



Yes it's a difficult time for our residential students

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Snacks of rice filling the rumbles 1 hour before Yum Bai (translates to Eat Rice or lunch).

TUMMY RUMBLES FIXED!

Our thanks to kind supporters for the lovely understanding messages we are receiving in these challenging times.

Yes it will be very difficult for us to provide for the residential students who all have no where else to go. Leng remembers as a young kid being very hungry in the time after the Khmer Rouge. He was lucky enough to be found by his Aunt and Uncle to be sheltered and loved, but empty tummies were just a fact for everyone! Today there are still very few birds due to people eating them along with rats, snakes, etc Leng remembers eating if they were lucky enough to find and catch any of these, to feed the whole family over several days.

Because of these memories, at ODA he always has a pot of cooked rice that kids can go to at any time for a snack if they feel hungry, and that is a 'luxury', he is worried he may not be able to provide in the coming months! Ask your kids or grandkids how they would feel about snacking on cold cooked rice? But our kids feel very blessed!

Tour visits at our gallery usually provide a good deal of our income to keep the kids, and with that avenue closed Leng is very worried. If you could spare even \$10 a month to assist they would be so very grateful.



Working out the pattern?



Ah thats more like it!

FACEMASKS UNAVAILABLE

Our residential students and Leng didn't take long to find a solution.

COVID-19 effects are being felt worldwide and with even more limited medical facilities available in Siem Reap we needed preventive measures. Leng decided the children should be wearing face masks when venturing outside of ODA itself for food shopping. We know they only offer limited protection, however better than nothing at all. Of course there are no masks available to purchase here either, so out with the material and scissors....

Yes, survival mode kicks in and they get on with making them themselves!

UPDATE: Leng has now been supplied some from the local Medical Center but home made ones are washed and ready if necessary again.



By George, I think we've got it!



Ah yes, we've really got it!

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There was certainly a few test cut out's and lots of giggles. Everyone went a little bit crazy, but they soon got it right . Great to see how together, they can always find a solution to what's needed. Leng and his wife Sry On are great examples for the children to follow. All of them have suffered very hard lives in the past.



SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED IN CAMBODIA FOR NOW.

In a couple of months the wet season will hopefully arrive on time, and everyone can begin preparing and planting the rice crops. This will give the village families a focus if schools remain closed, and help keep them all busy.

ODA Central kids are continuing with some Math, English and IT based classes on line and led by our older students. *They can be tougher than the teachers at their school!* They will also work at the ODA mini farm nearby to grow hydroponic tomatoes and tend the small fish farm.

There are some government on line lessons, but internet is even more inconsistent than usual, rare in the villages, and even rarer for families to have access to a computer way out there anyway. So our village students face a hard time to continue their Khmer and ODA classes.



Strange to see our village schools so empty of kids, bikes and the usual noisy action.

ALARM FOR EVERYONE

ODA's Village Liaison person was contacted and told he had been exposed at a recent meeting of village authorities, to a person who now tested positive to COVID 19. He had gone directly from the meeting to a ODA teachers meeting to share the updated information. Three of those teachers live at ODA Central so Leng was sick with worry that our teachers and ODA Central students may all be infected. He isolated the three teachers immediately, but it had been several days before they were warned. Thankfully eventually our Liaison man's test was clear but at least the kids all understand now why they have to stay within the boundaries of ODA.



2019 August rice planting. Villagers are hoping the wet season comes on time in June this year. Last year was a drought and very late planting, creating great hardship.

Tourism is the backbone of Siem Reap and the surrounding subsistence farming villages.

The lack of international tourism worldwide will affect every corner of the globe and will bite particularly deep in Cambodia. We know that nowhere is immune to this and like everyone, we hope we can all ride this through. Villagers are used to the harsh realities of life and will probably weather it better than westerners. Droughts, being cut off, and crops devastated by floodwaters are regular occurrences for them to cope with, but the retrenchment of family, usually employed in hospitality, cuts off much needed funds to tide them through.

ARE THEY SCARED?

Yes like everyone, village families are uncertain and very worried, and the challenges to keep everything operational are certainly there for ODA, without our tourism donations, art and card income it will be very difficult. However ODA has always been run very tightly, the residential students have learnt to cook, clean and wash clothes etc to enable them to manage their own lives when they graduate, so costs are always kept at a minimum. Our children have all come from very desperate situations so they have survival memories to fall back on.



ONE SURVIVAL STORY

One story some 5 years ago is of siblings then 2, 4 and 6 years' old. Mountain chiefs contacted Leng asking him to take them in, as they had been abandoned and were living on the side of a road (buffalo track) eating dirt and leaves and in land mine country! As always with new children Leng took them to hospital to be checked thoroughly including for AIDS, which are no problem to ODA with good ongoing programs at the Angkor Hospital for Children. Luckily they were clear of that, but the 2 year old was hospitalised immediately for 6 weeks with the doctors telling Leng he would have only survived another 4-5 days if not brought in.

The 4 year old, a girl, was acting as mother to her brothers and continued this role on arriving at ODA, it was so touching to see in one so little! The 6 year old had had an accident and having 'died' for one month, (was obviously unconscious) before coming to ODA, and continues to have difficulties, so he was quite dependant on his little sisters 4 year old survival instincts too.

The youngest boy is fit and healthy now as is his wonderful older sister and both doing very well at school. The boy who had the accident has long term learning difficulties, but is a bright happy and very social young boy. Sadly their story is quite typical of many youngsters who have found sanctuary with ODA.



MOVING FORWARD

ODA Central school - Many of our children have overcome very difficult situations and backgrounds when they were young also, so whilst they may have had a 'dream' existence at ODA with plentiful food, dry housing, education and genuine 'family care', they all know how to pull together and survive challenging times, getting on with studying what they can online. They know

how to get on with what's necessary, so will manage to weather this somehow!

THANK YOU

We know it is a very uncertain world right now, with many more people becoming vulnerable to ill health and hardship. We hope you are keeping yourself safe and well.

We appreciate more than ever your commitment to the life changing financial support you offer to children attached to ODA Cambodia.

Like everywhere it will be hard to survive but the simple truth is we have to for all these kids and our teachers sakes!



Time for creating.

Chanda and Channy love creating their art around their now online university studies.

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Keeping everything in order.

Sok Vun and Me Sung manage the Gallery brilliantly, Leng is proud of them.

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