

GROWING CAMBODIA – ACTIVITIES REPORT 2022

This is the ninth Annual Activities Report for Growing Cambodia Inc.

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 with the fourth located at Koy Meng in the province of Banteay Meanchey.

The restrictions imposed due to the Covid 19 pandemic continued to affect our operations through the first five months of the year. English classes were held at the schools when lockdowns were not in force. Small classes were also held in the villages themselves when the schools were closed and the laws allowed. From December 2021 normal classes resumed and teachers returned to their pre-covid working hours and full pay. We continue to be so grateful to the local managers and teachers for their fantastic efforts during the last two years :

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.

Our Annual Trivia Night was once again cancelled due to Covid 19 restrictions and with it our major source of fundraising. Due to incredible ongoing support we were able to raise close to \$38000 in regular and once-off donations - including amounts raised by Glenda Salter, Fiona and Martin Francis and Nola Brooks through garage sales and other projects. Thank you everyone !

The “Fill the Bag” campaign, launched to give disadvantaged students the opportunity to attend or stay at government schools, continued later in this year with 60 students again being provided with scholarships.

The year also saw a number of students transitioning from our English schools to attend University. Nine teachers and former students received sponsorship from Growing Cambodia to undertake courses at 5 different universities in Siem Reap and Phnom Penh.

The financial year again saw a small loss incurred. No administration costs were paid meaning every dollar raised was spent on our activities in Cambodia.

We had one volunteer this year – one more than last year ! With borders re-opening we are hopeful that we will have more volunteers helping out at the schools again. In December there will be 20 volunteers visiting the schools as part of a group celebrating the 10 year anniversary in Cambodia. Kawana Waters Secondary College is also planning to return to our schools in 2023.

Thank you to the Committee for your efforts and advice throughout the year – particularly Secretary Sharon Elliott and Treasurer Lois Green. Sharon has continued to provide great support to the organisation whenever needed ! Lois has continued to diligently look after our finances with Vattey in Cambodia.

Lois has decided to step down from the Committee at the next AGM. Lois has been Treasurer since 2015 and her attention to detail, wise counsel, pertinent advice and dedication to Growing Cambodia over the years will be sorely missed. Thank you so much Lois for all you have done.

Also leaving the Committee after 5 and a half years is Deb Kerry. Deb has been our Volunteer Co-Ordinator and helped review our policies and procedures and volunteer advice during her time. Deb's commitment, support and input to all areas will also be greatly missed. Thank you so much also Deb for all that you have done.

Finally a separate report has been prepared by Nola Brooks regarding a Web Site Project with Latrobe University and Didasko. The project expanded well beyond the original brief and had those attending the zoom meetings very excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for Growing Cambodia. The next committee will be tasked with exploring these possibilities in an effort to improve our structures, communication and delivery of our objectives. None of the outcomes described in the report would have eventuated without the enormous amount of work put in by Nola – a huge thank you to Nola and also Warren Davie for the work that you have started to put in on our communications through Facebook and Instagram.

We all look forward to catching up with our friends in Cambodia very soon.