

Honour Village Cambodia Summer 2015 Newsletter



Honour Village Cambodia, Siem Reap, Cambodia

www.honourvillage.org

Welcome!

Dear Friends and Supporters round the world,

We hope you are enjoying good health and seasonal weather. Many of our rice fields now have more grass than rice, and if the rains do not come regularly soon, the crop will fail.

Stop press! It seems at last the rains have begun in earnest, and now rural visits are hazardous as the mud roads are eroded.

On the Move

Our Project Trust volunteers, Kian and Chloe, left us last month and we shall be welcoming a team of four new volunteers for ten months in September. These young people do stalwart work in so many areas of our school's daily life. Recently we began "one-on-one" and small group work with children who need extra help. This has proved very successful and we shall make it a regular part of our learning opportunity.

Our CRST (Cambodia Rural School Trust) volunteers continue to be a tower of strength. They come to us for two hours a day, Monday to Friday, as part of their university sponsorship agreement with CRST. They

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Family Visit: Chhunly and Sophal with a re-integrated child and his new step-sister

Storm

A freak local storm in April devastated four of our local villages. The Cambodian Red Cross donated tarpaulins, mosquito nets, cooking pots and rice to well over 100 families, eight of whose homes were totally destroyed, the rest too dangerous to enter.

The spirit of the Cambodian people has again been evident in this adversity as, with minimal help from the wider community and a donation divided with care among the most needy families, they have repaired and rebuilt their homes.



Sporting fun with Globalteers, who come to us for an hour twice a week



Gifts for a family in crisis



Reintegrated child, now back home for 20 months.

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teach school grade Khmer, assist with other classes, initiate play in our playroom, lead sports activities, and tutor our scholars at Future Bright International School in Siem Reap in Maths, with excellent results. More recently, three of them have, in turn, signed confidentiality forms and acted as translators and interpreters at meetings and family visits, thereby enabling Sylvia and then Sue to catch up with Sophal and Kimly, our two trainee community workers.

Chenda, our social worker, is just back from maternity leave, and is now the mother of a baby boy called Meas (gold). We are so glad to have her back, and offer her and her husband our warmest congratulations. Sadly, Va left us in April to work for World Vision – a big step up for him, and he went with our blessings and congratulations, although we miss him sorely.

Sue was on extended leave from April to July this year, and Sean and Sylvia, retired and semi-retired social workers from Sue's home village, came and stayed in her rooms and offered support and encouragement wherever they went.

School Life

Our school continues to thrive under Hen's able leadership, and annual assessments are about to be sat by all but the youngest children. A school party and prize-giving ceremony will take place at the beginning of September, which, this year, is the start of the government school holidays. Each of our three Kindergarten class students will receive a small prize for something (we've lots of good reasons to give a prize even if academic work doesn't fit!) Every class, including KG, will have 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize-winners.

Older Cambodian children treasure an exercise book, pencil, ruler, sharpener and eraser. Four year-olds will each have a slate and chalk, ready for government Kindergarten. We already have parents coming to ask to register their small children for next year's KG classes, and may well need an extra class to cope with demand. Parents' meetings are becoming popular, and Hen has added an extra meeting for parents of 26 children with special needs.

Special Needs: Long-Term Plans

We now have a child who is adjusting to wearing hearing aids in our youngest class. He can hear only minimally, and the NGO clinic in Phnom Penh has told his parents that the process will take several years. When he is five or six, he will go to the big NGO special school in town, where he will learn sign language. He has a one-on-one teacher with him at all times, kindly sponsored by friends in Australia.



Building Skills

As our resident family grows smaller and older, we are teaching our mothers new skills, so that they can remain part of the Honour Village family. Our mothers now are community workers, office assistants, and Khmer teachers as well as being mothers. They also help in the kitchen when either Kaiy or Nuert is off duty.



Time to color

Family Reintegration

Our work in reintegrating our resident family back to relatives wherever possible continues slowly. It will not be possible for twenty of our children.

For these we shall, in the longer term, be looking either for foster families or for teenage group homes.

We shall be partnering with another NGO, under the able leadership of Hannah Won, Residential Care Network. Hannah has worked in Cambodia for 15 years. We hope to have further news on this collaboration in the Christmas newsletter.



Our KG Walking Caterpillar – great for pick-up at the end of the school day



Life is Fragile

Life here is so fragile, and in the last three months one child has returned to us because of the death of his caring grandmother, as well as an aunt and older cousin, which has left another small child in his already sick mother's care.

Very recently, four of our children lost their father to a tragic motorcycle accident. They have a step mother who loves them and is now caring for two of them.

Another child has recently lost her caring grandmother and now her grandfather is also sick, with very limited access to qualified medical care. There are four small children to be looked after and the adults in the family are working in Thailand to try to repay the debts accrued by grandmother's "medical" expenses.

Grandfather had been sold pills by the pharmacy and understood he should take one every hour; the instructions clearly said, in English: "One tablet to be taken every six hours". Grandfather was feeling very ill when we visited. Great aunt is already caring for other small relatives. The mother is chronically ill herself and finds life very hard going. Other children have sick caring relatives who have little or no access to qualified medical care, or whose addiction illnesses are destroying their lives.



Two reintegrated boys with the piglets born to the sow with which we helped the family start a small business.



Helping Families

Two of our families need to rebuild their homes; one family will need a lot of help. Two girls will be able to return home when their house is completed; their parents have been making the concrete pillars, have levelled the ground and have collected much that will be needed. We will provide the zinc roof and some of the wood for the floor. Their neighbours will come to help them build. Two small boys requested a loo, and their stepfather managed to provide most of the materials; we completed the remaining two items, and he is building it himself. The second home is urgently needed for two boys who have been living with their mother for 18 months. Until now, it has not been possible to repair or rebuild homes on Apsara Authority land, but this ruling has recently changed. Now we are working with the family to achieve a new and watertight home.



It's never long before the neighbours and friends arrive.

Thank You for Your Support!

Our work continues to grow and develop, and our dreams seem often to begin in reality before we had expected them. It is a case of learning to stay within budget but "go with the flow", and truly the work is endless. However, when a donor offers to support a specific project which has significance for them, what reason would we have to delay?

We thank all of you who have so kindly and generously given to our work, either in funding or gifts that help to sustain our daily life. We have achieved such a fantastic amount to date and whilst we continue to achieve everything with your support and goodwill, we do still need that ongoing support. Our charity and its success stories would not be where it is today without your support and we want to continue this path and grow in 2016.

If the coming year sees any fundraising opportunity you would like support for, no matter how big or small, please don't hesitate to get in touch with either Chhunly or me, or with Dan Taylor.

Regards and many thanks from *Sue Wiggans, Chhunly Tiev, and Dan Taylor*

Contact Us

We welcome your comments!

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Exuberant Teenagers



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