



Sovanapoom Care Newsletter

July/August 08

Dear Friends,

We have had a productive time recently in the building and in the classroom. Our hand was forced to build the security wall around our property here as there was equipment disappearing overnight. Our land is already built up two metres above the surrounding land to avoid the flood level, but thieves were still managing to get in and take equipment and supplies we need for the building. We didn't really have the finances to build the wall but we had to step out and build it in faith.

There were 10,000 bricks for the wall delivered from Phnom Penh late one Saturday afternoon and were left on the roadside outside the front gate. It's almost 100 metres from there to the back of the property where we needed to store them in preparations for building the wall. The job was too big for just the older boys to get done that day so everyone chipped in to help get the bricks moved. Wheelbarrows, trolleys, carts and baskets were used as well as lots of hands, even the little kids joined in carrying one brick at a time. Eventually the bricks were all moved



by 7pm that evening. The boys have done a good job to build the wall up quick and the finances have come in to cover the cost.



It looked like we were going to be struggling to cover our everyday running costs as well and everything else and so the anything that could be was pulled in extra tight. The generator was turned off and for a few days we sweltered without much power for fans or anything else. The food budget was also cut back we ate more rice and less meat and veggies. Gratefully and thanks to our friends who donated to Sovanapoom this month, the money came in at the last minute before we had to make any more cuts and send children away!



Last week we celebrated with a family in our community for the birth of their new baby. Baby Rotanak is a healthy little brother for Moses and Phillip.

We've seen several teams come through for a day visit and some have stayed on to help teach the children. Belinda and daughters Summer and Abbie from Brisbane came for a week and blessed the children with a day out at the water park. The girls loved playing with our children and all the ladies loved their white skin!



A YWAM Team from Kona, Hawaii have spent a week with us and the kids. The children have really enjoyed their visit learning songs, playing games and having a lot of fun!

We had a visit from a team of girls from Simpson University in Washington, US who helped out with the Sunday Community Outreach. Another from History Makers Church in Queensland, Australia dropped in one morning for a visit.

Thank you to our friends who have donated to Sreylin's beauty school training. We now have the funds required to send her to get the training she so wants to do. It was Sreylin's 18th birthday last week and after she had a day out in the city with her friends Sokim and Maly to celebrate we really enjoyed being able to bless her with a special surprise when we told her about the training!



For some time now we've been investigating options for establishing a standard school curriculum for our students' education. Having a standard curriculum in place will greatly assist the volunteer teachers who come to help us and the students who often have several different teachers throughout the year.

We now have an opportunity to purchase a curriculum in the US and friends of ours will help bring it to Cambodia, saving us a huge amount in postage! The initial cost of purchasing the curriculum is approximately US\$3,000 for preschool to grade six. In addition to the initial purchase cost we will have ongoing expenses of approximately US\$5,000 each year to produce it for the students.

Please contact us on email admin.sovanapoom@gmail.com if you are able to help us with this need.

Spotlight

Sreyly has been with us about three years. She has a mum and dad, three brothers and one sister. Sreyly and two of her older siblings stay with us.



When Sreyly's youngest brother was born her father couldn't afford to pay a nurse to come to their home to help Sreyly's mother. So her mother gave birth to the baby without assistance on the floor of their bamboo hut.

Shortly after the baby was born their whole house which was on the riverbank collapsed into the River and her whole family had nowhere to live, no food and no income.

They knew about the Centre from our community outreaches and came to us for help. For a time, Sreyly's whole family lived at the Centre, her father helped on the building site and her mother helped cleaning and caring for the children.

Before they came to stay with us, Sreyly and her siblings just survived day by day finding what they could to eat. They were receiving very little education because their parents had very little education and in this situation they were going to have very limited opportunities for the future.

Now Sreyly no longer needs to worry about where her next meal is coming from. She is no longer a child at risk of being trapped in a horrible life of child trafficking.



Sreyly is a very bright girl, she learns well in school and she is doing really well at the Centre. Presently all the children are learning the first chapter from the book of John in the Bible, it's quite a long passage with 51 verses. Just recently Sreyly received special recognition as she was the first in her class to be able to quote all 51 verses and also know the multiplication tables up to 6x12.

Along with her older brother and sister, Sreyly is receiving everything a child needs to grow healthy emotionally, spiritually and academically.

Clothes

Last week we were blessed with a donation of \$200 to buy clothes for the children. That much can go a long way here and we found some real bargains at the markets.



They're mostly seconds and need sewing up a bit but we'll make them work. Here's some of the big boys choosing their shirts. Teenagers are just the same here as everywhere else—they know their style!



Goodbye

We're all very sad that Joel and Chloe who have volunteered with us teaching English for the last six months have decided to leave us. They have been a big part of the school this year, teaching the two older classes English and Math lessons, craft, games and making friends with the students. They will be sorely missed by us all. We really appreciate all their hard work, and wish them well in their next endeavor.

Agriculture

This year we have been working on a new project here in Cambodia, one to see the future of the work at Sovanapoom and that of these children secured financially. Through our agricultural projects we are endeavoring to provide vocational training, employment opportunities, supply food and fund the future education and care of the children.

So far we have been able to purchase 20 hectares of land through generous donations from our friends. This would not have been possible without the help of just a few people who see this vision and understand the potential for the future through agriculture. Thank you to those donors!



Last week I traveled with Thoeun and Wutar, one of our bright young leaders to check on the project at Banteay Meanchey. The journey to reach there takes about 8 hours by car and a large part is on unsealed roads. We spent a couple of days in the area, camping with our friends who live there and making plans for the future.

At present the land is covered in scrub, the large trees have all been removed and the locals tell us that just five years ago tigers were living there. Now the tigers, elephants, javan rhinoceros and much of the other wildlife have disappeared.

We will soon begin work to clear the land and prepare it for growing crops and trees. The cost of clearing this land is expected to be US\$5,000. Initially we anticipate growing rice,



Moringa and Jatropha and farming, fish, pigs and chickens and in the future dairy cattle as we have the resources and the manpower. The co-operative is in its early stages at the moment, but we have quite a few members so far. We will be training local poor farmers to be

able to grow better crops and also we will set up market opportunities for them. Presently farmers are not getting the best produce from their land and they are only accessing the limited local markets. By not farming the land properly or knowing how to market the produce effectively they are missing out on great opportunities for growth and many of these farmers are living in poverty as a consequence.

We already have some large markets lined up to sell the produce and through a co-operative agriculture banking system we will finance the farmers so that they will be able to make a financial return from their land.

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