

## **GROWING CAMBODIA – ACTIVITIES REPORT 2020**

This is the seventh Annual Report for Growing Cambodia Inc. and, as for many others around the world, the effects of Covid 19 have resulted in interesting challenges for our organisation.

The purpose of our registered Australian charity is for 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 activities of Growing Cambodia did not change during the last year. We continued to support the provision of English lessons in four rural villages. Three of these villages are located near Siem Reap.

The English classes would not have been possible without the local managers and teachers at the schools helping Growing Cambodia deliver the lessons. Many many thanks to :

Mr Sopheak Phay  
Ms Vattey Ouch  
Mr Sovann Kay  
Ms Narim Sun  
Ms Phally Soy  
Mr Nith  
Ms Ratha  
Ms Rathana  
Ms Sem Reaksa  
Ms Samphoas  
Mr Chanthorn  
Ms Rany Chhoeurng  
Mr Oudorm

and to our other teachers who left during the year.

Since March 2020, classes have not been conducted at the schools due to restrictions and rules put in place by the Cambodian Government in response to Covid 19.

To support our teachers through these difficult times we have continued to pay them 50% of their normal pay. Our two managers have also taken a pay reduction.

The wonderful news though is that from July 2020 the teachers have taught the students in small groups in their local villages – an amazing effort which shows how dedicated our managers, teachers and students are. Hopefully all will return to normal classes at the schools soon.

We are fortunate that we have such a very dedicated and hard-working team devoting themselves to teaching fellow Cambodians. Growing Cambodia pays the monthly salaries to our schools manager – Mr Sopheak and our local accountant Ms Vattey Ouch and the twelve

teachers . The wages paid to our managers and teachers 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 this year with 65 students being provided with scholarships. This program has been supported by the fundraising efforts of supporters in the US and coordinated by Peggy Newton. Thank you so much to our friends in the US – we are thinking of you all.

Unfortunately our hugely successful Trivia Night was cancelled this year due to Covid 19. As a result our major source of fundraising disappeared. We did hold a “virtual” raffle and other supporters donated and over \$ 15000 was raised. Although we had a healthy cash position at 30 June this year the Committee is looking at other fundraising ideas in this Covid 19 era.

A special thanks to our ongoing sponsors who donate to our cause year after year – you know who you are – your generosity continues to amaze us.

During the year, just like every other year, there were no administration costs meaning every dollar raised was spent on our activities in Cambodia.

Thank you to the volunteers who gave up their valuable time to assist at one or more of the four schools in Cambodia as well as other volunteers involved both in Australia and Cambodia with the making and distribution of Days for Girls Kits to the girls in the villages. Thank you Deb Kerry for co-ordinating the volunteers.

Last but not least thank you to the Committee for your efforts and advice – in particular Secretary Nola Kemp who is retiring at the AGM. Nola has been an incredible worker for the organisation and always puts her hand up to help out. Nola’s organisational skills, passion and dedication to the cause have been such tremendous assets for us to take advantage of. We wish you all the best Nola but we know you will not be far away !!