

Health and Well-Being in Pursat, Cambodia

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On the 31st January 2020 25 Rotarians were met by Richard Allen and Susan Mastin, from the Rotary Club of Gainesville, USA; and Pollin and Visa from SC. SC Australia (an initiative of Rotarians from Districts 9465 and 9455 in Western Australia) is partnered with Sustainable Cambodia USA, headquartered in Gainesville, Florida, with SC in Pursat Province, and with the Rotary Club of Pursat, Cambodia. They have been joined also by the Rotary Club of Springwood, Blue Mountains, Australia.

In Australia, they are supported by **Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS)** Project 39 and 39C donations. In the USA, donations/sponsorships are through the SC website:

www.sustainablecambodia.org

Martti and I met the Sustainable Cambodia organisers at the RI Convention in Hamburg. Our contact was PDG Jennifer and Ian Scott - jennifer@scottadr.com. Much of the organising was also done through Richard Allen.

In Phomn Penh, our group experienced the Toul Sleng Genocide compound and the Killing Fields memorial centre, as a background to understanding the poverty in Cambodia today. We then proceeded to spending 5 days in Pursat Province. We saw many projects of SC and the Rotary Club of Pursat empowering rural villagers to create self-sustaining communities with clean water, wells, ponds, pumps, bio-sand filters, latrines, preschool buildings, school furniture, libraries, school books and teaching aids.

SC provides training courses by SC Cambodian supervisors, in health education, education, farming, gardening, animals, fish, bees and water resources, pumps and wells, etc. for all of these projects. We visited a *"before"* village, that was just beginning the process of prioritising their needs for SC. We also went on a 'bamboo' train to two of their *"after"* villages, where the villagers' well-being and prosperity was clearly improved.

There are three schools supported by SC and SCA (one Primary to Senior, and the other two just secondary). They supplement Government education, sponsoring and tutoring motivated youth to go on to Tertiary education. SC 'School life' and 'home life' sponsorships for students, and university scholarship subsidies for the best of their emerging scholars, are available. We met up with many of these scholars on our journey.

SCA's high protein self-help breakfast nutrition programme is an early morning stew-soup prepared by the remote villagers. As of mid-2017, twenty preschool gardens will have been cultivated and the villagers will then provide the vegetables grown from seeds provided by SCA, to be fed to children at the preschool each school morning. SCA has also provided an animal pass-on programme. We saw the results first hand!

Finally, SC arranged for us to all conclude our Rotary journey in Siem Reap to check out Angkor and its amazing temples and ancient cities, a silk farm and the Apopo Mine detection Rat program. It was all astounding.

We would so recommend this as an experience of a lifetime!! They do 4 trips annually each January and February. People can sign up to these on the SC website or through Jennifer and Ian, RC of Springwood, or meet them at their booth in Hawaii.



After washing their hands, these littlies eat a nourishing breakfast, and then brush their teeth

Yr 12 KBfC students in their girls' dorm, as they live far away



"Before" village – Meeting 1

Oral hygiene routine after brekky

Water pump and bio-sand filter in "After" village