



## TEACHERS ACROSS BORDERS

### NEWSLETTER

September 2011 Volume 2 Issue 2

<http://www.janur.net/TAB/>

This article was taken from the above blog site and there are some interesting photos to too.

#### Dates for 2011/2012

**ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING  
OCTOBER 12**

**COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
NOVEMBER 30**

**BATTAMBANG  
WORKSHOP  
JANUARY  
6TH TO 14TH**



*Susie Lachal and Sobon in  
Kampong Thom*

Make a donation to assist with the running of the workshops.

**Donations can be made on the TAB Australia website**

As a first time participant in the TAB program I was a bit nervous about how I would cope with it but it was a fantastic experience that I would encourage anybody to be part of at some time. The first part of the Kampong Thom program was for students in their first year of teacher training at the regional teachers college. Some had come from small rural schools and had only completed year 9, but most had completed year 12 in bigger centres. After two years of teacher training they'll begin work in schools with over fifty students in a class, very few resources and not even be paid for their first year of work. Then in their second year they'll earn \$40 a month. Some members of our group visited a school 30 km from Kampong Thom, certainly not really remote, where there were 78 students in a class no pens, no paper, and just one small slate for the whole class; it made all of us appreciate what we had in our teaching environments a bit more. Our workshops were a mixture of teaching and classroom management strategies plus some

review of concepts. A few of the students spoke quite good English but most were dependent on the translators who did a fantastic job. I particularly appreciated mine as they were English teachers rather than Maths teachers and therefore weren't always familiar with the Maths terms. This part of the program was a bit easier for the presenters and translators as each workshop was given three times.

By the third time the translators were able to fill out some detail for things that the students found difficult in the first session; and after the first day the students were much more comfortable with us and we were much more comfortable with presenting via a translator. My understanding of Cambodian culture was that most students would not be prepared to risk making mistakes, or to admit to other students that they didn't understand, but I was impressed with the way they threw themselves into unfamiliar activities, offered help to each other and asked good questions when something wasn't clear to them.

For the second part of the program the presenters spent five days with a group of experienced teachers. In my case I had 24 maths teachers with up to 30 years of experience who were there to learn more about new teaching methods in the hope that they'll be able to apply at least some of them in their huge classes with very limited resources. This week was harder on the translators as every session was new material, but again they did an amazing job of getting the ideas over when we weren't always experienced at pacing ourselves appropriately for translators. Especially later in the week there was a lot of laughter coming out of various classrooms as the teachers, translators and presenters threw themselves into the activities.

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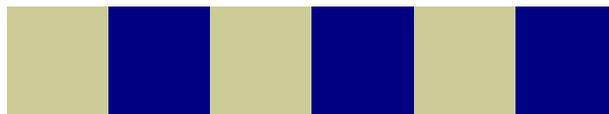
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It was humbling to see the participants' commitment to becoming better teachers, as even for experienced teachers the salaries are so low that they can't survive on them. Many of them get up early to work at a job such as running a stall in the market, teacher a full day at the government schools and then work in another job in a private school or something like a motor-bike rider providing a taxi service around town.

Outside the time at the teachers college we all enjoyed the friendliness of the guys working in the hotel and the people around town. Like many places in Asia these people who have so little are very generous with what they do have. The whole experience was fantastic and I certainly hope I can continue to be part of it in the future.

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#### **In the next edition**

- Comments from participants
- News from Kampong Thom
- AGM

Contact and Queries:

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#### *An apology*

*The newsletter has been curtailed this year but there will be another edition before the end of the year.*

### **Train the Teacher Kampong Thom Workshop-Susie Lachal and Kathryn Feil**

Eight teachers from the Battambang and Kampong Thom provinces participated in the Train the Teacher (TTT) TAB workshop in July at the Kampong Thom PTTC.

Each morning of the program, the teacher participants together with Susie Lachal and Kathryn Feil, TAB volunteers from Melbourne, worked to explore concepts of learning and teaching styles, questioning techniques, presentation skills, meeting audience needs, multiple intelligence and higher order thinking skills.

The workshop participants observed the other TAB workshops and kept a journal that recorded the arrangement of the workshop space, styles of presentation, activities used and observations on what factors were important to running an effective workshop.

Mrs Sarida and Sophorn Sam assisted Brigid, Principal from Melbourne, who was leading the administration and leadership workshop. They presented several sessions very successfully and were able to deal skilfully with difficult questions and issues of managing a group. Sophorn Sam ably presented the results of his Masters thesis which he completed earlier in the year while studying on a Cambodian scholarship program in China.

During the afternoon each participant in the TTT workshop, delivered their own workshop with the support and feedback from either Susie or Kathryn.

An exciting highlight of this program was the delivery of an ICT workshop each afternoon by Sok Samnang and Sobon to their teacher colleagues, some of whom had never used a computer before.

Sophorn Sam presenting his masters findings to the TAB Leadership & Administrators workshop in Kampong Thom July

