

## UPDATES

I apologize for the lack of updates! I've sat down multiple times to write one and have just never finished namely because of mind blocks, tiredness and admittedly not knowing what to say all the time. The past few months have seen progress in my work but they've been most challenging. I've had to accept that not every story is a success story and not everyone you pour into will chase the new opportunities that they are presented with. It's been a reminder that God's will, not my own, is sovereign. And also that we rely on Him, not our own efforts, for ultimate transformation; He is enough.

### What's been going on?

- *Lots* of reintegrations. Hooray! Many girls that have been here since I first arrived (almost 2 years ago?!) and shortly after are finishing up their training/study programs, getting jobs, and ready to leave our Project. So good. It's been a blessing to see them butterfly into who they are now and leave with confidence, skills, and the ability to support themselves. I'm always selfishly sad to see them go at the onset as it means I don't see them as often – but once I get myself together (lol), I make sure they know how proud I am of them.
- Getting ready to hand over my role. I'm slowly working myself out of a job – bittersweet. I see that I'm less needed now and am more here to come alongside staff and consult when needed. I still have a lot to do in terms of getting things on paper and ensuring 100% transferability once I leave but we're on the right track.
- Our Project Manager is at home on sabbatical for 3 months so I've been given the role of Interim Project Manager. I'm a few weeks in and really enjoying it while simultaneously pulling my hair out. Learning a lot but being stretched thin having to manage 5 different groups, mitigate conflicts between and within departments, navigate struggles with client cases, manage finances, and be the one to make the final decision on a lot of issues. I'm *extremely* grateful/honored for this opportunity and it's such a cool way to end my last few months here as I'm having to work closely with all of our teams and stay in the loop with all client cases. But – please pray for me!
- On Tuesday we are piloting a project with an organization called **Project Girl Code**, which will aim to provide digital and computer literacy to our girls and ultimately increase their employability. It's a 3-month long program and we want to see them all graduate from it. Those who prove capable will then have the opportunity to enter a yearlong training track and pursue careers in IT; a truly remarkable opportunity for girls who do not have primary or secondary school diplomas. This partnership has been a long while in the making and I'm so excited to see it take off. Hoping it will open up so many doors for our girls. Check PGC out, they are **very** cool <http://www.projectgirlcode.org>

## Prayer Requests

The last 2 weeks alone have been really heavy with a number of health and security issues with our girls. I've broken down a few times amidst the stress of my workload and the pain of certain cases but it's reminding me that there's no way I'm doing this by my own strength. Honestly and truly. I know God's hand is on me and on this Project and that is literally the only reason things are still running. That said, I would most appreciate prayer.

- **Rong**; suffers from a heart condition and was operated a few years ago under the care of another NGO. She is such a talented artist and a few months ago she started one-on-one training at a digital animation studio (one of the biggest in SE Asia!). Last week she suffered some seizures and when we took her in to get examined, they said she had a brain tumor that needed to be operated on. She was crushed. We all were. We went to get a second and third opinion, and it turns out that it is a water-filled cyst, not a tumor, pressing on the part of the brain that would induce seizures. She's been put on medication to reduce the occurrence of her seizures and we'll closely monitor over the next month. If they persist she'll have to undergo surgery to drain the cyst but we're hoping otherwise. Keep her in prayer as she's felt really discouraged the past few days. Also keep our residential care staff in prayer as they are the around the clock responders to these medical emergencies. It's been beautiful to see some of the other girls pray over her before and after hospital visits. In the hospital waiting room last week she shared with me how God has the ability to move mountains big and small, and she knows that He can move this one too.
- **Vatana**; a new client who's been with us for a few days only. She's a high-risk case as someone is looking to find her. Without giving too much information, please pray for her safety as well as the safety of our staff and other girls who are in the shelter. Doing our best to be extra cautious these past few days but we will need to find a long-term solution by this week as we are not equipped to offer her the protection it seems she needs. To that end, pray for myself, Sinath, and Virak who are all working on this case; pray that we get the information we need to piece things together and cooperation from other parties who can help us help her. Pray for Vatana as she's hopped from orphanages and NGOs since the age of 6 and is experiencing the full effects of institutionalization. Pray that she experiences God's fatherly love while she's with us and wherever she goes once she leaves our shelter.
- **Resilience & job retention**; we work so hard to equip these girls with skills and opportunities for sustainable employment. It's most discouraging when they quit/give up on them, either because they can't get themselves to stick it through (common for victims of trauma) or because their families pressure them to stop training/working. Pray that they would develop the resilience not only to survive in their new work/study places but also to thrive in them.

- **Wisdom;** I need it more than ever to manage this Project.
- **Staff care;** our staff are the lifeblood of this operation. Working in this environment has a huge impact on them physically, emotionally, and spiritually and a lot of them are on the verge of burnout. Pray for strength, strong faith, peace, and rest.
- **Preparing to come home;** time's almost up. A bit nervous about being back home, starting school in September, and sorting finances out once I get back.
- **Project Girl Code;** that all the girls who start will see it through and finish. That they would understand, learn, apply, and be able to pursue.

## Finances

I want to thank you for your continued financial support. I can't begin to tell you how appreciative I am of it and how much I depend on it. I've been asked if there are any ways people can support our project financially so I figured I would list a few current needs

- **Dental hygiene for Om Vanna.** Vanna is one of our eldest staff members and the day/night nanny for our girls' babies. She's had tooth pain for a long while but cannot afford the quoted price of \$80 US to have 4 teeth repaired. She's approached me to help so I told her I'd reach out! I know this kind of donation would not go to our girls directly but it would have a direct impact on the quality of life of our precious nanny!
- **Graduation party;** we are organizing a graduation party to honor about 15 girls who have finished a training/study program in the past few months. We have some graduating from a yearlong program at a sewing/design school, a 7-month very intensive tourism/hospitality program, a 3-month culinary course, and a yearlong hair/beauty training program. This is sincerely a defining moment for them because they actually applied themselves to something longer term and finished it!! Money would go towards food for the event, small gifts, and possibly a small excursion to the waterpark as a celebration after the ceremony. I'm estimating the cost will be around \$1000 US but feel free to give as little as you can!
- **Whiteboards for our Learning Center;** the ones we have now are in bad condition and I'd love to replace them as we use them day in and out to teach. We need 3 and each one is about \$20 US, for a total of \$60 US.

I'd love to hear from you guys! Let me know if you have any questions! There's only so much I can share through these updates or what I post on Facebook because there is so much going on every day but I look forward to sharing a little more and seeing you guys in August!