

November 2012

Please see latest update on developments in the UK as posted on our home page.

Regrettably another stone was thrown at our office on 20 Nov at 10.05pm (the same window as on 25 June) with our Executive Officer resident there. This cannot be coincidence. It follows increased observations by LMDS "vigilantes" whose presence prevented our members from arranging visits to Audiology Clinics. There were also other developments that week including Muslim Aid advertising for a Credit Officer to manage revolving funds in Kampong Tralach district.

As stated on our home page, the papers have now been submitted in the UK for the Independent Complaints Reviewer to examine the case. We have asked if there is any possibility of action being taken to stop LMDS from spoiling our services with poor disabled people.

03 November 2012

In early November we were invited for the graduation of the NHS students who studied IT in PNC (formerly CIST). They have worked very hard for the last two years and achieved good results, including a "top 10" student award for Man. PNC's courses are very practical and all students go out on internship with a company each year. They ensure that the students attend classes regularly, are on time and do a lot of self study. We saw them maturing into young adults capable of looking after themselves and adopting a good attitude towards their study and work.

Both Man and Kiv have now joined the company where they did their last internship - Man as web developer for Web Essentials and Kiv as IT support for Open Net. The other two girls should soon get a job in systems and networking administration.

This year, for the first time, PNC invited parents to attend the graduation ceremony, though not all could attend as most are from provinces and villages far away. However, Man's mum and sister, and Kiv's mum and aunt made it there. They were obviously very proud of their child and we were happy to take family photos. All the parents have been very supportive, giving their blessing for the students to stay away from home and concentrated on their studies.



This is the first group of NHS students to undertake the two-year IT course in PNC. Two other NHS students did a 6 months' data entry course with PNC earlier and both are working for Digital Divide Data. We hope that all these students will serve as role models for the NHS computing students coming through and that their success will serve as an encouragement for more students to apply to PNC. NHS has helped to supplement PNC's rather meagre living allowance and will continue to provide for any new students when needed. We will also continue to mentor the students when they come to study in Phnom Penh.

October 2012

After the disappointment of our partners withdrawing their co-operation last month, we are pleased to advise that with a new partner and in new locations, 21 poor vulnerable students will be admitted to school after the Pchum Ben holiday. We are withholding details because of LMDS's ongoing intimidation.

We did manage, however, to assist one very poor family in Rolei'bier District whose children can now go to school. Please note that the light hair colour is a sign of malnutrition. (The Rolei'bier District Governor in April 2010 held a public meeting to establish the facts and truth, accepted by LMDS's

representatives present but not acted upon.)

The project is undergoing both external evaluation and auditing this month.

The Governing Council and members are greatly encouraged to be informed that they have qualified for legal assistance in the UK and a Barrister has agreed to take on their case, following the Charities Commission's decision not to conduct a full investigation.



September 2012

Four students supported last year for Grade 12 high school have successfully passed and are now hoping to be able to continue their studies beyond school or find work. We will feature at least one case study in our "Human Stories" section if we can meet them safely. Last year in all 53 poor students, 26 girls, were supported to go to or stay on in primary or junior/senior high school.

Sadly our partners "Bright Hope Institute" and "Support Rural Children Organisation" have withdrawn from the plan to assist 52 poor vulnerable students to enrol this new school year starting this month. They are acceding to the claim by LMDS that this would constitute "unlawful activity" as specified in the June 2010 order issued by the Ministry of Interior. Hopefully the UK and AUSAID investigations, as mentioned on our homepage, will lead to a resolution whereby these young people are not deprived permanently of these life-changing opportunities.

August 2012

Fourteen children have been enrolled and assisted to go to the Vaddanhak Nursery School for the new school year. The school caters only for poor and vulnerable families. Community Facilitator Soth Sovanda carried out eligibility assessments and Governing Council member Mr Kuon presented the children with their kits.



Mr John Vijghen on behalf of SKN kindly presented the certificates to the 12 students graduating from Visal's first class, as well as giving an encouraging talk to the new batch of 12 students. Already two students have obtained good jobs as a result of the skills learned, one in Korea and another with Beeline Mobile Telephone Company. The students asked Mr Vijghen to convey their thanks to the Dutch children who every year sold stamps to raise funds

for development projects with children. They said that without this kindness, they would not be able to acquire IT skills. A special tribute was paid to their teacher Visal who 7 years ago was a poor student just like them, but today was a computer expert; a teacher and the owner of his own business.



July 2012



The second intake for the computer classes operated by Visal commenced on 2 July with the 8 students braving the first torrential rains of the wet season. Sovanda is giving them a briefing before they get down to serious work.

June 2012

The NHS office within the Vaddanhak building was attacked on the 25th June while our Executive Officer was resident. The incident has been reported to the Police and extra security measures taken. The stone (circled) has been kept and is shown on the window-pane next to the office desk of the Executive Officer.



NHS has reminded both the Civil Society Minister and the Chief Executive of the Charities Commission that their promised replies are still eagerly awaited. (See January below.)

NHS was able this year to join other organisations in Kampong Chhnang to celebrate International Children's Day. We provided the illustrated theme. The image is based on a well-known Khmer saying that likens children to bamboo shoots growing. Nurture them well and they grow up big and strong!



April 2012

NHS is pleased to announce that in conjunction with longtime partner CNVLD, a women's wheelchair basketball team will be formed, for 16 players. They will in due course join a new national league. This will complement the volleyball players who are males. If you want to know more, please [read about the project](#) that started in Battambang last year.

NHS has also joined CNVLD in international advocacy over the disappointing news that only one Cambodian athlete can go to the London Paralympics. Please see **article** in the Cambodia Daily. The UK's Channel 4 News covered a story on it.

We are also pleased to announce and welcome the appointments of Ms Soth Sovavnda and Ms Sary Rattana as Community Faciliator and Administration/Finance Manager.

"Au revoir" and good luck to Andy and Ming, our Computing Consultant Advisors who are off to Tanzania for a new volunteer placement. We will try to keep things up to standard until you return!

16 February 2012

When we ask students why they don't go to the optician the answer is usually "Because it's expensive". Eye tests are free but the frames and lenses are not, and private opticians may prescribe glasses regardless of whether they are really needed. Poor people often go to a market stall and pick up a pair of cheap non-prescription spectacles instead, which probably does their vision more harm than good.

With this in mind, a party of poor school students was taken to the International Centre for Eye-Care Education Clinic (ICEE) in Phnom Penh on 16 February 2012 for eye-checks. ICEE clinic is manned by three dedicated Cambodians and provides low cost eye care to the general public. Three students were prescribed with spectacles, as was their accompanying teacher. Seila, the optometrist, also advised the others on how to look after their vision. This is the second group kindly assisted by ICEE with support from SKN.



19 January 2012

UK Civil Society Minister, Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, has agreed to take up with the Charities Commission the NHS's beneficiaries complaint against LMDS - the Commission promised a new investigation in August last year but there has been no communication from them since.

16 January 2012

Congratulations to Visal who has now successfully established his own computer business in Kampong Chhnang. He has come a long way, as his [personal story](#) tells, as a poor boy who thought computing skills were beyond him because of disability. Visal's achievement is the ultimate success



story of organizations such as NHS, where personal poverty and social exclusion are made a thing of the past. Here, not only is there a genuine self-sufficient private solution for Visal and his family, but because he is now training more poor disabled young people in computing, these students too may well follow him with their own successful

careers and businesses. We wish them and Visal well as they meet future challenges.

Pictured on the left of Visal is Stephen Pfeiffer of Stepsafe, with his partner Eva from the Australian/US NGO that was the first organization to help NHS when it became independent.

Congratulations also to our Trustee, Mr Roger Biggs, on his award of an OBE in the UK New Years Honours, for his services to health in Asia. Roger of course was the original designer and fundraiser of the project for disabled people in Kampong Chhnang.

11 November 2011



The Child Advocacy Group was invited to the opening ceremony of the Pannakhmer Academy on 11 November 2011 in Kandal Province. This was because of their previously well-received performances about disaster-preparedness based on Hurricane Katrina.

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