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Sent: Friday, January 25, 2013 5:41 PM

Subject: Update

Hi Everyone,

Ann is leaving Cambodia in the next hour. The following is a summary of some of the things that got done while she was there. I hope that reading it ahead of time will help you make sense of all the information she will present when we meet on Tuesday.

Gardens:

Many **vegetable beds were prepared** - clay removed and topsoil installed - then vegetables got planted. The **mushroom growing hut is finished** (cost \$10) and is awaiting material which Sok Na has money to pay for. The **compost pit is working** and he knows how to compost. The **papaya trees are now flowering**, just before Ann leaves. **Sok Na is firmly in charge of the garden** (with Sarith's official approval). He seems adept at gracefully ignoring Sopath's sometimes wildly wrong gardening suggestions.

Grounds:

These are picked up, with trash cans in place and Sopath recruited to keep the grounds clean. **Flower beds** are in in the front, and with the driveway and **gate** Sarith got finished, it **looks quite nice**. Fence posts are being poured on site into molds made by the carpenter. The excavation plan is in place as soon as it dries enough to bring in machinery.

School Building:

The computers are now protected from surges and brown-outs. Shelves are in to hold material and arranged to mark off work areas. Sopath's room is given some privacy by shelving and the computer class space expanded a bit in the process (sewing tended to expand all over the place). Again, we have tasked Sopath with keeping it neat and enforcing the rule of using trash cans. This will be an ongoing problem but we are not going to give in on this - our school will be neat and clean.

Dormitory (House): One of the downstairs rooms has been cleaned out and painted inside and is ready for our first visitors to stay there, Marek and Dana. The shutters have been painted (blue) and the building looks much better. There are some repairs to be done still. There is another room that can be cleaned and painted for visitors.

Administration: Sok Na is in charge of the garden, Sopath is in charge of the buildings and the sewing teacher (who is also a cook) is taking over supervising the meal preparation without being asked. We have the draft of job descriptions we can discuss at our meeting next week. Getting all this in writing will be helpful. It will be helpful to Sarith in overseeing the project and free him from responsibility for details that need daily supervision.

General Observations:

The diet at the school is not completely balanced, especially with protein, but all the **students have gained weight** (and they needed to). This shows you how poor nutrition is at home and reinforces the importance of the garden. Our students are malnourished and we are on the way to fixing that - getting the fish and chickens producing is the next

big step here. Ann said that some of the girls have gained 8 or 9 pounds and are now worried about getting fat. She said there is no danger of that.

The **attitude at the school is good**. Sarith has chosen two really good teachers who show up every day and do the job in a pleasant and friendly way. Sophat likes the students and it shows. The teachers had to train the students to **live communally**, to pick up after themselves, **to resolve disagreements**, to take **care of personal hygiene**. This is the first time they have been away from home or had standards to meet other than their family's hand to mouth existence. Our teachers are doing an outstanding job.

Another thing that helps the attitude is that **Sarith was able to place** all the computer students and a couple of the best sewing **students so quickly**. The consultant on placements can get the job done if we can keep up the good training. The apartment in town is getting the job done but still needs supervision. Sok Na spends a night there every so often.

I think we made big progress during Ann's visit. She will be able to tell us what is needed next and we can set priorities and budget for what is needed when we meet. I look forward to seeing you all.

Roger