

"Fritz and Linda came from Illinois to help us with the Children's Program for the entire month of January. Both are gifted in music. Fritz is a great guitar player and Linda teaches music for a living. They are also very good teachers. Linda is a trained elementary teacher. Their task was to work with our kids and our teachers and to teach them how to sing better.

Our part of rural Cambodia has very little tradition of singing and music. There is singing at weddings and funerals, but it is only done by a few selected "professionals". But for the general population, there is little or no singing at religious functions, schools, in families, and virtually every other context. Nor is there any teaching of music.

Our kids worship and praise God at every one of our get-togethers but they have had no training. It often sounds just like they have had no training, despite their enthusiasm. Linda and Fritz taught the kids and teachers the very basics of singing, starting with teaching them to sing the basic musical scale and to stay on pitch together. They also taught them several beautiful worship songs. The kids responded well. They are eager to learn to sing well. They loved the beautiful sounds and we saw noticeable improvement in their singing abilities but more importantly also an excited new interest in worship and praise. It is as if they just realized that not only can worship be very beautiful but they themselves can learn to sing beautifully.

I believe this is an unprecedented opportunity to change the local culture by introducing beautiful singing to be associated with worship of the true God.

### **Expanding the Children's Program**

Now that we have more teachers, we decided we could expand the program. We have prayed in the past God would prepare a village and the very children that He wanted in our program. One of our teachers, Sokaa, passed through a certain village in past years and she always saw many children and each time felt a deep burden for those children. After consulting and praying with all the teachers, I sent them to approach the chief of that village.

What happened was amazing. First of all, when they looked for his house, Sokaa realized it was at the very spot along the road where she always felt a strong burden for the children in that village. After the staff explained clearly the program's objectives, including our desire to introduce Jesus's teachings to the children, the village chief enthusiastically said he wanted us to work in his village. In fact, he told us the best place to meet with the children was at his compound! It also turned out there was an old small house in front of his property that a neighbor was trying to sell for a low price but no one wanted to buy. We bought the house yesterday for only \$225 and will be able to easily modify it for a meeting place. We'll move it to the back of his property, which looks like a good place to meet.

We thank the Lord for preparing this village! We trust He has also prepared these children for Himself. John "

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