



# CSR Activities in Cambodia



On June 3, 2013, a ceremony was held in Cambodia to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Safety Village Construction (SVC) project, which Komatsu has supported since its start. The SVC project is an endeavor that Komatsu and its partner, Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS), have been involved in creating safe communities through demining activities and putting the infrastructure in place that is required for the daily lives of local residents. Taking this occasion as an opportunity, Komatsu held science classes for the Cambodian children living in the village where the ceremony was held.

Komatsu regularly holds the Science Class for Children at the Waku-waku Komatsu Kan (Kids Pavilion), which is situated within the premises of the Komatsu-no-Mori (Komatsu Green Park) in Komatsu City, Ishikawa Prefecture, in Japan, as part of its locally oriented social contribution activities. The classes are held in a fun way in the hope that local children will take an interest in science and manufacturing, whereby a number of children participate every year.

Witnessing their success in Japan, Komatsu became eager to hold such science classes for Cambodian children. In doing so, Mr. Koji Orimoto, a former Komatsu engineer, and I visited Cambodia from May 29 to June 6. Komatsu has thus far built four primary schools in Battambang Province in western Cambodia as part of its CSR activities, and this time around, science classes were held at three of these schools.



Chairman Kunio Noji of Komatsu Ltd. giving speech at a ceremony to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Safety Village Construction (SVC) project

## Holding Science Classes in Cambodia — First Endeavor Ever Taken Overseas

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Every student is focused on making a balancing toy.



Staff from JMAS and Komatsu briefing the children about the content of the balancing toy workshop

### Science Classes in Cambodia

In cooperation with JMAS staff, Komatsu organized a science class that involved playing with soap bubbles, which is a popular children's pastime in Japan, and making Japanese traditional balancing toys. Soap bubbles and balancing toys were selected because we heard that children in Cambodia had never played with either of them and it was easy to obtain basic materials locally.

We had to drive more than two hours to get from our hotel to the primary schools, which are surrounded by vast vegetable fields. When we arrived, the children led us to their classroom, quickly went back to their desks, put their hands together and unexpectedly greeted us with a big welcome, saying "sok sa bai (hello)."

### Balancing Toy Workshop

We started with making balancing toys. Using illustrations, wires and bamboo skewers, we finished up the toys by putting them together with adhesive tape. Some children got sticky adhesive tape all over their fingers and hands while other children weren't quite sure what to do at the first stage of the toy making and older children helped them. Each of these scenes was so endearing and made us smile warmly. When everyone finished making their own balancing toys,



Children showing their creations

they lined up their creations on a model bridge that Mr. Orimoto had made and watched excitedly whose balancing toy swung the most. In the end, they imitated the balancing toys with one foot up, and we took group photos of them.



Blowing soap bubbles into the blue sky

## Soap Bubble Making

Since we had heard that children in Cambodia had never seen soap bubbles, we secretly began preparations to surprise the children. We planned to start blowing bubbles to see how they would react.

One by one, children in the classrooms began to notice big soap bubbles floating into the blue sky, asking, “What’s that thing up in the air?” As more children screamed with delight, others came rushing out of the classrooms en masse and into the field. They called to their friends and started pointing and touching the bubbles with sheer delight. When I asked if they wanted to try, with a shy smile one of them held the big wire ring with both hands and slowly soaked it in the soapy water in a tub. As the child raised the wire ring, a big soap bubble appeared and was swung into the air. All the children gathered around the bubble and chased it until it popped.



Students are thrilled to see soap bubbles for the first time.

## Future Activities

This was the first time for the Waku-waku Komatsu Kan to hold science classes outside Japan. The village that we visited is a demined settlement established through the efforts of the SVC project. There, new schools were consecutively built where children come to learn every day bursting with energy. I personally witnessed the children experience the joy of *Mono-dzukuri* (manufacturing) and eagerly learn various things. Komatsu will continue to provide support globally to offer children as many opportunities as possible to learn.

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