



**NPO/NGO HG Booklet2** English ver.



## **A start of Physical Education in Cambodia.**

<https://www.hofg.org/>

## **Can sports change the future?**

**Challenges tackled by  
Yuko Arimori and friends and supporters.**

**NPO/NGO HEARTS OF GOLD**

Representative Director  
Yuko ARIMORI



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# **The legacy of Hearts of Gold**

## **– Beyond 20 years of international cooperation through sports. –**

**Yuko ARIMORI**

Representative Director of the Hearts of Gold.



In 1996, right after the Atlanta Olympic Games, I was invited to the charity marathon in Cambodia, originally planned to ban landmines and support the landmine victims. It was the “1st Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM)”. I was happy to participate to show my gratitude to all the people who supported me in my running courier. In 1998, we established the “Hearts of Gold” with people who shared the vision of providing aid to countries in need through sports and education.

The AWHM was the first charity marathon race authorized by the AIMS (Association of International Marathons and Distance Races) organized in developing countries. Our goals were to make the AWHM known globally, support the landmine victims, and encourage Cambodians to be financially independent. The race has grown from six hundred forty-five runners from 16 countries to more than 12,000 runners from 85 countries in 2019; thus, AWHM has become a popular event globally and provided financial aid to people with disabilities and to disabled children.

We received a strong request from the local government to “provide guidance to other sports.” To respond to their request, we organized a “Recreation and Sports Festival for Youth.” We continued to manage the same festival until 2005. We had another task of training local people to teach various sports. We took many athletes from Japan who participated in the past Olympics Games to teach them.

2006 we began to support the school curriculum related to physical education in primary schools in Cambodia. Twenty years ago, there was little interest in providing aid through physical education in Japan. However, we understood the importance of sports and physical education and took action to develop physical education classes in the lower secondary schools. Later, we started the project to establish the first “Four-year Physical Education College” in Cambodia.

We have faced many difficulties in the past 20 years. Every time we encountered problems, we discussed them until we reached an agreement. We achieved our mission because we spent effort understanding each other. Going through this process, I have made a positive change in myself.

Undoubtedly people and the world will change. The effort of carrying out our mission in the last 20 years brought strength and gratification. We are grateful to all the people who shared the same vision and supported us. Thank you for believing in HG! I am delighted to celebrate these accomplishments with you.

\*Association of International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS) has more than 450 member races in over 120 countries worldwide. The goal of the AIMS is to spread long distant races globally, share and exchange information on running.

## Seek for the development of Cambodia over physical education.

**OUK Sethycheat**

General Director, Directorate General of Sport, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport



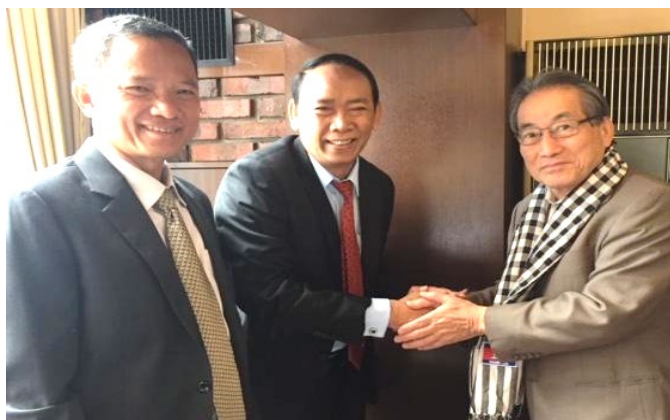
On December 21st in 2016, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Cambodia, and the Hearts of Gold signed the agreement concerning designing the guideline for a lower secondary school physical education. This project has been brought into practice for three years and nine months and was able to reach our goal as scheduled with great success. We are very proud of the success of reforming the lower secondary school physical education following the project of promoting the Primary School Physical Education Program, which had started in 2006.

I believe that 12 national trainers will take the initiative to develop a nationwide physical education program based on the Lower Secondary School Physical Education Guideline. Now I am fully convinced that introducing new physical education programs to primary, secondary, and high schools nationwide will have a significant effect or influence and help enhance the environment of nurturing human resources for the development of Cambodia in general. Physical education aims to facilitate “knowledge, technical skill, behavior, and cooperative attitude,” It is worth mentioning that these attributes to personnel development. I also believe that faithfully pursuing the above objectives will make it possible for our country to accelerate climbing up a ladder from a low-income to a middle-income by 2030 and a developed country by 2050.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the Japanese government, especially the Hearts of Gold, JICA, Japanese experts, and all staff members who showed energy and power who devoted themselves to the full-fledged restoration of the field of education in Cambodia, which was devastated in the past. Thank you very much.



## Great respect and reverence for the dedicated effort by the Hearts of Gold.



### **Gotaro OGAWA**

Director of Asia Japan Alumni (ASJA)  
International, Japan.  
Honorary advisor of Hearts of Gold  
Former Ambassador to Cambodia

I first encountered the Hearts of Gold the day after arriving in Cambodia to serve as an ambassador. It was beginning of December 2000 at the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon. Running used to be my favorite

sport, and I entered this race without much preparation. I got dehydrated because I didn't drink enough water. It remains in my memory with a bit of bitter after taste. After the race, I met Ms. Yuko Arimori, Director of the HG, and I was deeply impressed by her sincere and strong passion for this charity event. I have kept close attention to the activities of the HG, and I am fascinated by the continuous expansion of activities over the 22 years.

Initially, the project let Cambodian children enjoy and have fun playing sports after enduring a long civil war. Then, HG created physical education instruction books and built teaching systems in elementary, junior high, high schools and to university. It helped children in need to be independent and gave students a chance to study in Japan. I relate this continual activity to the philosophy (human education through physical education) of Jigoro Kano, the founder of Judo. He is respected as the "father of Japanese physical education," who established the Japan Sports Association.

I feel that they were able to accomplish their mission due to their firm conviction, passion, and sincere concern toward the people of Cambodia. They received "The Japan Foundation Prizes for Global Citizenship 2019" to signify their efforts. I am sure that the HG will continue endeavors to realize the "coexistence with all nations in mutual prosperity," especially between Japan and Cambodia



### **"Hearts of Gold" - Origin of the name -**

Lorraine Moller, New Zealand, one of the Olympic and world-leading marathon runners, was invited to the Angkor Wat Marathon in 1996 and was deeply impressed with the activities organized by Yuko Arimori to support landmine victims in Cambodia through running. She later expressed her excitement that "Yuko Arimori is a real Gold Medalist in her Heart." "Everyone can be a Gold Medalist in Heart only if they pursue it seriously. We quoted her words and named our organization the "Hearts of Gold," wishing to form a group of people pursuing for a "Gold Medal" in their hearts.

\* Lorraine Moller: Born in New Zealand, bronze medalist in Barcelona, and participated four Olympic Games consecutively. Served as a Deputy Representative of the "Hearts of Gold" at the time of establishment.

## Those who challenged to dig a well.

### -How did the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon start? -

**Hajime YUKI**

Founder and former Director of the Japan International Road Runners Club.



I used to work for the news media based in Osaka for more than forty years, the first half of my career as a sportswriter and the latter half as a director of planning sports and culture-related businesses. The civil war was almost over in Cambodia, and we thought that peaceful life was on the way. However, they discovered thousands of landmines buried in the farmland, and many farmers and children had fallen victims. The country was called "islands floating over landmines." I had a strong urge to help solve the problem; thus, this project started.

An old Chinese saying tells us, "Do not forget those who dug the well when you drink water." Many people participated in the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM) dug the well at Angkor Wat. Ms. Sachiko Takamitsu, who belonged to an International Medical Care Institution specializing in artificial legs, was one of them. When she went to Cambodia and mentioned about charity marathon races in Japan, she was asked to help create a race at Angkor Wat. She came to us and got us involved in this project. We decided to put part of the runners' entry fees from Ashiya, Amagasaki, Nishinomiya, and Kobe UNICEF Cup marathon races toward a fund. We contacted late Mr. Yoshio Goto, a leader of a senior sports group in Gifu Prefecture, Ms. Lorraine Moller (New Zealand), bronze medalist in the Barcelona Olympic Games (the name of "Hearts of Gold" was given by her) and Yuko Arimori, medalist in Barcelona and Atlanta Olympic Games, invited them as guest runners.

With a representative of the Cambodian government, we attend the General Meeting of AIMS (Association of

International Marathons and Distances) held in Macau. The directors of primary marathon races in the entire world attended this meeting. We made a presentation to appeal the importance of organizing a charity marathon race at the historical ruins in Angkor Wat. It was unanimously approved, and they gave us their support. After the approval, we didn't waste time and worked hard to develop the half-marathon.

At the end of 1996, we had the first international half marathon race pursuing humanitarian aid in Southeast Asia. The operational cost came from funds raised from several marathon races in Japan. The race operators were some officials from the Japan Association of Athletics Federation (JAAF) and many amateur runners and volunteers. The runners' entry fee amounted to approximately one million yen (10,000 USD), was donated to landmine victims to provide artificial legs.

When we started the Project, late Mr. Yoshio Sakurachi, who served as Speaker of the House of Representatives and Minister for Foreign Affairs, was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Association, gave us solid support. When I spoke to him about the Project, he traveled to Angkor Wat to see the venue with his own eyes. He said, "I shall be happy if I can be of any help to you with my position as a Chairman of the Parliamentary Association for Cambodia." He also contacted Japan Amateur Athletic Federation (JAAF) and Asian Athletics Association (AAA) to support the Project. From Cambodia, Prince Sihanouk attended the Project to show his respect to Mr. Sakurai.

Another important person we should not forget is the late Mr. Kihachiro Onizuka, founder of sporting goods manufacturer ASICS. He was an entrepreneur with a great passion for supporting developing countries by donating sporting goods. As the President of the "Organization of Humanitarian Aid," he had an office in Cambodia, which we use as our liaison office. It helped us recruit local staff to communicate with officials and purchase necessary materials. Mr. Onizuka attended the opening of the event.

In the second year, 1997, safety concerns were raised due to the terrorist activities by the remnants of the defeated Pol Pot clan and unstable domestic government. The Japanese government issued a warning against travel to Cambodia. We were almost on the edge of canceling the event. However, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the NGO, "International Campaign to Ban Landmines," and it highlighted a global awareness and calmed the situation in Cambodia.

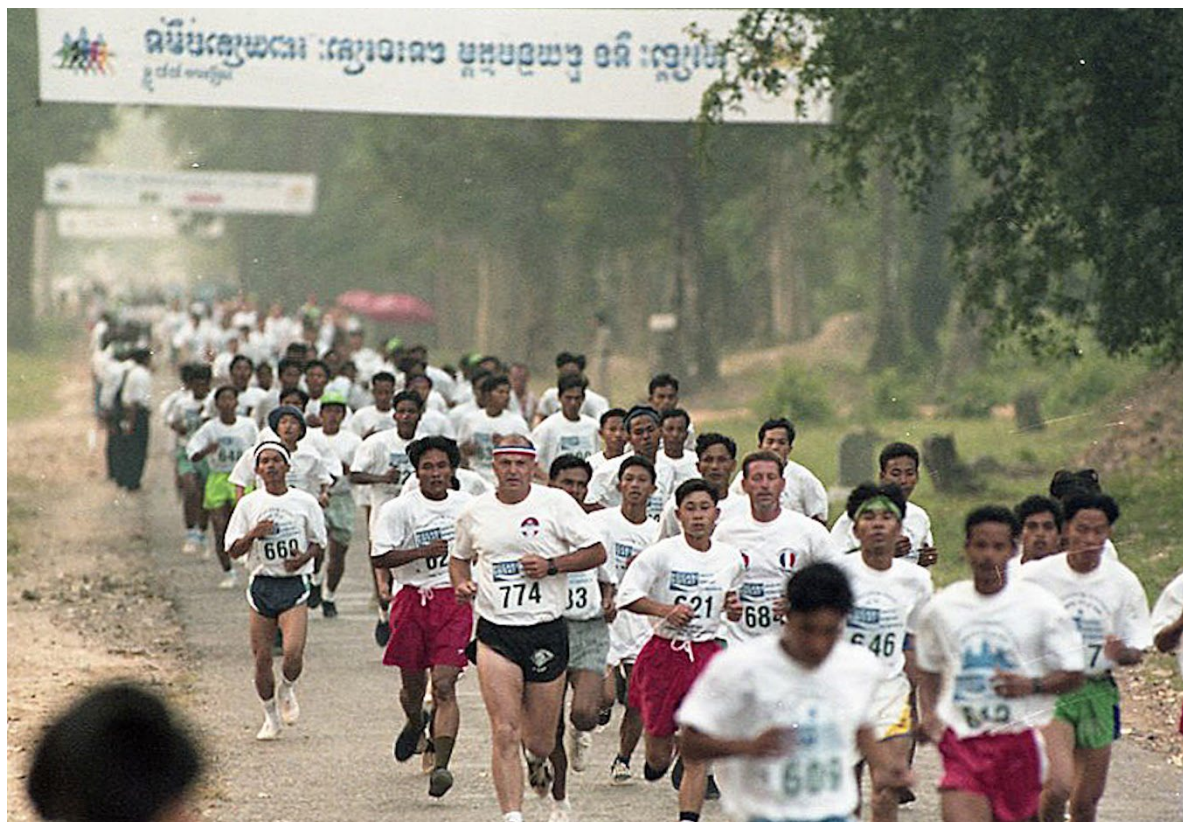
More importantly, two Prime Ministers, Ung Huot, First Prime Minister, and Hun Sen, Second Prime Minister, political opponents, attended the opening ceremony together, wishing for the event's success. Surprisingly, Hun Sen participated the race and ran hundreds of meters. The security was perfectly arranged: Mobilized police and military forces to detect landmines, kept severances around the venue, and deployed tanks about 10 kilometers square around the racecourse. Luckily, so many runners came from many countries, promoting event's slogan, "keep the light of humanitarian aid through running."

After three years, the foundation of the Project was solid. The water from the well we dug was giving flowers to blossom. I felt it was time to hand over the job to the younger and energetic person, Yuko Arimori, and her Hearts of Gold members.

## Started with great support by volunteers' passion and courage

**Tatsuya TANI**

Director of Sankei Sports



Organizing and supporting the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon was requested by the Cambodian Government after the "Macau Conference." It was essential for the Government to announce that the civil war came to an end and they are ready to organize an international marathon race at Angkor Wat. The race was to symbolize the peace in the country. We discussed this Project with the Sankei Sports Osaka head office. Because two years ago, a Japanese police officer, Mr. Takada, was killed there, we felt that it was necessary to visit before making the decision.

We traveled to Angkor Wat to carry out the preliminary survey. A soldier, Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh's nephew, drove us in a jeep with firearms on both sides through the Angkor Wat ruins to check the racecourse's safety and road condition. There were signs of skulls indicating landmines. Regardless, Mr. Yuki of Sankei Sport, responsible for the survey, decided to proceed with the Project.

Many volunteers came to help to set up the first race. Mr. Hiroshi Shibata from Amagasaki city Amateur Athletic Federation (AAF), the late Mr. Kimiaki Nishikawa from Kobe City, the late Mr. Yoshio Goto from Gifu Running Club, Mr. and Ms. Yamagishi from Japan Dragon Boat Association, and Mr. Makoto Shobu, who used to work for a language school, and many other volunteers worked together. To make sign boards for the race, we purchased thin wooden boards at the market and painted them. We also tried to repair the racecourse damaged by armed vehicles or tanks during the civil war. The day before the race, we started to put up tents at the start and finish area. It's an unexpectedly hard job for inexperienced volunteers, and we were exhausted. In the beginning, local people were standing and watching, but later they came to help us. Thanks to their lending hands, the tent village was completed

by late evening. On the race day, Mr. Shobu was the master of ceremonies and simultaneous interpreter at the opening ceremonies and farewell parties attended by VIPs from Cambodia and Japan.



The Khmer Amateur Athletics Federation (K-AAF) was supposed to send someone to the check-in desk by 10 am, but no one came until later. I expected a responsible person to show up on time and when someone showed up at 4 pm, I felt slight cultural shock. However, not all Cambodian people are like that! Luckily, we had 35-year-old Mr. Hong, a reliable all-around man. He showed up at 5 am sharp every morning at our hotel and worked with enthusiasm, arranging color

cones for the racetrack, setting marathon gates and desks, getting necessary equipment, and water and bananas.

On December 22nd, 1996, at 6 am, in cloudy weather conditions, 661 runners gathered from 14 countries started at the sound of a gun from the entrance of Angkor Wat. The first race was precisely the result of the “volunteer spirit” achieved by local Cambodians and Japanese cooperation.



## **Sport has changed the state of political conflict.**

**–Sport helped appeal the restoration of Cambodia to the world. –**

**PRUM Bunyi**

Advisor to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.



The preparation for the First Angkor Wat International Half Marathon, 1996 (AWHM) started in 1994. The civil war ceased at last in 1993, and we were accepted to participate in the 12th Asian Games in Hiroshima held in 1994 along with a slogan of “Keep going, Cambodia”. In 1994, another half marathon was organized to run though from Phnom Penh to Kampong Speu, which triggered the realization of the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon to be held in 1996 with support from Japan.

I contacted the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) to register me as an IAAF member and started preparation for organizing the AWHM including measurement of the running course. Even though I had difficulties in following the necessary procedures within Cambodia, I was able to complete it with help from Japan. Another good luck with us was that Mr. Norodom Ranariddh, then First Prime Minister, was in the office as a President of the Cambodia Olympic Committee, and we were able to enjoy his support. Three Japanese men, led by Mr. Yuki, visited us often for help. An important meaning of the “1st International Marathon Race” held in Cambodia was that Cambodia can be recognized globally as a safe and peaceful country after having overcome damages caused by the civil war. I was invited by Yuko Arimori after finishing this race, and she advised us to develop this marathon race in connection with society, not as an ordinary sport event, and make an effort to disseminate our dreams to include people with disabilities athletes, and eventually contribute to world peace.

The next year, 1997, a military conflict between FUNCINPEC and Cambodian People’s Party broke out. The conflict ceased only within two days, but Norodom Ranariddh was dismissed from his position and was expelled from his native land. Even though AMHM was registered with the IAAF as an annual event, the political situation

was extremely unstable, and we were not sure whether runners would make entries. We were at a loss as to what to do. Even in these difficult circumstances, Mr. Yuki visited us consecutive months, September, and October, to continue meetings to promote a shared understanding toward carrying out the race in some way or other. Ung Huot became the First Prime Minister after Norodom was expelled from the country, however, Hun Sen, then the Second Prime Minister, who defeated the civil war, maintained both political and military power. There still existed a risk of another military conflict between these two Prime Ministers. Our final plan was to invite both Ung Huot and Hun Sen with the utmost care and attention to the opening ceremony and to the race day. It must appeal to the image of a safe and peaceful country, Cambodia, all over the world.

We strongly pushed two Prime Ministers to attend and experience the second AWHM, and to our great surprise, both, political opponents of each other, agreed and attended the opening ceremony together wishing for the success of the event. At that time, I was acting as General Director of Sport as well as Chairman of Cambodia Olympic Committee. I still wonder if my position helped me communicate both with the Government side and Olympic Committee and resulted in the success of inviting two Prime Ministers to the same stage. H.E.Mr. Sar Kheng, then Minister for Home Affairs, handed an official letter requesting to support the AWHM over to Japan, confirming the security issue was completely guaranteed at the risk of the Cambodian Government. The second AWHM was successfully organized, and without the success of the second AWHM, we could not have expected to see further development of AWHM.

## **The road to localize an operation of the marathon race, conquering the barrier of culture and customs.**

**Taku YAMAGUCHI**

The first director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office.  
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health and Sport Science, University of Tsukuba.



In 2004, after graduating from graduate school, I went to Cambodia to open the Heart of Gold (HG) Southeast Asia Office. First, with the help of Mr. Sem Phalla, the local manager of the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon. The funding of the marathon and all the preparation work was done by HG Japan. As the AWHM participants grew in number, it became necessary to get the job done locally.

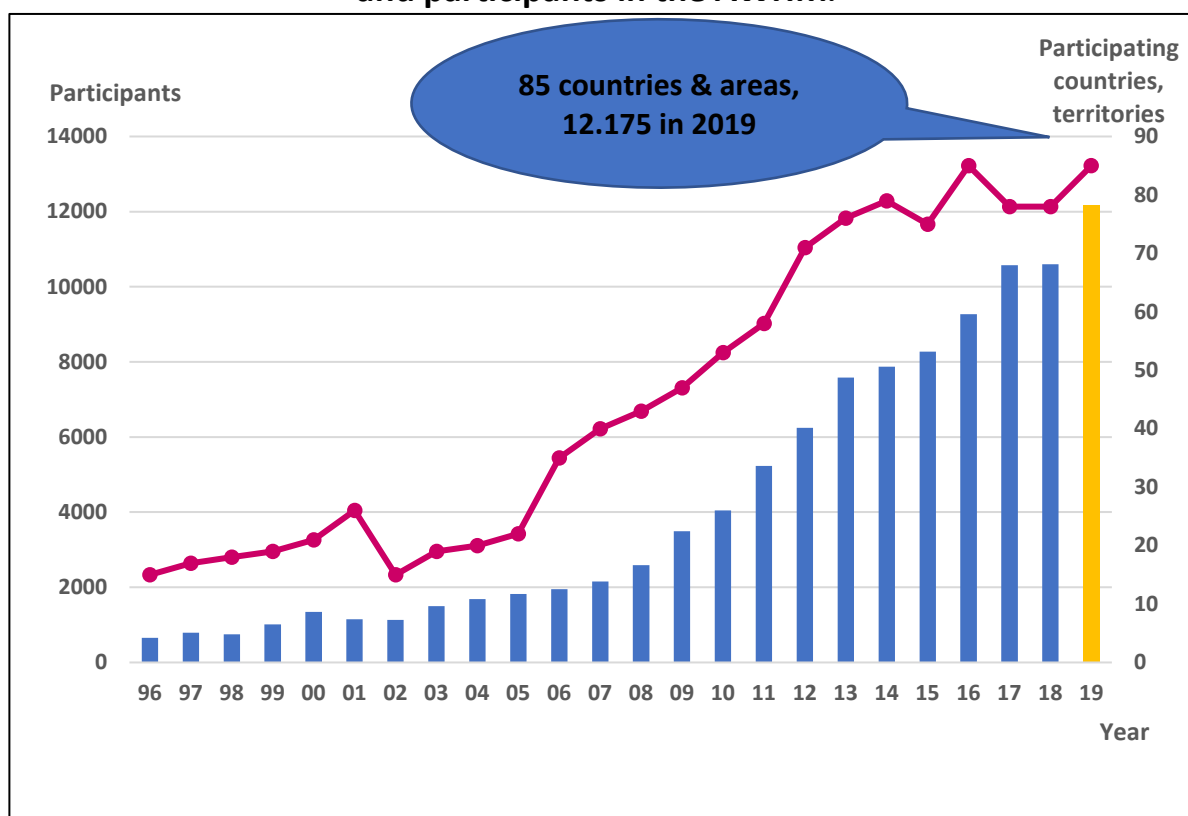
Overcoming the differences and developing a mutual trust with the staff, we made steady progress. Luckily, Cambodia's social stability and economic growth exceeded our initial expectations helped in making progress. Also, the number of participants in the race increased year after year. We achieved our plan and turned over the operation to the local organization before the 18th AWHM in 2013. The "AWHM localization plan" was divided into four areas: (1) setting up the annual schedule, (2) making the preparation manual, (3) creating the operation manual, and (4) setting up the financials. Taking consideration of the Cambodian customs, we made the "Organization Committee," "Steering Committee," and "Operation Committee" to put the plan in action. Making rules and regulations, annual schedules, and operation manuals made smooth progress, but the human resource development and financial planning were challenging.

We transferred the technical aspect of the race to the Cambodian Athletics Federation (KAAF). I hired staff and trained him to oversee the race. On top of human resource development, my work consisted of the day-to-day running of the office, race operation, managing volunteers, designing equipment, promoting the race, and getting sponsors to the race. We tried to be financially independent from HG by (1) Raising entry fees (entries from foreigners residing in neighboring countries and living in Cambodia), (2) implementing a "pledge system" \* (3) adding new corporate sponsors. With the prospect of a solid financial situation, we were able to transfer the race.

The relationship that HG built running the AWHM led to creating a physical education program for schools in Cambodia. HG developed sports programs for all levels of the school system. The marathon support project has become the cornerstone of HG and still shines on people as a symbol of peace.

\*Pledge system: The system in which friends of runners make donation to the race

### The transition of the numbers of participating countries, territories, and participants in the AWHM.



## **Come on!!**

### **-The symbol of friendship between Japan and Cambodia-**

**Yuko ARIMORI**

Representative Director of Hearts of Gold.



After the 11th Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM) in 2006, I suggested converting this event to Cambodia. Their answer was, "We are not ready", but I was able to add a clause in the minutes that "the Cambodian Olympic Committee (NOCC) and the Cambodian Athletics Federation (KAAF) aim to run the tournament independently in the future". However, the Cambodian and the Heart of Gold (HG) had a difference in understanding.

After agreeing to this proposal, we had a meeting every year to gain mutual understanding. We created the Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office to teach a local staff to operate the event. An increasing number of runners from many countries have generated significant economic effects in the region. The growing number of runners both from domestic and overseas looked forward to the race in the historic ruins of Angkor Wat World heritage. Thus, the AWHM has developed into one of Cambodia's most significant sports events involving people with disabilities, women, and children.

At the 18th AWHM in 2013, Cambodia requested to turn over the AWHM to them as they were ready to take on the operation themselves. I was not entirely convinced of their readiness but felt that the time had come for hand over. A memorandum incorporated the event's vision: "AWHM is organized as a symbol of friendship between Japan and Cambodia and contributes to the development of sports in Cambodia." The memorandum stated that 1) the AWHM remain as a charity race, 2) keep the initial vision, value and aim of the race, 3) maintain the financial

transparency. I became lifetime Honorary President and be invited to the AWHM representing HG every year. After agreement on the above, we handed over the WHM operation.

On the early morning of December 6, 2015, I stood at the starting line of the 20th AWHM, awaiting the break of dawn. In the past, I used to run 21.0975 km along with all other runners, taking care of things on the way, such as paying attention to the cars driving into the racecourse, supporting staff at the water station, cheering up runners who are walking, etc. This time, I kept on running, reminiscing the last 20 years. On the way to the finish line, one young Cambodian runner called out to me, “Come On!” It used to be my role in cheering up runners calling out “Come On!” It gave so much joy that the spirit of the race was carried out, and the race was independent. In response to “Come On”, I wanted to keep running with them.



## **Point to line, line to surface**

### **–How to localize and continue our activities–**

**Kuniko TASHIRO**

Vice President, Secretary-General, Hearts of Gold



The first AWHM was held in 1996 to abolish landmines and support landmine victims. The following year in 1997, another crisis of civil war occurred. Many parties concerned, including the Japanese government, worked very hard to overcome the crisis and stabilize Cambodia. An executive committee of AWHM believed that inviting two prime ministers of opposing parties to the race would help move Cambodia to peaceful situation and appeal to the whole world. I was working in Cambodia at this time and still vividly remember and felt so grateful to have had the opportunity to help build peace in the country through sports.

The following year in 1998, we created the “Hearts of Gold” office there. Our initial purpose was to continue this international charity marathon and foster human resources to operate the event locally. We received a request from the local authorities to provide support for other sports, preferably using only one ball, such as soccer, volleyball, and basketball, for children. Upon request, we organized a “Youth Sports Festival” starting from 2001, which has evolved into “Youth and Leader Training through Sport Festival, YLTS Festival” co-hosted by the Ministry of Education (Refer HG booklet 1 for details). Many of Arimori’s friends who have participated in the past Olympic Games and experts on sports visited Cambodia and coached the teachers. Instead of organizing a sports festival that takes place once a year, we felt the necessity to develop physical education classes in the school systems. To put “Sound mind in a sound body,” in effect, we met with officials from the Ministry of Education. Mr. Prum Bunyi, Advisor to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, agreed to our suggestion. His comment was, “I would make

it my lifework to implement educational reform. I would ask you to wait until we form an office for educational reform.” In 2003, after Cambodia’s general election, we received news from Mr. Prum Bunyi, informing us that a new department of “Sport and Physical Education (promoting physical education in Primary school)” was established. A miracle has happened to us! We succeeded in opening the door to physical education, promoting the project for primary schools (JICA’s grass-roots project) in response to their request.

We had a few challenges; Mr. Prum Bunyi struggled to set up the education office within the Cambodian government; we were having problems raising funds and getting support from experts and authorities. We contacted organizations such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, JICA, Foundations, Local Governments, and Universities. In those days, the sporting events were considered an international exchange program, and getting involved in other countries' education was detrimental. They did not think a small NPO such as HG is not qualified to aid foreign educational administration. We knew that we could never step forward without having competent personnel, funding, and the right environment to develop such an extensive project. First, we looked for a partner to lead this challenging project, and we found Mr. Taku Yamaguchi, as the First Director of Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office.

Thanks to the incredible support by the late Dr. Takeo Takahashi, Vice President of Tsukuba University, we received their help. The physical education project in primary schools in Cambodia started ten years after AWHM and five years after YLTS. Initially, JICA hesitated to help, as it never had previous experiences with the grass-root project. Their support helped us to develop our plans from dots to line and from line to surface. We started offering high-quality physical education programs to primary schools all over Cambodia and enhanced students’ “Sound mind in a sound body” within the physical education classes. However, we had to make an enormous effort to educate people who have never seen nor taken physical education and develop the physical education system throughout Cambodia. It took ten years, but the development of today was led to the establishment of a system that could be disseminated throughout Cambodia in the future by involving school teachers and teacher training schools as well as human resource development of administrative organizations (central and local).

## Creation of the Department of Physical Education and sport for Student

**PRUM Bunyi**

Advisor, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

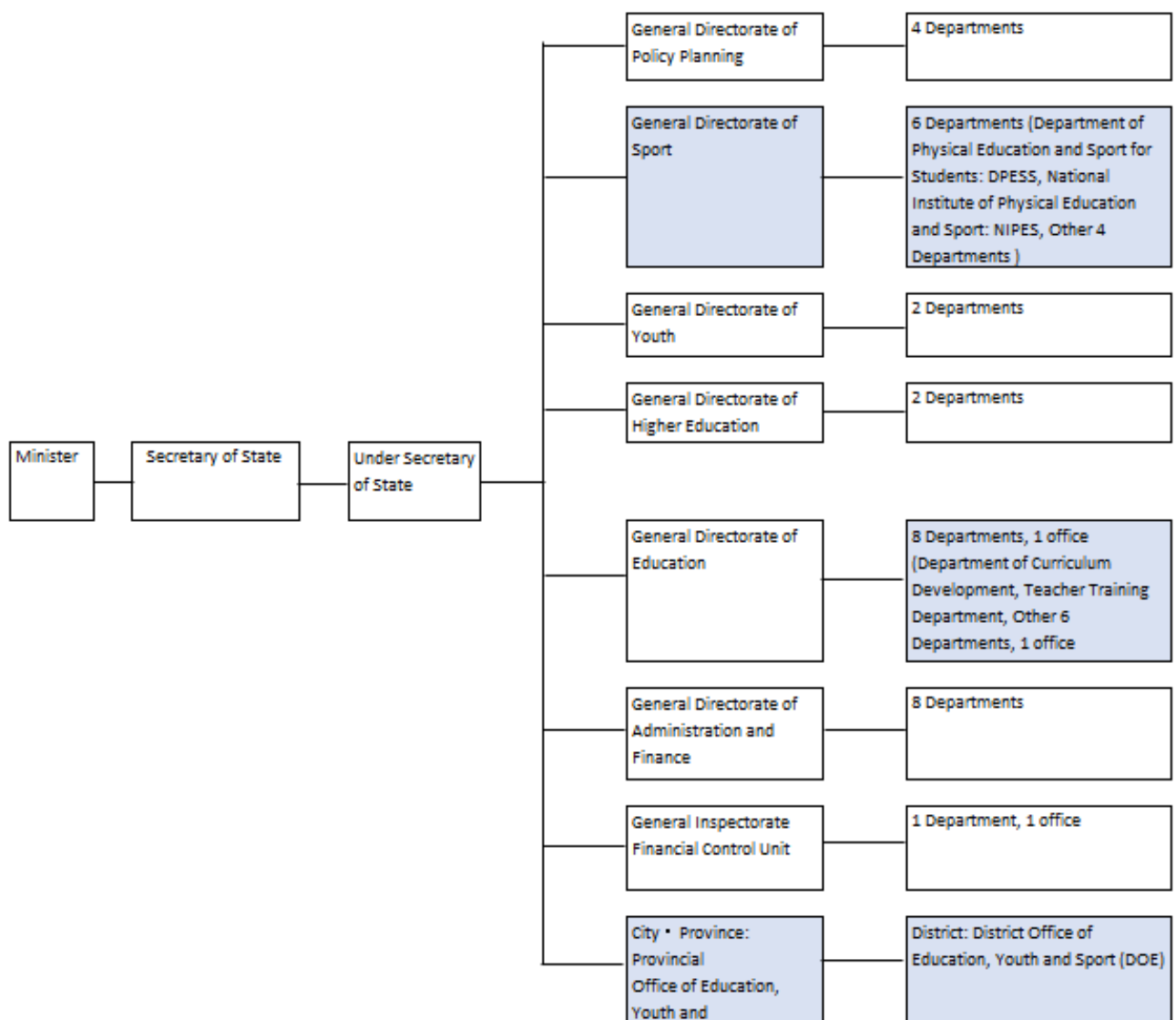


In the beginning, there was no separate division among education, youth, and sport within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. On our way to continuing the AWIHM, Ms. Arimori stressed earnestly that “not only normal healthy people but also People with disability people have to join for the development of the whole community. The same applies to the world of sports, too”. In accordance with her policy, we have continuously carried out support for the people with disabilities through the channel of Cambodia Trust and Cambodia Red Cross. I had the luxury of being concerned with the “Youth and Leaders Training through Sport (YLTS)” which started in 2000, and by being involved in this position, I recognized that school children are also members of society. When I asked schoolteachers what they are teaching in the physical education class, their reply was “I don’t know what to teach”. I did realize the need to improve physical education in the school by obtaining feedback from teachers. “Directorate General of Sport, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (DGSYS)” was established in 2003, and Department of Physical Education and Sport (DPES), Department of Physical Education and Sport for Students (DPESS), National Sports Training Center (NSTC) were established following the DGSYS. At that time, the National Institute of Physical Education and Sport (NIPES) was still a subsidiary body of the NSTC. I was appointed as a Director of the DPESS, and from 2003 to 2006, I had a stormy argument with Mr. Taku Yamaguchi, the first director of the Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office at that time. I remember fondly when we had discussions over and over again to solve the impending problems and had a drink together sometime to understand each other.

Later in 2006, the “Directorate-General of Sport, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (DGSYS)” was

separated into the Directorate-General of Youth and Directorate-General of Sport. The Directorate-General of Sport was split into four departments, DPES, DPESS, NSTC, and NIPES. Even though JICA's project started in the same year, 2006, we had no other choices to request JICA to render us full support and guidance because of the following reasons, 1) DPESS was newly established, 2) most of the staff were young and inexperienced. As the DPESS was obliged to control physical education in the schools, we requested not only the Department of Physical Education and Sport concerned but also the Department of Primary School and Teaching Method (current department of curriculum and syllabus development) to be involved in our project. I am profoundly grateful to have been able to establish a foundation of the physical education system for trainers in each stage of the National, Regional and Provincial levels which are still well underway.

## Activity-related Organizational Structure of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport



## The beginning of physical education in the Kingdom of Cambodia

**Taku YAMAGUCHI**

The first Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office  
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health and Sport Science of University of Tsukuba

After the general election for the National Assembly in 2003, the government undertook a drastic reform of education in Cambodia, and in 2004 the Department of Physical Education and Sport for Students (DPESS) was newly established. Mr. Prum Bunnyi became the director of this department. I worked together to promote and develop Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM) and Youth and Leaders Training through Sport (YLTS). For local executive officers and teachers who had not enjoyed nor experienced modern physical training, it's not easy to embody the physical education classes. With the support of JICA's grass-root project (2006~2008), we created the "Physical education course guideline for the primary school" and drafted a teaching instruction guide for them. The details are in the "The HG booklet 1".

A course of study or an instruction book is meaningful if used in an actual physical education class. Second stage school physical education support project (2009-2012) stated including: "promotion of elementary school physical education" with the aim of "publishing newly revised instruction books," "establishing system in the Ministry of Education," "training national and regional trainers," and "training teachers and create teacher training schools in the field."



At that time, the twenty-four provinces of Cambodia were divided into five regions: large cities, mountainous regions, river regions, coastal regions, and remote regions. The model schools in the central provinces were selected and it took over half a year considering capital investment, seminars, traveling guidance, open study groups, and certification of central schools. We expanded the program through Cambodia.

The Japanese educational system had to be modified to fit local conditions. After a trial and error, we made a revised "RECTI" \* two. It was a step toward the shared dream of creating the physical education program. Our aim was "to develop national trainers, to establish a follow-up system," and "to set up designated schools for research." Out of 48 participants, 28 finished the National Trainor course, and six persons in charge and six assistants in charge were certified by the Minister for Education. The office was created to handle revision of teaching instruction, physical fitness test, research on physical education, development of educational materials, and familiarizing teaching instruction materials.

NT's importance was acknowledged within the Ministry of Education, which gave confidence and pride in the work they do. The Provincial Teacher Training Center (PTTC) was created to offer regular workshops and educational training and it brought NT, HG and teachers to communicate and build networks.

Our next target for the "follow-up system," we tried to strengthen the cooperation with the "Provincial Office of Education (POE)," which is in 24 provinces in Cambodia, and the "District Office of Education (DOE)" in 7 regions. And in the newly established "Annual Physical Education Council," we offered an opportunity to the local staff for self-assessment, problem-solving, and review their action plan. However, despite our effort, not all has proceeded favorably; the system's progress was dependent on the awareness and ability of staff-in-charge and teachers in the region. As a result, in setting up "Pilot schools for research," ten base model schools, five base model PTTC, 40 schools, and 13 PTTC outside of model provinces were established, and the project moved to the third stage.

\*1. YLTS: Abbreviated form of Youth and Leaders Training through Sport.

\*2. RECTI: Abbreviated form of Regional Education Center Transferring Initiative.

The system to construct core primary school and training school at the center province and promote physical education to the neighboring schools and teacher training schools.

\*3. NT: National Trainer: Those who passed the examination of the professional physical education teacher authorized but the Ministry of Education.

\*4. PTTC: Abbreviated form of Provincial Teacher Training Center.

Primary school teacher training school.

\*5. POE: Abbreviated form of Provincial Office of Education.

Education Board of Province in Cambodia.

\*6. DOE: Abbreviated form of District Office of Education.

Education Board of District.

## Our goal is to establish physical education in Primary schools.

**Yoshinori OKADE**

Professor, Nippon Sport Science University



I went to Cambodia for the first time when the primary school physical education support project started. I felt that there might not be enough time to achieve the goals set for the project. The project had a time limit, and there was no guarantee to continue the project after the time expired. I set goals so that the project will be lasting.

It was essential to set up a local program by developing human resources and systems. It was necessary to find people who agreed and desired to implement the project. I needed to find someone competent and has similar values to work together toward the goal. The workshop for the project provided an excellent place to find this person.

At the workshop, participants separated into groups to discuss what they wanted to achieve.

After each group presented their goals, I had them vote on the proposal that they felt was necessary. There were so many that raised their hands many times that it was confusing. It was not a productive way to narrow down the goals. Later I found that the participants in nature wanted to be agreeable and not express individual opinions. In general, the people of Cambodia are not argumentative and want to create a harmonious and peaceful relationships. We found competent personnel, and we worked together to develop goals through productive discussions. This project helped me even after I returned to Japan in preparing the class curriculums. It was a valuable experience for me.

### **Professor Yoshinori OKADE**

From 2006, by recommendation from late Professor Teo Takahashi, he became advisor on HG's physical education program. He became a member of the committee to develop Course guidelines and physical education teaching instruction in the elementary school. He was also in charge of guiding teaching methodology, drawing policy development of promoting physical education as well as providing technical advice in establishing the four-year college. He was awarded a Letter of Appreciation from the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport in 2016. He took the office of Emeritus Professor of the Sports Research Center, National Institute of Physical Education and Sport in 2020.

## **Our dream was to overcome difficulties and open a new history of developing physical education.**

**DOK Kirirath,**

Deputy Director, Department of Physical Education and Sport for Students, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.



We did not have any knowledge, equipment, facilities nor even the site when we started preparing “Course guideline of physical education in the Primary school”. As nobody had any experience of creating course guidelines, we had so many difficulties to develop a course guideline only among limited working group members from the Dept. of Physical Education and Sport for Students (DPESS). Currently, tangible results of the project have been achieved, and it became possible for us to discuss policies on how to familiarize physical education together with high government officials such as Directors, Administrative Vice-Minister. In those days, it was almost impossible to communicate with high government bureaucrats in view of the historical background of Cambodia.

The next step was how to educate teachers to teach at the school in order to familiarize physical education. However, most teachers did not have any experience of learning physical education, so we had to start to teach them from the meaning of physical education. In Cambodia, the school management is all dependent on the management ability of the school principal. We needed their cooperation and coordination to generalize physical education in the schools. In fact, when we visited schools, a teacher spent only ten minutes teaching Khmer-style physical exercises within a 40-minute class lesson. A particular situation in Cambodia at that time was that no space to exercise, no teaching tools such as balls, etc., no gymnasium like in Japan, and we had to stop physical education lessons when it rained. There were no teachers who delivered class lessons after preparing for an annual teaching plan and teaching guidelines. The start of our school management was gathering everyone’s passion and tackling so many inexperienced difficulties.

Even in those circumstances, I was convinced that the role of EPESS was to develop physical education, and I considered carefully and deeply how to teach physical education to the children, as a leader of the management

team and Deputy Director of EPESS as well. I was lucky enough to have had a good chance to cooperate with other staff members to discuss and develop the plan on any necessary occasion. Our dream was maximizing the chance of learning new physical education and opening a new chapter in the history of physical education in Cambodia, not sticking to the old physical education system.



I would like to make my best effort to contribute to realizing the following targets through physical education; 1) new physical education courses could be spread and familiarized, 2) children could become healthier through physical education classes, 3) the number of students not attending school would be lesser, and 4) motivate children to go to school by attending physical education classes.

## Children have changed by receiving new physical education

**OUN Sothary**

Vice Principal, Preah Sihanouk Primary School, Svay Rieng



At Preah Sihanouk Primary School in Svay Rieng province, a new physical education class started in 2011 based on a new workshop carried out by the Hearts of Gold (HG) and the Ministry of Education of Cambodia. In the old physical education classes, we seldom saw children's smiles as classroom lessons were only raising hands and moving the legs, thus moving their own body was not included, nor no chances to enjoy the matches. In the new physical education classes, many soccer, basketball, and volleyball matches are included, which gives children chances to cooperate and communicate with each other to discuss how to win these matches. Among these sports, what I found unique was the gymnastic mat exercise as we have never experienced it and found it very interesting. The HG has donated us 4 mats which enabled us to use two classes at the same time. We tried to arrange meetings with parents once every three months, and when we told them that physical education classes were scheduled on Tuesday and Friday, they prepared sportswear for children to wear in the class lesson, thus we were able to obtain the cooperation of parents.

I am now taking the lead of physical education as a vice-principal as well as a teacher of the school. I am so grateful to be able to teach new physical education and to have become a trainer in the region. Children have been given many chances to play matches of some sport, which encouraged them to practice and study hard to win the games. And, as a vice principal, I got into difficulties facing a shortage of teachers and regional leaders who have good knowledge of the new physical education system as some of them have retired at Mandatory Age. It's not the shortage of teachers who have good knowledge of the new physical education system, but the fact is that the number of teachers equipped with techniques of teaching physical education is very limited. I, from the

management viewpoint, try to encourage those who are interested in becoming a teacher to read guidebooks and understand the new physical education.

In the Preah Sihanouk Primary School, we held an athletic meeting for the first time in 2014 under the guidance of the Ministry of Education and the Hearts of Gold. From next year onward, the school started to hold an athletic meeting independently and continuously as an occasion to let parents and people in the region know what students have learned throughout the year, not only holding the athletic meeting as a chance for students to enjoy. Teachers' endeavors were acknowledged by the Ministry of Education and resulted in the appointment of a designated school for promoting physical education. I try to achieve a high quality of new physical education as a designated school, and continuously develop an awareness of the health and smiles of children taking advantage of this trend.



## **Support system for physical education in Cambodia from Okayama.**

**Kyoko INOUE**

Department Manager, Project and Public relations, Hearts of Gold (HG).



This Training project was an excellent opportunity for the people of Okayama to understand HG's activities and the situation of Cambodia. We received much support for our project from our community, especially for a training program based on subsidies provided by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) in 2011. It made it possible to invite Mr. Prum Bunyi, Advisor, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport,

followed by seven other officials taking a pivotal role in Cambodia's physical education.

Through this experience, they had a chance to observe the physical education program in Japan for the first time. Watching the athletic meet at a primary school motivated them to do it in Cambodia. Two years later in 2013, organized by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, had their athletic meet. They requested us to send experienced leaders to help them, which was agreed by Okayama prefecture and city government. The Okayama government continually supported our programs and helped us to build a solid relationship with Cambodia. In 2016, teachers in Okayama city conducted a gymnastic and rhythmic exercises workshop for the teachers from Cambodia. We are thankful for the support we received from the Okayama prefecture and city government, schools, companies, organizations, and individuals. We requested various sports equipment such as balls, inflators, athletic uniforms, sports shoes, line markers, and ropes for Cambodia. We have been getting donations from many supporters: Eikoh Sports Company has continuously supported us in collecting new and used balls by asking the customer from stores, manufacturers, and club teams. Okayama Gakugeikan high school students took them when they went on a study trip to Cambodia. Omocha Oukoku (Toy Kingdom) raised fund from their charity mini marathons in their park and donated the horizontal bar equipment. Rotary and Lions Clubs donated basketball hoops, soccer goalposts, water purifiers, and printing of the instruction booklet. The cost of making a gymnastic mat by HG staff was Y10,000 and [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use



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the students raised funds at the school bazaars and other activity to support HG. These supporters truly believe in HG's spirit of "Do the best on what you can!".



## In anticipation of the birth of new physical education in Cambodia



**Yasunaga OGAWA**

Principle of Okayama  
Municipal Gojyo Primary school

I was an elementary school physical education teacher's consultant in the Department of h

Health and Physical Education of the Education Bureau in Okayama Prefecture. I received a request to explain the school curriculum guideline of physical education, teachers' training, and the role of

local government to a representative from Cambodia. He was very eager to learn and asked me so many questions. I tried my best to answer his inquiries, even though I was not sure how much I could meet his expectations.

In 2010, Mr. KEO Sochetra, Assistant-Project Manager of the HG South-East Asia Office, and I attended elementary school and teacher's workshop in Okayama Prefecture. Meeting him made me think of doing something more for physical education in Cambodia. On the way to the workshop, we talked about the situation in Cambodia, including the civil war, people's condition under Pol Pot Regime, and how it changed society. We went to the Okayama city elementary school athletic meet and observed how people were cheering, and the whole community came to unity. I saw his teary eyes and listened to his desire to bring this event to his country and build a peaceful society. To me, who grew up after the WWII and didn't experience the war, this incident left a significant impact on me.

Later, I was sent to Cambodia and collaborated with the local leaders to develop athletic meetings. I met the same representative from the Ministry of Education again. Through the activities in Cambodia, I gained significant learning experience. I did not want to force the Japanese way of doing things, but to be flexible and be mindful of the local leaders' opinions. The communication was difficult because I could not

speak Khmer, and my English was limited. I was under pressure, but it was an enjoyable experience. Ten years have passed since then. Physical education in Cambodia has been slowly but steadily rooted and developing.

I hope that even in areas where facilities are insufficient, there will be a "fun physical education" that is different from Japan. We hope that physical education in Cambodia will flourish and will set good examples at various international sports conferences soon. It may be that Mr. Keo will be the presenter. When it happens, I would like to go and congratulate him. It may not be just a dream, and it will charm us all.



## Does “Honored day = PE Festival” contribute to the school physical education in Cambodia?

**Yuichi HARA**

Lecturer, Okayama University Graduate School of Education.



I still remember the scene vividly where children participated in the PE Festival (athletic meeting) at the Wat Chork Primary School in Siem Reap on December 7, 2013. The energy exerted by children was much more than when I visited in 2000. I was a student then and did not even imagine coming back to do something meaningful with children, teachers, and national trainers (NT).

The HG suddenly opened the door to the new challenge when I received a call from Ms. Kyoko Inoue, HG Department Manager, Project, and Public Relations. She asked, "Could you help support athletic meetings, PE Festival, in Cambodia?" Without hesitation, I responded, "Yes." However, afterward, I asked myself, "Is it possible to hold an event in Cambodia, where people suffered a tragedy, having been tyrannized by the Por Pot regime?" My unarticulated anxiety came true later.

At first, we started discussing the purpose of the athletic meeting with NT through skype. After observing the athletic meet in Okayama, I could understand their wish to have one in Cambodia. However, even in Japan, the purpose of athletic meet was being reassessed. That is why we needed to clarify the purpose of the athletic meet in Cambodia. Because of the language barrier, we had difficulties in communicating. Mr. Naoki Nishiyama, Board of Directors, the HG south-East Asia Office, and Mr. Keo Sochetra, Assistant-Project Manager, the HG South-East Asia Office, agreed on these goals: 1) To foster the enjoyment of sports and cultural activities. 2) To improve physical fitness and skills. 3) To bond families, schools, and communities. We repeatedly asked NT, "What's the reason for holding an athletic meet?". The questioning recaps the purpose of the athletic meet and reminds the importance of physical education programs at schools. The goal may change later, but the meaning of the athletic meet should

be preserved.

We faced a wide range of problems concerning school facilities, equipment problems, lack of experienced teachers and faced difficulties of teaching children from all different social backgrounds. Together with NTs we tackled these problems one by one.

At Wat Chork Primary School, there were 1400 students, and it was demanding to manage this number of students even in Japan. We were accommodating and worked with NTs, professionals, and students, and on the day of the meet, we delegated NTs to run the meet alone. As a result of our perpetual effort, in 2019, there were an athletic meet at fifteen schools. I believe, children will receive higher quality of physical education when the local people develop the system in their way.

The PE Festival in 2019 survey showed that offering the PE Festival and a new physical education system together was effective. I wish Cambodia to flourish into a society where sports are part of their livelihood and enjoyed by all. At the same time, I want to continue my work in Cambodia to create a Win-Win relationship.

## Start out little by little

### –International cooperation by Elementary school students–



#### **Mayumi ITAKURA**

Vice-principal of Okayama  
municipal Housen Primary school

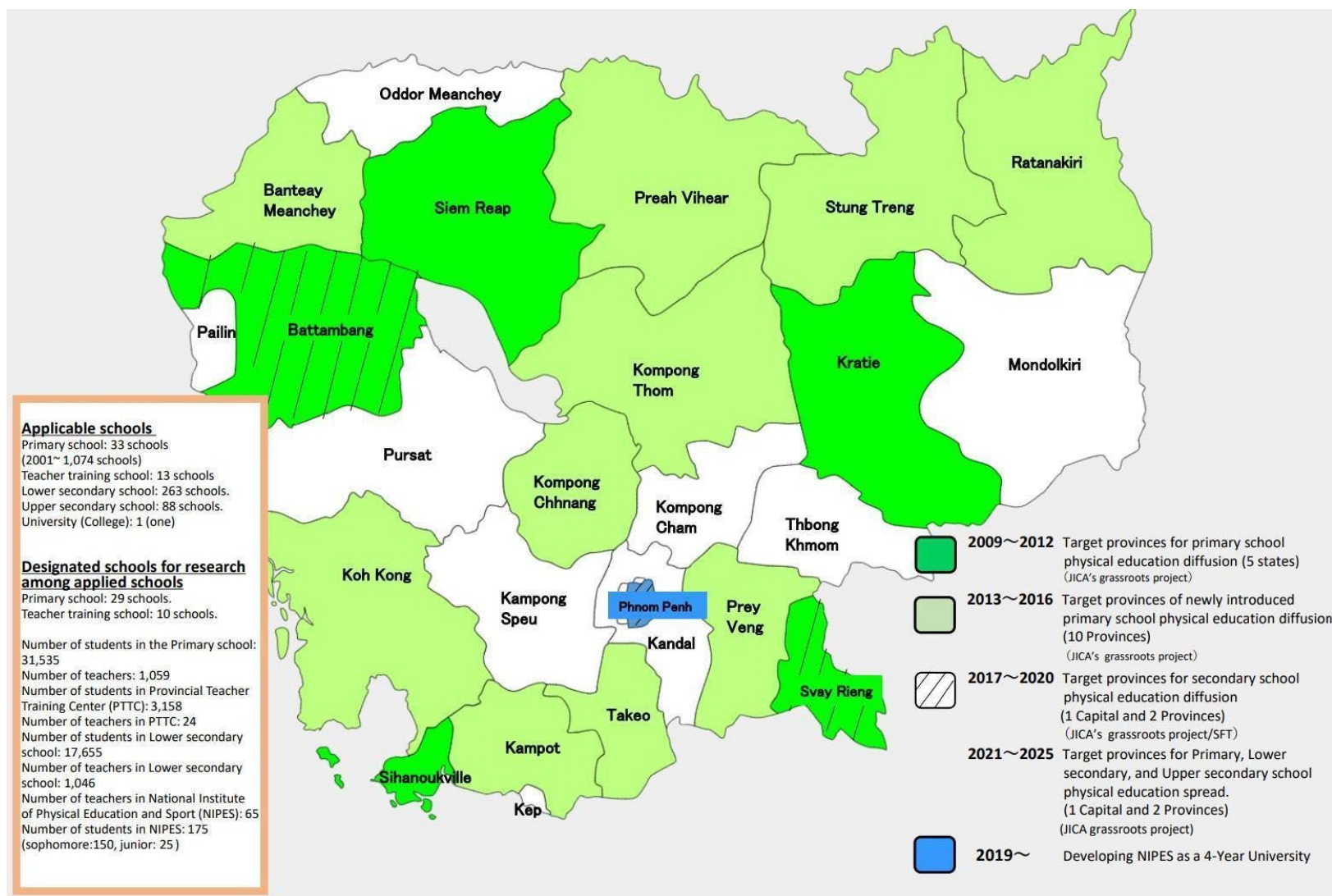
At our junior high school graduation in 2020, I gave a congratulatory message to them. "I am delighted to announce that the gymnasium for the Bassac Lower Secondary School in Cambodia has been completed. The funds you raised helped to build it! It's true that small effort become a huge strength if gathered together."

When the graduating class was in sixth grade at Okayama Third Municipal Fujita Elementary School's open study period, they studied international study offered in collaboration with the Hearts of Gold (HG). When Mr. Keo Sochetra visited, he told the class that physical education is not available in Cambodia. When they found out that the children of Cambodia were unable to attend school regularly and do not get a chance to play ball even, they wanted to do something about it. They collected daily goods and sent them to Cambodia

And, through skype, they communicated with the children in the New Child Care Center (NCCC) in Cambodia. Speaking to them directly, they felt close and said, "We have friends in Cambodia, and we want to do something to make them happy!" Seeing them on skype led to taking the next step. "What do they want? Let us ask them this question" To find out their interests, they showed them how to leap over a vaulting horse, performed mat exercises, rope jumping, and soccer. Also, they asked Mr. Sochetra for advice. They put themselves in the place of children of Cambodia to see what the best would be. The idea of building a gymnasium was brought out, and some voiced that, "It is impossible to raise enough to build a gymnasium; it's better to send something else. "To this remark, other students said, "It is not enough to build a gymnasium, but we need to start somewhere." We, teachers, were pleasantly surprised by this remark, and it made us happy that the international study was meaningful and felt proud of their benevolence. After the discussion, we divided the fund equally and sent balls and other half toward the construction. The congratulatory message was for these students. Every year we did fundraising at the local festivals and discussed the distribution of funds. We also donated all the jumping ropes students have used for their exercise.

Through international studies, students experienced the joy of helping others. "There are things we can do to help others even though however small it may be." It is the same for us adults. Do not be a person who is indifferent to the various problems that are occurring in society. For that reason, I would like to continue learning with the children. One day there was a fundraiser in front of the Okayama Station, and when I donated, the girl with the box recognized me and said, "Oh, teacher!" She was my student at the Third Fujita Elementary School. I gleamed and felt warm that she was doing what she had learned.

## The map of the area of promotion and support activity of the physical education course in Primary, Lower Secondary, Upper Secondary school, and University.



## Birth of Watty –A Secret Story

**Hidetaka Nakamura**

Representative of the Social Compass

Three years after arriving in Cambodia, we decided to create a character to inspire the image of Cambodia. I wondered, "What represents Cambodia?" Angkor Wat, the world heritage, came to my mind. It exactly is the "Watty." Another character I created was "Indy," representing the "Independence Monument", which is known and familiar to Cambodian people. However, it takes time and effort to gain popularity like a Doraemon. It is nothing but a mere scribble unless the public widely knows it.

How can these characters, Watty and Indy, be known throughout Cambodia? After consulting with Cambodian people, I found out that Cambodian people enjoy dancing and physical exercise. I remember watching people dancing or doing some exercises in the park. I decided to contact Mr. Nishiyama of the Hearts of Gold. When I met him three years ago, he asked for ideas on promoting rhythmic exercises, "Khmer exercise," for physical education. We made a sample animation of Watty and Indy doing the exercise and presented to the Ministry of Education. It was approved and the show was on TVK, national TV, every day from six-fifty every morning for four years.

After Watty's debut, the character appeared on various signage for JICA and other NGOs and government messages related to trash, traffic congestion, sewage problems, agricultural water, medical care, education, and tax issues. Practically, the Watty character has grown up to embody the concept of SDGs. I hope both Watty and Indy will continue participating on various occasions.



## **Physical Education Course in the Primary school. Started on the road to independence.**

**Naoki NISHIYAMA**

Board of Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office.



I transferred to Cambodia in April 2012. At that time, a new physical education project in five provinces and training Youth and Sports Division of their Ministry of Education officials, as National Trainer, was in progress. The second phase of collaborating with schools and training officials in these provinces was making progress. Implementing physical education programs and educating National Trainer for the entire country must be conducted by the Education Ministry of Cambodia.

I planned the third phase for the Ministry of Education to establish the physical education course in the primary schools for the entire country. The outline of the third phase to extend the program for the whole nation of 24 provinces; 1) increase the model province from 5 to 15, and have them teach their neighboring provinces, 2) increase the number of officials dispatched from the Ministry of Education from six (6) to twelve (12), and improve education and skills of each officer and give accreditation to those who finished training, 3) Ministry of Education to adopt the policy to get the education program in all the provinces.

Same as the phase two plan, we divided the whole country into five areas; each area included two model provinces set up in the phase two plan and promoted the physical education system to other provinces. Even though the main purpose of the project was to guarantee the quality of the physical education classes and establish the system to promote and spread physical education, officials in charge had to be capable. For the officials, we

secured the budget, had them make their own plan on monitoring. The project did not progress as we expected. Some of them had problems remembering all the curriculum or did not complete it on time. However, officials in charge have gained a sense of responsibility by taking control of their provinces. They have learned to promote new physical education by establishing good relationships with teachers through continual communication, not following orders.

After the entire project was over, the Ministry of Education and the province of Battambang started to conduct workshops and monitoring in their way along with local trainers. Thus, they are continuing to tackle problems constructively and independently. Similar attempts are taking place to promote and spread new physical education in other areas, backed up by the Ministry of Education.



\*First phase: February 2006 - February 2008

Produced the teaching instruction after completing the course guideline of physical education for the primary school and authorized it.

\*Second phase: June 2009 - June 2012

Spread the physical education course guideline and teaching instruction to five provinces. Six national trainers received certification.

\*Third phase: April 2013 - September 2016

Spread the physical education to fifteen provinces, and additional six national trainers and thirty regional trainers received n certification.

## The value of the project on physical education by the Hearts of Gold

**Keiko MIZOE**

Team Director, Agricultural and Rural Development Group1, Economic Development Department,  
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

I used to work at the Japan International Cooperation Agency Chugoku Center (JICA's one of the domestic branch offices to cover the Chugoku area) until July 2020. I worked with the Hearts of Gold (HG) through JICA's grass-root technical cooperation projects for more than four years. The HG and JICA have collaborated for about 15 years since JICA's first grass-root project started in 2006. I was impressed by the task of the HG to improve



physical education in Cambodia. They respected Cambodian people's opinion, exchanged their views, discussed until they reached a mutual understanding and worked together to reach a common goal. With patience, HG members trusted and gave the responsibility to them. I believe these approaches have made Cambodian people aware of the importance of the project, established trust for HG, and led to a long-lasting project.

JICA's Chugoku Center will focus on getting more Japanese to be aware of international cooperation and participate in the activities. The HG is successful in Okayama and there are groups establishing exchange programs with Cambodia. We, JICA, must learn from HG's "strong power and energy" to get people to participate. We plan to boost physical education and support grass-root technical cooperation programs.

I look forward to seeing more Cambodian children find their interests, develop their possibilities, learn the importance of cooperation, and devote themselves to something meaningful.



## SPORT FOR TOMORROW

### –The bridge between two countries through new physical education–



**Takumi KAWAHARA**

Director, Secretariat of Sport for Tomorrow Consortium, Japan Sport Council

I am delighted that Japan Sport Council entrusted the HG with developing the physical education guideline for lower secondary schools in Cambodia. The Japan Sport Council is a consortium of the Japanese government and various organizations related to sports. The physical education program was approved by the Minister for Education. It is our representative project and our contribution to the future of Cambodia.

When I attended the award ceremony in Cambodia, I verified that the HG had earned deep trust from the officials of Government, education, and school teachers. I am convinced that this resulted from many years of volunteer work in Cambodia, starting with the marathon, creating sports for people with disabilities, and developing physical education. The HG has consistently contributed to designing the course of physical education for primary, secondary, and upper secondary schools. HG did the groundwork and provided stability to conduct the project for a long period as government officials get shuffled and it's difficult to have continuity.

I had a chance to attend the workshop organized for the Cambodian government group. The group paid their own cost to visit and observed the teacher training system in Japan. It must have been difficult for them to pay for the expense of visiting Japan, given the problematic situation of Cambodia at that time. They were attentive and enthusiastic.

All of us are happy that the Government of Cambodia has chosen Japan to help develop its physical education system. HG has been playing a crucial role in bridging the two countries. I hope that the HG continues its activities and is acknowledged by the people of Cambodia.

SPORT FOR TOMORROW (SFT) is an international aid for a sports initiative jointly implemented by the Japanese public and private sectors. SFT aims to share the values of sport and promote the Olympic and Paralympic Movement to people of all generations around the world, including developing countries, for a better future for the world, from 2014 to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

\*(<https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/about/>)



## New Physical Education extended to the Lower Secondary School

**Naoki NISHIYAMA**

Board of Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office



Photo by ISHIKAWA Masayori

In 2014, we received notice for the Strategic Bilateral International Contribution Project provided by Support for Tomorrow (SFT). At that time, we were fully occupied with JICA's grass-root technical cooperation project implementing the third phase of the primary school physical education support project. However, we did not want to miss this opportunity. HG has been actively carrying out activities of international cooperation through sports since the establishment of the HG in 1998. We were confident that JICA valued our grass-root technical cooperation projects. Following the primary school project, the project for the lower secondary school was moving. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia also requested that we support lower secondary school physical education.

Before applying for funding for developing the physical education guideline for the lower secondary schools, we consulted with the Japan Sport Council (JSC). We spent three months researching lower secondary school physical education in two provinces in Cambodia and in Japan. We had a workshop inviting specialist from Japan.

2015 January, we received the approval for the project from SFT and completed our plan by March. Because of the delay in funding, the project didn't start until October. We planned activities rapidly to complete the project by December 2016. Every month we had workshops in Cambodia, inviting experts, training in Thailand and Singapore. Because twelve members of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia were writing each sections of curriculum guidelines, it took time to edit and consolidate the guideline. In addition, the approval procedure of the Minister of Education took about two months, so it was necessary to complete it by October 2016.

The Ministry of Education helped facilitated the process and submitted the proposal to the Minister for

Education in the beginning of November and it was approved in December. On December 21st, a ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of the course guide of physical education for the lower secondary schools. The following guests were invited to the ceremony from Japan, Mr. Hiroshige Yoshiie, Senior Vice-Minister for Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Mr. Hidehisa Horinouchi, Ambassador Plenipotentiary, Embassy of Japan in Cambodia, Mr. Hajime Adachi, Director of JICA Cambodia office, Mr. Takumi Kawahara, Director, Secretariat of Sport for Tomorrow Consortium, Japan Sport Council, Professor Yoshinori Okada, Nippon Sport Science University, Ms. Yuko Arimori, Representative Director of the HG. Mr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia, was also invited to represent the country. It was an unforgettable moment to have seen the members of working group expressing relief and satisfaction.



## **Easy-to-use teaching guidebooks.**

### **– Making Supplementary Teaching Materials –**

**KEO Sochetra**

Sub-Project Manager, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office



Hearts of Gold has started to produce a teaching guidebook of physical education for Lower Secondary School and to promote physical education in all Lower Secondary Schools in Cambodia from January 2017 to September in 2020, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in Cambodia, as a project of JICA's grass-root project after the course guideline of physical education was authorized by the Government of Cambodia in 2016.

The original plan was to complete the teaching guidebook of physical education for Lower Secondary School by September 2018, however, the technical committee found it difficult to complete it by the target date and delayed it until September 2019. The reasons for delaying the original target date were 1) 32nd Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games) is scheduled to be held in Cambodia in 2023, and nationwide national games were being held to prepare for the SEA games, 2) it became necessary to reform sports academy and sports events in each province in Cambodia. On top of these reasons, various activities in the country were affected by Cambodia's national election scheduled to be held in July 2018. Another difficulty we faced was finding an illustrator who was familiar with the concept in terms of physical education. Lastly, it took some time until the teaching guidebook was authorized by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports in Cambodia. All kinds of course guidelines, teaching guidebooks, and textbooks pertaining to Cambodia's Ministry of Education needed to be submitted to the

Department of Curriculum Development (DCD) first, and obtain the green light. DCD was a specialized bureau that dealt with checking, editing, approving, and the official publication of all kinds of books pertaining to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. The problem was that none of the staff in the department understood physical education in those days. Therefore, I had to take the trouble of explaining the overall content written in the teaching guidebook of physical education.

In the end, the teaching guidebook of physical education in Lower Secondary School was authorized by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports, in September 2019. The Ministry of Education printed and published about 10,600 teaching guidebooks at their own cost, and delivered them to all of 1,760 schools in the whole country through the channel of the regional and provincial Education Board. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, HG became unable to visit and monitor the state of progress and changed the progress status management to cope with the current situation.

We started to create auxiliary teaching materials for teachers so that teachers were able to understand it easily and teach students efficiently, reference books, and content for online lessons (rhythmic exercises) for Lower Secondary School students. I ended up compiling collected words and phrases relating to physical education in Japanese, English, and Khmer language, which I accumulated from the time I was involved in physical education as an interpreter and published it. All of these projects were over in September 2020.



## From “Sport” to “Physical Education” for children

### **PREAP Vutheara**

Chief, PE, and Sports Research Center, National Institute of Physical Education and Sport,  
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport



First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), JICA, Hearts of Gold (HG), and everyone who has been concerned with the development of physical education and sport in Cambodia.

I have been working to develop the course guideline of physical education in Lower Secondary School since 2015. I visited Tokyo and Okayama

along with nine members in total, including six members from the Department of Physical Education and Sport for Student (DPESS), National Institute for Physical Education and Sport (NIPES), from February 8th to 18th in 2015. We learned how to produce course guidelines and teaching instructions as well as what to investigate at the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and universities in Japan. It was a great learning experience to have observed students warm up even during the break, prepare for the class, and tidy things up after the class efficiently together with teachers.

In Cambodia, physical education and sports were considered as one category, and we have been studying sports training even in the NIPES, even though it was the organization to nurture teachers of physical education. We came to understand the meaning of physical education and sports through the training and workshop held in Japan. Teachers in schools were trying to create a course guideline of physical education and teaching instruction, including the ways of creating annual plans and ideas of teaching instruction.

There have been intensive discussions between DPESS and NIPES based on the difference of knowledge and experiences of each other, and varieties of opinions and ideas have been exchanged among the members in terms of the ways of editing teaching instruction and the content to be studied in the workshop. We finally overcame differences of opinions and reached an agreement to create the course guideline and teaching instruction of physical education so that children in Cambodia could lead smarter and healthier lives, especially to learn the value of manners, knowledge, skill, and cooperative attitude through physical education. I now fully enjoy working on the project in collaboration with the HG, and it's my great honor to have been able to contribute to physical education in Cambodia as one of the officers of the Ministry of Education.

## Effective collaboration with Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers

**Kiyofumi YOSHIDA**

Volunteer Coordinator, Japan International Cooperation Agency Cambodia Office.

The cooperation between JICA and the HG dates to 2006 when “Primary School Physical Education Course Guideline,” started. It got stronger in 2017 when Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers for JICA and the HG started working on the “Lower Secondary School Physical Education Course Guideline.” Their volunteers went to four lower secondary schools and attended the training organized by the HG and the Cambodian teachers. They made observation and gave appropriate advice. Their guidance helped HG better prepare for the future and solving problems. It was JICA who was influential in supporting the project.

Many JICA volunteers were new college graduates and younger than teachers. Just as in Japan, their culture respected elders and they were little hesitant in speaking out. To ease the situation HG provided background information, status, and condition of each school pertaining to their physical education. Also, the communication was difficult due to the language barrier. It took them some time to understand the situation and be comfortable working with them

The trust that HG built in Cambodia made the physical education project a success. I have my sincere respect for the actions and achievements made by the HG. I wish that physical education in Cambodia would be further promoted and progressed nationwide.



## **Creativity, inventive ideas, the importance of making effort, developed through new physical education**

**KONG Saban**

Principal, Bassac Lower Secondary School, Svay Rien

I read a report submitted by Mr. Reach Sobuntheoung, physical education teacher, describing an introduction to physical education when I attended the workshop organized by the Hearts of Gold and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS). The report described as follows; “I like sports and physical education is one of my favorite subjects. However, I did not know how to teach the subject as the course guideline and teaching instruction of physical education did not exist until now. Physical education teachers have learned how to read physical instruction textbooks every time we attend the workshop, and introduced new physical education”.

We had two physical education teachers in my school, one teacher attended the workshop and the other did not. I instructed them to work together supporting each other. I left the decision to these two teachers on how to teach physical education from now. Table tennis was one of the subjects of the new physical education program, and teachers made table tennis tables and rackets by hand using equipment such as a blackboard and desks left in the school. They also started to implement physical fitness tests at their own risk for the new trial.

Having evaluated the effort of these teachers, the HG has supported the building of a covered sports gymnasium, which made it possible for us to utilize not only for physical education but also for a wide variety of purposes. As Bassac Lower Secondary School is located next to the Primary school, we decided to allow Primary school children to visit and use the facilities on Thursday after consultation with the chief of the community.

I believe the reason why the physical education class has been promoted in Bassac Lower Secondary School is that the teaching instruction book is well prepared and described for us to understand easily how to teach physical education. I intend to present at the provincial annual meeting of education that my school has further promoted through physical education.



## **Teachers' responsibility.**

### **- What I learned at the workshop -**

**REACH Sobuntheoung**

Physical Education teacher

Bassac Lower Secondary School, Svay Rien

Every time when we attended the workshop organized both by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and the Hearts of Gold, we were fully explained about the purpose of the workshop and the goals to be achieved. I was able to understand clearly the difference between the old and new physical education system when I attended the second workshop, and all we had to do was to put what we had learned into practice.



Even though it's not an easy job to understand all of the new physical education systems, I had the confidence to achieve it by combining the knowledge I have learned both at National Institute for Physical Education and Sport (NIPES) and the HG. First of all, I started to carry out what was written in the teaching instruction textbook. I also carried out recreation and physical fitness test referring to the annual plan which I completed at the workshop. We made table tennis tables and rackets by hand using equipment such as a blackboard and desks left in the school. Even though we introduced new physical education, the progress we have made might be only about fifteen percent of the whole concept.

The HG visited Bassac Lower Secondary School to monitor the progress of the project, and after evaluating our efforts of having dealt with introducing a new physical education system, they helped build a covered sports gymnasium, which made it possible to teach physical education even on rainy days. In the new physical education program, teachers need to create an annual plan, syllabus, and teaching unit as well as teaching plan, and we are obliged to guide the students to set their own goals to achieve by themselves. We, teachers, are responsible for guiding the students to learn independently. Then, students will be able to acquire knowledge and promote health by learning new physical education.

I do welcome an inquiry from any other schools with regard to developing and promoting new physical education, I am more than happy to support them.

## **Thank you for making children smile!**

### **–Course guideline for the Upper Secondary School–**

**MANG Vibol**

Deputy Director, Department of Physical Education and Sport for Students, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport



I have been involved in creating the course guideline and teaching instruction of physical education both for elementary and Lower Secondary schools in collaboration with the Hearts of Gold (HG) since 2006. I was quite sure that we would need to create the same guidelines for Upper Secondary School as well, however, it should be created by ourselves, not the same as the project collaborated with the HG for elementary and Lower Secondary School, of course, expecting the support by the HG, though. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport created the framework of curriculum referring to the educational policies of Singapore as a model which constitutes 16 subjects to learn from elementary to Upper Secondary School. In order to follow the model of Singapore, the course guidelines have to be produced in a unified format.

The members in charge of creating course guidelines of physical education for Upper Secondary School met together, however, very few of them had knowledge and experiences how to create course guidelines and teaching instruction, therefore, we had difficulties of deciding the purpose or goal to be achieved, i.e., what should be included in the guideline, what do teachers and students learn through physical education, etc., and thus the eternal purpose was not clear enough. As for myself, I was not a professional in physical education, and it's very difficult

for me to start from scratch to produce the course guideline. We had accomplished producing the guideline under the guidance of the HG up until then, however, it was beyond the scope of our imagination to produce the course guideline by ourselves for Upper Secondary School from the very beginning. Some members insisted on including as many athletic events as possible, but it confused us to fix a definite purpose if we do so. And, we once tried to assign one member to be in charge of some specific athletic event, but in actual fact, he or she had no idea nor knowledge about the rules of the event. Through these difficulties, I had a feeling that it was quite difficult to produce course guidelines in a unified format and content from elementary to secondary and further to Upper Secondary School.

I found that we needed to learn more about physical education in other countries, and requested the HG to let us visit and observe the physical education classes of Upper Secondary School in Tokyo (2018) and in Okayama prefecture (2019). In creating the course guideline of Upper Secondary School, proposals and opinions were split among the workshop members into two or three, i.e., to create one set of course guidelines for each school grade, or one set for three school grades at one time, thus it took longer to put together different proposals, select terminology, and edit the physical education guideline textbook. When we tried to insert photographs, selected photos did not match with the edited content, nor were we able to elicit ideas from the workshop members. What's important was to collect opinions of teachers working at schools in producing course guidelines, however, teachers have never experienced nor seen new physical education lessons in the past, and thus we were unable to receive any opinions from teachers. Likewise, we were unable to give any feedback on carrying out the new physical education to teachers. We had to consult with the HG in the end on how to proceed to the next stage, without having any experts in Cambodia.

We were lucky enough to have gained the skills and completed the course guideline of Upper Secondary School thanks to the cooperation of Professor Okade, Mr. Nishiyama, Director of HG South-East Asia Office, and Mr. Sochetra, Sub-Project Manager, HG South-East Asia Office. The course of the guideline was authorized without problems by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS), and distributed to all Upper Secondary Schools in Cambodia. I do appreciate the support by the HG to establish new physical education from elementary to secondary, and further to Upper Secondary School in Cambodia. It used to be a white canvas without any drawing on it, and now it has become a colorful canvas with so many kinds of drawings and paintings based on the variety of experiences and knowledge I have gained in the last 20 years of my life. Lastly, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the HG for making us and our children in Cambodia smile all the time. Thank you very much!!

## Curriculum guidelines and instruction books

### –From Primary school to Upper Secondary School –



#### **Naoki NISHIYAMA**

Board of Director, Director, Hearts  
of Gold South-East Asia Office

When I transferred to Cambodia in 2012, the physical education curriculum for primary school, which the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, created with HG in 2007. I had a few questions. For example, why were swimming lessons included in it? Can the children leap over a vaulting horse? How did the authority understand the health

service? I discussed this with my predecessor, Mr. Taku Yamaguchi, on this issue. He said the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports in Cambodia had decided to include them because they wanted for future use.

After I was assigned to Cambodia, the teaching instruction of primary schools (2014), course guidelines for lower Secondary Schools (2016), teaching instruction for lower secondary schools (2019), and course guidelines for upper secondary schools (2019) were authorized by the Ministry of Education. My work was updating them keeping the original concept built in the curriculum guidelines of elementary schools. I made recommendations and advice in line with them. I removed the health and swimming lessons from the primary schools because they were not taught. And it's still a pending issue to be discussed further. They were against including swimming into the course guideline of lower secondary schools at first. However, the Ministry of Education wanted to increase the number of teachers to teach swimming to avoid drowning accidents. Eventually, both parties agreed to include it as an optional course.

I believe the course guideline must be simple enough so that teachers in Cambodia can easily understand and use it freely. The most difficult task was unifying the materials used from



primary schools to upper secondary schools. We had to understand the whole background, i.e., how the classes were conducted, teachers' level, official documents, and the consciousness of the Ministry of Education officials. We could have been more thorough, but we wanted to keep the momentum going and have teachers read and apply the guideline we created on timely manner.

I hope teachers who had not experienced physical education classes can readily use the curriculum guide and teaching instruction and give good lessons. It will give me great pleasure to see more students in Cambodia receiving physical education.

## Development of physical education and sports in Cambodia

**Koichi SAKAMOTO**

Second Secretary, Embassy of Japan in Cambodia



Most of the social infrastructure in terms of education disappeared due to the civil war in Cambodia. They had to start to rebuild the educational system from scratch without facilities such as schools or teachers. Physical education was not recognized as an academic subject in a school curriculum twenty years ago. Hearts of Gold (HG) has started its activities in such a grim environment. I want to express my heartfelt respect for the passion and activities of the HG, which has taught the importance of physical education to the authority concerned in

Cambodia and walked together with them to develop and promote physical education.

The HG has spent time and effort to help develop a four-year physical education college.

The college to educate physical education teachers was funded by: The “National Institute of Physical Education and Sport in Cambodia (NIPES) Four-year College Project” and “Japan NGO Gratis Fund” supported by Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I believe that the profound knowledge of HG in physical education had a significant role and contributed to improving the quality of physical education in Cambodia.

In 2023 Cambodia will host the “South-East Asian Games” for the first time. This is exciting for the people of Cambodia, and their enthusiasm for sports will grow. I expect children who have found sports interesting and enjoyable will grow healthier and stronger through physical education. I hope the HG will encourage more people to participate in sports and lead healthy and happy life.

I understand the HG’s activity has exceeded 20 years, and it’s my honor to congratulate the HG and its members and wish for further development and prosperity.



\* Grant Aid for Japan NGO Cooperation:

The Japanese Government offers a financial assistance program for development projects designed to meet the diverse needs of developing countries. Known as "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GGP)"\*, this scheme supports projects proposed by various bodies such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local government authorities.

## **Reforming Four-Year College by the NIPES**

### **–Fostering new leaders in physical education–**

**Koji TEZUKA**

Deputy Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Office



Since 2017, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) started to proceed with educational system reform and planned to establish a teacher-training course in the four-year college with the help of JICA. It gives a bachelor's degree of ASEAN standard to teach at the colleges and universities. The "National Institute of Physical Education and Sports in Cambodia" (NIPES) was the only educational institution to educate teachers for secondary and upper secondary schools within a two-year curriculum. MoEYS had problems creating a curriculum, educating teachers, and adding facilities to an existing two-year system.

MoEYS requested help from the HG, which has been operating activities to develop physical education of primary and lower secondary schools in Cambodia for more than ten years.

The "Physical education course in the four-year college project by NIPES" has started with the help of "Japan NGO Gratis Fund Aid" supported by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs from January 2019. The purpose was to establish a four-year physical education university in the same level as other universities offering diplomas on other subjects. This project included creating a curriculum, and educating teachers, and administrative staff. It also included constructing a swimming pool, among others items.

The first thing we worked on was approaching all teachers of NIPES to understand and identify steps to establish a four-year physical education college. We invited Dr. Taku Yamaguchi, Assistant Professor of the University of Tsukuba; Dr. Yoshinori Okade, Professor of Nippon Sport Science University; Dr. Satoshi Yoshino of Ibaraki University from Japan; and Dr. Lian Yee Kok, Assistant Professor of Putra Malaysia University from Malaysia, to our workshop. We created the four-year physical education course curriculum, admission policy, a handbook to

administer the physical education courses, career plan, and an evaluation system. After completing these necessary policies in each area, we visited Japan and Thailand to observe actual physical education classes to increase NIPES members' potentials. We constructed a swimming pool as well.

After the preparation for the four-year physical education college, we supported NIPES on improving their management skills. We planned with universities in Thailand and Malaysia for NIPES teachers to apply for a master's degree physical education program. In terms of arranging facilities, we supported them in building the swimming pool and sports gym, setting sports gym apparatus, repairing dormitories for students, and taught them how to manage these facilities. Our next target is to focus on the project with NIPES on networking with rest of the world through the "International Center Plan."

Finally, NIPES's four-year middle and high school physical education teacher training courses are running smoothly, and students will be learning necessary disciplines to teach physical education in line with the current curriculum guidelines. I hope that new physical education will expand into school education in Cambodia.



## First Four –Year College of physical education in Cambodia

**KEO Sochetra**

Sub-Project Manager, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office



Primary and Lower Secondary School teachers in Cambodia are currently educated and trained at the Primary school teacher's center (PTTC) and RTTC respectively. However, both PTTC and RTTC are two-year terms, and only physical education teachers of secondary and Upper Secondary schools are educated at the National Institute of Physical Education and Sport (NIPES). Cambodia has reformed the educational system in 2017. What's particularly worth noting is that it was decided that the two-year term for the teacher education program is going to be changed to a four-year term to grant a Bachelor of Education.

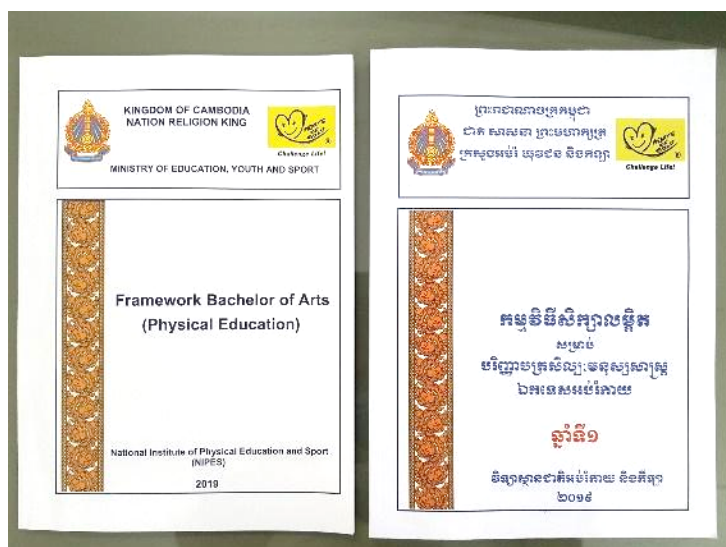
In 2018, two four-year colleges for training teachers, which have been combined PTTC with RTTC, were established, and it was decided the NIPES is going to be upgraded to a four-year university following this change. The HG was requested by the Ministry of Education to cooperate with the reform of NIPES to the four-year college as we have been supporting to create course guidelines and teaching instructions of physical education for the primary, secondary and Upper Secondary School since 2006.

The Hearts of Gold has been collaborating with the Department of Physical Education and Sport for Students (DPESS), Ministry of Education since 2006, and has been considered to be a professional organization in terms of physical education in Cambodia, thus the Ministry of Education invited the HG as its partner in Physical Education. It's not an easy job for us to work on the basic framework such as creating curriculum and syllabus toward opening a four-year college.

We have created the course guidelines and teaching instructions, however, the number of needed lessons taught are limited. On the other hand, the number of classes needed for graduating from college are calculated by

the unit based on the syllabus. We have never experienced working on this kind of system until we were involved in this project. We, along with the project manager, devoted ourselves to completing these unexperienced tasks based on the knowledge we gained through the workshops with which we attended for the last 15 years and the professional support from Japan.

For the moment, NIPES is conducting classes based on the framework of the curriculum and syllabus we have developed with all our effort. We plan to discuss revising the current system with the teacher training college after trying these methods so that teachers find it easier to conduct classes. I remember that a physical education in my school days was military training. All my difficult times have now turned out to be my great pleasure and pride when we see our children blessed with a chance of receiving real physical education classes. I am very happy to have been involved in this meaningful project.



## Construction of a swimming pool

**SO Samy**

Construction Engineer, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office

The construction of the swimming pool planned by the National Institute of Physical Education and Sport (NIPES) was designed and moved on to meet the planned size of 25 meters long, 15 meters wide and 1.4 meters depth. The



purpose of this project was to arrange the environment to nurture teachers who are able to teach new physical education in line with the management policy of the NIPES. The construction of the swimming pool started on March 8th in 2019 and was completed on September 15th.

This project of constructing the swimming pool started after having concluded the contract by three parties, Mr. Nishiyama, Director of the HG South-East Asia Office, Mr. Kourn Vanthon of RT ENC Engineering Construction Company (at present, TR D&C Co.,Ltd), and Mr. Theam Angkeara, the then Director of the NIPES. My role as an engineer was to conduct an inspection of the construction site, attend the meeting, check the progress of the construction, and to seek solutions of the problem as a specialist if it happened. The swimming pool was officially handed over from the HG to the NIPES on October 5th in 2019 after finishing the management workshop.

My responsibility as an engineer continues to be engaged in a three year's programme by the NIPES such as construction of a swimming pool, construction of a fitness room, design drawing of dormitory renovation, and to estimate expenses of the above projects. I do appreciate the Japanese people, Japanese Government, JICA, and the HG for the financial support and technical assistance to physical education, especially constructing the swimming pool to save children from drowning disasters. Construction of the swimming pool is not only beneficial to students



of NIPES and children but also contributes to creating new jobs for construction workers. It was a great honor to have welcomed Ms. Yuko Arimori, Representative Director of the HG, at the construction site to observe the progress of the construction on June 4th in 2019.

## **Teaching for the Children in the 21st**

### **–Manner, knowledge, skill, and spirit of cooperation–**

**PECH Kongkea**

Officer, Center of Research and Science of PE and Sport, National Institute of Physical Education and Sport.

The educational reform from two-year College to four-year College by the NIPES kicked off in January 2019 with the cooperation of the HG. We learned so much know-how from the HG, such as creating a curriculum framework including syllabus planning, introducing the credit system, and applying the standard of education with overseas universities. We also received active support and guidance for the systematic human resource development, the ways of creating management handbooks, and other various documents.

Gymnastics apparatus and equipment for swimming lessons have also been provided. Thanks to this support, students of the College are able to learn how to teach swimming lessons, and we can expect fewer drowning disasters of children by learning swimming style. When it comes to the learning system, we gained the skills of not only creating curriculum framework and syllabus planning, but also course guidelines and teaching instruction for the teachers in the Lower Secondary School, and the ways of assessing the progress of students. NIPES has not given instructions to teachers on how to assess the performance of students. Now teachers are able to confirm if the object of classes given in the guideline, “attitude, knowledge, skill, and cooperativity”, are sufficiently taught, classes are taught according to the guidelines, and assessment of students are properly conducted, etc., after receiving the guidelines and teaching instruction. The HG has kindly given instruction on the ways to assess students at the workshop.

In the past we had focused on training teachers in the NIPES without specific purpose or concept, however, after having learned the way to assess the performance of physical education, our viewpoint of nurturing teachers has changed. We were able to enhance teaching guidelines to teach Cambodian students in the 21st century to think by themselves, to enrich an imaginative power, to ask questions without hesitation through physical education. I believe that teachers have recognized the importance of teaching children the “knowledge, skill, manner and spirit of cooperation” through the workshops. I sincerely wish the HG and the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport to work together to give us much more knowledge in order to pursue the goal of nurturing high-quality teachers.

To end, once again I would like to express my gratitude to the HG and NIPES for their support and cooperation up until now.

## **Physical education connects with people around the world.**

**–A grand design, International Center. –**

**Naoki NISHIYAMA**

Director, Hearts of Gold South–East Asia Office

The National Institute of Physical Education and Sports (NIPES) of Cambodia's established the first four-year college of physical education in 2019 with the help of the Japanese NGO Projects Grant. However, the teaching staff and the curriculum needed more work.

The enrollment started in December but teaching programs and teaching staff required more time to develop. There are no other institutions other than the NIPES could give



higher physical education in Cambodia, so it is essential to cooperate with universities in foreign countries. To improve competitive sports, Ministry of Educations sent teachers to obtained master's degrees in sports science in the universities in Cuba, Vietnam, and Russia. However, there is no teacher with a master's degree in the Faculty of Physical Education. Thus, it became important to cooperate with the Faculty of Physical Education in foreign universities.

We need to enhance the quality of the NIPES through working with foreign universities on overseas studying programs, receiving students from foreign countries, and creating joint research programs. Therefore, the role of the International Center within the NIPES becomes more significant. The HG is working on creating the concept of the International Center with Mr. HOU Shittisophealai, Director of NIPES, at the request of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS). We are working to enhance the quality of teaching physical education in primary, secondary, and upper secondary schools on training of teachers, research on teaching method based on scientific grounds, and improving quality of NIPES.

There is a saying that "Rome was not built in a day." As this saying implies, we may not be able to see the fundamental changes today, tomorrow, nor a year or two years from now. However, I believe that they will succeed in building the physical education system that Cambodia can boast to the world after ten years by adding day-to-day, year-to-year efforts. I am honored to be working toward completing the system with all people concerned, such as the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS), Department of Education in Province and Area, schoolteachers, children, and parents.

## Aiming at the Global University of Physical Education open to the world

**HOU Sitthisophealai**

Director, National Institute of Physical Education and Sport, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

The National Institute of Physical Education and Sport (NIPES) started the project of a four-year College with the support of the Hearts of Gold (HG) in 2019. The project will be operated for three years; however, it would take another year even after completing the current project in order to ensure the completion of this project and



prepare for further works on reforms. There are many issues that the NIPES still leaves unfinished. We need to tackle reforms of the curriculum and accreditation (credit) system of the two-year College which has been performed alongside the reforms of the four-year College. As to the facilities, repair, extension, and reconstruction of dormitories and classrooms are other tasks to be completed. The undergraduate program in the four-year College has already been started, however, we aim at introducing the Master's degree program and Doctor's program in the graduate school.

After having worked with us, the HG, as a partner to boost the projects, has brought us many beneficial results such as building a channel of strengthening of cooperation with Nippon College of Health and Physical Education, attending a physical education conference of ASEAN, and cooperation with universities in Thailand and Singapore. Collaborating with these foreign universities will help teachers of NIPES obtain undergraduate and master's degrees in the future. My dream is to develop NIPES, a prominent university of physical education in Asia with the help and collaboration of these partners. In order to make it possible, we would like to conclude an agreement with universities in Japan and ASEAN through the channel of NIPES International Center. I would appreciate it if the HG would support us to develop the College in Cambodia globally open to the world. In 2019, we requested Ms. Yuko Arimori, Representative Director of the HG, to become an honorable professor of NIPES. We want her to give us advice for further improvement of the system and special lectures to the students. I sincerely hope for the continuous development of both NIPES and the HG.



## The future of Cambodian physical education

**Yoshinori OKADE**

Professor, Nippon Sport Science University



At first, I was apprehensive that an NPO such as the HG could develop the national level project in Cambodia; however, such concern has been unfounded. The reason could be summarized as follows: In Cambodia, the person who creates the instruction guideline and the instruction book and the person who is responsible for its dissemination are the same. It means that the same person will be revising these materials ev

en ten years from now. Nearly 15 years have passed since the start of this project, and it seems this system has proved to be functioning effectively in Cambodia. The success of this system is because of the policy of nurturing human resources on a long-term basis and giving them sense of pride and responsibility on their work.

On the other hand, getting the successor would become difficult if those who started continued to stay in the position for a long time. Accordingly, in Cambodia, an authorization system of national trainers was introduced so that the person currently in charge could step aside to support the successor. On top of that, steady efforts were made to network regularly with university and administrative offices.

The project may not be continued due to the change of government or the change of personnel in the department. However, HG played a vital role in this project as an organization responsible for keeping the continuity of the project.

The example of Cambodia clearly shows the importance of fostering diverse human resources who will be responsible and be able to network with others. I feel that such a strategy is effective in every country.

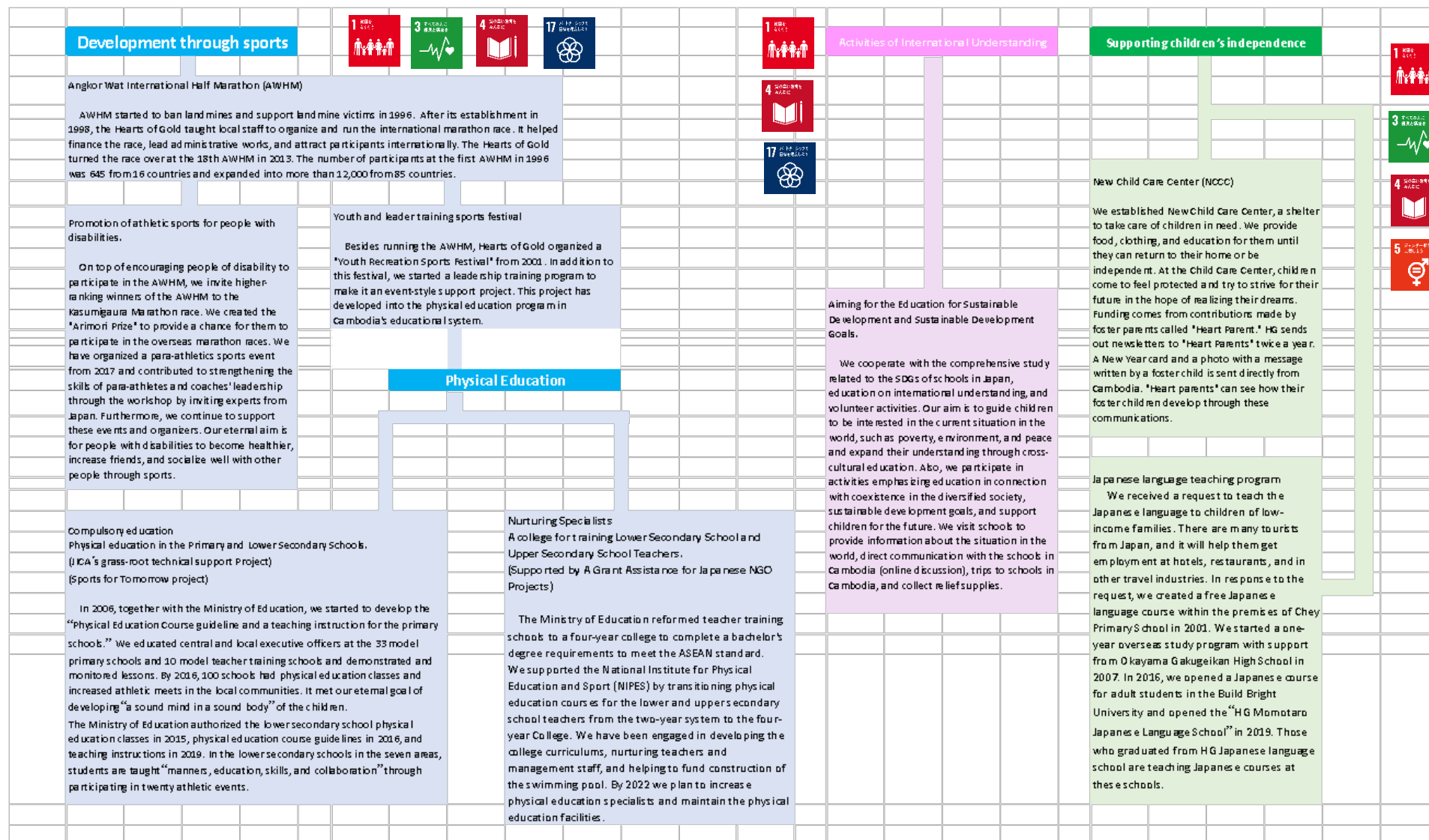
When I was asked to write something about the "Prospects for the future development of physical education in Cambodia," the first thing that came to mind was the image of the children learning "knowledge, skills and mannerism" through physical education and enjoying the classes.

To realize this image, first, teachers need to understand the content of the course guidebook and apply them to their school situations and children. However, teachers have not learned to teach physical education. It is necessary to educate teachers first. Educating primary school teachers is currently conducted at the teachers' training school in 18 provinces. Teachers train in Phnom Penh and the province of Battambang at the four-year college. The secondary and upper secondary school teachers are taught at the NIPES in Phnom Penh and a four-year training school, which HG helped. It's crucial to improve the quality of these teacher training schools.

Although there are still issues such as a need to improve guidance at on-site schools and quality of teacher training schools, but they are steadily moving forward. Being able to imagine the future is more fun than anything else. We will steadily tackle present problems while looking to the distant future. HG will continue the physical education support project and so will other: The Ministry of Education will continue to improve and disseminate the quality of physical education. School teachers believe in the future of teaching high-quality physical education. We have built trust and shared expression of "growing together." And we will continue to do so.

Since the Angkor Wat International Marathon, we have been developing an overall physical education program and made significant progress in primary school to four-year college. We were able to get many people to participate in the project and I feel that it will continue to get their attentive support. Together, we will continue to help make physical education in Cambodia one of the best in the world.

# Overview of the activities of the Hearts of Gold as of March 2021



## **“Courage and hope” for People with Disability.**

**Haruka YONEYAMA**

Project Officer, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office



The Para-sports support project by the HG originated as a charity Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM) to support the landmine victims and children who lost their limbs. Some of them have suffered severe injuries from the explosion of landmines, and many were in the blink of death. The HG has been continuing the activities for more than 20 years to support them in overcoming poverty and discrimination. HG encourage them to build “courage and hope” through sports.

The journey of the HG with Para-sports is as follows.

Since 1998,

- We created a system for those wishing to attend the AWHM in December every year from Phnom Penh and other provinces.
- Conducted marathon training every Saturday to prepare them for the AWHM.
- HG supported the Cambodian People with disability Athletic Federation (CDAF).

Every year since 2006.

- Invited higher-ranking winners of AWHM to Kasumigaura-Marathon Race in Japan.



Now we can see the increasing number of para-athletes participating in international events and Paralympics. Even though some para-athletes were allowed to participate in those events every year, their entries were limited. We had to tackle many issues, such as a lack of technical coaches and trainers who have professional knowledge, difficulties in obtaining equipment for para-athletes, increasing the number of para-sport races in Cambodia, etc. There are not enough awareness and need to develop means for them to participate.

Since 2017;

- We organized a Para Athletics Workshop inviting Mr. Toshihito Mitsui, Director of the Japan Para Athletics, and Mr. Katsuyuki Kondo, Nippon University (Sports- for- tomorrow project).
- Organized the first Para Athletic Race.

We organize Para Athletic Races regularly to increase motivation give more experiences. We invited children with disability so that they could see and learn more about the para-sports.

- We invited a coach and athletes to Japan as part of the para-camp program and arranged advice from Japanese Paralympian, Mr. Hitoshi Matsunaga of WORLD-AC. The following year, in 2018, we invited Mr. Matsunaga to Cambodia and organized a seminar advising wheelchair racing coaches and athletes.
- We are actively receiving volunteers from Tsukuba University within JICA's short-term volunteer dispatching program.
- We have collaborated with the CDAF initially and with the National Paralympic Committee of Cambodia (NPCC) from 2015 to promote the Para-sports in the entire country of Cambodia.

It is our great pleasure to see people with disability who used to stay at home are now going out enjoying sports making friends. I wish to continue working for para-athletes as I receive encouragement from their smile and

vitality.

The Other Activities

## New Child Care Center Project

**Kuniko TASHIRO**

Vice President, Hearts of Gold, Secretary-General, Hearts of Gold

**Kimiko MURAKAMI**

Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office Siem Reap Branch, Senior Advisor



In 2001 the Child Care Center (CCC) project started in Battambang to protect and foster children. It moved to Siem Reap in 2003 and changed name to New Child Care Center (NCCC). In 2006 built a dormitory for boys, and later for girls. Furthermore, we added facilities for health supervision, a multipurpose hall, a dining hall, and an administrative building. Both Mr. By Thaily (2012~) and Ms. Choeuth Sreynoch (2014~) received training for fostering children and administrative jobs as child welfare officers. Mr. Em Pisey, in charge of cooking and counseling, joined the team. Thus, three members work in the 24-7 support system.

After ten years since establishing these facilities, we carried out large-scale repair works to secure safety and improvements in 2018. To cope with the spread of COVID-19, we responded by developing an online system in the schools, laid optical fiber cable, and equipped facilities with internet capabilities. We are now taking procedures to be registered with the Department of Health and Human Services.

The NCCC has been able to "nurture children" with the support of Heart-Parents, and children can lead their lives feeling at ease surrounded by the love of Heart parents. Three children have learned the Japanese language and studied in Japan within the last couple of years. I am committed to supporting the children who try to find their dreams and make earnest efforts to get out of poverty and become independent.



### Record of Children's path after NCCC (2009~2020).

1. Left after graduating Secondary and Upper Secondary School.

Obtained a job: 5

Vocational training school: 2

Got married: 1

Obtained a job after studying Japanese in Japan: 2

2. Left while being taken care of in the facility.

Returned home: 7

Taken to a relative's home: 1

\*Child Care Center Project: This project started in collaboration with the local group "NPO Rushina Communication Boneshia," The HG has taken over the project and became the main body of operating the facility after the group withdrew.

\*Heart Parents System: Support JPN3, 500 per month (renewable every year) provides for their living cost, education, and support them to learn to be independent. Heart parents receive a newsletter three times a year, twice from the office and once directly from the foster children.

The letter sent from Children in NCCC for Torrential Rain Western Japan



### The transition of the numbers of Heart Parents and Heart Child



## Japanese language teaching project

**Kimiko MURAKAMI**

Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office Siem Reap branch.  
Senior Advisor, Hearts of Gold.

**Kyoko INOUE**

Department Manager, Project and Public Relations, Hearts of Gold



In response to the request to teach the Japanese language, we opened a free Japanese language course within the premises of Chey Primary School in September 2000, and many children started to study the language. From 2007, with the help and understanding of Okayama Gakugeikan high school to accept students from Cambodia, one student studied there. By 2019 nine students had studied at the school. After returning to Cambodia, those students found employment at

a government agency, tour companies and other companies and others became nurses, Japanese language teachers. Having studied the Japanese language helped them to realizing their dreams of leading their lives independently and supporting their families. We extended our project to open a Japanese language course at the language center within Build Bright University (BBU) for adults in 2015. In 2019, we moved the course to “HG Momotaro Japanese Language School” and offered class to study for the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test. The N4 level is required for a career in nursing and health service in Japan. One of the students who studied at the Okayama Gakugeikan High School passed the N3 level and advanced skills (nursing) and obtained the Certificate of Authorization for Employment in Japan.

### From students to teachers.

Two students who have studied from elementary school at the HG Japanese language school are now teaching at the “HG Momotaro Japanese Language School” in Cambodia. It is a proof that the reconstruction of Cambodia has come to be carried out directly by Cambodians.

#### • Japanese Language Proficiency Test Pass Record:

N2 6 people

N3 6 people



## Assistance to Affected Areas in Japan –Together with the cooperative body–

**Koichi SHIZAWA**

Secretary-General, Japan Police Fire Sports Federation  
Director, Hearts of Gold



The Great East Japan Earthquake hit Northeast Japan on March 11, 2011. Japan and the whole world were shocked to see the unbelievable images of unprecedented terrible damage. “Is there anything we can do to support the people in disaster-stricken areas?” Many people took action, and so did the HG in collaboration with the Japan Police Fire Sports Federation (JPFSS). HG procured water and other emergency relief supplies, and the JPFSS delivered relief supplies using their experience where the distribution system had collapsed

entirely. We delivered necessary supplies directly to the people and areas in need of these items. When we reached the disaster area, we checked the safety of the people, including JPFSS members. We continuously carried out our rescue activities in response to the request of elementary school teachers related to the Ishinomaki Club and other support groups at the evacuation shelter. HG organized a “3.11 Animo Project” together with HG Ishinomaki Club, Fukushima Club, staff, experts, and volunteers led by Ms. Arimori. We conducted support activities for children in the disaster area until 2017 when the city built a new elementary school consolidating Nobiru and Miyanomori elementary schools.

In addition to the Great East Japan Earthquake, the HG has conducted “emergency support” together with the JPFSS at the time of “Kumamoto Earthquake 2016”, “Flood in West Japan (2018)”, “Hokkaido Iburi Tobu Earthquake (2018)”, Typhoon No.15 and 19 (2019), and “Heavy rain in July (2020)”.

**\*Japan Police Fire Sports Federation (JPFSS):**

Members are active and retired police officers, firefighters, public security officers. They engage in volunteer activities using their professional and skilled techniques in the disaster area, especially in need of search and rescue operations.

**\* 3.11 Child Animo Project:**

It provides emergency support assistance, dispatching professional staff, sending supplies to the shelter and schools, creating summer camps for children, and installing streetlight devices using photovoltaic solar cell (88 devices installed collaborating with Japan International Development Organization, Ltd).



## Education for international understanding.

### -Education to develop one' s mind and manners-

**Kuniko TASHIRO**

Vice President, Hearts of Gold  
Secretary-General, Hearts of Gold



The HG has participated in support activities aiming at children in developing countries and disaster-struck areas to teach them to solve problems on their own and for them to gain independence.

At the same time, we felt it is essential for children in Japan to learn the essence of running a sustainable society. The HG has devoted itself from the beginning to help develop overall learning from elementary school to university, and support activities in collaboration with the student council, parents' association, various seminars, and international groups. The aims are: 1) Learn current issues in the world 2) Act 3) Evaluate. Some schools have online activities with schools in Cambodia, and many universities do fieldwork in Cambodia.

We found that those students who participated in these activities gained valuable lessons. They appreciated their upbringing and living in a good environment. They learn that there are many things they can do to help disadvantaged people, and it is interesting to know about society. It gave them a chance to reflect and make changes in their lives. Another thing they have learned was that "It's not fair to pretend not to know, or not to act when they can." They now understand that it is essential to communicate with people across the sea and support each other; even small forces become a massive strength if gathered. They could acknowledge that poverty, environment, food, human rights, and peace are linked.

Above all, we could confirm that children were able to nurture the "eyes to see something one is unable to see" and "ears to hear something one is unable to hear" through our activities. It was a most profound and valuable lesson that we learned.

## **Runners-aid and events in Japan.**

**Kyoko INOUE**

Department Manager, Project and Public relations, Hearts of Gold

The Hearts of Gold (HG) is very privileged to have received support from the runners-aid. The "Charity Marathon to support the HG " receives a portion from large and small local marathon races, regardless of size and racing distances. Financial aid varies from a donation by the race organizers, individual runners, and fund-raising campaigns. Some organizers have continuously donated for more than ten years. They have kindly allowed us to set up HG's booths at each marathon race venue. Ms. Yuko Arimori, Representative Director of the HG, staff members of the HG, and volunteers can use them for promoting our activities.

Many marathon races in Japan support HG activities. The HG Charity Dinners, were organized by Mr. Yasuo Nojima from 2006 for ten years, had more than 100 attendees. HG supporters have participated each event with enthusiasm: "those who can, what they can, and as much as they can Do."

## **Going together with the HG**

**Koichi SHIZAWA**

Board of Director, HG  
Secretary-General, Japan Police Fire Sports Federation

These are our supporting groups throughout Japan to carry out our activities:

Hearts of Gold

HG Iida Club: Homare Sakai, Kazuo Haba

HG Ishinomaki Club: Akiko Kimura

HG Nagaoaka Club: Yukifumi Shimizu

HG Ehime Club: Masatoshi Miyauchi

HG Fukushima Club: Tadashi Honda, Kinya Konno

Animo-no-Kai

Grand head temple of the Koyasan Shingon sect, Nankaishin: Daien Matsui, Seihan Takei

Suita Nakanoshima Runners: Masako Matsumura, Kenichi Ito

TAO

Society of Oriental Medicine, Dental Volunteer: Shigemasa Kubo

HG West Japan Volunteer branch office: Yuriko Shimao

HG East Japan Volunteer branch office: Koichi Shizawa

## Concluding remarks.

**Kuniko TASHIRO**

Vice President, Hearts of Gold  
Secretary-General, Hearts of Gold

I was requested to organize the first Angkor Wat International Half Marathon (AWHM) photo exhibit and Yuko Arimori's talk show on the theme of "Cambodia Aid" in Okayama city in March 1997. In December of the same year, I went to Siem Reap, Cambodia, to participate in the 2nd AWHM. I agree to organize an NGO, the Hearts of Gold (HG), with Ms. Yuko Arimori. At the October 10, 1998, inaugural meeting in Osaka, Mr. Hajime Yuki, founder of the AWHM, asked me to be the administrative officer of HG.



After that, for more than 20 years, I was blessed working with her and a wonderful group of people. I admired her tenacity, and she gave me trust and the confidence to work with her on international cooperation through sports and support children to gain independence. We had no experience, funds, or human resources, but it gave me pleasure and enjoyment working to achieve our goal.

Fortunately, when we are faced with a complex problem, a person who can help appears. We have met people who have a gold medal in their heart to support us. The world is unequal and full of contradictions. It is easy to think that power, wealth, numbers, and rules are important, but we need to recognize the value of spiritual wealth. The activities of NPOs and NGOs are to foresee what is important to develop a sustainable society in the future and change the world for the better little by little. No doubt, we witnessed the reconstruction of Cambodia through physical education and children becoming independent. Seeing these transformations is rewarding for people who work for NPO and NGOs.

Twenty years have gone by, and I am living in a completely different age compared to the beginning of the "international cooperation through sports." Many people were involved in our projects, and those who participate enhance each other. In addition, each one of us realized and found value in life through these participations. Here, I would like to introduce the activities of HG 20 years and deliver the voices of people who have contributed. We would not have accomplished without them, especially, without Mr. Taku Yamaguchi, First Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office, and Mr. Naoki Nishiyama, the current Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office. Their passion and hard work pulled us through. And I believe they also have significantly grown by devoting themselves to the activities of the Hearts of Gold. I hope this book will inform how each person tackled the difficulties in pursuing the targets assigned to them. Global warming, economic disparity, poverty and the widening income gap, and unknown virus disease will soon become significant issues to challenge. We may not secure peace in the world unless we fight against such cases hand in hand. I am convinced that we can overcome difficulties by tackling these issues altogether and supporting each other. Hearts of Gold will continue to step forward, pursuing "A sound mind in a sound body" based on past experiences, and we expect many more people will join us for the common goal.

## Editor's postscript

**Naoki Nishiyama**

Board of Director, Hearts of Gold South-East Asia Office



When I was hired by the Hearts of Gold (HG) in 2012, I was excited to work for an organization related to sports that influenced national policy.

The HG had produced excellent results in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport of Cambodia and established strong relationships. This relationship was developed by Ms. Arimori, Representative Director, Ms. Kuniko

Tashiro, Secretary-General, and Mr. Taku Yamaguchi, First Director, HG South-East Asia Office, and all other people who contributed to the activities of the HG. It helped carry out projects and events. JICA and the "Sports for Tomorrow Project," which was created to prepare Tokyo Olympic Games, helped expand the physical education of secondary schools in Cambodia. Together with the "Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Project" by the Japanese government, it established Cambodia's first four-year physical education university. Thus, eight years have passed very quickly. Let me take this opportunity to express my respect and thanks, especially to Professor Yoshinori Okade of Nippon Sport Science University, who supported us with positive advice from a professional background HG's Cambodian staff member. They worked hard to establish relationships with The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, mainly my heartfelt thanks to Mr. KEO Sochetra. Also, I must not forget my gratitude toward H.E. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth, and Sport, who trusted and supported our activities. In addition, I must mention H.E. Sar Sokha, Secretary of State, H.E. Bou Chumseay, Under Secretary of State, H.E. Ouk Sethycheat, General Director of Sport, H.E. Prum Bunyi, Advisor, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, and leaders in all departments.

When Ms. Kuniko Tashiro, Secretary-General of the HG, planned to publish a book celebrating the 20th anniversary of the HG, focusing on developing physical education in Cambodia. I wanted to convey the voice of people who were engaged as much as possible. During the interviews, I found that everyone wants to spread physical education as much as possible. I realized that the perception of physical education has changed from the traditional physical education of doing simple gymnastics in Cambodia to nurturing "knowledge, skills, and attitudes." HG will continue to work together on budget, human resources, facilities, and systems. We believe that by working together, HG will be a bridge between Japan and Cambodia and with other ASEAN countries and will be able to promote sustainable development.

Thank all people concerned in this publication to mark the 20th anniversary of the HG. Especially, my appreciation goes to Ms. Kuniko Tashiro, Secretary-General, who supported me on writing and editing, Ms. Kyoko Inoue, and Ms. Haruka Yoneyama, who helped with writing and composition of the book. Also, I would like to express my appreciation to all the people who contributed to making this book possible. The HG will advance its activities for 30 - 40 years and more and continue to "grow together" with the people in Cambodia.

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