



LIFE STORIES

September 2015



Today, more than 600 young Cambodian men and women who once trained at the Project Khmer H.O.P.E. (Anglican) Centres, have had a chance to come out of poverty. Equipped with vocational skills in hospitality services and skills for the technical industry, they have found jobs.

With the skills and the values learnt at PKH, over the years, many have progressed in their course of life.

On 26th September 2015, the PKH Alumni will gather in Siem Reap. PKH supporters from Singapore, PKH trainers and staff will join in this occasion to celebrate life and to give thanks to God for His goodness.

“Life Stories” is a collection of the testimonies of some of these young and grateful people.



Chann Thouern in a photo taken in 2015.

My name is Chann Thoeurn,

I am from Svay Rieng Province. Nowadays I live in Siem Reap with my wife and I am working in Siem Reap at Angkor Paradise Hotel in the front office department.

Allow me to brief you about myself. After I finished my studies at grade 12 in 2006, I went to Phnom Penh to look for a job but I could only work at the construction site.

Everyday I spent eight hours working under the sun and I could get only eight thousands riel per day and I have pay five thousand per day for my food. I tried to look for an office job in the company but they did not accept me even though I could speak a bit of English due to my not having any experience. I spent many months working in Phnom Penh and I could save nothing. I decided to go back home and help my family to work at the rice fields.

One day there was a Pastor who works in the church where I used to study in English with

him everyday during my high school time and he told me that PKH could help me to change my life. He then brought me to PKH for an interview. God opened the way for me even though I was unsuccessful the first time.

I spent one and half years in PKH studying English and Hospitality and I gained a lot of knowledge especially getting to know more about God. Every Saturday and Sunday we had Livingstreams Club and Sunday School.

When all the students finished their second year course Teacher Susan brought me and some of my friends for interviews at Le Meridien Angkor Hotel. We all passed our interview in different departments and I started to train in the Front Office as a Doorman, Bell Boy, Receptionist and Reservations but after training I did not pass. Teacher Susan called me to go for interview at Sunway Hotel in Phnom Penh as Receptionist and I decided to go even though I did not know where the hotel is.

I went for the interview alone with Human Resource (Mrs. Sopha) and the

Front Office Manager Mr. Many Young. They gave me a job as a Receptionist and as a permanent staff too. I worked for Sunway from 2008 and saved some money for my family and I also saved to study at the University at night.

At the end of September 2012 I joined Naga World Hotel as Front Office Supervisor then I moved to work at Angkor Paradise Hotel as Assistant Front Office Manager from January

2013. After seven months they promoted



Chann Thouern with Teacher Susan at the PKH Centre in 2008.

to be Front Office Manager and now they just promoted me to be Room Division Manager at Angkor Paradise hotel.

I know that without God and PKH, I have nothing. He is always guiding, protecting and blessing me all the time. I really thank God for changing my life and my family.

Once again I want to say a very big thank you to all teachers, the staff at PKH and especially all the supporters who always donate your own money to PKH to

help the young poor Cambodian's people from difference provinces including me. Your giving through PKH has changed our life to be better and better. May God bless you and protect your family with the full of love and joy and may God be with you always.

Chann Thouern
Rooms Division Manager
Angkor Paradise Hotel
September 2015



Hon Ley completed the PKH Hospitality Training in 2007 and started work in 2007 at the Le Meridien Hotel in Siem Reap.

My name is Hon Ley, I'm from Battambang province and from a big family. My mother passed away when I was about 2 years old and from that time on, my oldest sister is the one who looked after me.

When I was at Primary school, I always look after cows after class. However my elder sisters always supported me to study and at that time I didn't know why education was essential.

After I finished my high school, my sister's friend had recommended me to study at PKH and she was a student of Bible school in Phnom Penh. I become a Christian in 2005 a year before I went to PKH. I am now studying at Build Bright University in a General Management course.

I thank God that He called me and chose me to be his son. Without Him I may be a cow-herder or farmer. He gave me basic skills from PKH which is English and Hospitality. But the most important thing is a good attitude that I gained from PKH and it is very useful in life. Moreover He had blessed me for overseas working in Singapore for 2years.

At the end I would like to say thanks to the Singapore team that always support PKH as well as reading my testimony. May God bless all of you! Amen!

Hon Ley
Senior Guest Assistant
Phum Baitang Resort
September 2015



Hon Ley worked at the Front Desk of the Re Hotel in Singapore, 2013-2015.



Soklai (front left) on the way for a job interview at Sokha Beach Resort, Sihanoukville in 2010.

My name is Un Soklai. I am 24 years old. I have 7 siblings and I am the fifth child in the family. I graduated from PKH Centre in 2010. I don't have a diploma or Grade 12. Because of my living condition, I only did Grade 9 in 2006-2007. Then my oldest sister found a job for me in a factory. My first salary was only \$50 per month and after probation I got stable salary only \$70-\$80 per month. I always hope one day I will still have chance to continue my study. My family also know and understand my willingness to learn.

One day, my sister's friend brought a message to me about PKH. That was the new chance for me and my oldest sister also approved me to take this chance. I didn't know much about PKH. I just knew they give a chance to poor Cambodian people to learn English. I was happy and nervous at the same time to go for the admission interview.

I was so happy as my first impression of PKH Centre made me think it's the very best place with big building inside and farm outside of the centre. This made me remember who I am.

I was really grateful what PKH provided to me. There are many things such free accommodation inclusive of 3 meals, and stationery. More over, there is good advice and care from teachers and staff. I

was not a Christian at that time and it was the chance for me to hear about God and Jesus. I did not believe as I have my own religion which is Buddhist. Anyway I love and respect God and I never show negative action or look down on Christian.

At the Centre, I lived with some good Christian friends and in God's plan, He selected me to be His child. That made me feel I want to try to be Christian. Day by day I learned how to pray and read the bible with my friends. On Nov 14, 2009, I decided to be baptized with some other 50 students at CCOP - that is a church in Phnom Penh.

After 1 year in English class I continued to Hospitality class, then graduated in 2010. I was the first group of students which went out for job in Front Office Department at Sokha Beach Resort & Spa, Sihanouk Ville with 5 other friends.

I never think that I can pass the interview because I thought I am not pretty, not tall and I knew my friends are all more clever. On the way to Sihanouk Ville I prayed - may everything follow God's plan and I will

Soklai (1st from right) – on the staff of Sokha Beach Resort in 2014.



try from my best at the interview.

This is another testimony that God have done in my life and I realized that nothing is impossible in His hand. There were only 2 of us who passed the interview. We both working in front office department as Operator. After around 1 year, I moved up as a Reservation Officer with the salary \$120. It was very busy working in reservation section and no one want to move to this section.

After joining reservation around 1 week, my Manager and Supervisor resigned at the same time. It was such a heavy burden for me who just joined. I was alone and in-charge room reservation section. I felt like i am an acting Reservation Manager, Assistant Reservation Manager & Reservation Supervisor. There were a new manager, supervisor and officer coming one by one but after 3-4 months some walked out some resigned. My reservation office welcome and farewell very often. I almost fall down and there was no energy to go on and want to give up, but I always ask God for patience until we have full team. I worked quietly and my Front Office Manager encouraged me a lot and the GM promoted me as reservations supervisor with the salary around \$300. There were some duty manager and some staff knew this information. They were not happy and look down on my education background that is not suitable with my new position.

I felt sad too to hear that and thanks God for giving me patience so that I can have this day and thank God again for this half year I have full team of 5 people. So now I can take this some free time to continue Grade 12 this year. I pray hard I can go to university next year.

Un Soklai
Reservations Supervisor
Sokha Beach Resort, Sihanoukville
September 2015



Chandara (front, left) in a hospitality class at the PKH Centre in 2011.

My name is Srey Chandara, I am 25 years old. And I am now working in Himawari Hotel and Apartments, Phnom Penh, as a receptionist. I am happy with my work especially with team work. My boss, Mr. Andrew Tay always love and care for us.



I am the only child in my family. I live with my mother and my grandmother. My father passed away when I was three months old. My family is not Christian. Since I have studied in PKH (in 2010/2011) the best thing I understand is the love of God shown by my lovely teacher Susan and all the teachers, staff and friends at PKH.

I would like to give thanks to God and all the supporters from Singapore that love and care for young poor Cambodians like me that had no hope at all.

Srey Chandara
Receptionist
Himawari Hotel & Apartments
September 2015

Chandara at the Business Centre of the Himawari Hotel in 2014.



Chi Samnang (3rd from the left) in a photo taken in 2009.

My name is Chi Samnang, I am 27 yrs old and I am married and I have a baby girl named Hannah who is 1year & 5 months old now. I was born in a poor family with 08 members. They are my parents, 2 older sisters, myself and 3 younger brothers. My father passed away on 24th Nov 2012 as he had high blood pressure. While my father was still alive, he was farmer during the rainy season, and during the dry season he climbed palm trees to collect the sap, made palm for sale.

When I was in Primary & Secondary school, I stayed with my parents, helping them to do farming. I was like a right hand of my father/ left hand of my mother. (helping my mum & father's job) My parents sent one older sister to stay with uncle near Kampong Speu market and my uncle supported her to continue her studies at High School. My oldest sister & younger brother stayed with an aunt (she has no children), and she supported them in their studies.

When I studied at High School, I failed my grade 12 in year 2007, and it made my father very upset with me as he really put his hope on me to get grade 12 certificate because my two older sisters had already failed grade 12 exam. Grade 12/ diploma II was hard for us to get because at public schools in Cambodia, if we have not enough money to pay for part time studies,

we would have less knowledge. Then my father heard from my uncle about PKH School. The school supported Cambodian Youth to study free and also help them to find a job after students graduated. My father proposed me to study at PKH. However at that time, I really wanted to re-study at grade 12 again, so I pleaded with my father to allow me to go back to my high school, He said "No". I explained that if I go for a test at PKH and failed, it would waste one year and I asked my mother & uncle to help to speak to my father. This time my father agreed with me to go back to high school. After half a month, I got a serious motorbike accident and I was unable to go to school. Therefore, I waited for a chance to get a form from PKH and do the admission test. Many thanks to God that I could pass the test and get a chance to study PKH in 2008. He has chosen me to go there (at that time I was not a Christian yet).

PKH Centre is not just a school where I can study English and hospitality because it



Chi Samnang with his daughter Hannah (photo taken in 2015).

is also the place that I can study about God and about Jesus Christ. I have also made many friends who love and are taking care of each other like a family.

Especially, all the wonderful teachers who love and take care of all the students like their own children. That is the time I got to know Jesus Christ step by step. As I remember, while studying at Hospitality class, I did not feel ready to accept Jesus Christ and be baptized yet as I was learning about Christ.

When I finished my study at PKH, I got a chance to have a 3 month training attachment at Inter-Continental Hotel in Phnom Penh from 01 Sept 2009. (Two students of my year were the first PKH students that got a chance to train at that Hotel). It was hard to find a room to rent

near the hotel. Finally 1 month passed and we found a room to rent near the hotel. God always be with us as the PKH teachers always help us, even by supporting us with spare food (like bread & jam) as well as give us allowance when we were still training.

In Nov 2009, PKH organized the students to have baptism again at CCOP Church, and I was ready to be baptized in Nov 2009.

There are many things I would like to say thanks to Father God that he has chosen me, thanks for His blessing, Grace, Love and forgiveness, and even though I have made mistakes or wrong things against Him, but His Love & forgiveness never ends

Samnang Chi
Reservation Supervisor
Le Meridien Angkor
September 2015



Pol (in front) in hospitality class (photo taken in 2011).

My name is Long Samniengpol. I am 24 years old, yet still look very young. I am from Kampong Speu Province of Cambodia. I am from a simple family. I have an older and younger brother and one younger sister. My dad is a soldier and my mum was a garment factory worker. My mum passed away in 2013.

In 2009 I accomplished my grade 12. After high school, I was so confused. I wanted to move on to university but my family was not able to support since my younger siblings also needed support for their schooling. So for almost 3 months, I was wandering and thinking about what's next. Then it was the time when Project Khmer H.O.P.E.(PKH) came to me. The father of an ex-student named Chandamony, told my dad about her after PKH. So I decided to go to PKH and passed the admission interview.

I learnt a lot of things at PKH; it provided me with knowledge and skills. One of the greatest things and what I will always remember, is the opportunity to know, to understand and to feel God. I was not a believer but here is how I became one. During the 2 years training at PKH, from day to day, I saw the love of God through teachers and staff. And every weekend I had a chance to worship and hear more about God and His word. Until the last year before

leaving PKH, I decided to be baptized. The love of God is so powerful.

Finally, thank you for your time to listen to my sharing. I hope it can be of help or encourage others. I am really, really thankful to God for everything I am today and whatever I will be in the future. May



Rotha (left) just before a job interview at Le Meridien Angkor in 2009.

My name is Rotha, I am 26 years old. I come from Phrea Vihear Province. I was born into a big family. We have 8 siblings, 6 sisters and 1 brother. I am the 7th member in my family.

My mother is a housewife, My father retired many years ago and all my brothers and sisters are farmers. I have completed grade 9 and then I decided to stop my studying because my study is not so good. My family is poor and so I helped my family to work at our farm for a few years but our farm supporting not enough for my family so I decided go to work in Thailand as a construction worker. I worked there for half a year and the work was very hard. I got benefits so low so I decided to come back to work as a farmer with my family again.

During that time I heard about PKH school from my cousin, Savet who was studying bible school in Phnom Penh. He

the Lord our God be glorified. God bless you.

**Long Samniengpol (Paul).
Receiving Officer in the Finance
Department
Le Meridien Hotel
September 2015**

told me this school provides a chance for poor people in Cambodia to study free, stay there with meals, and it is the best school to study in English, hospitality and skills to work in hotels. All the students study there for 1 year or 2 years and then go out to work. I decided to study there in 2009. When I stepped in to PKH and lived there, I learned about Jesus Christ. Before, I also have heard about his name but just know he is a good God, he can save us from this world to heaven but I did not understand anything about Jesus.

When I was studying and living at PKH I could see Jesus through the Christians like the teachers at PKH, staff, pastors, students, and friends. They have hope from God, are loving, caring for each other so much as one family. And they are full of encouragement to each other.

On Saturday and Sunday I worship Him and study God's word at PKH so I start to know him more and more about God. I started to obey Him and follow Him and then my life started to change. My life was not like before. I feel I have a new life again at PKH with Jesus and now I am a Christian, I trust in him and I receive him as my savior from now on for ever.

After PKH, I went to Siem Reap and did my training attachment in Housekeeping at Le Meridien Angkor. I became a permanent staff member and then transferred to F&B as a Service waiter. Now I am a Bell driver in Front Office. I am also married to another

PKH graduate Savun and we had a Christian wedding. We are expecting our second child. My wife Savun is also working in the hotel in Le Meridien in Siem Reap

I would like to say thanks to God for everything that he has done for my life and my country. Thank you for your blessing on PKH, all supporters, teachers, staff, and all PKH students for always providing what we need. Thanks so much to all supporters of PKH, teachers, staff and all students

for your working hard and loving, caring, always encouraging us. Especially I want to say thanks to teacher Susan who loves us like her children and always look after us, caring about us all the time whether we are in or out of PKH.

**In Rotha
Front Office Bell Driver
Le Meridien Angkor
September 2015**



Sokly (3rd from right) in a photo taken in June 2015.

I am Sokly. I was the youngest of 9 members in my family. 3 months after my birth, my mother passed away. At that time we were very poor, which was why my father decided to give me away to a couple who had adopted 3 daughters. My new family are also poor, but they have just enough to take care of me.

I finished grade 12 but could not pass the exam; I had failed and lost hope. Fortunately my brother Hon Ley told me the good news about a hospitality school name PKH (Project Khmer H.O.P.E.). I realised at once that my new hope has come.

While studying English in Term 2 at PKH in 2009, my adopted father passed away, leaving me as the only man or head of the house.

My daily life only depends on the paddy field, and it is very hard work.

In the 3rd term I studied Housekeeping and was sent for training at Le Meridien Angkor. I became a staff after completing training and was shortly transferred to F&B service. Now I'm a Driver with the Front Office department.

I give thanks to God for bringing me a new hope, and specially for the opportunity to come to know Him as my Lord and saviour. Without PKH, I am not sure what would happen with my life.

My wife Sreymom also works at Le Meridien Angkor. We married at Teacher Govin's church in Siem Reap. God blessed us with a baby daughter, who we love very much.

Mostly we love God. Without Him none of these will happen. Thank you God.

**Sokly
Bell Driver in Front Office.
Le Meridien Angkor
September 2015**



Sophea, with his wife, Srey Neang, and son.

Hello, I'm Hok Sophea, I was a PKH student in 2005. I'd like to share what God has done for me.

Before coming to PKH, I worked on a farm, feeding fish, ducks and chickens. God really blessed and helped me so that I could pass the test to study at PKH. At that time, I just knew a little English.

I learnt a lot at PKH, not only English, but also to be a good person: how to work in a group, to share, help and love each other, to be humble and patient. I had a great time and got to know God too.

I completed the Hospitality Course in 2006. However, as my father passed away from a stomach surgery, leaving me the sole breadwinner to care for my aged mother and my siblings, I was not able to carry on with further training and a job in the hotels. PKH gave me a job to work with Dr Bun Rong in the healthcare work in

Aoral. I gained knowledge and experience from working with PKH.

After some time, I got married to Srey Neang, also a former PKH student. Much later on, we started a small motor repair shop at Kampong Speu market. Today we have a bigger motor repair shop.

Now my life has changed from a worker to being a boss in my own business. I also have a pretty wife, Srey Neang and we have two lovely children, a son and daughter. We are not rich but neither are we poor anymore. I'm happy with what I am now.

Thanks to PKH and our God, without whom I really don't know what my life would be. Lastly I want to give thanks to God, that He sent such very good teachers and staff, especially for all donors from Singapore and overseas who spend their time and own property to help me and our Cambodian people.

Hok Sophea
Owner of Motor Repair Shop
Kampong Speu
September 2015

Sophea (front row, 2nd from right) with fellow PKH trainees who graduated in 2006.



Seamean and his family.

My name is So Seamean. I'm 29 years old from Kampong Cham Province. I'm one of the first year (first batch of) students who was chosen to study at PKH Centre during 2005. This is my testimony of how I feel and how God has changed my life.

Before I came to PKH Centre, I was a hopeless person with low education. Life took advantage of me in the wrong direction and I also never truly believed in God because I grew up in a Buddhist family.

But while studying at PKH Centre, with no TV or world music to listen to, I only focus on studying and learning things about God.

I decided to follow God and as a result, my life completely changed. The Holy Spirit has cleansed me and God has blessed me so much with His love. God has brought me quite an interesting thing in my life.

In 2006 after graduating from PKH, I moved to Siem Reap to train in a 5 star hotel (Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor). A year later, I became a full time staff. In 2008, I made a hard decision to get married early,

since I was really young that time. God has blessed us with 2 girls and with our good jobs, we could save enough to buy our own house.

My life could never be better without God, so I have come a long way. And I am amazed everyday by the change in me. I could not have made this change myself. I just know that God rejoices when He is able to turn someone to His light.

Today I'm writing this to thank God for making me who I am and all His blessings for me and my family. For the strength He gives me each day and for all the people around me who make life more meaningful. Amen.

So Seamean
General Storekeeper
Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor
September 2015

Seamean, as a bartender at the Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor in 2006.





Sivon in the PKH Hospitality class in 2007.

My name is Klot Sivon. I am from Takhmao district, in Kandal Province. There are six members in my family - my parents, two brothers, one sister and me, the oldest child. I went to school and had completed my grade 6(primary school). I then had to give up my study due to poverty and certain circumstance in my family.

I heard about PKH from my neighbour and I applied to study there. I was so blessed that I got selected by PKH committee. I am from a Christian family. My family and I became Christians in 1991.

I am thankful to God for his amazing grace. Even with little resource that I have He is there to strengthen me and comfort me. Today, life is wonderful! With God, I have been provided with more than what I deserve, and it is all because of Jesus and His love for me. Jesus is the answer for all of my needs.

**Klot Sivon
Front Office Manager
Golden Temple Hotel, Siem Reap
September 2015**

Sivon (left) in photo taken with Im Sok Soley at the Raffles Grand D' Angkor in 2007.



FOR I KNOW THE PLANS
I HAVE FOR YOU,
DECLARES THE LORD,
PLANS FOR WELFARE
AND NOT FOR EVIL,
TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE
AND A HOPE.

Jeremiah 29:11