



ACTION



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Sowing the seeds of a new tomorrow for Cambodia



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Cambodia Action

Registered Name:
Southeast Asian Outreach
UK Charity Number: 293382

GENERAL INFORMATION

Cambodia Action is an evangelical inter-denominational mission and development agency, founded in 1973 by Major Taing Chhirc of the Cambodian Evangelical Church. The object is to promote the Christian faith and relieve poverty and distress among the peoples of Southeast Asia. Work is now solely amongst Cambodians.

Cambodia Action is a member of International Co-operation Cambodia (ICC), Global Connections and the Evangelical Fellowship of Cambodia (EFC).

DONATIONS

We rely on God to meet our needs through gifts. All donations are acknowledged unless otherwise requested. General gifts may be allocated to the greatest need, although donors can indicate a preference. Funds given for a specific appeal will be used for that purpose.

Cheques should be made payable to "Cambodia Action" and sent to the Yate Office.


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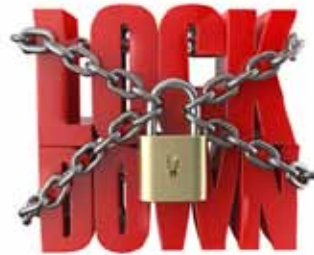
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Cambodia Action is working in partnership in Cambodia with a number of local NGOs

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>> Editorial

Philippians 1:6 'being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.'



Dear Friends,

Paul is speaking to the church about God's ability to sustain and complete that which He has started. As the director of Cambodia Action for the last six years, I have witnessed over and over again how the Lord has sustained us as a mission organisation in the UK and Cambodia.

Covid-19 has put things on hold, has slowed certain plans, but we are still moving forward with the call that He gave us all those years ago (1973), seeing the Kingdom of God introduced to those living in Cambodia.

Continuity and sustainability are important in seeing us complete the work God has called us to. In this edition, I include a snapshot of the last two years' income and expenses. Through faithful partners and friends, Cambodia Action managed to balance the books at the end of last year. For this, I want to say a big thank you to all of you who pray for us and to all who give towards seeing His kingdom come in Cambodia.

In this edition, you will read of heart-warming stories of genuine generosity and kindness shown to people in a difficult situation, in need of food.

Sadly, we say goodbye to Geoff Collett who has been involved with Cambodia Action for many years, serving in the field, then as Executive Director, and finally as a trustee, ensuring the continuity when handing over the reins to me. We all wish Geoff God's best for what He has in the future.

A final thought. There are many people carrying loads of cares, burdens of debt, fears of the future and struggles with restrictions. Psalm 55 is a great encouragement to us all, a remembrance that He not only cares for us but also sustains us. God bless you all, and again thank you for standing with us to see lives changed in Cambodia.

Psalm 55:22 'Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.'

Chris

Serve as a Trustee of Cambodia Action

We are currently looking for men and women with vision and commitment to join Cambodia Action as trustees. Trustees are individuals with particular skills who come together with a common vision to see the work of the organisation benefit those living in Cambodia. Working together as a team, we unceremoniously carry out the functions necessary for Cambodia Action to function. If you would like to explore playing a crucial part in the life of Cambodia Action, contact David Adams via email at Dave.Adams@davidkearopticians.co.uk

>>Reflection on Cambodia

Ecclesiastes 3 says 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens' and knowing when the time has ended for you is vital. Personal circumstances and a deliberate decision to not muddy the waters for the new ED, meant I have not returned to visit Cambodia since my last visit as Director in 2014. As I read current reports from team members, without the benefit of recent personal visits, I struggle to connect it to the country I first knew thirty years ago. Of course, I have seen the changes happen through some of the intervening years, but it is still amazing to look back and see how much has been



Modern day Phnom Penh

transformed in three decades, and increasingly so in the last decade. Their reports of bustling, developing Phnom Penh are almost irreconcilable to me with the war-torn streets and traumatized population it was then. Even rural life seems to have changed. So while the timeless tread of buffaloes still tramples the rice paddies in some parts, there is much more mechanization and the famines of the past have been replaced by occasional food shortages.

Looking back, the infrastructure development, by God's grace and the labours of expat and national Christians, has been mirrored by the growth in God's people. The remnant of Christians left after the Khmer Rouge genocide and the repression of the Vietnamese occupation, have multiplied at a rate seen only in China. Recently the Prime Minister, Hun Sen, publicly thanked the Christian community of Cambodia for their efforts in education and social projects and promised to continue the policy of religious freedom, which is not echoed in other SE Asian countries.

Of course, the development, that we as a mission have participated in, has brought much that is good to Cambodia. But still the poor and marginalized exist and likely 'will be with us always'. Injustice, exploitation and poverty still exist. There is still much to do for expat Christians in supporting nationals to meet social needs, as well as to support and encourage the national church to reach the whole country and their immediate neighbours with the gospel.

Of course, supporting the mission work through the governance work of the Trustees in the UK has been rewarding and still possible without regular exposure to the country. But again, it is time for some fresh blood to be part of the next phase of CA's life as we restructure and adapt to the new environment in Cambodia and the opportunities that arise. CA is looking for new trustees, if you

are interested go to our web site for more information.

So, in summary, I feel blessed for what God has shown me over the years of involvement with His work in Cambodia and the Cambodia Action family. So many precious people, both national and ex-pat; so many amazing examples of God at work.

Geoff Collett

Geoff's contribution to the life of Cambodia Action has been immense. He, along with Carole and Anna, were members of our original team to work in Cambodia. These were days of power cuts, poor sanitation, stomach issues and mosquitoes! Real pioneering project work. Back here in the UK he has served as a trustee for 12 years and as our Executive Director for 11 years.

His calmness of character, wisdom, discipline and steely determination have been greatly appreciated within all aspects of the work Cambodia Action. Above all there has been a deep commitment to serving within God's kingdom and trusting God for both our vision and as our resource. As he frequently reminded us, God has been faithful and our provider even when circumstances have been very challenging.

We will greatly miss his thoughtful incisive thinking in our Trustee meetings and the hospitality that he and Carole have offered over the years. "God honours those who honour Him" Geoff and Carole we thank you.

By David Adam (Cambodia Action Chair.)



>> Lockdown is not the same for everyone

The world has come to understand a new word: 'lock-down'. Implementing this measure across the globe looks completely different from country to country. In the west, restrictions on travel, the wearing of masks and the exercising of social distancing has become the norm, but lock-down is not the same for everyone.

Poorer countries have really felt the

brunt of strict lockdown restrictions, with many families feeling the impact of these harsh but necessary curbs.

Cambodia, although reporting great progress in rolling out the vaccines, has seen a huge upturn in infection rates so took measures which cut people off from their workplaces and the means to generate their daily income.

>> Lockdown is not the same for everyone(cont'd)

As markets started to close across the city and people were unable to buy fresh food on a daily basis, reports started to filter in of people going hungry and not getting sufficient fresh foods. Fridges are not a normal item of household equipment for many families, so going to the market is an everyday occurrence by necessity. With the implementation of no-go zones, some of Cambodia Action's partners' staff members were caught up behind red zones. These same staff members, who were responsible to help others, now needed help themselves, which, I am happy to report, did arrive.

The kindness of people became evident as from across the city assistance came from different quarters to the many poorer and needy families. Reports started to emerge of churches, individuals and organisations mobilising to help feed their neighbours by offering basic food packs of rice, noodles and fish. A truly scriptural response. Thankfully, different organisations were also given access to these hard-hit red zones, mobilising and coordinating distribution of food packs.

As an organisation working in Cambodia for many years, working with partnerships, we were approached directly to help with the purchase of food and we were able to send £400 as an immediate response to this request. This is part of our on-going vision to bring not only the gospel to Cambodia but also to help out practically when the need arises.

In the west, we take for granted our ease of access to supermarkets and food supplies. A trip to the local grocery store may incur only a short wait and the wearing of a mask. But it is very different in other countries. A good example of this is given by one of our team member families living outside the city.



The village they live in was completely road-blocked for a number of weeks, with no one allowed in or out. This might have been manageable, but this particular village has no market or shops. Thankfully, through forward planning and notification, the family were able to stock up on essential things, as none of the supermarkets would make deliveries, apart from one supplier who was willing to deliver frozen meat and cheese products.

We all want to see the end of these restrictions but grace, patience and peace need to prevail in all of our hearts, especially in places where people have suffered so much more than us at home in the UK.

Chris Catlin

>> Ready to return



Zoran and Margaret Sulc return to Phnom Penh on 7th July after over a year in the UK. After enduring 2 weeks quarantine in one room of a government appointed hotel, they'll find an apartment and set up home. What will they return to?

- Cambodia thankfully spared many covid deaths to date, but crippled economically by the virus.
- A church going through a refining process uncovering many who are reaching out to their suffering neighbours, in words and deeds, with the gospel.
- CA co-workers who have seen and learned so much of God's faithfulness and that of their Cambodian sisters and brothers.
- Precious fellowship with ministering brothers and sisters who have become

dear friends.

In the season ahead they will help to identify how CA may respond to the new realities of Cambodia – and seek additional partners we can work with. Our team may be small presently but as we all - workers and supporters - allow Jesus' heart to move us to prayer, surely he will answer:

'But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were faint and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then said He unto His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest.' Matt. 9:36-38

Jesus wants labourers – not just “pastors” but those who, in all walks of life will shepherd the lost into the fold and then care for them. Cambodia Action as a mission wants to be a blessing and support to these.

The author of devotional work *Streams in the Desert* received a letter from her travelling husband Charles Cowman before they returned from the US to Japan. He wrote, *'Our lives may be short but they must be fruitful. I trust we shall (soon) be able to go home, for America has no charms for me.'*

“We do have some “charms” – our precious family and supportive ‘friends’ – and we've been blessed to have time with them here, but otherwise these words resonate. Please pray for us.

>> Good news despite Covid - Acts of love at the Agape factory

The Agape mattress factory, which employs 30 people, is situated in the rural province of Kampong Spue, just under 50 miles southwest of the capital city, Phnom Penh. Herry and his wife, Susie, two of our long-standing team members, have for a number of years been overseeing this growing business which impacts lives and creates much-needed self-sustaining jobs in a province with high unemployment. It is always refreshing to hear of what the Lord is doing as he uses this small business to touch many people's lives.

As a direct result of a strong Christian influence and the factory's presence, we have seen marriages restored, a number of outreaches completed into the community, and local churches strengthened. The factory supervisor, a committed Christian, is using her time providing spiritual guidance and help to those working at the factory. Currently, a course on water baptism is being taught, which hopefully will lead to people responding to be baptised.



During the Covid Pandemic, Kampong Spue, as with the rest of the country, has recorded an increase in active cases, which are having a huge impact on the local economy and community. Travel restrictions have been placed on the normal visitation trips that Herry makes. However, through ongoing training and commitment, a small group of believers

applied what they have learnt in 'Acts of Love'. This core team from the Agape family mobilised others within the community to and distribute basic yet essential non-perishable foods, including rice, canned fish, oil and noodles. Money was also collected to help some in the community. For the 60 families assisted, this has come as a life-saver. The further message from the factory to the community is to join in the government's vaccination program with many already being vaccinated.

"The purpose of the factory is not just to offer jobs and economic stability, but also to inspire the workers to look beyond themselves and care for others," Herry writes.

By Herry Heryanto

>> News from our partner - M'lup Russey

Throughout Phnom Penh's lockdown, M'lup Russey worked with local authorities to provide practical services to vulnerable children who are in areas where families are unable to access food, or who are suffering in other ways due to Covid.



Four orphanages requested help. Over 65 children living in those orphanages were supported with emergency food support packages as the orphanage staff were not able to leave the centres to buy enough food for the children.

Some of MRO's own team members also faced the challenges of food security and concern for their own children's health because of the areas they live in. MRO used the Staff Care and Well-Being budget to deliver emergency food packages to 23 team members and their families during the lockdown.

The provinces are also badly affected by the situations caused by Covid. Social Affairs officials in six provinces are requesting emergency food packages for vulnerable children. So far, 30 of those children have already received emergency food packages, and there are more deliveries and requests expected.



A huge thank you to the M'lup Russey team members who are making the deliveries!

More great news

After many years hard work by a dedicated group of hard-working people, especially Sarah Chhin and other members of the M'lup Russey team, the Prakas on Procedures to Implement the Care of Children through Kinship and Foster Care has been signed by the Minister of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation. This is huge news and will be welcomed by many! The Guidelines on the Reintegration of Children, and the Transition and Closure of Residential Care Institutions, which represents nearly 10 years of development by the Ministry of Social Affairs in partnership with Project SKY and M'lup Russey, are nearly finalised and ready to be signed. These procedures will eventually benefit thousands of vulnerable children throughout Cambodia, once they can start being implemented.

>> The kindness of a Tuk-Tuk driver

'Charya' (name changed), our neighbour and Tuk-Tuk driver, was our helper in three excursions into neighbourhood generosity. During the lockdown, he was still able to come over and work with us: making a list of neighbours to receive cash gifts and calling them at the appointed time to receive the gifts. He gave me advice when a young woman whom I didn't know asked to be added. He said her husband can't find work as a driver right now so include her.

involved in the contacting of other Christian groups like the Salvation Army who stepped in to help. When I needed cash to pay for all the gifts, he drove me to the ATM, negotiating with the road-block to get us through. He picked up the Salvation Army donations, ordered the extra canned sardines, and delivered packages to the other organisations to distribute.

Charya received five packages to give away. Going home, he started texting pictures of his own distribution ceremony



with masks and distancing. Then, thinking again, the Tuk-Tuk driver even gave to his own neighbours his last package, meant for his own use. His message was, "I was filled with compassion for them; I couldn't leave any out."

We are all impressed with this humble Tuk-Tuk

On our second effort, Charya worked again, picking up the order of fresh foods and transporting them to 50 families in the red zones, areas close to the old city dump.

Charya again was helpful on our third huge giveaway, accompanying me to meet with a local Pastor to negotiate who would benefit from the give-away of packages. Charya was further

driver. He is a good example of a person who has shown compassion in a difficult time and situation. Susan has sent Charya scriptures and is praying for his salvation. Because Cornelius had been generous with the poor, God sent Peter to him. Pray for Charya to see God's message as well!

Story told by *Susan Smith* of the Sunrise Project

>> Thank you for your generous gifts



2020 was a difficult year for many people including mission agencies. Despite all that is going on around us, as a mission we have continued to experience the generosity of faithful givers. Below is a record of the gifts that Cambodia Action has received over the last two years. We have seen a drop in income between 2019 and 2020, however through careful planning and budgeting we have not moved into a deficit. Your giving has enabled us to share the love of God in a country that is desperately seeking true meaning. Furthermore, with the funds we were able to sustain our work together with our partners, who seek to bring the good news to Cambodians.

Many blessings,
Chris

Cambodia Action Financial Report 2019/2020

	2019	2020
Incoming resources	£	£
Donations	138,553	124,079
Investment Income	61	53
Activities	-	-
Total Income	138,614	124,132
Resources expended	£	
Charitable Activities	140,429	120,115
Cost of generating funds	8,084	4,624
Total resources expended	148,513	124,739
Bal. carried forward	30,542	29,667



Thanksgiving

***'And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.'* Colossians 3:17.**

In this edition you would have read of the kind and generous deeds carried out to assist needy people. We thank God for those that are prepared to go the extra mile in seeing help come to less the fortunate. This is the spirit of generosity that we as Christians need to have. As a mission, Cambodia Action is thankful and full of praise for our team members, and our partners who are willing to do what is necessary to bring His Kingdom on earth.

We are thankful that God has undertaken for Zoran and Margret to return to Cambodia and we are truly thankful for all those that stand with us in prayer and giving.

Prayer

- Continue to pray for wisdom, patience and courage to the Cambodia authorities across the country as they handle the difficulties associated with the spread of Covid.
- Pray for our team members that need to juggle life at home with children not attending school and with travels through-out a very different Cambodia.
- Pray for Zoran and Margaret as they return to Cambodia, finally leaving the UK after being here for over 18 months. Pray for a good re-entry into the country, for favour on all that they will need to get done and settle in again.



Pray for Cambodia



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