

Progress report on SOID and Veal Village School in Siem Reap, Cambodia



SOID Veal's Village School

Dear friends,

In this Newsletter we want to inform you briefly about a number of issues concerning SOID. Earlier this year, you received a newsletter on February 1st, 2015.

SOID

In 2006, Mr. Sok Vanna, a Cambodian, established a local Non-governmental Organization (NGO) in Siem Reap. The name of the organization is "Supporting orphans and indigent People of Cambodia For Development Organization (SOID)", which means "Organisation to support the development of orphans and the poor in Cambodia." SOID is a Cambodian government registered organization that focuses on education.

## House for the family of Srey Mom

In our newsletter of February 1, 2015, we had reported that Gertie and I during our visit to SOID in Siem Reap in January 2015 had visited the family who have a daughter that had lost a leg in a traffic accident. The family has two daughters and a son. The daughters are students of our school, the son pursues secondary education paid for by SOID. When we visited the family we found out that this family is extremely poor, has no home and that they lack anything else. They are allowed to live in a structure that is actually the cooking shed of the house next door (see photo below). We found the situation untenable and we feared that in this situation it is not obvious that the parents have their children go to school - every pair of hands means some income and food at the end of the day.

We also mentioned in our Newsletter of February 1, 2015 that we would explore the possibilities for a new accommodation for the family. Ultimately, Gertie and I decided along with the two Belgian board members to donate for our own accounts and with a contribution of a Belgian family, to SOID. SOID could now buy a piece of land with an existing house. SOID makes this house available free of charge and indefinitely to this family.

The house also has a western style toilet (instead of a squat toilet as Asians are accustomed to) built for the disabled child.



The cooking shed where the family used to spend the night



The new house



In the new house



The toilet

The family is overjoyed with their new living situation.

### Sponsoring by Lahrhofschool

The primary school "Lahrhof" in Sittard had decided to support two projects, one in the Netherlands and one abroad. At the end of 2014 we submitted on behalf of SOID an application to become their project and later we were informed to our delight that SOID was elected as the foreign project. SOID will receive support from the Lahrhofschool for several years starting 2015.

To raise money, the children of the Lahrhofschool held a sponsored walk a few weeks ago. And on the 3th of April 2015 we received from the director of the school a symbolic check of € 2650, - for SOID.

Prior to the charity Gertie and I gave two presentations to the school, one for the younger classes and one for the older classes. The presentations gave the children an idea of the life in Cambodia and of the education at the school of SOID. The children were very interested and asked many questions, more questions than we could ever answer in the scheduled time. The teacher of the highest grade of primary school invited us to continue the session in her classroom, because the children in her class still wanted to know so much more!

Here are some examples of the children's questions:

- Why are many people in Cambodia so poor? Are there any rich people? Why are the rich people not helping the poor people?
- Why doesn't the government of Cambodia help the poor people?
- Why can the children of poor people in Cambodia not go to school?
- By what do poor people live in Cambodia?
- Is there electricity and water in Cambodia? Do poor people have to drink water from the river (!)?
- What do people eat in Cambodia?
- Do they also have internet in Cambodia? Do the children have mobile phones and I-pads?
- Why do you do this job (guiding and supporting the SOID organisation) and why do you spend so much time and money on it?

This is just a sample of all that has been discussed. We had a lot of fun to give the presentations and answer the questions the best we could. We are convinced that the children are now much more aware of the differences between the Dutch and Cambodian society.

Wim and Gertie Dohmen



Children of SOID's school holding a logo and picture of the Lahrhofschooll.

## Contact

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