and traditions of Cambodian architecture and brings back the functionality of bamboo as a construction material**
- **To involve the private sector (identification of skills needed in the future, curriculum development, funding) as funders and partners**
- **To contribute to resilience-building and trauma recovery through education**

The project is currently in the planning phase but progressing rapidly with an initial working group already established and fundraising and partnership activities starting soon.





# HOUSE OF CULTURE AND MUSIC



## FUTURE PROJECT

Cambodia has a long and rich history dating back to before the Middle Ages. It was during the golden age of the Khmer Empire (between the 9th and 13th centuries) that arts and culture became integrated into society through religion, rites and customs. The current situation of Cambodian culture, however, reflects the recent historical period. During the time of the Khmer Rouge regime, arts and culture almost completely disappeared and even ritual music as well as any theatrical performances were banned. All of this resulted in a loss of the supporting role of traditional music in the ceremonial and communal life of Cambodians. The dictatorship fell from power in 1979 – instability and conflict, though, remained for an additional 20 years.

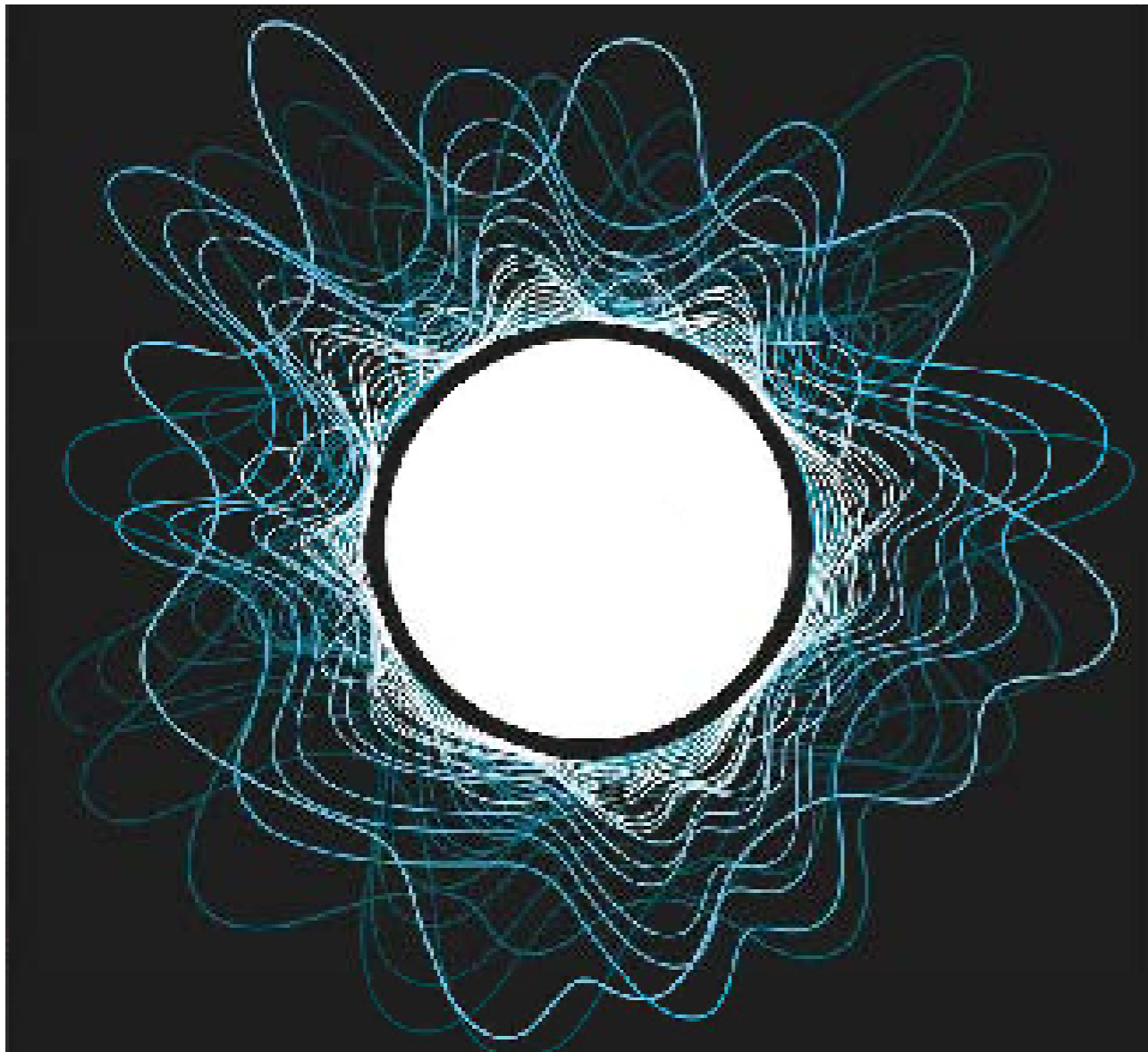
Recognising the important role of art as a healing power after a crisis, the NGO Cambodian Living Art (CLA) brings together artists and employees working at different levels of art education to fulfil its mission of healing trauma, safeguarding traditions and restoring meaning to the communities.



Despite the important and intensive efforts of the CLA, many of the cultural practices are still endangered due to ongoing socio-economic and political changes since the Khmer Rouge era. Cultural regeneration, more than ever, plays an essential role in Cambodia's recovery. It caters to the need to transmit culture to rebuild bridges between generations, between individuals and between institutions. To share one's art orally does not only mean passing on know-how. It also means passing on people skills.

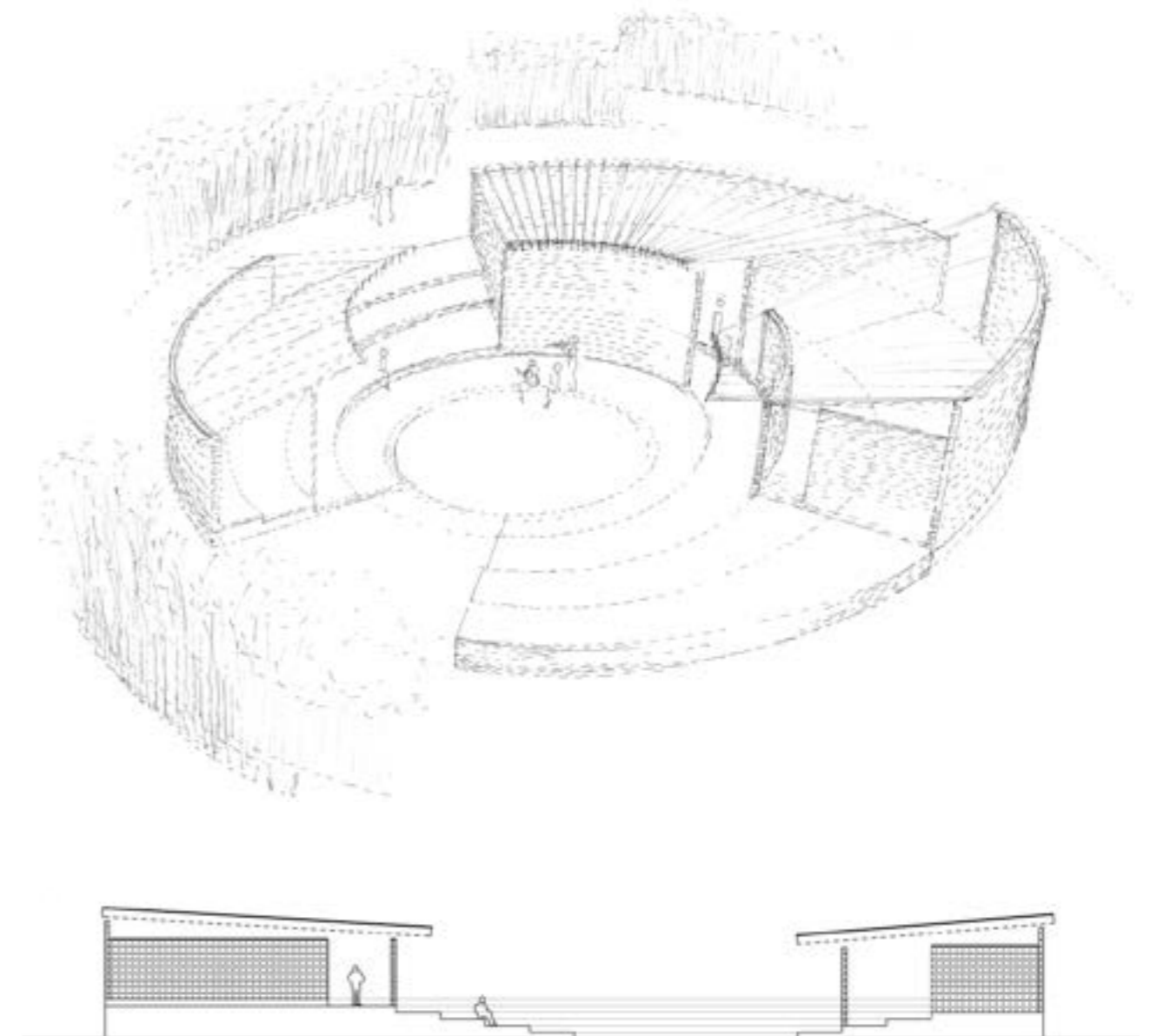
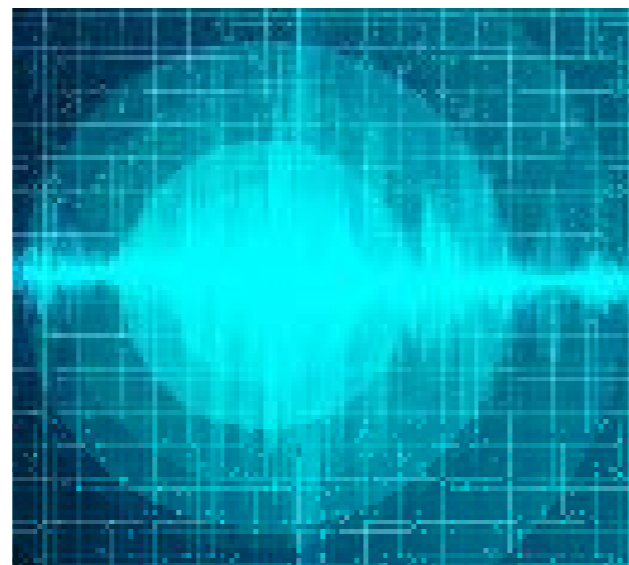
Affected is in particular today's generation of children and young adults that grows up without "naturally" integrating traditions and cultural expressions into their lives since their parents are not able to transmit these and the economic situation of the country allows only for limited projects and initiatives of cultural development and reconstruction. An additional risk is the growing influence of Western values as expressed in the form of music, cinema and digital media. All of this led to an alienation of generations of Cambodians from their traditions and values.





At the heart of SGC's cluster project is the school that today teaches more than 300 students. As a school that is shaping the next generation of Cambodians, we not only have the duty to transmit and teach technical skills such as Mathematics, Reading and Writing but also to integrate cultural subjects such as Music and Arts into our curriculum and give our students a chance to build knowledge and practice in these disciplines. This will enable them to find their roots in Cambodian culture as well as to build bridges to the Western influences that incessantly influx into their lives – ultimately finding a healthy balance.

Given this situation, we have decided to focus on musical and cultural activities to connect both worlds by teaching music and cultural expression. In order to do so, we, with support of Atelier Oi, are planning to build a "House of Culture and Music" as a physical building where content such as music (including learning to play instruments), dance







and theatre – both traditional and modern – can be taught and practiced, starting at primary school level. The “House of Culture and Music” will also include a studio where recording of music, videos and movies can be professionally done and taught, which is non-existent in the country today. The production studio will complement the activities of our education campus and thereby transform it into an important centre of cultural happening and a meeting point and haven, giving artists an opportunity for exchange and development.

To turn this vision into reality, we are collaborating with international actors such as musicians, directors and artists from all over the world.

First conversations about the project met with a lot of enthusiasm and we were able to attract outstanding individuals as “godfathers” for the Smiling Gecko House of Culture and Music.

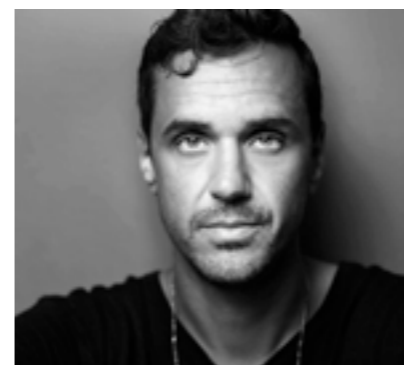
## MARK FOSTER



The German-Swiss film director, producer and screen writer is the overall “godfather” of the project. Marc is not only known for directing renown feature films such as “Finding Neverland”, “The Kite Runner” and the James Bond movie “Quantum of Solace” but also received numerous prestigious awards including the BAFTA, Golden Globe and the Independent Spirit Award. Marc will influence in particular the film and video direction, production and editing area of the overall project

*«Ultimately, it's truly vital for every culture to have a growing artistic community that contributes to the dialogue of the human condition. Music, literature, and film, are emotional outlets that are a part of the healing process of a nation and help guide the evolving storyline of their own culture.»*

## SEVEN



Swiss R&B, soul musician and singer, impresses with a skyrocketing 17-year-long career that includes 10 studio-albums, 4 live-albums, more than 1'000 headliner shows and uncountable collaborations. In 2017, he was recognised with the “Swiss Music Award”. Seven has been involved with the work of Smiling Gecko for many years already and played a crucial role in the event “Swiss Artists for Smiling Gecko” in 2015. With Seven, we can count on perfect support for all aspects related to music.

*«Creativity is not only an outlet in between the musts and duties of us humans. Every change has its origin in a creative moment and all ideas, inventions, revolutions and creations start in our imagination. This craft of all crafts must be cherished, taught, promoted, worshiped and planted. Art is storing history and painting the future everyday.»*

## PHILIPP SCHWEIDLER



Philipp leads a Swiss agency for audio branding and supports brands in the development, creation and management of their Sound Identity. Amongst others, Department of Noise is responsible for the sonic brand appearance of 20 Minuten, Bank Cler, Fyooz, ifolor, maxon, Swissgrid and VP Bank. Also, DoN has a longtime expertise in music production. In recognition of its work, it has received numerous gold awards, chart placements and critical acclaim (including at the International Sound Awards in Hamburg). DoN contributes technical expertise and advice for the production of the sound studio and the teaching of audio and sound techniques and recording.

*«What makes me happy the most? Bringing people together through the power of sound and create mutual experiences through it. That's what drives me! Hence, it feels like a perfect match: supporting the creation of a platform where Cambodia's nearly lost musical heritage can live on, while providing a seedbed for new creativity.»*



# ADVANCED BIO BASED CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS LAB



## FUTURE PROJECT

Considering that most developing countries grappling with explosive population growth are situated in the tropical climate zone and given that bamboo thrives under tropical conditions, the project wants to evaluate whether processed bamboo could be promoted as a building material for the local construction industry. The studies conducted in the laboratory focus primarily on the use of bamboo as a steel substitute, as bamboo is lighter, stronger and more affordable than steel, and also resistant to corrosion. Bamboo grows very quickly, is an excellent carbon sink, does not rust and is extremely strong. Last but not least, it is a renewable resource.

Bamboo can be grown in regions where its properties are of huge benefit. Since bamboo is a pioneer plant and can be cultivated in soil that is unsuitable for other crops or rendered useless by depletion, it is not in direct competition with food production. It could provide the basis for an alternative construction technology, replacing expensive imported building materials and, thus, promoting economic sustainability in developing countries. Better still: bamboo might even revert the typical flow of building materials, which is currently directed mainly from developed to developing regions. Manufacturing high-performance products from bamboo can potentially boost the local value chain, providing the foundation of a new key industry based on a renewable resource.

For these reasons, SGC is going ahead with the development of this new type of engineered material, cooperating with the Karlsruhe Institut for Technology (KIT), represented by Assistant Professor of Architecture and Construction Dirk E. Hebel and the Future Cities Laboratory in Singapore.



Thus, a laboratory for researching alternative building materials such as bamboo or mushrooms is being set up on the SGC premises. The laboratory will not only serve research purposes but will also be able to manufacture small products made from these materials.

### ECONOMIC IMPACT & BENEFITS

- Achieve sustainable and equitable growth through sustainable cultivation methods and trade practices

### ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT & BENEFITS

- Improve the local environment by rehabilitating degraded land with bamboo cultivation
- Lessen environmental impact through effective use of all parts of bamboo

### SOCIAL IMPACT & BENEFITS

- Improve livelihood through job creation in the entire value chain of manufacturing BVL
- Expedite rural development through investments of infrastructure setup around centralized processing centers



# SGC HISF | EDUCATION CAMPUS



The education system in Cambodia is highly decentralised. It is faced with a host of difficult challenges including a lack of qualified tutors and adequate teaching materials and other problems including poor work ethics, and low professional standards, that can be attributed directly to low wages. The consequences are frequent class cancellations on account of educators who prefer to pursue secondary employment or collect additional tuition instead of teaching class. Children living in the country only have limited opportunities to attend school as they are often expected to work in the fields. These detrimental conditions have led to profound differences in quality both between individual schools and between urban and rural regions. Overall, parents pay up to six times more for the education of their children than the government. This often results in a family's inability to send all of their children to school. In particular, many girls drop out of school, which leave them with a lower level of education as their male schoolmates.

Therefore, the SGC HISF | EDUCATION CAMPUS is at the heart of SGC's activities and the objective is that in medium-term, the economically independent units of the SGC cluster project will be able to cross-finance the school.





**LY Sam Ath**, 34, School Operation Manager, SGC HISF | Education Campus

I graduated with a degree in school leadership and education. I joined SGC in 2017. The school education system in the rural areas of Cambodia is poor. The SGC HISF | Education Campus is setting new standards for the poorest children. As the School Operation Manager, under the guidance of our Swiss School Director, I love working with the children. Our pupils are incredibly committed and eager to learn, and it makes me very happy to witness the enormous progress they have made since the school opened. At the moment, we are teaching around 300 students.



### **PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Education is the linchpin for the development of any society. Providing primary and secondary schooling for children is therefore of paramount importance to the SGC cluster project. The local village school was renovated with the help of SGC in 2015. Since this did not provide sustainable results, we opened the SGC HISF | EDUCATION CAMPUS with a primary school and a kindergarten in November 2017. The school will be extended over the coming years up to high school level. This means the establishment of an education centre for around 1'100 students that serves as a model for the school system in Cambodia. During the school year 2021/2022, more than 400 children benefitted from this excellent facility that provides an innovative, child-friendly and effective learning environment.

The kindergarten includes 6 classes as it also serves as a crèche for very young children. The primary school currently runs 3 classes each from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. At the moment, the campus includes 3 kindergarten and 6 school buildings, as well as an office block. There are 3 sanitary buildings, a laundry, a library and a medical care centre. Most of the sports facilities are completed. Additional school buildings are under construction, while work on the outdoor facilities continues.

The campus runs 2 school buses to bring children who live within a 15 km radius from the campus to and from school.





All of this enables pupils to continue their education within the Cambodian system, while also being prepared for the IGCSE exam. This internationally recognised exam allows them to apply to universities all over the world. The plans for the coming years include the extension of the school by 1 grade per year and the much-needed construction of dormitories for the increasing number of teachers and tutors.

With Barbara Beaufait, we have a very experienced school principal for the SGC HISF | EDUCATION CAMPUS. She has led several international schools in Asia and around the world and has not only excellent expertise and leadership experience, but also an extensive international network. In the 2021/2022 school year, there are approximately 30 local and international teachers and managers working at the school to enhance the quality of education.

The school has adopted a curriculum that is recognised by the national authorities in Cambodia as well as by international schools and universities. The teaching of English is given top priority. During the first years (age 3-6, kindergarten and preschool), the children are taught exclusively in English, based on the International Early Year Curriculum (IEYC). The principles of early childhood education and the methods adopted for the kindergarten are based on the Swiss model. From 1st grade, the pupils are taught in Khmer and English. The education is based on the national curriculum of Cambodia on the one hand, and the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) or International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) on the other. The Cambodian curriculum does not include sports, arts or music. At our school, however, we teach these subjects, which are greatly enjoyed by the students.







All our students receive 3 healthy meals per day at the school canteen. In addition, we run hygiene awareness courses for the students as well as their parents. As most children do not have proper access to bathrooms at home, they all shower at the school before attending class. They are fitted out with school uniforms that are washed at the school laundry. Each year's uniform has its own colour. At the end of the school day, the children take another shower and change back into their own clothes.





# SMILING GECKO CAMBODIA MEDICAL AND DENTAL CLINIC



Medical and health care facilities in Kampong Chhnang Province are highly inadequate. The improvement of this difficult situation is an important issue for SGC. The objective is not only to improve the general health of the students but also to work on the establishment of a systematic medical prevention and first aid care centre for the students and staff.

For this reason, a clinic has been integrated into the planning of the Education Campus and a clinic building was constructed on the school grounds. Run by a local medical doctor, the Smiling Gecko Medical and Dental Clinic is equipped with basic medical and dental treatment rooms and a basic pharmacy kit. Patients are cared for by a Cambodian graduate nurse. In addition, a Swiss certified nurse is regularly on site as a volunteer. The clinic also receives regular support in medical and dental care from Swiss doctors and dentists as volunteers, i. a. from the Center of Dental Medicine of the University of Zurich (UZH).



The main task of the clinic is to provide first aid in case of illnesses and accidents. In addition, the clinic provides bi-annual check-ups, vaccinations and annual hearing and eye tests. To provide these exams, we collaborate with several hospitals, doctors, such as paediatricians and dentists as well as child protection authorities. External doctors and dentists come to our clinic and professionally equipped two-chair dentistry at regular intervals for the treatment of patients. Our nurses administer first aid and provide treatment for minor illnesses. They make home visits when necessary and accompany patients during emergencies.

In addition, the clinic's responsibilities include health care training for teachers, hygiene checks at the school cafeteria and food service areas, while maintaining health records and accident statistics.



# SOLAR PROJECT



In the fall of 2020, SGC has built its own photovoltaic plant on the premises. Because of the high average number of hours of sunshine per day, there are many reasons and arguments in support of this important project.

On the one hand, it promotes environmental protection by using clean energy from the sun and thus reducing the consumption of fossil fuels. On the other hand, the use of the solar system leads to savings in energy costs through lower electricity bills. The money saved in this way can be used for other purposes, such as running the school or expanding other projects. In addition, the dependency on state power companies decreases, which means that SGC is better protected against power outages and voltage drops.



The 230 kWp photovoltaic system will enable SGC to cover 66% of its energy consumption during the day, or 50% of its daily consumption. While the grid-connected photovoltaic system is in operation, any excess electricity demand can be simultaneously drawn from the state power grid to meet SGC's entire energy needs.

The 1000 solar panels required came from a generous in-kind donation. Each panel is equipped with an inverter and produces about 25 KW with an average efficiency of about 95%. The system is installed on an area of about 2000 m<sup>2</sup> and is located on an open area of the SGC site, which has no shading and thus guarantees permanent solar exposure.





**SAN Phalla**, 41, Farmer

My family of 6 and I were living in a slum near Phnom Penh until SGC moved us out of the dumps in 2015 and provided us with some land and a small farm on the SGC site. We are very grateful that we can make a living here through agriculture and especially that our children can attend the school and thus receive a very good education.

## AGRICULTURE FAMILY PROJECT



Since 2015, 12 families have relocated from the slums of Phnom Penh to the SGC site. Each family was given its own small farm. The combination of poultry and pig farming, horticulture and staple crop production provides a secure income for the extended families living on the site. True to its commitment to “help for self-help”, SGC does not merely hand over these farms to the families free of charge but enters into a lease contract with them. The farm families pay SGC a lease and are solely responsible for the upkeep of the premises and equipment.

If they hire external labourers, they must pay fair wages as well as the statutory social insurance contributions. With the assistance of SGC, all families are now able to make a living from their farms. Only a small portion of the food produced by the Agriculture Family Project is however, intended for own consumption by the families on the farms. Most of the produce, which is purely organic and grown according to sustainable principles, is sold on. Some of it is bought by the Farmhouse Restaurant and the Industrial Kitchen and Canteen. Before joining the project, the families lived in the slums while they now have a proper home. As their future is much more secure, they can make decisions and learn to take responsibility for their own lives. The Agriculture Family Project benefits around 100 people directly.



# WOMEN IN AQUACULTURE PROJECT



During droughts, people in rural Cambodia, including Kampong Chhnang province, face severe hunger. Most small farmers grow rice in fields without artificial irrigation. Due to inefficient farming methods, depleted soils and the scarcity of water, there is only one rice harvest per year. Incomes are therefore low, and natural disasters such as droughts push families to the breadline and into malnutrition. Many of the problems facing the local community could be resolved by extending the growing season through irrigation ponds and by diversification of the crop production on the available arable land.

The Women in Aquaculture project aims at eliminating food shortages in rural Cambodia. By building irrigation ponds that serve as fishponds, farmers are able to grow crops all year round. Stocking the ponds with fish adds nutrients to the irrigation water. The fish produced in the ponds are a welcome source of protein for the farm families and generate additional income when sold on the market. The project is targeting women, and providing them with proper training. This, in turn enables the women to assume leading roles in businesses and their communities.



As part of this project, SGC is road-testing an innovative open-source technology known as the Sun-Oxygen System. It enables local rice growers to construct multiplex ponds that serve as irrigation ponds as well as aquaculture tanks.

The project combines infrastructure put in place by SGC with know-how and expertise from ZHAW Wädenswil.



# AGRICULTURE COMMUNITY PROJECT



In the summer of 2019, SGC launched the Agriculture Community Project. This will support poor families in the area through micro farming, growing vegetables and raising livestock. The main objective of this project is to achieve a financial revenue and economic risk reduction for the supported families. The aim is to generate additional income on top of their main source of income.



**The Agriculture Community Project supports micro farming and pursues the following three objectives:**

- **Standard of living**

Poorest families are lifted out of extreme poverty and can improve their standard of living for a life in reasonable dignity.

- **Education**

Families participating in the project obtain proper training and further education in agricultural methods of production. They are thus able to pass on their new knowledge, so that future generations can do better.

- **Food**

The products from the project feed the growers and others in the region. Local people can access top-quality and nutritious food at affordable prices.

SGC supports the families in the project by putting the necessary infrastructure, based on their personal needs and the requirements of their farm businesses, in place. Such infrastructure includes pigsties, chicken coops and fishponds. When the facilities are in place, SGC supplies the piglets, the chicks and the fish stock as well as the necessary seed and feed. SGC thereby promotes the production of nutritious organic food on small farms. The project currently involves 10 farm families who benefit from additional income.



# HUMANITARIAN AID



Humanitarian aid is designed to save lives and alleviate suffering during and in the aftermath of emergencies, whereas development aid responds to ongoing issues, particular systemic poverty, that may hinder economic, institutional and social development in any given society. The SGC principle and the work of SGC falls mainly into the category of development aid but in a country like Cambodia, the situation requires the provision of humanitarian assistance in times of emergency and in cases of extreme poverty.



Even though we are not a humanitarian aid NGO, SGC has been providing regular direct aid to those who suffer the most since 2015. In these cases, we mainly provide rice, other food items and urgently needed hygiene articles to families living on waste dumps and in the slums in and around Phnom Penh. Although it does not provide enough or lasting help to those in need, a donation can take some of the burden off their daily lives.





NY Ros, 71



## EMERGENCY AID



We further provide support in the immediate vicinity of the SGC cluster project in cases of natural or human emergencies. Due to an extreme drought (2019) and the consequences of the global Corona crisis (2020/2021), almost all farming families in the area are currently in acute need. In these dire times, SGC continues to provide humanitarian aid and regularly supports the suffering families in the neighbouring villages with food, fresh drinking water and medical care. Our emergency team distributes daily packages of food, protective equipment such as disinfectant gel and protective masks and, if necessary, medication to the desperate people. In addition to rice and dry provisions, the packages also contain products from our vegetable farms as well as from our fish, chicken and pig production.

## COLLABORATION WITH OTHER NGOS



For SGC, cooperating with other organisations is crucial, as it gives us access to expertise and support in fields in which these specialised charities operate, especially in the area of medical services.

SGC maintains a particularly close cooperation with the Children Surgical Centre (CSC) by Dr. Jim Gollgoly, a British-American surgeon. The CSC started out as a small project intended to help landmine victims, among them many children. Over the years, the centre turned into the NGO we know today. Its objectives is to improve the quality of lives of children and adults with physical disabilities by offering free rehabilitative surgery. The centre treats severe cases of SGC patients with a wide range of medical services, from general surgery and orthopedics to eye surgery, plastic surgery and surgery to treat burns. SGC is assisting Dr. Jim by supplying his centre with drugs and medical consumables. We also made three tuk-tuks available to serve as transport vehicles for sick people, and installed three operating tables at the CSC.

For emergencies beyond first aid, we collaborate with the Japan Heart hospital. Japan Heart is an organization whose goal it is to contribute to community development in Japan and abroad through health care and education. The organisation runs a hospital located about 30 km away from the SGC site. For more serious injuries such as major burns, open wounds, serious infections etc., that can not be treated adequately at the SGC Health Clinic, we transfer the patients to the Japan Heart hospital for treatment.

To further support our SGC Health Clinic, we work together with HOPE Cambodia. The HOPE team visits our school 2-3 times a year in order to examine and treat all affected students for ear, nose and throat issues. Those who need surgery are referred to the CSC in Phnom Penh for further treatment.

Additionally, we maintain a partnership with Cambodia World Family (CWF) in Phnom Penh. CWF supports us with dental care including dental check-ups, cleaning, repairs and extractions.

All our students receive basic health checks conducted at our SGC Health Clinic once a year by students of the Edgewood College, Henry Predolin School of Nursing, Madison Wisconsin USA.



# AWARENESS-RAISING & DIALOGUE

In order to create awareness for improving the for sustainable development aid in general and for the goals and values of Smiling Gecko in particular, Smiling Gecko frequently solicits public and corporate platforms and contributes at conferences, workshops and panel discussions.

## TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS



In his speeches, Smiling Gecko's founder Hannes Schmid passionately reports why he is engaged in Cambodia. The famous Swiss artist and photographer describes the poverty of the population and the living conditions of the distressed children and families in the slums and the dumps of Phnom Penh, showing many of the impressive pictures of his photo series «CONCERNED PHOTOGRAPHY». The partially oppressive photographs lend ugliness to dignified beauty. They are photographs of an artist whose concept of art is also an economic, political and ethical one.

As a social entrepreneur, he describes the «Smiling Gecko Principle», which has a holistic approach that leads to a sustainable improvement of the living conditions in a society. He, however, also openly describes and offers suggestions for the improvement of the framework conditions for sustainable development aid.

Hannes Schmid's presentations are an exciting experience as well as an inspiration and motivation for future engagement.

# LIECHTENSTEIN DIALOGUE FOR DEVELOPMENT

In order to find and develop new ways to improve the general framework for sustainable development aid, in 2018, together with the HILTI Foundation, the "Liechtenstein Dialogue for Development" was launched. Once a year (with the exception of 2020 and in 2021 in a virtual format, due to the pandemic), Smiling Gecko brings together top-level representatives from governments, foundations, companies and NGOs to discuss new approaches to development aid. This platform enables business and philanthropy to meet and to exchange ideas, thus raising awareness for the goals and visions of sustainable development cooperation. Participants receive impulses and inspiration across sector and country borders, thereby strengthening the partnership approach.

*"Governments and NGOs still mind their own business. That has to change dramatically, because the world is moving faster and faster globally. New ways have to be found, outdated processes have to be fixed."*

*Hannes Schmid*

## MILLENNIALS CIRCLE

Millennials are an important stakeholder group and the next generation of leaders, investors and movers. Furthermore, as a generation, they are active and engaged in social initiatives that make a difference. Given these characteristics and motivations, the Millennials Circle was created as a spin-off of the Liechtenstein Dialogue for Development.

The vision of the circle was defined as "redesign the way that development aid is implemented for the benefits of all stakeholders" and the respective mission is that "the Millennials Circle harnesses the power and resources of a network of individuals to create exponential social impact through concrete actions and initiatives". In that sense, it serves as a cross-stakeholder platform to holistically analyze, debate and identify key levers, synergies and innovative ideas to drive relevant change of governmental and private sector engagement. Future events are planned online and – as soon as possible – in-person.



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## SUSTAINABLE AGAINST POVERTY IN CAMBODIA

Cambodia is today one of the poorest countries in the world. Smiling Gecko is an aid project that is breaking new ground. By supporting economically and ecologically sustainable cluster projects, they have adopted a holistic approach to development aid, aimed at the long-term improvement of the life of people and communities in rural Cambodia. Since 2014, the relief organisation has given hundreds of people from the slums of the capital Phnom Penh and the region a secure future in rural Cambodia. Since then, many jobs and training places have been created in agriculture, tourism and hospitality, manufacturing and trade and education. Due to the economic orientation of the cluster projects, after a start-up period, they should be able to finance themselves and then fund the school and thus the education of the children. This results in the exemplary model of a functioning, rural community that provides people with education, decent work and sustainable income.