

## Shine Project Update for Myers Park UMC (October 2021)

Since our last update in June, we have continued to advertise Shine Project through various sources (churches, FB, posters, Youtube, etc). In the months of July through October, we interviewed one candidate and are waiting to interview 2 more candidates:



1. Socheat Heng - She is 16 years old and dropped out of middle school when she was 13. The reason why she dropped out was because she was in an accident where a boat hit her floating house (house situated on Mekong River) which caused a serious head injury for her. She missed school for more than half a year and did not feel that she could continue her education. The only issue with accepting her was that she did not have a place to stay during her vocational training (3-4 months) because she does not live in the city. Although our current policy is that we only receive applicants from the city (because we do not have a place for them to stay), we decided to accept her and let her stay in our Susanna Wesley House (dorm for young women who are attending universities) for the duration of her training. She wants to be trained in hair/makeup.



2. Phallin Chun - She is 22 years old. She finished middle school but did not go on to high school to find a job to help her family. She wants to become a hair stylist and have a stable job. Currently, she is working as an online salesperson (via Facebook). We were not able to interview her yet because her residence was “red-zoned” for covid-19. Her interview is still pending.



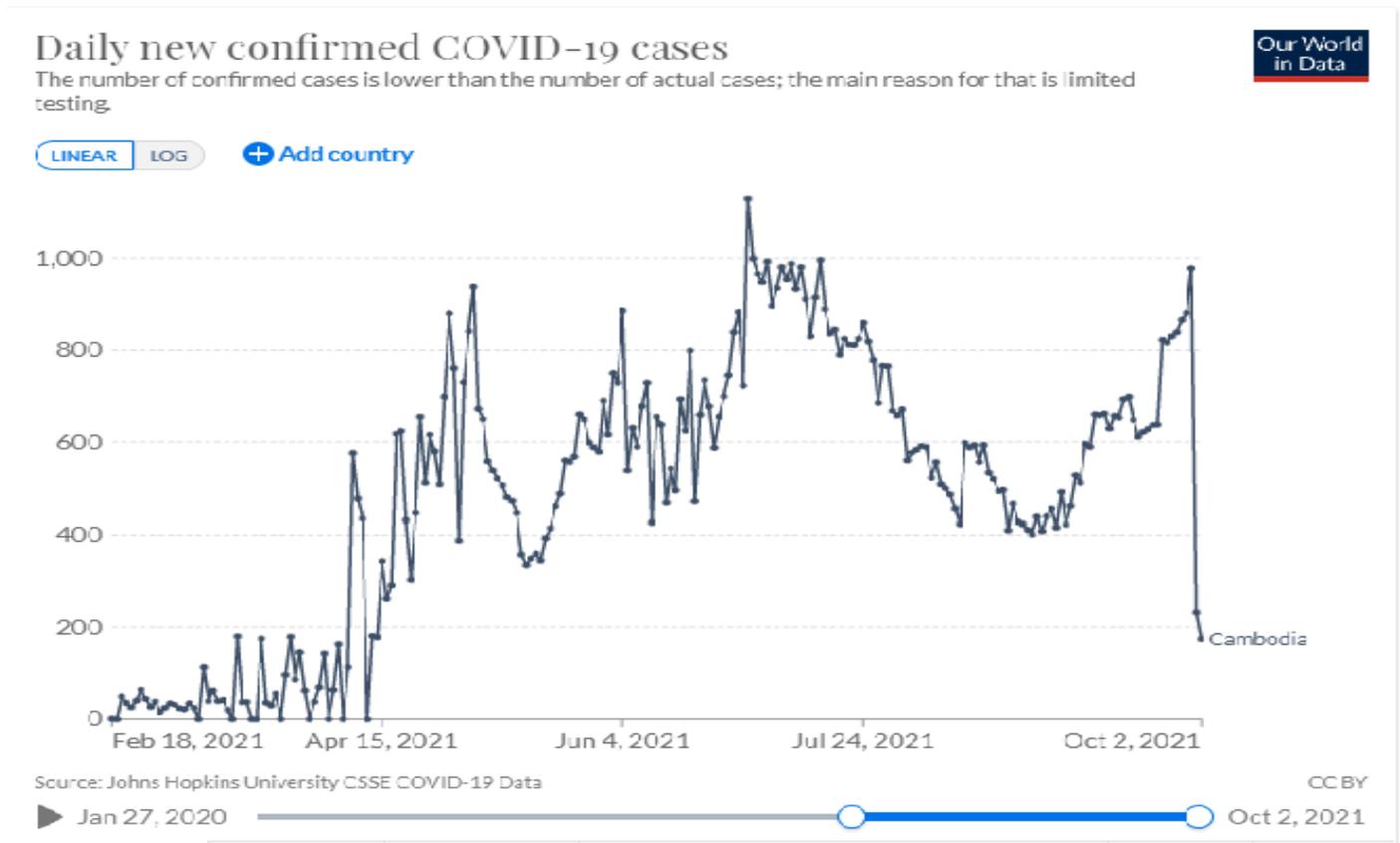
3. Chea Kimheang - She is 25 years old and dropped out of school after 5th grade. She was not able to make it interview because she tested positive to covid-19. Her interview is still pending.

\*\*\*\*\*

Unfortunately, we have not been able to start vocational training for any of the accepted candidates because of the raging pandemic situation in Cambodia. As explained in the June newsletter, the country went into lockdown in March, and the situation did not improve much. We did not want our young candidates to be trained at places where there is a high traffic of people and be exposed to the virus, especially

with the infiltration of delta virus. In fact, all the candidates agreed that they should wait till the daily covid-positive case numbers drop to about 200. (It has remained high from 400-1000 daily cases in the last few months.)

Fortunately, Cambodia has been very aggressive in vaccinating her citizens. They've recently started to vaccinate young children from ages 6 years and older. The government proudly estimates that approximately 66% of Cambodians are vaccinated and looks forward to slowly opening up to return to normalcy.



In fact, we were very excited when the number of positive cases dropped from 900 to 200 in one day a few days ago. However, we've discovered that the reason for such a sudden drop was because the government adopted a new policy of reduced testing for covid-19. This actually causes more anxiety for the citizens because the citizens will not know the real number of cases. Therefore, we will wait to let our candidates to be trained in their chosen vocational fields until we feel that they will be working in safe surroundings.

Shine Project Team  
Oct. 4, 2021