



HELPING HANDS CAMBODIA NEWSLETTER

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THE OFFICIAL NAMING CEREMONY FOR OUR SCHOOL "The Iqbal School"

On 31st August, 2007 we held a ceremony to officially name the school/community education center. One of our wonderful supporters and dear friend, Aline from France, suggested the name. Aline played a big part in making it possible to build the school so we wanted to wait until she visited Cambodia to hold the ceremony.

Our school is named after a young Pakistani boy called Iqbal Masih. Iqbal was born in 1982 and died in 1995 when he was just 13 years old.

Iqbal was held by a chain to a carpet loom and was made to work sixteen hours per day. He was repeatedly beaten for disobedience and was given very little food. When he was 12 years old, Iqbal was only the size of a six year old. At the age of 10, he escaped the slavery and he began to speak out against child slavery and for freedom and schools for all Pakistani children.



Iqbal joined the BLLF*, an organization that worked to free child slaves. Iqbal's goal was to help stop child labour around the world, and he helped over 3,000 Pakistani child slaves escape to freedom. Iqbal travelled to many countries and gave talks about child labour. He also managed to complete 5 years of school in just 3 years. His dream was to become a lawyer.

Tragically, he was shot and killed on 16th April, 1995 at the age of 13 because of his work against the child labour industry.

Iqbal is a hero who died trying to make the lives of other children better.

**Bonded Labor Liberation Front (BLLF) in Pakistan, an organization working to free child slaves.*

PHOTOS FROM OUR OPENING CEREMONY



The children sang songs in English.



Students reading out Iqbal's story.



The ceremony was attended by the Commune and Village leaders.



Unveiling the sign.



We also included a tree planting ceremony.

Medical Aid

Many people in our village suffer from a wide range of eye problems. We have found a very good eye doctor in Siem Reap so have started bringing the villagers to his clinic, several people at a time. We bought the first four patients to him a little while ago. Unfortunately, one lady could not be helped at all, but the other three patients were all able to receive treatment. One lady now has spectacles, one lady will return later in the year for surgery and one boy received medicine for allergic conjunctivitis. His eyes had been so bad that he had stopped going to school. He had been elsewhere for treatment but had not got any relief. Once he started to use the prescribed medicine his eyes improved dramatically and he approached Chanti and asked him if he could come to our school!



Our wonderful volunteers - Lately we have had quite a few people come to visit and volunteer at our school, some of them are listed below. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all our volunteers - they really enrich the lives of our children.



Koren from Australia helped with the uniforms (and with the money to buy them). She also taught for a few weeks.



Bella from England taught every weekday morning for three weeks.



My brother, Brett, and two nephews, Jared and Jordan, even held an "AFL footy clinic" (Australian Football League) which the children enjoyed immensely.



Vicki and Jenny entertained our children for an afternoon.



My nephew, Jordan, giving out school bags containing stationery, bought with money he raised.



Brian from Australia, who, amongst other things, got the solar power up and running and also brought to our attention the dengue fever problem (because he got it himself)!



Carolea (Caz) from Australia completely overhauled the vegetable garden at the school.

Caz now continues to support us in Australia, helping with raising awareness and fundraising.



Aline, from France did all manner of things - from working in the garden, to teaching.



John from England helped in the garden and was given the job of "official photographer" at our naming ceremony.



Leigh-Anne helped teach the children songs.

*Thank you for taking
the time to read this
and thank you for
caring.*

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