

Témoignage - Léna, Anjali House

My name is Léna and I have been working as a volunteer in Siem Reap since September 2021. Now that my time at Anjali House is coming to a close, I took some time to reflect on my experience.

Life in Cambodia has changed a lot since I arrived here. At the time I arrived, the 14 days of quarantine were still mandatory. The country was still closed to tourists and Siem Reap was going through major roadwork. Everything seemed uncertain, but I was amazed by my surroundings and ready to get to work.

It was my first time in Asia, but for some reason, Cambodia felt familiar. I adapted myself rather quickly to my new life. I was told by other volunteers that the children here were calmer and more respectful than in France. But I didn't find that to be true, to me they were just like the kids that I know back home. Some of them are studious, others are eager to leave school, some are chatty in class, and others draw on their book at the back. And that's great, they should be able to express themselves and act like any other children.



What I Did at Anjali

I was coming as the volunteer coordinator for Anjali House. **My role was to search and interview potential** volunteers. I soon realized how difficult it will be in the current situation. Because of this my mission became more versatile, I started assisting the communication team and when a few weeks later we opened our door to the children I had a lot of things to do.



I started to help Annie, our gardening volunteer, to assist her during the gardening class. Spending time with the students was a wonderful experience. This led me to assist Samen and then Vee in their class, first by assisting in English lessons and then by **running workshops every week.**

I have now been working with the same class for more than 10 months. By always being with the same students, I was able to develop great relationships with them and lead short and long-term workshops.

Falling in love with Cambodia

During this year in Cambodia I learned a lot, the versatility of my missions at Anjali House introduced me to a lot of new skills. Spending time with the students also brought me a lot, I made progress in Khmer, and I learned about their culture and about the [Cambodian plants in our garden](#). I loved spending time with them.

Slowly things are getting better here, we recently welcomed new volunteers and we hope that the next few months will bring more of them. I am sure that all of them will fall in love with Cambodia and with all the people of Anjali just as I did. I will miss the break time in front of Anjali with all the staff, the funny discussions, and the laughter of the kids.

This year was challenging on so many levels, but I really want to thank all of the staff and volunteers who made this experience so much more enriching and amazing.

Thank you all so much!

