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Newsletter - April/May 2013 - No 2

## Community Support Association Newsletter

### Our achievements so far:-

- English classes up & running with 110 enrolled students
- 11 Families under the sponsorship program
- 18 wells completed
- 5 duck farms Sponsored
- 2 Toilets completed
- 3 vegetable gardens sponsored
- 3 water filters purchased
- 7 x bicycles
- Establishing an "Emergency Fund"

### Donations & sponsorships can be made towards:

- Sponsoring a family or child
- \$150 to provide a pump well
- \$500 to build a proper toilet
- \$20 to buy a water filter
- \$45 to buy a bike for a child or family
- \$50 to start a family size chicken or duck farm
- \$100 to start a family size pig farm
- \$50 to start a family size vegetable garden
- \$35 to buy a set of farming tools

### Hello to all our CSA Family & Friends

Since our last newsletter, the **CSA Team** have been putting in place many new initiatives, which has seen the organization continue to prosper, offering wonderful support to the village's of Bos & Somrong.

For all our facebook friends you can see **regular updates** and **photo posts** about the various activities which have been happening. And for all our sponsors/friends who are not on Facebook, we consider these regular newsletters as a great way to keep everyone **connected**.

**Thanks** goes out to Julie Greig for helping spread the word of the wonderful work being done in the village's supported by CSA. We warmly welcome members of the Hillston-Gunbar Parish to our growing circle of **CSA family and friends**.

The **free English classes** have been an overwhelming success. Our teacher Mr Hean, through sponsorship, has continued his University level English. Mr Hean travels into Siem Reap each Saturday & Sunday for his study.

Our **bicycle tour** through the village areas is now open for business! Establishing the tour, and to see it up and running has been very time consuming for Rathany, who has worked tirelessly delivering the brochures to various hotels and guesthouses around the Siem Reap area. All profits from the cycle tours will go directly back into the association. **Locals helping locals, doesn't get any better than that!!**

Rathany held a **Health Care & Birth Control group discussion**. This was very well supported by the villagers. The association hopes to have more of these types of "relaxed" discussion groups in the future, as accessing information is difficult for the villagers due to their isolation.

We also had a wonderful response to our **Christmas Giving Appeal**, resulting in 5 wells, 1 duck farm & 1 bicycle, and 5 bicycles for the Bicycle tour. At Christmas time it's not always easy to find any spare \$\$ so we sincerely thank all who were able to offer support. **A gift that keeps on giving!!** Even the smallest amount, can make a big difference!!

**Khmer New Year** is a time for celebration for all Cambodians. Rathany organized activities & games out in the village to celebrate. The day was a huge success. Thanks to our generous sponsors who helped make it all possible.

Till next time!! **Kind regards from the CSA Team**



# Khmer New Year - April 2013

**Khmer New Year** is a time for celebration and some fun! A national holiday is declared, and Cambodians visit family and friends and generally enjoy parties and celebrating. Activities were organised out in the village for the English Class Students. Egg & Spoon races, sack races & a game of being blind folded and having to hit a terracotta pot!! Balloons were used also for decoration and balloon races. A great time was had by all.

*Thanks to our generous sponsors for this to happen!!*



**Top Right:-** The egg & spoon race  
**Right:-** cheering as a student tries to hit the pot

**Below:-** The "rice sack" race  
**Bottom right:-** Tying the scarf for the student to be blind folded.



**Happy  
Khmer  
New Year!!**



## Health Care & Birth Control Discussion Group Discussion

**In February**, Rathany organized a group discussion for the villagers, primarily to extend their knowledge and learn about the importance of birth control & health care. The presentation was very well attended. Many of our family sponsors may recognize some familiar faces in the crowd.



**Above:-** Rathany in Bos Village, doing a presentation on Birth control and Health Care.

**Right:-** A great attendance from the Villagers

## Bicycle Tour - in Bos Village A Community Ecotourism Initiative.

After much research and discussion, the CSA team decided to go ahead with the idea of establishing **a bicycle tour around the village area**. But firstly CSA had to set about raising the \$400 needed to get the cycle tour up and running. 5 bikes would need to be purchased, leaflets had to be printed and a local guide needed to be trained.

**But as usual through the generosity of our CSA network**, we were able to purchase the bikes, and so the idea was off and racing!!

Those who received bikes for Xmas, will just

have to come to Cambodia to ride them in the bicycle tour!! The brochures are now printed and Rathany has been busy in Siem Reap distributing them around to various hotels and guesthouses. A villager has now been trained as a "local" guide, and highlights of the tour will include visiting "locals" making brooms, palm sugar, rice noodles and visitors will really get a "feel" for rural Cambodia!!



**Let the cycling begin!!**



### **"Emergency Fund"**

Since CSA was established the organization has faced many challenges in assisting the villagers with emergency medical aid and situations where people are in dire circumstances. (homes damaged by storms etc) Medical services at the Children's Hospital in Siem Reap are free for those under 18 yrs. But food & medications are not. So even when a child is in hospital, a relative has to take food/water and buy the medications needed for their stay. **Due to the isolation of the village, many parents can not afford the trip into Siem Reap.** So that's where CSA can offer a helping hand!!

**We have faced 3 very serious situations, where CSA has stepped in and saved lives.**

- ◆ Met Da's successful eye surgery, where this father of 6 children, was able to access eye surgery in Siem Reap and save his sight.
- ◆ A young girl in Somrong village contracted Dengue Fever, and life saving medications were purchased.
- ◆ In Bos village a young girl had a serious accident falling down a tree, where a stick became impaled through her leg. The girl was already delirious and in a serious condition with infection by the time the CSA team transferred her to Siem Reap Children's Hospital. After surgery on her leg to remove the remaining stick, and with intravenous antibiotics she was able to return home to the village after a week in hospital.

**Thank you to all our generous supporters who have made donations ensuring money is available when these "emergencies" arise!!**

## Chansor Commune School - English Class Update....

**Free English Classes**, now known officially as the **Chansor Commune School**, was established in Sept. 2012.

Mr Hean, in Somrong Village, very kindly donated his time to run the classes. Not only that, but Hean has also allowed the class room to be set up under his residence. A toilet & well were sponsored at Heans house for the growing number of students to use.

All the school items were generously donated by a now growing circle of CSA family & friends. The desks, whiteboard, school supplies, storage tubs & books.....and so the English classes began. What started as "let's just see the response" from the village children, had nearly the power to overwhelm us!! **110 eager students** now attend **English classes "free"**. The lessons are held over two time slots, this is to accommodate the different ages of the children attending state school. Hean keeps a detailed record of attendance of each child, and "book" awards are given regularly for academic achievements. A **laptop** was donated for the use of the students and Hean, and through more generous donations a battery and inverter were purchased so the laptop could be used in the classroom (the classroom has no electricity).

Our next project for the school is to extend our "**book**" library so that a borrowing system for the students can be put in place. This would extend support to the students, as many children do not have the opportunity of reading books at home. **Thank you to all who have made the English classes a reality!!!**



Left:- Mr Hean using the donated laptop in the classroom. Battery & inverter were also donated. Thanks to our sponsors.

Right:- Students enjoying books in "free time" at the school.

We have the opportunity in June to send over items to the village. So we are sending out a call for assistance...If there is anyone who may be able to help with the following items please contact

Ali VanNoort (see contact details below):-

- ◆ Basic reader books, in good condition - picture books & reader books suitable for students up to our Yr 6 level.
- ◆ Any Laptops in the cupboard not being used? - must be in good working condition



### Ongoing projects in the Village's:-

- ◆ **Establishment of "Future Fund" - Cricket Farm**  
A generous donor has contributed a substantial amount towards the \$2000 needed to establish a cricket farm. The CSA team is working towards this being our very first "micro finance" business enterprise for a local family. Rathany, together with the village elders and commune leaders, will plan and consult on the best way of offering this opportunity to the right family. Training on the management and running of the cricket farm will be provided, as well as ongoing support to ensure the success of the business. Allison & Julie saw first hand, when they visited a cricket farm in Siem Reap with Rathany, how this could be our pilot project in establishing business opportunities in the villages. As all our CSA family/followers will appreciate this is a very big step in establishing such an enterprise, so it will be important to offer this to a family which we know can be successful with this business. This will take many months, but we will provide updates as we can. A huge thank you this "anonymous" donor.
- ◆ Ongoing training for our "local" guide helping with the bicycle tours
- ◆ Providing "Emergency" Fund relief for families facing medical or other challenges where they require support.

**From all the Community Support Team - Rathany, Bophay & Ali - we thank you for your continued support and interest in providing this "helping hand" to the people of Bos & Somrong Villages.**

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