

House of Light and Knowledge

Bringing light and knowledge to Psach Poy

The House of Light and Knowledge is FEDA's largest and one of which all our staff, volunteers, donors and supporters can be justly proud.

The House of Light and Knowledge (P'tea Ponleu Vichea in Khmer) is a community / youth centre for the children of Ksach Poy village. The centre opened on 5 November 2005, and provides free English, Primary Healthcare, Environmental Studies and Peace Studies, sports, art and music classes. Classes are scheduled so as not to interfere with the local school timetable and take place either early in the morning or in the late afternoon.



The children of Ksach Poy have never before had the chance to learn another language and other vocational skills. It is hoped that with more skills the children will have more options than their parents did. We now have more than 800 children voluntarily attending classes so they may have brighter futures.



We also hope that the project will help to rebuild, on a local level, the social fabric of a country that has been almost completely destroyed over the past thirty years. If it is a success the venture could well be replicated in other parts of Cambodia.

Building the dream

Thanks hugely to the dedicated fundraising efforts of volunteer **Dickon Verey**, a very large piece of land was able to be purchased in the centre of Ksach Poy village in mid 2004. Since then, on that land, a vision has been taking shape.



House of Light and Knowledge comprises:

- A three classroom school building including a small library and veranda space (underneath this is a kind of roman ampitheatre which can hold about 600 people);
- A caretaker cottage;
- An office building with computer lab;
- A small shed housing a generator (generator donated by Besom Furniture in the UK);
- A small green mesh nursery for future landscaping development; water tanks;
- A library
- A playground
- Volleyball, basketball and football facilities.
- Internet facilities
- An outhouse used as a music room
- An impressive front fence with solar panel lighting



Great care has been taken to ensure that the wood used in the building of the centre is legally logged and the structure is of traditional design so as to be energy-efficient and environmentally friendly.

Future plans for the site include:

- Seminar room
- Changing Rooms
- First aid clinic

Landscaping

We are keen to improve the site which will include building access roads and paths, developing a nature trail and fencing ponds on the land. The estimated cost of this project is \$10,000.

Sports Program

We want to introduce a proper sports program at P'tea Ponleu Vichea. Such a program would be groundbreaking in Cambodia as there are very few (with the exception of private expat schools in the capital, Phnom Penh) in existence in Cambodia. We have already begun the construction of a football pitch which we would improve on and would construct badminton courts and a Takor court.

Traditional Arts Centre

The Traditional Arts Centre is perhaps our most important dream. The traditional arts in Battambang are only facilitated by one other school and it is our hope to encourage children to pursue an interest in this area. To do so we would need both a facility and equipment (costumes and instruments). We estimate the cost of such a facility would be \$40,000. Furthermore, we would be able to provide employment for other arts institutions (who often find difficulty finding jobs for their graduates) as teachers. Our hope would be that children would reach a sufficient level to produce shows that could be important income earners for both P'tea Ponleu Vichea and the performers themselves.

Library Improvements

We hope to improve the library significantly with books, bookshelves and comfortable seating. We estimate that this will cost \$3,000.

Vehicle Upgrades

Our faithful truck, a Toyota Hilux that has braved the potholed road to and from the capital, has started to show its wear. We hope to replace it. We also need to buy a new motorbike. The cost will be \$6,500.

Eco- Tours Project

To begin this project we are raising funds for Kayaks and a jetty and safety equipment. The cost will be \$5,000