



Dear Friends and Sponsors round the world,

This update comes with our very best wishes for a happy and peaceful Christmas, and a New Year full of promise to follow.



Keeping the library tidy

Our school has 336 children on roll, although there are periods when the attendance is low, owing to rice planting and harvesting, cow-herding, ceremonies and family chores. We determine to teach the very best lessons we can to as many or as few children who arrive every day! Continuity is not always easy, but life is a challenge and children learn and thrive on whatever periods of school and play that are available to them.

We have begun to give the children a daily snack during both morning and afternoon shifts. Bananas were our first attempt at making sure no child had too empty a tummy to learn, and this has swiftly been followed by Khmer cake twice weekly (thus providing work for another local mother), banana once or twice a week and bread and condensed milk once or twice. This has been possible because of an initial donation from UK; a school in Australia who visited us decided to give us the remainder of their funding for snacks, and the Kidsmatter team in Singapore also decided to raise funds for this new commitment. Although we are anxious not to divert any funding from our core projects - our school and residential homes - we are thrilled to have been given new funding ring-fenced for our community support work.

Our residential family is thriving, and we have begun the long process needed for reintegrating back to their villages or extended families those children for whom it is a possibility either now or at some point in the future. At the end of this process there will be children who will remain with us as their main carers, although contact will always be encouraged with birth relatives. We are able to begin this long-awaited work now as Gail, a highly experienced social



Staff training

worker, is volunteering with us for six months. Gail is working daily with our two excellent and dedicated Khmer social workers, Va and Chenda. Each child who is able to return to full-time family care will be supported by Honour Village throughout their childhood and full-time education. Each will receive a monthly monitoring visit for the first year, then quarterly if all goes well; each will have appropriate support, whether this be monthly rice and food, plus all school necessities, or something that will enable the family to earn a living. So far one possibility has been the rent of a small fishing boat for three months (\$1.25 per day) and then, if all goes well, the boat will be bought for the family for \$300. This will enable them to work and live at home rather than relying on itinerant brickmaking. Another idea is, together with family and school support for a family who have been living on \$1.25 a day, providing an initial supply of bicycle parts for a father disabled by a landmine. He has a small stall, but never makes



Concentrating during a morning lesson

enough to buy much stock, and is unable to travel into town to buy at the best prices. We are also looking for a loving and stable foster home for one of our “babies”, who is now two and a half years old. This work, for the right parents, will provide another local family with a small income, and the child will be able to form a permanent attachment to his new family.

Our volunteers have been a huge help to us, and we would like to thank them all. Our young Khmer volunteers come to us as part of their high school and university sponsorship provided by Cambodia Rural School Trust. They all do a marvellous job in the classrooms as interpreters, and assisting with Khmer computer classes throughout the day, playing with small children and leading basketball, volleyball, football and a score of other games with older ones. Our international volunteers turn their hands willingly to any challenge we offer, teaching and assisting, helping with Kindergarten playgroup and classes, going on the school run on their bicycles and teaching sports. They are all willing to try a multitude of other jobs that come their way.

Chhunly, our Country Director, continues to work long hours with total commitment, and he heads a wonderful team of staff who take every opportunity to train and learn more



HVC border gardens flourishing

both on courses and from one another. We would like to thank our three Boards of Directors/Trustees, in Cambodia, UK and Germany for their unstinting and loyal service and sheer hard work, all done on a voluntary and expense-less basis.

We are very proud to announce that we are now members of ConCERT; this membership is not easily come by, and we want to thank Chhunly and our staff team for achieving the necessary standard of care, education, transparency and commitment to the work we are doing every day of every week.



Christmas Carol singing at the Sofitel

We are so glad to report that USAID have offered to work with us on our plot of rented land. This is an educational process and will involve both Honour Village and the local community in learning sustainable methods of agriculture and fish rearing.

We would like to thank all those of you who have worked so hard on our behalf to hold fundraisers. Gail and I have just returned home from Hong Kong, where we went for a short holiday and attended the fund raising event at Rula Bula's. It was an amazing evening and raised over 10,000 GBP. We have an increasing number of friends around the world, and every penny you send to Honour Village is used

for either our school or our residential family, with now a small amount of funding to begin our community support programme. However, we must not try to run before we can walk, and we are advised that we must have both our initial projects firmly funded and sustainable before we can look at enlarging our community efforts. Sometime in the future, we would like to involve some village mothers in providing a hot meal morning and afternoon for those children who are most in need, but for now that must remain a dream.



Christmas Dinner at the Sofitel

Those of you who are sponsoring named children will be notified if “your” child is reintegrated with his/her birth relatives. There will still be sponsorship needed, of course, though on the whole this should eventually be well less than residential care, unless a child is fostered, when it would cost a little more. In the meantime, we still need to pay all our staff salaries. One day, when there are fewer children living with us, we hope that our mothers will train as community workers and give support

to local families, as well as monitoring every child who has returned to their village or other relatives. Their salaries would then fall into the community support project. If you are happy to continue with your regular funding, any surplus will be used either for our school or for feeding our school children.

We wish you all, wherever you may be, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sue and the Honour Village Family – staff and children, both resident and non-resident.