



Le Don du Chœur

Chœur d'Enfants des Écoles Privées Genevoises



HIGHLIGHTS

Don du Chœur marks 15 years of service

- Save the date for our special birthday party on 15 may!

Madagascar

- School library opens, guest room available, bikes for the teachers

Cambodia

- 550 children registered for current 8th school year, canteen honoured by WFP, choosing careers for school leavers now a priority

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Madagascar: a boost for learning at Andohasatra school Don du Chœur provides 1,500 school books



Happy children in their new library

Since the opening of the primary school at Andohasatra, in October 2016, the lack of school books has meant that children have to copy down texts written by the teachers on the blackboard – a process that is more or less accurate! And it's the same story in all rural schools in Madagascar.

By the end of May this year, some 1,500 titles, including school primers and books for the library, will arrive at the school. Some books

are also being provided by the Regional Education Directorate. This will make an enormous change! The books will help improve the quality of the instruction and reinforce the process of learning to read and understanding texts. It will also help kindle an interest in learning among the 360 children at the school. The Head of the school will be responsible for the library; he will be given training to enable him to catalogue the books and generally organise the library, which is to be housed in the old school building, now renovated.



The library will soon be opened by Education Ministry officials

A Geneva librarian has a key role

Silvana Huttenmoser, librarian at La Découverte school in Geneva, helped choose some of the books for the library at Andohasatra. "There are no publishing links between Switzerland and Madagascar," she regrets. She concentrated on books for all school levels, with themes that match as closely as possible the world of the children in southern Madagascar. "I made a careful selection," she says, "which I hope will make them keen to read."

Her choice of novels, knowledge books and teaching manuals will take two months to arrive in Madagascar by container, along with the personal effects of Claude-

Alain Burky, DDC committee member and head of project, who is moving to the area.



Silvana in her school library

Come and celebrate 15 years of Don du Chœur!

A warm welcome awaits you on 15 May at the Halles de l'Île in Geneva for a special birthday party!

Save the date now. We'll dance and sing with the fabulous Nyon Lights and have a wonderful evening by the Rhône.

It was really urgent!

The life of teachers at rural schools, especially in semi-arid regions, is very hard. At Andohasatra, they have to walk to school, a daily round trip of 20 kilometres in extreme heat.

Their working days are exhausting, as they are already tired from the journey. Their family lives are almost non-existent. And the children are penalised because classes often start late...

The teachers decided to ask for bikes, which they promised to maintain themselves. Don du Chœur has agreed and has also put up a small building with two rooms, as accommodation for the Head and for occasional overnight stays by other teachers.



Bikes make life better for the school as a whole

THE CAMBODIA PROJECT

World Food Programme rewards Ta Pen cooks who keep young bodies sustained

Since the school opened in 2010, the WFP has supported the children at Ta Pen through food deliveries, making the canteen one of the pillars of its success. The consumption of rice, tinned fish, soya, oil and salt is supervised to the nearest gram by the organisation, which makes random visits to check up. Don du Choeur provides additional support with meat and vegetables, to help fight malnutrition.

Every day, Ky and Phuong, the school's two cooks, prepare 550 meals and snacks. They wake at 4am to start preparation, so that everything is freshly cooked. At Ta Pen there is running water but no refrigerator to preserve the food, and just two small wood-fired stoves to cook on. But they manage and their efforts have been rewarded – they received

bikes from the WFP and a big Hats Off from the Don du Choeur!

Ky had the good fortune to be trained at the Sala Bai hotel school in Siem Reap. She decided to start a cooking workshop at Ta Pen to teach children some easy recipes using only a few ingredients. Her courses aroused great interest among the youngsters.

Of the 2017 graduates, two girls followed in her footsteps and got places at Sala Bai while three boys were taken on at the nearby Haven restaurant school. So, among all its other achievements, Ta Pen is producing a group of trained young cooks who one day may become Chefs at the big hotels in Siem Reap. We'll be following their progress with great interest....



Ky at her stove, about to prepare 550 nourishing meals



A big thank-you to the WFP from the children at Ta Pen



The two young students, happy to be trained at Sala Bai

"Pas du Choeur" - onwards and upwards!

Anne-Caire and Vincent tell us that their epic 800 km hike, called the "Pas du Choeur", has now raised an amazing CHF 53,000, meaning that donors financed a million steps.



Vincent and Anne-Claire at an event for their walk

The couple will go to Ta Pen at the end of March to meet the 27 young people who are now pursuing further education thanks to the walkers' efforts. Their thanks go to the families, friends and donors who have the children's interests at heart. There'll be news of their visit when they return.

Young people at Ta Pen think of their future Difficult choices ahead

In six months' time, some 25 youngsters will graduate from Ta Pen Secondary School. Will they go on to the High School or will they choose vocational training?

A year ago, in January 2017, they attended a careers fair organised by the NGO Enfants du Mékong and met various speakers who explained the career choices, openings and training options available. This was an important opportunity for our students.

Now they have had twelve months to think about it and discuss it with their teachers, trying to find possibilities that match their abilities. The hour of decision is upon them – with some hard choices to be made, considering that some of them will be responsible for supporting their families who live in extreme poverty. The decisions will not be easy to take.



The 2018 edition of the Careers Day presided over by officials of the Labour Ministry



Each year, Ta Pen students are able to take part in the event, organised by "Enfants du Mékong"

Your donation will help us help these communities

Don du Choeur

Swiss non-profit association, tax-deductible since 2008

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