



Kids International
Development Society

NEWSLETTER

March 12, 2011

Dear Friends,

First of all we would like to say that our thoughts and hearts go out to all those in Japan who are struggling with this great tragedy.

We have now just arrived in Bangkok and will be heading home in a few days so this will be our last instalment from S.E. Asia. Having to say goodbye to our friends in Siem Reap is always hard but the most difficult is saying goodbye to the girls at **Somnang House** (that is totally funded by K.I.D.S.). We have known some of the 11 girls that live there for many years. Their backgrounds vary from being true orphans to being at risk on the street and abandoned. When we think of where these girls were and where they are now it fills our hearts with joy. The girls now study English, are beautiful Apsara dancers (traditional Khmer Dance) and love having the opportunity to go to school, they are respectful to others and respect themselves, together they form a strong and happy family. This is mostly due thanks to the amazing woman You Vath, who after working for over 30 years to help Cambodian people and children recover from the genocide, opened her home and her life to these girls; her daughter Somnang also shares her life with the girls. Thanks to your support Somnang House can continue for another year and everyone is very happy.

The Moat Kla Floating School is almost finished and the villagers and students eagerly await its arrival. We have made sure that our friends from The Lake Clinic will be there when it arrives and that they will take pictures for us. The school looks great and we are really pleased with the builder Mr. Lowey. We are sorry we have to miss the arrival of the school in the village but work and life calls us back to Canada. As we travelled out by boat this week to see it we can only imagine how happy the children will be when this brand new, brightly painted school comes into their village...filled with new wooden desks. Thank you so much for making this vision from last year become a reality.

Every year we visit **Angkor Hospital for Children**. For over ten years this incredible hospital offers prevention, treatment and life saving operations to thousands of children from all over Cambodia. The hospital also trains Cambodian doctors and nurses, as there is such a great need for well trained medical practioners. When the war ended there were only 17 doctors in the whole country. The hospital staff is now made up of 98 % Cambodians. This year one of the items they were in need of was a suction machine and we were able to purchase one for them. This machine is used during operations and for other vital procedures, most hospitals this size would have many but right now AHC only had two working so they were really pleased that K.I.D.S. could assist them. Every year we also purchase lots of art and reading supplies for the art therapy program, a very

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kind and talented woman named Sinat runs this program, she entertains the children and their families while they stay at the hospital and face very difficult situations.

As always we provide some individual **family support**. This year we have been able to assist some very hard working people with, pumps for gardens, sewing machines, solar lighting for children to study by and small engine repairs. Thanks for assisting families to improve their lives in small but significant ways.

Last but not least we want to give you all an update on **Sopak**, the girl with hearing problems. We have continued to work on Sopak's hearing problems with the help of a great NGO called Hearing Cambodia, based out of the UK. As it turns out Sopak has two perforated ear drums and both her middle ears were infected. The medication has cleared up the infection and we have made arrangements for her to see a foreign doctor, through the NGO, to consult about future treatment. We also had Sopak fitted for a hearing aid. It was a truly moving experience when we took Sopak to get her hearing aid. The technician explained how it worked and she looked very apprehensive to try it, when he put the hearing aid in her ear she sat there with this blank, expressionless look on her face. As she sat there in silence it occurred to us that she was listening to sounds she had rarely if ever heard. The room was so quiet and we could hear a bird singing in a tree outside the window, we asked her if she could hear the bird and her face lit up and she said..."Yes I can". For the first time Sopak could now hear the peripheral sounds in her world.

Before we left Sopak wrote us a really beautiful letter, using her English skills, thanking us and you for your support. We will close with some of her words which represents the thoughts, feelings and appreciation of so many in Cambodia and on the Burma border. We thank you for your kind words, your generosity, your support and for making a difference to us and to so many children, women and families.

"Thanks for your support for studying English and Khmer, I will not disappoint you. You find a way for my ear to be well and we thank you very much. My parents are very happy and say hello to you and they exactly send many thanks and wish you to meet good luck, good health, long life, success and happiness forever. So on behalf of my family we thank you very much for you who support us again".

Sopak, Adrienne and Rick