

# Evaluation Mission 2012

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## Background

### Year 2011

In 2011 after a brief tour with Chantrea with emphasis on rural lifestyle, my first impressions included the following:

- Lack of fresh water in rural areas even though there had been heavy rainfall in the region.
- Benefits of well water demonstrated.
- Extreme poverty evident in the countryside.

CWEP funding was focused on donations from tourists and their friends. At this time the education component included bicycles, some donated stationery supplies and the computer program sponsored by [Labdoo Organization](#) (Spain).

### Year 2012

This time we focused on visiting completed wells, meeting the farmers and visiting a school to view their computer lab (I brought 2 laptops from Melbourne with me). Also, there was an opportunity to observe a class and meet with an English teacher.

#### Clean Water

Visited Toy Teurn and his wife Chin Euth, beneficiaries of Any and Gustavo (Barcelona, Spain). I was impressed by the pro-active attitude of this couple. Observed steady progress with their fish farm and use of irrigation for their extensive vegetable plot. Also discussed further education prospects of their daughter Teav. A bicycle was donated by my friend Dr. Margaret Campbell (Melbourne) to enable Teav to travel to school. Am investigating the possibility of a scholarship for Teav to complete High School.

#### Other wells visited

- Visited wells donated by myself and the [Teachers Union](#). Observed that people were making an effort to irrigate for extra crops and not rely solely on the wet season.
- Learned about the life of a share farmer, (percentage of crops and animals given to landowner. )
- Learned that different areas require specific wells to suit geography of land. Some locations may need water filters. The depth of wells depends on the terrain .Went with Chantrea to obtain quotes for various clean water related items.

#### Education

- Visited the SRET School where a computer lab was set up with help from Labdoo. This was an important resource for the students. Repairs and exchanges of faulty laptops appeared to take a considerable amount of time due to reliance on travelers to deliver and return computers. This could take months.
- Initial discussions about setting up a volunteer English teaching program.
- Opportunity to visit the SRET school library. Very basic. Included sets of text books.

- Discussion of a possible scholarship promoting female students. ( May be sponsored by Tall Poppies – I will discuss with them)

Overall I was pleased with the amount of progress made in just 12 months. In particular, Chantrea has obviously worked tirelessly organizing the selection of prospective beneficiaries, well building, computer deliveries/maintenance, and keeping track of all funds. This is a huge task in addition to running his tour business.

The financial report provided by Chantrea demonstrated the generosity of donors and the growth of the project. It was particularly interesting to note the increase of donations in 2012 compared to 2010 when the project started. With such a large amount of money coming through combined with the prospect of expansion and change from CWEP to the Foundation for Water and Education, Cambodia (FWEC), it is suggested that a separate bank account, preferably with an international bank, be set up. This enables us to be transparent with incoming funds and provides added security for money left in an account for repairs and sundry expenses. When donations are made to the FWEC (as opposed to attending a fundraising event) a receipt should be issued. I just typed up a basic form and signed it when donors have requested evidence of payment. Although this is not tax deductible in Australia, I've still been asked to supply one.

After visiting some of the beneficiary families I was impressed that they started to extend their use of water to include irrigation for extra crops. Everywhere I visited, I was made welcome. In particular, I was impressed by the Teurn family's enthusiasm and excitement in demonstrating the working of their fish farm. I mentioned this family when I visited one my beneficiaries. The head of this family was a widow. She possibly would be interested in extending her farm to include fish but did not have the experience or the finance. I was particularly moved by this family mainly because the mother did not appear to be in good health herself yet she was responsible for her school age son, daughter, grandchild and son in law.

This is my first "evaluation mission". It is obvious over the period of 12 months that this has gone beyond building wells, supplying chickens or bicycles. There are more people involved, and the original project is developing into an organization with a professional approach to its humanitarian work. Those who contributed to the Foundation in Australia will be pleased to see the results of their donations being put to good use. In particular, access to beneficiaries via the internet is popular with signs and photographs. On my return, donors asked about my visit .I have been able to report that progress is being made both in the field and the development of the Foundation. In the Siem Reap area we are increasing the number of wells built and planning for the future with money for maintenance of these wells in the communities they serve. What impressed me the most in my travels around the rural communities with Chantrea , is that the money I raised goes directly to the beneficiaries with little overhead costs. This is one of the main reasons I chose to assist Chantrea in providing funds for the original CWEP. It is also an important issue that is continually raised when I seek donations either financially or in kind. The simplicity of gifting a well directly to the community in need is good motivation to donate. I was privileged to be given the opportunity to connect with recipients and share in their progress.

Education projects will continue to develop with families whose basic needs for water and food are fulfilled. Then, perhaps, they will seek different opportunities for their children. One wonders if the fish farm family would be considering further education for their 16 years old daughter if they had not been recommended for the well program.

The Labdoo collaboration is evident, but given the location of schools plus the amount of use expected from these older machines, laptops break down along the way. It is challenge to repair or replace damaged units. The cost of repairing some SRET school laptops was about \$70.00 It was either raise the money or wait for another visitor from a labdoo person. In the meantime, students are missing out on important computer tuition. So, I opted to donate the money as it could be some time before these machines are repaired or replaced.

With plans for a volunteer teaching program being discussed by the team, to be beneficial to students of English, there are some details that need to be clarified. With astute planning, this program looks like it should be successful. There are a few aspects that are important to its success. These include:

- Obtaining permission and support from the school's director /local education office.
- Full participation and support sought from the classroom teacher. Improved communication with the classroom teacher. If possible via e mail (Not available), mobile: +85512 766 254 (SRET School English teacher's name: Mrs. Nhem Kakada)
- A simple orientation guide produced for the benefit of the volunteer (include cultural notes, school and classroom procedure for a particular school, a set of texts, dictionary, some simple method notes)

Whilst we speak of education as relating to schools, is it relevant to consider education programs for those beneficiaries who may lack experience with fish farming, repairing water pumps perhaps?

Overall, this evaluation trip opened my eyes to so many different areas of need. Nevertheless, my focus always returns to the concept of ensuring rural folk have clean water. It was demonstrated by some of the families I visited, that once this occurred they were able to move on to make other improvements in their lives.

None of this would have happened if it was not for our Chantrea. Thank you for your generosity, energy and being an inspiration to us all.

Maria Hicks

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