



Volunteer experience report
Volunteer swimming coaches, septembre 2012

Teaching the children to swim

Over the last two weeks 17 children attended daily swimming lessons. None of the children knew how to swim prior to the lessons. It is surprising how many people in Cambodia, a flat country full of lakes and rivers, do not know how to swim. So we were astonished at how quickly the children learned, most managing without arm bands after just a few lessons. We covered the basic strokes – front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke – as well as focusing on important skills such as breathing and treading water.

The children enjoyed swimming to the bottom of the pool to retrieve stones, and learning to dive. We spent one lesson swimming in clothes, since this is how most Cambodians swim, and as preparation for real drowning situations. The kids took turns ‘falling into the Mekong’ and swimming to shore – an important lesson and lots of fun! The kids showed enthusiasm every day, even though it must have been tiring for them.

To see so many students swimming so well after such a short time is really rewarding, and is evidence of how far determination and eagerness can go – well done to the new swimmers of the orphanage!

Julie and Olivia Dehnavi