

GROWING CAMBODIA – REPORT 2017

It is again with much pleasure that I present the fourth Annual Report for Growing Cambodia Inc.

The purpose of our registered Australian charity is the relief of poverty and assisting those who are disadvantaged in rural Cambodian communities by encouraging a better and more sustainable quality of life through education and the enhancement of their health and well-being.

The principal activity of Growing Cambodia is support for the provision of English lessons in four rural villages near Siem Reap. At Kok Beng 160 students learn English, at Beng Village the number is 260 while a further 310 students study at Oroluos – these classes are all held in buildings in the villages.

This year Growing Cambodia funded for the first time an English teacher at Koy Meng Primary School – a government school in the Banteay Meanchey Province. Such is the demand for learning English, with over 250 school children attending classes, a problem arose with students from other schools wanting to enrol !! Solution – we employed another teacher to support Mr Chanthorn – Ms.Rany Chhoeurng. Welcome and thank you to our newest teachers.

Indeed Growing Cambodia had a very stable year due to the outstanding and consistent efforts of all our Cambodian managers and teachers. They are a very dedicated and hard-working team devoting themselves to teaching younger – and sometimes older - Cambodians. Growing Cambodia pays monthly salaries to our three school managers – Mr Sopheak, Mr Sovann and Mr So - our local accountant Ms Vathey Ouch and nine other teachers – Ms Yani, Ms Ratha, Mr Kolap, Mr Sorya, Ms Saifong, Mr Vuthy, Ms Reaksa, Ms Nith and Ms Samphoas. All are helping the students learn English and thereby giving them an opportunity to break the poverty cycle as a higher income can often be earned from jobs resulting from the speaking of English.

The total wages paid to our managers and teachers - \$25026 for the 2017 year - are then spent locally which further supports local business and the local economy.

The “Fill the Bag” campaign, launched to enable poorer students attend or stay at government schools continued on very successfully this year with 32 students being provided with scholarships.

In 2017/18 Growing Cambodia will continue to support the English programs at Oroluos, Beng and Kok Beng and assist with the teaching of English, as well as the provision of teaching aids, at the government school at Koy Meng. Selected students will continue to be supported at University with scholarships for poorer students again a priority.

Financially we ended the 2017 year in a strong position due to the very successful annual Phillip Island Trivia Night where \$ 17936 was raised and the generous support of a number of families and individuals. The cash on hand at 30 June 2017 of approx \$39000 is inflated by the fact that the Trivia Night is held in late May each year. The budgeted expenditure for 2017/18 is \$40000.

The weaker Australian dollar still affects our funding of the various activities in Cambodia as our funds have to be converted into US dollars.

We are still proud of the fact that as there are no administration costs every dollar raised is spent on these activities in Cambodia.

A very big and special thanks to Jane Bown who looks after our increasingly liked Facebook page – her posts and dissemination of information are greatly appreciated.

Thank you as well to all our volunteers who gave up their valuable time to assist at one or more of the four schools. The students love working with our volunteers !!

A special mention to our volunteers who provided health and medical services in the villages and Medical Centres and the many other volunteers involved both in Australia and Cambodia with the making and distribution of Days for Girls Kits to young girls in the villages – what an amazing effort !!

Finally thank you to the Committee for all the time and effort you put in – in particular to our Secretary Nola Kemp and our Treasurer Lois Green. A special thanks also to Glenda Salter for her continuous efforts in organising fundraising events.

If there is anyone that has been missed, sorry and thank you, and good luck to our new committee !