



News Letter 2016/17



Dear Friends of K.I.D.S.,

Happily this year was another year of creating positive changes in the lives of children and families lives in Cambodia. As we reflect on this past year we are grateful for all those who partner with us to bring the basics in life such as: healthcare, clean drinking water, education and housing as well as giving children and families hope and the belief in a more equitable and fair world. The children, families and communities that we all assist are truly appreciative of the support that is shared with them. K.I.D.S. is a community of caring and generous people and we see first hand how much can be done with this kind of a team effort. In Cambodia we are inspired by those we work with and their desire for a better future for their children and communities and their commitment to work tirelessly to make this happen. Here at home, we are moved by children sharing their birthday money, making cards, playing music and forming global citizen clubs to support other children far across the globe, that are living very challenging lives. We hope this newsletter gives you a snap shot of the changes that together we have facilitated and we thank you deeply for your kindness and support.

Adrianne Dartnall and Rick Lennert
Co-founders

K.I.D.S Home for Girls

K.I.D.S funds a home for girls' ages 5 to 22 years of age. Some of the girls have lived most of their lives in this home and all have escaped a life of poverty, begging, abuse, neglect or hard labour. The girls have formed a supportive family where they treat each other with respect and love. Under the caring and supportive guidance of You Vath, the director/housemother and social worker, they receive an education, study English, computers, traditional dance and enjoy their time playing with their dogs and each other. When we visit regularly, while in Siem Reap, we experience the warmth, happiness and joy of a family and always leave feeling grateful that these terrific kids have an opportunity for a better life thanks to the support they receive.



EDUCATION

Otasak Primary School

Last year we visited this very isolated school along the Stung Sen River. The principal and teachers are incredibly dedicated, travelling long distances by road on motorcycles and sometimes boat to teach the community children. Thanks to Sarah Gilks and the funds raised through last years Healthy Role Model Program, we were able to renovate this broken down little school and provide clean drinking water. Now the school has a great kitchen and dining area so the students can get a nutritious meal each day. They have unlimited clean water, proper desks to work on and the school received a facelift, including fresh paint and repairs to doors and windows. To top it off some of the children, who had to walk hours to get to and from school were given new bikes so their lives are now much easier.



Smart Kids Program

K.I.D.S supports 33 students whose families work mostly in the local brick factories for incredibly low wages. To be able to survive many children have to work there as well. K.I.D.S supports one child from each family to get a good education and break the cycle of poverty. We provide bikes, uniforms, school supplies and English lessons. We now have 8 students, who have moved to the city and live with our incredible manager Hak, so they can learn about city life and move on to secure better paying jobs after they graduate from grade 12. All these young people are working hard to change their lives and the lives of their families.



Sohing's Village English School

Sohing started an English tutoring school in her village for very poor kids. Each day, in the evening, 60 children come to her home to learn and have fun. Sohing and another teacher provide instruction and a nutritious meal. K.I.D.S supports this amazing young woman to do this thanks to your support.



EDUCATION

Computers for Learning

It is hard to imagine a high school with 4500 students and only 20 computers, however that is the way it is in so many schools in Cambodia. K.I.D.S is committed to bring technology to young people in order to further their opportunities for employment and to attend training schools and universities. This year we supplied computers for a high school, K.I.D.S Girls Home and the Feeding Dreams free computer program for inner city kids. Needless to say everyone involved was extremely happy to learn and teach computers.



Bikes and Bathrooms Without a bicycle many children living in rural areas are not able to travel the long distances to school, especially when they move from primary school to high school. This year we were able to provide over 100 bikes to students. Thanks to all our donors for giving these kids a ride to further education. Another essential need in these schools is bathrooms. One of the inner city programs we work with is Feeding Dreams Cambodia. This program serves 800 children a day and provides them with free English lessons, hospitality training and computer training as well as a hot lunch program. The center had only two terrible toilets for the whole school however thanks to Compassionate Eye Foundation we were able to build them a wonderful four-toilet bathroom facility with showers. Not only were the kids happy the teachers and volunteers were very also grateful.



Education Sponsorship Program

KIDS sponsor a number of very poor students around the country for individual education programs. Some of the kids we have sponsored have gone on to become engineers, hairstylists, flower designers, bank tellers and store managers to name a few. All of them are doing extremely well. Education changes lives and thanks to everyone we are giving these young people a chance to change their futures and break the cycle of poverty.



STUNG TRENG WOMEN'S WEAVING CENTRE KINDERGARTEN AND SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

SWDC continues to support women to learn weaving skills and earn sustainable incomes by making beautiful silk scarves. This year K.I.D.S was able to train 10 new weavers thanks to the Compassionate Eye Foundation. These women can now make a decent living wage and have their children attend the on-site preschool/kindergarten that K.I.D.S funds. The children love to learn and their mothers don't have to worry about them. Everyone receives a hot lunch program. Chan and Chantha, who are the managers and co founders, have created a safe haven for these women, who otherwise would undoubtedly have lived a life of poverty.



FLOATING SCHOOL

K.I.D.S continues to support communities living on the Tonle Sap Lake. These communities are very isolated and yet still manage to provide education for their children. This year we visited a small floating school where 60 children attend each day to learn from a volunteer teacher. The school was in the process of sinking and it would not be long until the school would be under water. Fortunately we were able to support the school with new bamboo to provide flotation. Together with the community we installed the bamboo, bought school supplies and repaired the ceiling of the school. The teacher and these great kids were very happy to be able to continue to learn in an improved environment that is now much more sound.



FAMILY SUPPORT

Many of the families we work with live very difficult lives. Some toil away day and night fishing for a living while others need to have their whole families work in brick factories in order to earn a basic subsistence living. They face many challenges, including: lack of clean water, electricity, toilets and decent livable housing. Each year we try to alleviate the situation for selected families that are identified through our education sponsorship program. Over the years, we have built or renovated houses for these families. This past trip we provided six very needy families with new houses, rain catchment systems, toilets and 33 family solar lighting systems. Words cannot truly convey the difference these basic necessities make to the quality of life for these marginalized families. A huge Thank You to Lush Charity Pot initiative for their partnership on this housing project. Also a heartfelt thanks goes out to all K.I.D.S supporters for assisting with our other housing projects. Together step-by-step, family-by-family and house-by-house, we are bringing a much better quality of life to these very grateful families.



Some of the houses that needed to be replaced and some of the new houses and bathrooms



THANK YOU ALL FOR SUPPORTING THESE CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND PROGRAMS AND CHANGING LIVES FOR THE BETTER!!