

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.


## BANKERS

National Westminster Bank Plc,  
12, HighStreet, Doncaster,  
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Sort Code: 60-02-50  
A/C name: Cambodia Action

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 CambodiaAction

 @Cambodia\_Action

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

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>> Editorial

*“You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you”- John Bunyan*



Dear Friends,

Summer in the UK is on its way and I am sure many are looking forward to longer days and fun with family and friends. I read a report that last month Cambodia

reached very high temperatures across the country. Many of our team members and friends have commented on ways to escape the heat. I noticed this when I stepped off the plane from the UK in early February. In this larger issue I dedicate three whole pages to a report-back on that trip. Also in this issue, you will be able to read articles from team members, partners, including articles on a personal insert from Sarah Chinn and Zoran Sulc. Look out for a good report from of Sunrise .

In this issue we salute those who have laboured in the field, including the Rye family. It is sad news however that we report the departure of the family as they return to the UK. This is a family

who love Cambodia and have given years to the country over two different periods. Cambodia Action wishes them the very best. These and other team members and partners are among those who have poured into lives that will never be able to repay them for the time and care shown.

Also, it is with joy that in this publication I share on the collections that we made from the Christmas appeal and on the wonderful gifts that individuals have given to our partners.

I am reminded of Paul's letter to the Philippian church, thanking them for their kind generosity, stating that they had sent him aid more than once when he was in need. I love too the quote from Bunyan that those who have sacrificially given may never meet the people who were affected by the gifts. I want to thank everyone who has given either by serving in Cambodia or who cannot venture out to Cambodia but have provided financial support.

May the Lord bless you.

Chris.

**Dear Cambodia Action supporters. I want to thank each and every one of you for your support to this mission over the years. Every little helps us reach those that you may never meet. God's blessings.**

**Chris Catlin**

# >>Executive Director's Trip To Cambodia, Feb. 2024

Travelling through to Cambodia is one of the highlights of my year. Due to budget cuts, I have only been able to venture out once per year and just over three weeks seems to be sufficient to meet up with our team members and travel out to see different partners' operations in the provinces.

This would prove to be the trip in which I clocked up the most road miles (over 1100), visiting five different provinces. It was also the trip with the most interaction with different groups of people: I spoke to 17 different groups of people in 14 different locations.

## **Siem Reap**

I had not been to this province for over eight years. Much, I was told, had changed in the city bearing the same name as the province. It was sad to see hotel after hotel closed along a stretch of road, because of the drying up of tourism. However, when night came, the streets were filled with tourist life, so it seems that Siem Reap, with its brand-new airport, is recovering.

The purpose of my visit was to view the work carried out by a potential new partner. The trip included being exposed to two crucial aspects of their outreach programmes. First stop was a government-supported drug rehabilitation centre, mostly helping younger people recovering from milder drug issues. I was told that over 500 people were part of the programme. As men and women are not allowed to mix in the centre, I had to share my testimony twice, firstly with a large group of men, some as young as 14, and later with an even larger group of women. I was amazed at the important work being carried out.

Later in the afternoon, battling the heat, we visited over ten different families to distribute food packs and to pray. This is part of a programme designed to reach the 300 families in a newly established community near Tonle Sap Lake, famous for its floating villages. Through a kind donation, we were able to buy food for these needy families, pray with them and share the love of God.

## **Many miles on this trip**

The roads of Cambodia are vastly different from when I first started coming over. All along the important routes are small business and rest stops. I thought I would mention one.

The market at Skun, Kampong Cham province, is a good place to stop, eat and be refreshed, it is colourful and a famous stop for unsuspecting visitors. The reason: women vendors walk around with giant spiders that they place on you as an experience. You have a choice



**Spiders anyone?!**

of having a tarantula walk all over you or buy some as a snack! It may be colourful but not for me. A must visit on your next Cambodian tour?

### Prison ministry



**With PFC Director and a prison warden.**

I was blessed to have the opportunity to visit the country's largest women's prison in Phnom Penh city and witnessed wonderful praise and worship from those who are imprisoned. This particularly warmed my heart as I stood in a church building that had been built for the express purpose of ministering to those in need. Interest-

ingly, five years ago I stood on the same spot, praying with staff from Prison Fellowship Cambodia, asking the Lord for favour with the authorities for the building of a church; today we witnessed this great testimony to God's provision. What a highlight of my trip.

### High school openings

On this trip I was treated to a variety of school sharing opportunities, both in the north of the country and the south. The high school in Takeo province, a place I had been to before, gave me the opportunity to share my journey of grace. This time the head-master of the high school was keen that I speak mostly to the senior classes and so the whole morning consisted of class after class being brought into a large venue, all buzzing with excited young people. I used my allocated time wisely to speak on certain dangers and pitfalls young people fall into, referring to my own life story as an example of God's rescue plan in my life as a young man.



**With senior students - Takeo High School**



### A few new friends

Each time I go to Phnom Penh, I find myself in the company of missionaries (not only from Cambodia Action) serv-

## >> [Trip To Cambodia, Feb. 2024 \(continued\)](#)

ing the Lord through their different gifts and time; this trip was no exception: from those ministering to young men to ministries helping women make good decisions when they discover they are pregnant. I am amazed at the level of commitment and love these servants of the Lord show. I know Cambodia values their service.

### **Markets and trade coming back**

On my previous trips, just after Covid restrictions were lifted, I noted how many businesses had closed and how few visitors could be seen around popular markets. This trip was different. I loved viewing the Russian Market, walking through its narrow alleys. On this trip I was able to buy a number of handmade picture cards and a few other gift items. Well done, Cambodia, for making the country open to visitors.



**Markets are full**

### **One last mention**

I want to thank Phola and Sarah Chhin for the hospitality shown me during my trip. I stayed upstairs in the guest quarters and enjoyed their lovely open garden and being part of the family, especially during a wonderful pizza evening when a lot of the extended family came together to celebrate.

Chris Catlin



**Team Photo**

## >>A Parting letter from the Ryes

### ***Suasadey Pi Kampuchea' – 'Greetings from Cambodia'***

As a family who are grateful for several years serving in Cambodia we send love and warm, sweaty greetings from Phnom Penh, where it's hot season – today is a cool 36°C.

Thank you for all your continued support and prayers – we feel their effects every day.

As of this writing, we are all well and daily thankful to be journeying with God on this amazing adventure of faith and mission as a family. God has been so faithful, and our two children have thrived. Time has flown and it's incredible to think that we are now in the home stretch before we return to the UK at the beginning of July. For Jenny and Mark, we will be celebrating God's faithfulness to us for eight years in total, serving in Cambodia with Cambodia Action.

### **Mark & Jenny**

One of the greatest highlights of life here is being able to work and serve together at Hope International School – Mark as Secondary School Teacher; Jenny as School Nurse.

Hope School exists to support the work of hundreds of expat families who are involved in various Christian ministries throughout Cambodia. At one of the recent staff morning devotions one of the missionary families thanked Hope School for their support:

*"If it wasn't for Hope providing a great Christian environment for all of our children, we couldn't have stayed in Cambodia for as long as we have, doing our church planting work."*



**Mark Rye**

*Mark writes .* "I have been busy preparing students for Art exams, although I consider that my biggest role is the Christian discipleship of students. I'm thrilled and thankful for the opportunities to encourage and challenge young people in their faith journeys every day."

*Jenny writes .* "I greatly enjoy caring for the health needs of over 350 students at Hope School, and now know many of the primary students by name as they pop in with various injuries."

"I've also returned part-time to Mercy Medical Centre (a Christian hospital for the poor where I worked previously) and had the joy of working alongside three of the nurse leaders I trained previously who are now, respectively, the



### Jenny Rye with staff from MMC

Clinical Leader, Chief Nurse and Nurse Supervisor of the Eye Department. I was mostly focused on updating the Nurse Leadership course and mentored a new nurse leader who has just completed her training and taken over as Nurse Supervisor of Women's health."

#### Kids' Corner

Our two children have loved life here in Cambodia and enjoyed every aspect of school at Hope. They have embraced every new part of this adventure with gusto - we are so proud of them both. They, like us, have mixed emotions about leaving Cambodia, although we are all excited to be returning home. Here's a quote from one of the kids who summed up our feelings perfectly:

*"I wish Cambodia was closer to England; that way we could just pop to see our friends in both places whenever we like."*

The Ryes want to give thanks for God's faithfulness and help in every aspect of their lives and ministry during their time in Cambodia. As the Ryes leave the field, please pray for perfect provision

of job placements back in the UK and a smooth, easy transition for our kids back to their former primary school; and that they would re-connect quickly and make great godly friendships.

God bless and sincere thanks for all the continued love, support and prayers received from Cambodia Action.

With love, The Rye Family

Mark and Jenny have served in Cambodia over two different terms, returning to the UK and setting up home in-between. They have done a wonderful job in the field, balancing work, ministry and home lives. I recall meeting the Director of MMC at a coffee shop who expressed how valuable a contribution Jenny has made.

Their departure does leave a number of gaps and at our team meeting in Phnom Penh back in February, we prayed together that God would raise up others to fill these gaps.

If you know of someone who would like to go out to Cambodia, please do get in touch with me directly at [c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org](mailto:c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org)



## >> back in body, but heart and mind still lingering in Cambodia - Zoran & Margaret Sulc

***'Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you.....' 1 Sam 12:23***

Returning to the UK after 11 years in the field, we are thankful to God for the wonderful friends – brothers and sisters – he gave us in Cambodia. Our UK church lost interest in us after upheavals and pastoral changes but the Lord gave us a new home church in Phnom Penh and they prayed us back to the UK as missionaries! (Please remember to keep writing to missionaries you know – the longer they are away the more important it is).

Cambodia remains in our hearts and we are glad for every opportunity to continue serving Cambodians and also ex-pat workers. As well as praying, we can actively maintain our fellowship and encourage, give personal and ministry advice, and help with written material. (Zoran has also joined the Cambodia Action board – we are always looking for new members with a love for Cambodia) If you are interested contact our Executive Director at [c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org](mailto:c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org)

And ..... just before we left Phnom Penh we visited a long-standing friend who told us his nephew, Tang, would be studying at Huddersfield University for a year – only eight miles away from our new home! There is one other Cambodian student there and when we invited them for dinner we were delighted when they asked if two visiting friends could come as well. We are planning more time together and hope to connect Tang to another nephew, who is a believer when he returns home.



**Zoran, Margaret and friends**

It was a dream for years to be allowed to do some kind of mission work – we thank God for many loving relationships that we trust will last us the rest of our days.

By Zoran and Maragret Sulc

Note: We are thankful for the 11 years of service to Cambodia , however a gap in the field has been opened, if you would like to be part of filling this or others gaps, please contact our Executive Director on [c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org](mailto:c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org) .

## >> [Pola Chhin - A servant to servants](#)

Pola Chhin serves individuals who come to help develop his country or share the Gospel, as well as organisations and social enterprises established to support and serve Cambodia's most vulnerable people. As a Construction Supervisor, he tries to ensure their experiences are as smooth as possible, so that they can continue their work in Cambodia unhindered.

Over the years, he has constructed or fully renovated Churches, schools, doctor's surgeries, psychotherapy clinics, an addiction rehabilitation centre, charity offices, a women's refuge, restaurants, social enterprises, residential houses and a swimming pool. He built Hope School! These have all offered a huge variety of critical services to thousands of vulnerable children, adults and families in Cambodia.

It isn't easy for foreigners to access high quality repair services, so Pola has also spent a lot of time providing plumbing and electrical support when kitchens flood, taps burst, and toilets overflow or the whole building needs rewiring. He has redecorated rooms, built and fit new kitchens and bathrooms, hung pictures on walls and fixed air conditioners. It's very stressful being unable to easily find such services, and dealing with the consequences of shoddy work costs people time and energy better spent on their important work here – Pola supports them in this.

Of course, Pola can't possibly do all this work by himself! He has a team who move around the various project sites depending on their skillsets and the skills that are needed. Pola tries hard to show



**Pola Chhin**

the love of Jesus in very practical ways. Behind the Chhin family home, Pola constructed some simple accommodation where the workers can live safely with their young families - he employs poor, young men and pays them a living wage for their skills so they are able support their families, and he makes sure they all have access to health care and education.

Pola and his team are currently working on a few big projects in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap, including the renovation of a veterinarian clinic, an animal rescue centre, a social enterprise café and a house, and he is also helping two expatriates working in anti-trafficking and climate change improve the security of their homes by making and fitting strong fences and gates, and making a metal guard for an exposed balcony. Pola is also well-known for making bespoke furniture and will soon take on a team of young Cambodian Christians to train them!

By Sarah Chhin

## >> Partner feature - SUNRISE

In April 2021, the Kampong Cham provincial prison in Cambodia moved into a new facility. Sunrise has served in the prison since 2003, but this new facility caused our staff much trouble as it was twice as far away, with staff battling dusty construction, causing bumpy roads. However, it was never really a question of continuing the program or not. The staff are eager to show the love of God to the prisoners, who often feel that no one cares for them. In their hearts they cry out, "Who will show us some good?" (Psalm 4:6) Sunrise's answer is to be the Lord's hands and feet, answering "We will."

Sunrise's prison programme includes assisting the health clinic at the prison, with funds donated to buy medication. This is a crucial and very supportive ministry within the walls of the prison. We are often asked why we do prison work, particularly from the provincial government office. Our understanding is that God sends the rain on the good and the evil and that God can change anyone.

### Peace Builders

Another part of the prison programme is a daily 6-month class on Biblical relationship skills called Peace Builders. A couple of months into the class, one of the students developed a nasty boil on his arm. To self-treat it, he asked a room-mate to help open the boil and squeeze out all the pus. Without proper skill nor sanitary conditions, his infection only increased. He asked around, but the only medication he was able to collect from room-mates were a few paracetamols, enough to dull the pain briefly. He had a choice: go to the clinic and get help or attend the class that he found so valuable. He chose the Peace Builders class, but our Sunrise staff Yeng was alert to notice it and acted accordingly. Even though it was class time, Yeng took him to the medical clinic where he was able to get the wound properly cleaned and receive antibiotics and more pain killers. In no time, this inmate was on the mend, happily able to continue the class.

### Cleaner Water

Over the years, the prison has brought different requests to us, all issues that affect the health and well-being of the prisoners. When they asked about the water, we tested and found coliforms, E coli, and excessive hardness, which could cause acute infections and long-term kidney damage. Through help, Sunrise was able to assist the prison by installing a water treatment system. Prisoners helped with the placement of a new tank with a bio-sand filter to clean impurities such as coliforms and E coli from the water supply; other components dealt with water hardness. Praise God for clean water!



Clean water for the prison

## >> [SUNRISE \(article\)](#)

### Scabies

We found out that prisoner rashes weren't due to bad water but to horrible crusted scabies, so we conducted a major campaign against them, treating the entire prison twice! Through the donations of a UK medical mission group, we were able to purchase the scabies soap and the ivermectin for the treatment. The scabies aren't completely gone but they are SO MUCH better—prisoners practically cheer when we ask them about their condition. However, after more than a year, we see this ugly issue again. Sunrise will pursue a solution with the help of global dermatologists at the International Alliance for the Control of Scabies.



**Medication distribution**

### The Results

All prisoners know by now that Sunrise is a Christian group that cares for them — everybody knows that Christians paid for the scabies meds and the water system. During Peace Bridges, prisoners can ask their questions about God their father and Jesus his son. Despite their status as prisoners, every inmate can see that God is shining his countenance upon them (Psalm 4:6).

Susan Smith, Sunrise Cambodia

## INVITE CAMBODIA ACTION'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO SPEAK.



Cambodia is an exciting country with many opportunities to serve short and long term. Invite the Executive Director of Cambodia Action to visit your church group - big or small - to share on the work. Email him directly at [c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org](mailto:c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org)

## >> Your gifts make a difference

### **Christmas giving**

Christmas has always been the time when people exchange gifts, meet up with friends and spend time with family. Cambodia Action and its partners have looked for ways to make Christmas special in the "Kingdom of Wonder" - Cambodia.

This past December was no different. In our Action magazine 195 we featured five different gifts, special food packs for prisoners, medication cream, clean water systems, education packs for children and a wheelchair.

We were able to raise £1,250 from 15 different supporters: £300 for the prisoner's pack, £44 for creams, £234 for the wheelchair, £248 for the water systems and lastly £424 for educational packs. I am still delighted to see how our friends who support our partners open up their wallets and give. Thank you to everyone who gave!

I do want to raise one point and that is the shortfall for the wheelchair to the amount of £160. We had targeted the full amount for this all-important piece of mobile equipment and will be grateful for late contributions to close this deficit.

### **Thank you for the gifts**

Some great fundraising news apart from our regular giving over Christmas was a number of one-off gifts given. This came as a result of me sharing at a church service and later with a lady over coffee. These gifts went towards covering a percentage of my Cambodia February trip. I do find that when I am given the

opportunity to share in church groups, people respond. If you know of a group who would like to hear of our work, I am happy to travel to speak. Just email me at [c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org](mailto:c.catlin@cambodiaaction.org)

### **QR code**

As many people have a smart phone today, it has become easier to give using a mobile device. We have set up a QR code (below) that will take you to our giving page on our website. On this page we have different options to choose from, including general expenses and a partner support option.



Again, thank you all for the ways in which you support the work of Cambodia Action and its partners.

## >> Two new partnerships

The board of Cambodia Action has a mandate to explore any new partnership that, on the one hand would fulfil the ends of the organisation, and on the other, be a bridge and blessing to that partner in the field. During each trip the Executive Director meets up with the heads of different organisations that could possibly become partners and be showcased to our readers and supporters.

The February trip was no exception. Before I leave for Cambodia, months of planning and discussion take place to plan the time I am out there. This last trip incorporated a visit to the offices and a possible visit to the project of each of the two new partners we are currently exploring.

**Brave Ministry** was founded by Melinda Lim from Singapore, after she had travelled out to Cambodia on a volunteering basis for several different projects. These were mostly among 'the last, the lost and the least', forming the vision and drive of the mission. In 2016, Melinda returned to Cambodia as a full-time missionary and Brave, as it is affectionately called, was born.



**BRAVE**  
MINISTRY

Brave Ministry seeks to provide practical solutions that will transform those who are desperate, destitute and in despair. For more information, check out their web page at [www.braveministry.org](http://www.braveministry.org)

### **Mother's Heart Organization**



Katrina Gliddon is the founder of Mother's Heart, living and working in Cambodia for nine years before returning to Melbourne, Australia. Mother's Heart Organization, a local NGO, is under the leadership of their Cambodian Executive Director, Mr. Chhom Sarith. His wealth of experience in rural development and project management has been instrumental in steering the Organization, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The vision of Mother's Heart is committed to seeing 'no woman or girl faces a crisis pregnancy alone'. This is carried out by many dedicated staff members in two different cities', Phnom Penh and Battambang. Their mission: 'to empower, equip and educate women and girls facing crisis pregnancies - and their families - through counselling, support services, medical care and community involvement, so they can choose the best future for themselves and their babies'.

You can read more about Mother's Heart on their website at [www.mothersheartcambodia.org](http://www.mothersheartcambodia.org) .

## >> Celebrating the life of Denzil Jarvis

Our dear friend Denzil passed peacefully into the arms of Jesus on 26 April.



### Doing what she loved to do - being among the people

Denzil served Cambodia Action both as chairperson and board member for many years. She worked with passion and dedication and was committed to excellence both in the field and on the board. She was a woman of prayer who loved Cambodia through our organisation and this led her to make numerous visits, to personally support our workers and to see how the Kingdom of God was coming to those living in Cambodia, particularly among the poor.

I recall one field trip, when the plan to

visit a project was stumped by flood waters. As Denzil sat in the boat, which could travel no further, she prayed and then encouraged those around her with the word of God - she was no time-waster!

Denzil's contribution to missions in Cambodia is her legacy and we are so grateful for her dedication.

On Monday 20 May, with an almost packed church in St Christopher's Church, Southbourne, Bournemouth, we all heard different tributes to the life that she had led. I was joined by Geoff and Carol Collett, who knew Denzil well from those earlier days of Southeast Asian Outreach. Geoff and Carol had served in the field and during his tribute Geoff mentioned how instrumental Denzil had been in opening up opportunities in Cambodia, paving the way for a full-time team to be resident in Phnom Penh. As I sat listening to tribute after tribute, I was amazed at how diverse a life Denzil had led, from her singing to sharing on missions. Speaker after speaker recalled how she had touched their lives in a meaningful way.

Even in her last weeks, Denzil held firmly to her faith in the Good Shepherd - her Lord Jesus. Paul said, 'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain'. I believe that Denzil lived for Christ and now has gained it all.

Chris Catlin

# PRAISE & PRAYER

## Praise Points

- So far this year we have seen several one-off gifts given for expenses. We thank the Lord for his continued help in keeping Cambodia Action going with much needed finances.
- In February I met up with Jenny Rye, she had a health issue that has improved; we praise God and believe for a complete healing.
- For two new partnerships. As we look to the future, we eagerly expect that the Lord will bless our journey together.

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## Prayer Points

- **Rye family:** Please pray for the Rye family as they return to the UK. Pray for a fruitful job search with a favourable outcome for both of them and that their two wonderful children will fit right back into school and the UK.
- **New team members** to fill the gaps as the work and partnerships grow in Cambodia.
- **New partners:** We praise God for Brave and Mother's heart; pray that there will be a knitting of hearts as we look to work together.

## PRAYER AND NEWS UPDATES ELECTRONICALLY

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE OUR REGULAR UPDATES AND MAGAZINE TO YOUR MAILBOX.  
WRITE TO US AT [C.CATLIN@CAMBODIAACTION.ORG](mailto:C.CATLIN@CAMBODIAACTION.ORG)



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