

## E-mail Marka s Rogerem o vývoji situace ve věci záměru nákupu pozemku pro školu

From: rgarms tds.net [mailto:rgarms@tds.net]

Sent: Sunday, April 17, 2011 3:21 PM

To: Kak; ktgarden@chorus.net; Stephanie Ward; Sarith Ou; Sathin Ouk; Steve Strange; Tom Watson; grayw tds.net

Cc: Jan Pfeiffer; spinka.marek

Subject: Funding

Hi everyone,

I got a call yesterday from Mary Grow, just back from Hawaii where she presented a paper on traditional Cambodian wooden architecture. She asked for news on the tech school project (she had written a letter of support for it). When I told her our plans and that Sarith, Sathin and I were donating to buy the land, she immediately offered to donate the final \$500 we need! Now we have pledges for the entire \$3,500 that we offered to pay for one half of the land for the school.

This is a solid endorsement of our project. A cultural anthropologist who knows the Cambodian countryside culture and who has visited our school has given us a significant gift. This is a validation of our plans from someone who knows what we are doing and what we are trying to do. It is very encouraging to get such support.

Regards, Roger

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Dear Marek,

We are definitely making progress. In response to your most important question, I think it would be best for Sarith to own the land. I don't think our groups should register with the Cambodian government as land owners. For one thing, to do this, or to create a new NGO to do this, would be a big paperwork burden - and we still would own 49% of the land. I think the simplest and best way is for Sarith to be the owner, and to register a legal agreement that does not allow him to sell the land without written approval from us.

I am not sure who we should have on that agreement. We could have members from each of our groups or could simply leave it up to your group to decide. Non-citizens are allowed to have this right of refusal. This document will insure the land is used for the school without us registering or creating a registered NGO. I think it is best to keep a low profile, Marek. The more people know that foreign funders are providing ongoing support, the more likely we will be asked for money that will not be used for the school.

In addition to a low profile, local ownership provides some protection from corruption. We will staff and run the school with local people, serve children from Pouk commune and build local support by doing a good job. Sarith and Pean already have a good reputation - our project has been going for more than 10 years and his orphanage for 4 years. We know the commune leaders, we have contributed to improving the local infrastructure and have brought jobs and resources. Our local reputation and local allies gives us a certain protection from government intrusion. We Europeans and Americans can be known as contributors to the building construction but then it is best to stay more in the background. There is a recent London Guardian article that explains the NGO situation in Cambodia in much more detail - I can send it to you if you wish.

The lot for the school is 30 by 30 meters, on the concrete road and accessible all year. We plan to eventually build 4 classrooms on one side of the lot, maybe 5 by 10 meters each, leaving plenty of room for parking and a bathroom. If necessary, we can later build more classrooms on the other side of the lot. Sarith is now researching building costs. We want to build brick walls on a concrete slab (standard school construction and relatively inexpensive right now). The roof would preferably be

tile, more expensive than metal but much cooler and longer lasting. I will let you know when I get some numbers from him, Marek.

Again, thank you and your group very much for your interest and enthusiasm. If we can indeed move quickly, I think we should even though not all details are decided. Sarith and I have done a number of projects that we were not able to plan to the last detail (and our board has sometimes been somewhat dubious about us doing this). However, I think they would agree that these have worked out. It is like any good management structure. It is best to give good people a general goal and resources, and trust them to solve problems as they go. I trust Sarith to do this and it has worked time and again.

Regards, Roger

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On Thu, Apr 14, 2011 at 4:49 AM, spinka.marek <spinka.marek@vuzv.cz> wrote:

Dear Roger

This is indeed an excellent plan. I will ask the people about it later today. I am confident that we will approve it within a day or two and collect and transfer the \$3,500 rather quickly.

One purely technical question: who will legally own the land after it will be purchased? Will it be a newly founded NGO or branch in Cambodia (probably not), or Sarith 51% and you the rest, or will it be donated back to the Cambodian state with the legally binding arrangement for school use. We will be happy with whatever arrangement you will make, but it will be good for us to know it, should any of the potential donors ask.

Marek

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From: rgarms tds.net [mailto:rgarms@tds.net]

Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2011 1:46 AM

To: spinka.marek; Sarith Ou; Jan Pfeiffer

Cc: ktgarden@chorus.net; Kak; Stephanie Ward; Steve Strange; Sathin Ouk; Tom Watson; grayw tds.net

Subject: School

Dear Marek,

We are making some progress on the school. Sarith has found a suitable piece of land in Pouk, the best location. It was originally priced at \$10,000, but we can get it for \$7,000. He and Pean (our orphanage director partner on this) agree that this land will work quite well. Sarith also talked with the government officials. As he thought, we can make a legal agreement that the land can only be used as a school. This agreement can be registered with the government and will be legally binding. That way, neither your group nor the CSP will own the land, and it must be used for a school.

We do not know any rich donors, so we have to finance this ourselves. Sarith has agreed to donate \$1,000, Sathin Ouk (our friend and founding board member for CSP) will donate another \$1,000 and I will give \$1,000. We will raise another \$500 from friends and family. We can this way raise \$3,500, half the price of the land. We will ask that your group match this amount - that you donate \$3,500 to buy the land. If you agree, we will have the \$7,000 we needed to purchase it.

Marek, if you are willing, please ask your group if they will match the \$3,500 we will raise. My argument for requesting this is that even though you will be spending some of the funds you raise on the land, this smaller amount of \$3,500 will leave enough money to build the school and get us started. If your group agrees, we can have Sarith buy the lot, register the land as school land, and build as funds become available. There surely will be questions about this, and you may want to talk to Sarith, but this is the course I recommend.

We have continued planning for the school and I also want to share some of these ideas. Sarith has been talking with a person who selects and trains teachers, learning how to best do this and will talk with you about this as he learns. Sarith and I want to use the Artisans d'Angkor method for selecting students. This is a French NGO that trains village youth in traditional crafts. They take only young people who have been good students, have positive recommendations and whose parents want them to join. Once selected, those who do not work or are a disruptive influence are not allowed to continue.

Sarith and Pean have discussed providing micro-loans for graduates to set them up with equipment they need to start their own business. A tailor shop needs a sewing machine, a restaurant needs kitchen equipment and a bicycle repair shop needs tools, expenses way beyond what our poor graduates could afford. Loans to get started would be payed back in manageable monthly payments and these can then fund other graduates.

In terms of ongoing funding, we have begun to test our ideas on this. Pean has two groups of volunteers from England staying at the orphanage right now. They have expressed a great deal of interest in our technical school planning and a number of them have made offers of support when it is up and running. It looks like it may very well be possible to fund ongoing operations through tourist visits and the internet, as we had hoped.

So, Marek, and all of you, there is the plan to get us going. I hope you and our board members will comment and that you will let me know what you and your group thinks of it.

Best regards,

Roger