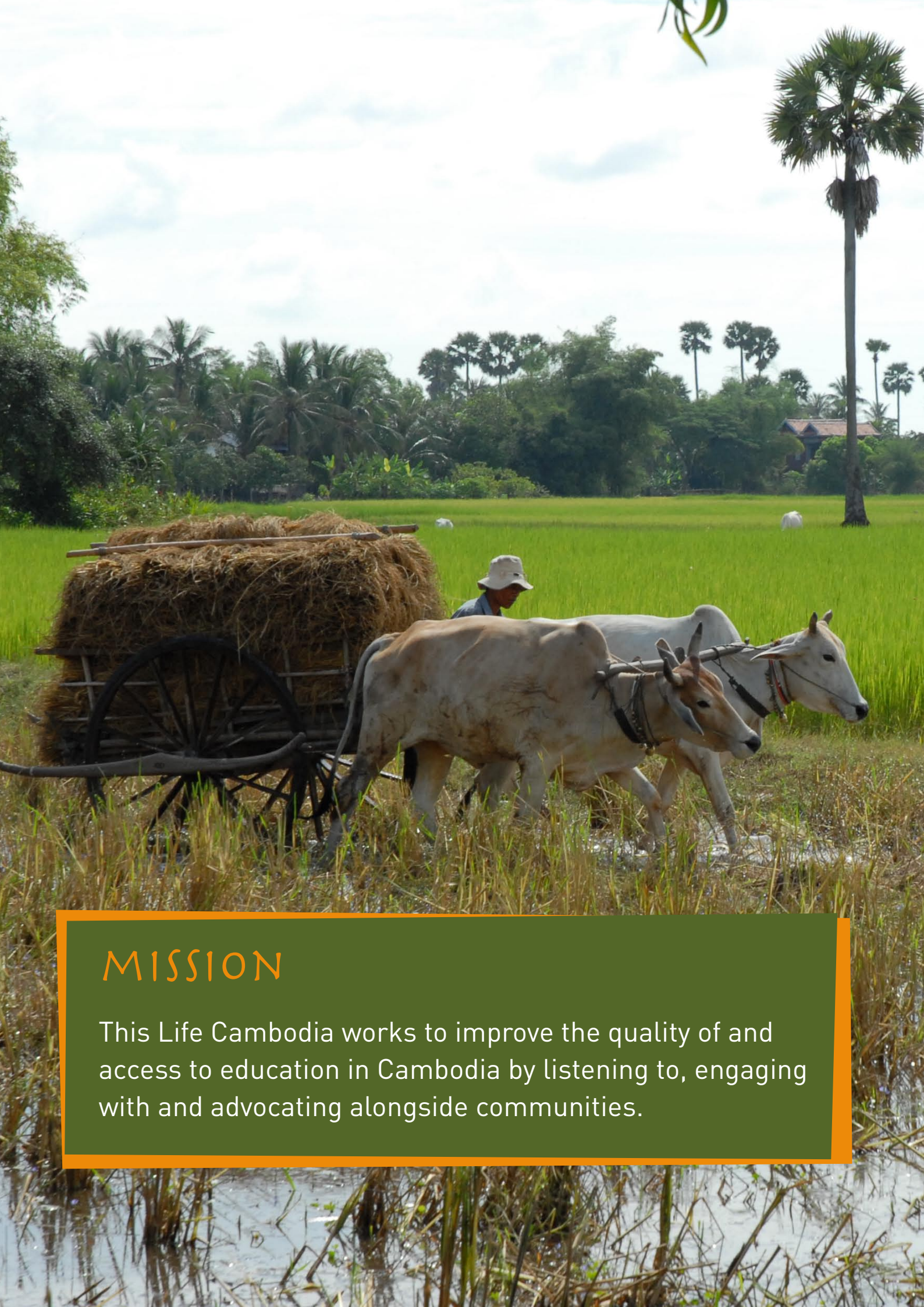




# THIS LIFE CAMBODIA ANNUAL REPORT 2012





## MISSION

This Life Cambodia works to improve the quality of and access to education in Cambodia by listening to, engaging with and advocating alongside communities.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This Life Cambodia (TLC) is delighted to be able to share the work that the organisation has done over the past 12 months in our annual report.

It is with courage, vision and determination that the board, staff and volunteers of This Life Cambodia consistently rise to meet the challenge of achieving our mission. We thrive to improve the quality of and access to education in Cambodia and this has been particularly evident through the impact This Life Cambodia has made in 2011/12. While you will read more detail throughout the report, major highlights include:

- TLC received an additional grant from AusAID to expand the This Life Beyond Bars program. Through this program 15 children incarcerated for petty crimes have been supported through the vocational training program, paving their way to a secure futures beyond prison. Six families have successfully started income generation through the Family scholarship project and the project team have worked tirelessly advocating for a juvenile justice system.
- 190 students have been supported through the Student Assistance Program. Assistance has involved; providing bicycles for children to be able to get to school, Lower and Upper secondary school scholarships for 48 students and solar power packs to 14 families.
- The Lower Secondary School Development Program aims to improve access and quality of lower secondary education and this program has focused on building the capacity of the School Support Committee to feel more ownership and power to engage the surrounding communities to participate in their school development. They have been actively involved in meetings and workshops and have successfully engaged the community in fundraising for construction activities.
- The Community Research and Consultancy Program provides information and services on issues affecting the provision of public education and human rights in Cambodia. This Life Cambodia is continually refining and expanding our programs in order to secure better outcomes for the communities we work with and the work that CRCP does has been invaluable in framing the programs and work that we do.

The significant impact that This Life Cambodia has made has only been possible thanks to you, our avid supporters and donors. The up coming year will represent some of our biggest challenges to date and with your support, we are confident we will be able to rise to meet these ongoing challenges.

Finally, on behalf of the board I would like to say a huge big thank you to the staff and volunteers of This Life Cambodia for your tireless effort in listening to, engaging with and advocating alongside communities to improve the quality of and access to education in Cambodia.

Claire Coxon





# ABOUT US

## WHO WE ARE

TLC is driven by the belief that every child has the right to a free, high-quality education and that this education is vital to the development of dynamic communities. TLC's goals are to: listen to individuals and communities define their own needs and solutions; engage individuals and communities to organise for their own needs through sustainable, accountable, and socially just processes; and advocate alongside communities so citizens are empowered to challenge inequality.

TLC has grown rapidly into a well-respected community development NGO with four programs in three provinces (Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey). TLC is registered in Cambodia as an International NGO, has charitable status in Australia, and receives funding from individual donors, private foundations, and international development agencies such as AusAid.

## WHAT WE DO

TLC is focused on developing programs that enhance educational opportunities to directly benefit the lives of children, their families and their communities in rural Cambodia. Our programs also enable communities to develop the essential infrastructure, skills and programs needed to make positive change and break free from poverty.

Every step we take, the communities are with us. We work directly with communities, schools, training centres, and sub national mechanisms such as commune and village chiefs, providing technical advice, training, and community development funding. By mobilising grassroots groups, TLC cultivates community voices to lead education development activities that they prioritise.

## THE HISTORY OF TLC



TLC was founded in 2007 after a community expressed concern with the lack of a platform to identify and prioritise their own development needs. TLC was formed in response to the need for capacity building and training for communities who have the drive to increase access and quality of education for their children.

At the age of 27 Billy Gorter launched TLC, based on the founding principles of listening to, engaging with and advocating along side communities; giving voice to community led and defined development. He is a passionate activist and advocate for change. Billy has more than a decade of experience working within NGO's tackling conservation, social, human rights and educational issues in Australia and Cambodia. He is an internationally sort after speaker at universities, research forums and assemblies for social debate. Billy is passionately committed to addressing the rights of children and educational development, inspiring many along the way to actively challenge the accepted.

## WHERE WE WORK

This Life Cambodia now works in three provinces in Cambodia; Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey.

The TLC main office in Cambodia is based in Siem Reap town.



## FACTS ABOUT CAMBODIA

### TOTAL AREA

**181,035 sq km**

Land: 176,515 sq km

Water: 4,520 sq km

### POPULATION

**14,952,665**

### YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE

**1953**

### MAJOR CITIES

**Phnom Penh** (capital)

### AGE STRUCTURE

0-14 years: **31.9%**

15-64 years: **64.3%**

65 years and over: **3.8%**

### ETHNIC GROUPS

**Khmer 90%**

Other 10%

### LANGUAGES

**Khmer (official) 95%,**  
French, English

### RELIGIONS

**Buddhist 96.4%**  
**(official)**

Muslim 2.1%

Other 1.3%

Unspecified 0.2%

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cb.html>



PRA-Actions women group discussion

# THIS LIFE BEYOND BARS

## INTRODUCTION

In Cambodia, children 14 years and over who come into conflict with the law face the same laws, courts and prisons as adults: there is no juvenile justice system in Cambodia. By international standards, the penalties these children face are severe. Many children come into conflict with the law because of poverty. For stealing electrical wire, a bicycle, a mobile phone or small amounts of money, children can be sentenced to years in prison.

This Life Cambodia (TLC) began researching these issues in 2009 and found that educational opportunities for minors inside Siem Reap Prison were limited to informal primary education, life skills, traditional music, and hair cutting. One organisation offers vocational training upon release however minors wanted access to vocational training inside prison. The prison authorities also wanted this type of education to be offered to juveniles nearing release back into the community. This Life Beyond Bars (TLBB) was thus created, and among other things, implemented two vocational training programs in Siem Reap Prison; motor mechanics and electronics repair.

TLBB also identified that no other organisations in Siem Reap were working towards improving the experience for children with a parent or care-giver in prison. There was no research available on this issue in Cambodia until May 2010, when Prison Fellowship Cambodia released the first ever research report documenting issues relating to the care and well-being of children with one or both parents incarcerated in a Cambodian prison. Furthermore, in Cambodia there is only anecdotal evidence of stigma and discrimination facing prisoners and their families, although it is generally accepted that stigma exists and that its effects are far reaching. In light of this, TLBB designed a project to support children in the community, which focuses on visitation. This enables the maintenance of family ties as well as income generation and healthcare for the family, thus enhancing the child's ability to continue their education. By focusing on visitation, the relationships within family and community are built upon, increasing the likelihood that children of prisoners will be able to access basic rights such as housing, food, health, safety, a sense of belonging, as well as access to meaningful education.

The objectives of TLBB are to:

- Increase access to education for children in prison
- Increase the resilience of families affected by the criminal justice system
- Strengthen the connection between local government mechanisms and the community regarding issues related to criminal justice

TLBB has shown great success in the past twelve months and has expanded its activities to Banteay Meanchey province and prison, after receiving a second grant from AusAID through the Community Development Fund.

## FACES OF TLC

### HOL RITHEAVY

TLBB Program Coordinator



Ritheavy has been involved in managing programs supporting children in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, and Siem Reap prisons for over seven years. His extensive experience working with children in prison and his understanding of subnational government structures makes him an empathetic and knowledgeable addition to This Life Cambodia. Ritheavy manages the This Life Beyond Bars Program, comprising vocational training, family support and community development projects that focus on education, rehabilitation and reintegration for child detainees as well as building awareness of legal justice issues in their communities. Ritheavy has a Bachelor's Degree in English Communications and is working towards a Master's in Management. He has also worked in the public education system. Ritheavy sees himself working towards the rights of children in Cambodia well into the future, and says that his greatest achievement outside of his work is that he is a good citizen to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

## ACTIVITIES

### Siem Reap

The past financial year saw activities continue in Siem Reap and Oddar Meanchey provinces, building on lessons learned from the first year of activities. Income generation activities began with families involved in the Family Support Project. All six families supported in the Family Scholarship Project have undergone training in chicken raising. In the up coming months they will be provided with the initial capital to turn their training into new employment opportunities.

The Community Development Project really began to take shape in the last financial year, with TLBB staff building trust and relationships through attending the monthly meetings of the security committees in the communes of Chi Kraeng, Trapeang Prasat and Krabei Riel. TLC hopes to work with the committees to begin designing work plans that accurately reflect the challenges community members face in the coming year. Communes were also surveyed to determine community members' knowledge of various aspects of human rights and domestic violence. The findings from this data helped TLC design training and workshops that were targeted to the needs of the communities. Topics have included: the importance of marriage certificates, effective intervention to respond to human rights issues and advice for local authorities to intervene in domestic violence.

These achievements have set TLBB on the path towards sustainability. With proper financial management, families affected by having a caretaker in prison can still ensure a good livelihood despite their circumstances, and communities with high rates of imprisonment can begin addressing issues like domestic violence and human rights abuses through government structures.

The Vocational Training Project suffered some setbacks in 2011, with severe flooding causing damage to the prison and vocational training centre. Classes were cancelled as the only access to the prison was by boat, and electronics and motor repair tools and equipment were damaged by the flood water. Despite this interruption to the project, there have been many successes. Firstly, seven former students were released from prison. Six of these students found jobs, two of which were in the field of the vocational training skills learned in prison. One other former student opted to continue his vocational training studies outside of prison. Secondly, the vocational training building within the prison was expanded after the flood. It is now big enough





Women concern around HR-DV workshop

to properly store all our motorbikes, and has a roof addition that protects students and materials from rain.

### Banteay Meanchey

As a result of the successes of This Life Beyond Bars, TLC received funding in 2012 to expand the work in this area to Banteay Meanchey province. The 'Challenges of Juvenile Justice in Cambodia (CJJC)' program began in February 2012.

In order to conduct this work, TLC opened a field office in Banteay Meanchey town. So far, the majority of work undertaken has been organising and assessing activities and beneficiaries. A number of Participatory Rural Appraisals were undertaken in communes within the province, and human rights training was held. Students and families were selected for the Vocational Training Project and the Family Support Project. On June 30, 2012, the vocational training building in Banteay Meanchey Prison was well on its way to being completed.

Preparation for the Vocational Training Project required CJJC staff to work closely with Banteay Meanchey prison authority. Through this close collaboration, TLC identified 18 vocational training students who met TLC's selection criteria and who will begin their courses in motor mechanics and electronics repair in September, 2012.

The Family Scholarship Project has begun the process of identifying families who have one care giver in prison and children of school age. Thus far, TLC has selected 3 families within two communes who meet our criteria, and will continue to select eligible families in an additional two

communes. TLC plans to work with a total of 10 families. These families will be our target beneficiaries for the Family Scholarship Project, which is scheduled to start in August, 2012. This project will include; visitation activities, school scholarships, income generation capacity building and health insurance provision.

Four communes with high concentrations of people in prison have been identified for our Community Development Project. These target communes will be the locations for training and workshops on topics such as human rights and domestic violence in coming months.

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- TLC received additional funding from AusAID to expand the TLBB program to Banteay Meanchey Prison, by establishing the CJJC program
- Began income generation activities for the Family Scholarship Project
- Built trust and relationships with security committees within three communes, as part of the Community Development Project
- Six families in the Family Scholarship Project have undergone training in chicken raising, and will soon be provided with initial capital to turn their training into new employment opportunities
- 7 children in the Vocational Training Course were released; two have used their skills in their communities by opening motor mechanics and electronics shops



# FAST FACTS

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING = 42

**Rate of attendance of students in the vocational training program = 92%**

NUMBER OF TIMES FAMILIES WERE SUPPORTED TO VISIT THEIR CHILDREN IN PRISON = 47

**Number of students who have been released from prison = 7**

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE SOURCED EMPLOYMENT OR STUDY ON RELEASE FROM PRISON = 100%

**Percentage of students who have reoffended after release = 0%**

NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS WHO VISITED CHILDREN IN PRISON = 43 (6 FEMALES)

**Number of families with a parent in prison who were supported in sustainable income generation = 8 (55 people/22 females)**

NUMBER OF TIMES FAMILIES WERE SUPPORTED TO VISIT PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS IN PRISON = 24

**Number of children with a parent in prison who were given a scholarship to study = 18 (8 girls)**

NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED MEETINGS WITH SECURITY COMMITTEES = 21 (5 FEMALES)

**Number of participants who attended 1 human and legal rights training workshop = 28 (5 females)**

PRA-Actions in Ma Lai commune







## CASE STUDY

Ratha served two years and six months in Siem Reap prison for a poverty related crime. During his incarceration he completed TLBB's one year Motor Mechanics Repair Course, which aims to engage with children to think about their future. Thanks to TLBB donors and the TLBB program, this child has been able to start a new and better life outside of prison and now runs his own Moto repair business.

After his release from prison, TLBB worked with Ratha and his family to help him reintegrate into his community in Oddar Meanchey province. Ratha is now using the skills he learned to earn a daily income to support himself and his family. TLBB supported Ratha to obtain an air compressor to help him get started, and with his profits Ratha plans to continue to develop his shop. He says,

*I'm so happy to be able to earn some money to support myself and to help my family by using these new skills.*

Furthermore, Ratha particularly valued the social and emotional awareness he gained through participating in the program, as highlighted by the following comment:

*TLC has provided me with the opportunity to learn new skills and it is important to me to use them for my new life ... during my involvement in the Vocational Training Course the subject that I was most interested in was morality.*

Ratha still keeps in touch with the other students, to continue the friendships formed while learning together.

*\*Names have been changed to protect the individuals' identity as per TLC's Child Protection Policy*



# LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

The Lower Secondary School Development Program (LSSDP) is TLC's solution to the widespread structural problem of low school enrolments in Siem Reap, Cambodia. This program is focused on community participation and community led solutions and is designed to be sustainable in the long term. The program is consistent with government education policy, supports the principles of Child Friendly Schools, and reflects TLC's core values. TLC uses the tools of organising and group decision-making to build the capacity of community members to identify their needs and envision realistic solutions to their educational problems. At the end of this program communities will be able to solve, or determine the needed solution of, any educational problem by themselves.

The main goal of the LSSDP is to improve access to and quality of lower secondary education. This program has been developed to increase communities' involvement in their schools and in the education of their children. There are three objectives:

There are three objectives of this program:

1. Mobilise School Support Committees to identify the needs of the participating communities and schools.
2. Assist School Support Committees in developing and implementing school development plans to address the educational needs of each village.
3. Build the capacity of the School Support Committee to function effectively and independently in the long-term.

The LSSDP has successfully completed its third year at the Krabei Riel Lower Secondary School, and Second Year in Chub Ta Trav Lower Secondary School. This year was very eventful for both schools. From constructing a school boundary wall to school gardening, the Lower Secondary Schools in Krabei Riel and Chub Ta Trav have undergone fantastic development.

## FACES OF TLC

### CHEA BORANY

LSSDP Program Coordinator



Borany comes to This Life Cambodia with rich and diverse skills gained through professional experience and a personal dedication to education. Prior to joining This Life Cambodia, Borany was the Program Coordinator for the Girl Guides Association of Cambodia. Borany fought hard for the education she has achieved: the daughter of rice farmers in Svay Rieng province, she faced the same barriers to education as the students she now supports. Borany's dedication saw her finishing high school and then moving on to university to complete a Degree in Economic and Social Science from the Cambodian Mekong University in Phnom Penh. Her thesis examined gender roles within village life at the commune level. Borany brings this experience to her role as Lower Secondary School Development Program Coordinator, working closely with community members, helping to raise the value of education at the commune level and build capacity for sustainable education development.



Students play on school opening day

## ACTIVITIES

The most fundamental activity of the LSSDP is capacity building of the School Support Committee (SSC) to function effectively and independently of TLC. The SSC is a community committee comprised of village leaders, commune leaders, teachers, principals, parents, and representatives from the pagoda. The committee is a government mandated institution and is seen as a way to increase participation within public education. By building SSC capacity in a number of key areas, the LSSDP puts sustainable tools for education development in the hands of the community.

The five key capacity areas the LSSDP focuses on are; the School Development Work Plan, Basic Communication, Monitoring and Evaluation, Fundraising, and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Training. From year to year, capacity development in each area is supported in different ways (training workshops, practice activities, and general support) to make sure that the SSC is ready to continue independently when the LSSDP concludes.

Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) were conducted in both Krabei Riel and Chub Ta Trav communes to identify community needs related to education and identify any other

issues that were unresolved from the previous year. Similar problems were raised in both schools:

1. Students often drop out of school
2. Parents and students often migrate to work in Thailand, or in city centres
3. The school environment is not good

PRA Training was provided to SSC members, who were engaged in the PRA process to find out the problems raised by their community, the root causes of the problems and ideally the proper solutions. The data was used to create a School Development Work Plan which is based on community input.

Training on School Development Work Plan creation was provided to the SSCs by TLC in both schools this year. In both cases, it was the school principal who volunteered to facilitate the workshop.

Vision Youth Partnership for Development (VYPD) conducted training on basic communication for the SSCs in both schools. The SSCs must be able to communicate effectively with a number of stakeholders, including; the community, government departments, and its own members.



Monitoring and Evaluation is used to keep track of each SSC's School Development Work Plan, and TLC has conducted training sessions on this. Both SSCs participated in training sessions to learn how to raise funds from their community, individuals and other donors, to support their School Development Work Plan.

The LSSDP also engages with teachers and provides opportunities for both the SSCs and teachers to participate in self-development training. In cooperation with the Provincial Teacher Training College in Siem Reap province, TLC also provided training on effective teaching and learning to teachers in Krabei Riel and Chub Ta Trav. This training focused on the teachers' performance at school, and how to use resources in the classroom effectively.

Other activities conducted by the LSSDP include school infrastructure construction. A good school environment is an important part of Child Friendly Schools, because a safe and stimulating environment encourages learning. Construction activities are essential to reaching the LSSDP's goal of improving access to and quality of education. The construction projects were initiated by the community, and community members were encouraged to participate and monitor project activities.

In the 2011-2012 financial year, the following construction activities took place:

- 3 classroom floors have been tiled, and 864m<sup>2</sup> of school yard and walkway have been paved at Krabei Riel School
- A 100 metre-long concrete school fence has been constructed at Krabei Riel School
- A 4 x 21 metre bicycle parking area has been constructed at Krabei Riel School
- A 400 metre long wire school fence has been constructed at Chub Ta Trav School
- A school gateway has been constructed at Chub Ta Trav School
- 4000m<sup>2</sup> of school land at Chub Ta Trav School has been levelled and refilled
- 2 sets of school benches have been provided to Chub Ta Trav School

Each year the SSCs participate in a school exchange visit to see how other schools function. This year the Chub Ta Trav SSC visited Angkor Thom Lower Secondary School, in Angkor Thom District, and the Krabei Riel SSC visited Samaki Lower Secondary School, in Chi Krong District.

CTT- SSC yearly meeting







School Gate way in CTT

During the exchanges, the SSCs learnt a lot about school management, including how to get the community involved in school development process and how to encourage contributions of time, labour, or funds. The SSC also learnt how to follow up on students who have irregular attendance at school. After the school exchange visit the SSCs were determined to apply all of the knowledge that they had learnt to development in their own schools.

To improve the quality of education it is important to not forget about learning materials for the students. Learning and teaching materials are the key to enabling students to study well and learn quickly. Every year the SSCs write a request letter to the Provincial Office of Education (POE) for resources. Due to the Cambodian government's lack of resources to provide study materials for every student, the solution is for the SSCs to try to find outside support from organisations like TLC, or from their own community members.

The LSSDP provided 200 Maths, 200 Khmer, 120 Social Studies, and 120 Science subject textbooks for students in grades 8 and 9, as well as English story books for Krabei Riel Lower Secondary School. In Chub Ta Trav Lower Secondary School, the LSSDP provided 2 boxes of first aid kits, administration materials (pens, writing books, markers, a map of Cambodia, and a world map), 35 story books which relate to literature study, 80 Maths textbooks for grade 8, 80 literature textbooks for grade 8, and 2 sets of agriculture materials.

Once a year, the LSSDP conducts an education awareness campaign for students and the community, to become more aware of the problems happening in their community and across the country. This year TLC held a migration education awareness campaign in Krabei Riel Lower Secondary School to discuss the impact of migration on the community and on children's education, as many people from this community had moved to Thailand to work.



In Chub Ta Trav, TLC conducted an enrolment campaign in which children, parents and the SSC participated. This campaign highlights the need to enrol children in school before the school year starts on October 1.

To keep track of progress against the School Development Work Plan, as well as following up on students' school attendance, the SSCs hold meetings monthly or when necessary. SSCs in each school also held one annual meeting to evaluate their School Development Work Plan.

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- TLC has seen big changes in both the Krabei Riel and Chub Ta Trav SSCs. They have been empowered to get involved, and actively engage their communities to participate. For example, after three years of working with the Krabei Riel SSC, its members now feel confident to raise teaching issues with the principal, such as how the school selects students to study short courses.
- The SSC in Krabei Riel School raised \$362.50 from their community to fund construction activities in the school such as; a bicycle parking area, school gardening, and land levelling to prevent the school from flooding.
- The SSC in Chub Ta Trav raised \$100.00 for the school fence construction. TLC also contributed funding to this project.
- The SSCs in both schools participated actively in the LSSDP, to engage the community to become involved with education development in their lower secondary schools.
- The SSCs in both schools participated actively in meetings, workshops and capacity development training organised by This Life Cambodia.

## FAST FACTS

NUMBER OF DIRECT STUDENT BENEFICIARIES = 381

**Number of direct community beneficiaries = 204**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED TEXT BOOKS AND SCHOOL MATERIALS = 191

**Number of teachers who participated in teacher training = 15**

NUMBER OF SCHOOL SUPPORT COMMITTEE MEMBERS WHO RECEIVED TRAINING AND SUPPORT = 27



SSC Capacity Building training

## CASE STUDIES

### KRABEI RIEL SCHOOL

The School Support Committee (SSC) is the government-mandated volunteer group of community members who work to support the school. Mrs Dam Sok, a 38 year old woman who lives in Krabei Riel Commune, is one of the SSC members supporting the Krabei Riel Lower Secondary School in Siem Reap. She works very hard for the Krabei Riel community, the school and her own family. She is a member of the Commune Council that works on women and children's affairs, and a member of the Conflict Resolution Committee. She is also a housewife and works to increase her family's income with handicrafts and rice farming. Working with the community she has learnt that students results have improved since the project started. Mrs Sok's comments that:

*Because of community contributions facilitated by This Life Cambodia through the Lower Secondary School Development Program, this lower secondary school has developed fast in 3 years ... The communities are happy to continue their contributions and the students are also happier to study now because they have enough textbooks, a nice library, and a good environment at the school, which makes their studies become better and better. I am very happy to work for my community and I hope that all children in Krabei Riel can go to school together and get a quality education, so that afterwards they can come back to develop my commune.*



Mrs. Dam Sok, SSC in KR





Mrs. Chan Ang, SSC in CTT

## CHUB TA TRAV SCHOOL

Mrs Chann Arng is a farmer and a very active member of her community in Chub Ta Trav Commune, Angkor Thom district, Siem Reap province. She volunteers as a School Support Committee (SSC) member at both the Secondary School and the Primary School. Besides her SSC work, she volunteers with other organisations as a community facilitator and also volunteers as a representative of the Commune Safety Council, working against theft, illegal drugs, prostitution, child trafficking, domestic violence, gangsters, illegal gambling, and weapons in her community. In addition to all of this, Mrs. Chann Arng also looks after her two grandchildren while her daughter is working in Thailand.

Working as a SSC member, Mrs Chann Arng is faced with many difficulties. Sometimes she has to walk several kilometers to conduct the parent meetings and discuss children's education. In order to participate in training with This Life Cambodia, to build her capacity for community work, or to meet with other organisations outside of her community, she often has to bring her two grandchildren along.

Even though she is very busy and faces many challenges, she continues happily to be part of the SSC at Chub Ta Trav Lower Secondary School. Within this role she has consulted

with parents to encourage them to bring their children back to school when they wanted to drop out. She helped to create the School Annual Work Plan, and supported construction activities including school land filling and levelling, and fence construction. As her house is close to the school, she also helps to look after the school property. The following comments reflect the changes she has seen as a result of the project, but also her vision for the future.

*Now I can be the change in my community. The people are more understanding about education. I want to see more change, and I want to see all the students in this community be able to finish their study. Some people have changed their minds now and have already brought their children back from working in the forest to return to school. I have done many things for the next generation and I am really happy.*

In the end she would like to say thank you to This Life Cambodia's Lower Secondary School Development Program, which supports this school by building the SSC members' capacity. She appreciates the training, school exchange visit opportunity, and consultancy support when the SSC faces problems. She feels that her efforts and those of other SSC members are making a real difference.

# STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

This Life Cambodia (TLC) is focused on developing educational, skill and development programs as well as supports that directly benefit the lives of children, youth and their communities in rural Cambodia, with a particular focus on promoting the importance of lower secondary school. TLC believes that every child has the right to free, high-quality education. Without an education or training, a child is immediately disadvantaged and far less likely to be able to achieve their full potential.

The goal of the Student Assistance Program is to support and reintegrate students back into the public education system. The Student Assistance Program consists of four projects: Student Scholarship Project, Light Up a Life With Solar, Pedalling Out of Poverty, and the Internship Project. All of these projects are designed to alleviate the financial burden associated with schooling, therefore improving the access to education for students from poor families.

## ACTIVITIES

### STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

In Cambodia, participation in every level of education is low. This is particularly true in secondary school; only 35 per cent of children enrol in lower secondary school, and an even lower 19.6% enrol in upper secondary school<sup>1</sup>. Overwhelmingly, poverty forces children to forgo schooling to support their families. Currently TLC provides scholarships to lower and upper secondary school students who have either dropped out already, or would not have continued to the next grade due to the associated high costs. TLC works with local schools, villages and communes, village leaders, and communities to ensure the most worthy children are chosen. TLC has implemented strict criteria, guidelines, monitoring and support programs to ensure scholarships are being effectively used and students are supported throughout their schooling. TLC has a policy that a minimum of 50 per cent of our scholars must be female to bridge the gender gap in education.



Scholarship students receive new bicycles

TLC sponsored a total of 39 students in the 2012-2013 Cambodian school year, across 5 different schools and three different communes; Krabei Riel, Dan Run Kandek and Siem Reap. TLC conducted interviews with all students and their parents in order to find out the impact and progress of the Scholarship Project and received great results and feedback. TLC is so proud of its scholarship students, as most have passed their exams and progressed to the next school level.

Parents are grateful for the program as it means their children, who they could not afford to send to school, can now receive an education. TLC supports their child's education by providing notebooks, text books, pens, pencil, uniforms, a bag, and sometimes most importantly, a bike to get to school easily and regularly.

Reflecting on the past school year, all scholarship students mentioned that without support from TLC's Scholarship Project, they could not get a higher education. The students are determined to study hard to continue through to grade 12, and have all shown their gratitude to TLC.

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport., Education Statistics and Indicators 2011-2012.



## PEDALLING OUT OF POVERTY

For some children in developing countries like Cambodia, the difference between getting an education or not may be as simple as a second-hand bicycle. A major factor influencing the high dropout rate between primary and secondary school is transport. Some of our bicycle recipients need to travel up to 10 km each way to the closest secondary school. Without access to basic transport, students are not able to get to school.

The Pedalling out of Poverty Project provides a second-hand bicycle and lock (costing US\$50) to selected students whose homes are far from school and whose families cannot afford to buy bicycles. In the 2011-2012 financial year, 231 bicycles were provided to students in rural areas such as Krabei Riel, Chub Ta Trav, and Dam Run Communes. All selected students are students who would be unable to continue their study to secondary school without a bicycle. These bicycles help the students access school easily and attend class regularly.

## LIGHT UP A LIFE

The Light up a Life With Solar Project aims to sustainably increase students' study time during evening hours. This project targets families in rural areas who fit within TLC's sponsorship criteria. Currently, as most children have household responsibilities such as tending to livestock during the day, the only time available to study or do homework is in the evening. Most families rely on battery-generated power, poor kerosene or candle lighting, all of which are most often used for domestic activities.

Our goal is to provide scholarship students and their families, as well as any local disadvantaged child (and their families) with solar lamps or lamp kits. These kits extend light hours in the evening and increase daily productivity, in terms of schoolwork for the child and household activities for the family. These lamps are useful for children to study and do homework for at least one hour at night. The family also can use the light to weave baskets and to have dinner at night. A solar lamp helps to improve students study and their families living conditions, by increasing their learning and working time at night.

Student scholarship receive new school materials in Krabei Riel





TLC provided solar lamps to 14 families in Krabei Riel in the 2010-2011 financial year. Throughout the 2011-2012 financial year, all of these families were followed up with and repairs were made to solar kits when needed.

## INTERN PROJECTS

TLC is staffed by a group of people with a strong and diverse knowledge base. Through accepting and training interns, the skills and knowledge of the current TLC team can be shared. A TLC Internship is a two-year opportunity for two recent high school graduates from underprivileged backgrounds to receive higher education through on the job training and university education. Interns receive training in language skills, computer skills and community development, while participating in TLC work.

TLC's two current interns have completed their second year studies at university. Both were very excited to start the new semester as third year students. They have completed

three levels of English classes and computer courses, which covered Ms. Word, Excel, Power Point, and Internet skills. They now apply the knowledge they have learnt to their work with TLC.

TLC provides the interns with the opportunity to work in an area that fits with their major at university, and helps them develop practical skills. Intern Sreyneang said,

*I am very happy to work with TLC as an intern because I think there are not too many opportunities for students who have finished grade 12 to find a job like me. TLC gives me an opportunity to work as an intern and to receive a high salary, university fees, English class fees, and computer class fees. I will try my best to work with TLC because TLC gives me the chance to work on my major. I am very happy that I can continue to study at university after I finish my contract as an intern with TLC. I am committed to studying hard to improve my English skills.*

TLC's interns help to distribute school materials to scholars





Intern Saloeurn wants to help children and develop her community. She says,

*I am very happy that TLC gives me an opportunity to be an intern who works with the poor students in my community. This is my dream, to be an NGO staff member, and I feel like it is a dream for me to work with TLC and continue my education at university. I will try my best to work for TLC. I will study hard to finish university.*

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The Pedalling out of Poverty Project provided 231 bicycles to students in three target areas: Krabei Riel, Chub Ta Trav, and Dam Run Communes
- 39 scholars in Lower Secondary School and Upper Secondary School were sponsored through the Scholarship Project
- 5 scholars in Krabei Riel graduated Lower Secondary School after being sponsored through the Scholarship Project
- Two interns finished their second years of university and will continue to their third year
- Two interns finished computer skills courses (Ms. Word, Excel, Power Point, Internet) and completed three courses of English classes
- The solar packages provided to 14 students in Krabei Riel in 2010-2011 are still working well, enabling students to; read books, do homework, have light for dinner, weave baskets, and providing families with light so they can be more productive at night.

## FAST FACTS

NUMBER OF BICYCLES DISTRIBUTED VIA PEDAL OUT OF POVERTY = 231

**Number of solar kits still providing extra light hours via Light up a Life with Solar = 14**

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS = 43

**Number of 2 year internships provided = 2**

## FACES OF TLC

TAN KIMLEN

SAP Program Coordinator



Kimlen is from Banteay Meanchey Province, and comes to This Life Cambodia with a strong background in student support programs. After high school Kimlen had limited opportunity to pursue a university education, as her family was not able to support her financially. Kimlen had the chance to undertake an examination with Cambodian Mekong University and successfully secured a scholarship to complete her Bachelor's degree, majoring in Finance and Banking in Phnom Penh. This led to three years of experience working in student sponsorship programs, first as a Sponsorship Program Officer and then as a Sponsorship Support Associate with international NGOs. Kimlen's background in supporting access to education is an asset to This Life Cambodia's Student Assistance Program. She says she is motivated by the opportunity to play a part in helping poor children access higher education, make their futures brighter, and live in a better world

## CASE STUDY

Layki lives in Krabei Riel Commune with her mother in a small house. Layki has been supported by TLC's Scholarship Project since July 2009. After she finished primary school, Layki wanted to continue to Lower Secondary School with the other girls in her village, but her family didn't have enough money to support her education. Thus, Layki applied for TLC's Scholarship Program in order to continue her education. She was accepted into the program and she and her family are very happy that TLC are able to support Layki's education. She says,

*TLC's Student Scholarship Project provides me with all of my school materials, such as notebooks, pens, bag, uniforms, and especially a bike for me to go to school on time.*

This school year Layki is studying in grade 10, at Samdech Euv Upper Secondary School. She is an outstanding

student, always studying hard and getting good results. TLC is very proud of her study results. Layki says that, "without TLC's support, my family's poverty would limit my opportunity to get a higher education." For now she is hopeful of finishing the Upper Secondary School.

She says,

*I want to be a doctor in the future, and I want to be a good citizen. I am never hopeless or unhappy, even though I was born in a poor family, because I have TLC's support.*

## FACES OF TLC

### SEN SE

Deputy Director

Se has been an integral part of This Life Cambodia since 2008, and brought with him a wealth of enthusiasm and knowledge from his previous role as Assistant Director in a local community development organisation. Se graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English from Build Bright University in 2009, and completed a Master's of Public Administration at the Royal University of Law and Economics in 2012. As the Deputy Director of This Life Cambodia Se supports the Executive Director in ensuring effective internal operations and organisational management including administrative, financial, and human resource policies and procedures. Se feels he is very lucky to have been born into a family who values education and he shares these values in his work. Se is keen to see a better Cambodia and believes that education can enable Cambodian citizens to achieve the lives they aspire to.





# COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY

## INTRODUCTION

The Community Research and Consultancy Program (CRCP) started in January 2011. The aim of this program is to provide information and services on issues affecting the provision of public education and human rights in Cambodia to communities, NGOs, government ministries, academics, and the general public.

CRCP is structured into three projects; Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Consultancy. The Research Project conducts high-quality research on areas deemed important to TLC's other programs. These topics typically include those that are beyond the daily activities of each program, but have clear implications for program design. Research helps TLC address complex issues such as cost barriers to education, the social implications of private tutoring, or factors of stress caused by child imprisonment.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Project conducts activities across all of TLC's programs to ensure programs are meeting their planned objectives and targets, to ensure we are being accountable to those that fund our projects and to the communities that we work with, and to ensure we are continually improving the way we work in communities. Put simply, this project keeps TLC on-track to meet its mission.

The Consultancy Project connects TLC to third-party individuals, or organisations working in educational development that seek TLC's help. This project ensures TLC is able to perform consultancies and properly manages each contract without taking other TLC staff away from programmatic activities. Consultancy activities help connect TLC to other NGOs, government, and academic communities involved in educational development, by providing services where TLC has conducted research or obtained experience, knowledge, and expertise through its programs.

The objectives of CRCP are:

1. To conduct research on areas that directly relate to TLC programs
2. To monitor and evaluate TLC programs to ensure they are meeting their goals and objectives, and are in accordance with TLC's mission
3. To consult with third-party individuals or organisations involved in educational development in Cambodia

## ACTIVITIES

The major activities of CRCP during the fiscal year 2011-2012, included the continuation of research into private tutoring, monitoring and evaluation of TLC's programs, staff recruitment, and consultancy.

Research about the social implications of private tutoring, funded by the Open Society Institute in collaboration with Lehigh University, was finalised in mid 2012. The research addressed the reasons private tutoring existed, including the supply and demand of education provision and the structural deficiencies within a developing education system. Our research found that private tutoring is evolving as a parallel system of education, with the potential to further limit access to a quality public education in Cambodia. The research intended to express ideas on the topic to provide communities and education development partners with more information to address these problems. The report of this research was written in both English and Khmer. The



CRCP conducting surveys with School Support Committee - Chub Ta Trav Lower Secondary School



CRCP meeting with villagers to discuss arsenic in water issues - Sambour Village, Prey Veng Province

Khmer report was published by TLC and will be distributed through our local networks.

Internal monitoring and evaluation on TLC's programs has also continued throughout 2011-12. CRCP monitored and evaluated the Lower Secondary School Development Program (LSSDP) over the course of the year. CRCP finalised the LSSDP Report by concluding that the school's self-dependency was not strong enough for Krabei Riel Lower Secondary School to continue school development activities without TLC support. The program was recommended to extend for another year, with a more direct focus on capacity building for the School Support Committee.

Similarly, CRCP worked on the This Life Beyond Bars (TLBB) Program, with monitoring and evaluation activities taking place across two financial years, (February 2011 - January 2012), as well as two six-monthly evaluations. In addition, the Vocational Training Project of TLBB requires weekly data for monitoring. The TLBB year 1 evaluation revealed a very good outcome to reflect the achievements

of the program, and shaped its programmatic activities for year 2. Additionally, TLBB's 6 monthly evaluations were also positive. For instance, in Vocational Training Project, children paid much more attention to training. Their skills were observed to improve and, more importantly, children had improved their behaviour and outlook.

Staff changes and expansion is another area of progress for the CRCP. In March 2012, a new Senior Program Officer was employed, and a new Program Coordinator was recruited at the end of June, 2012.

CRCP has seen many major achievements within their research and consultancy work. CRCP completed its own research on private tutoring in 6 schools; worked on a TS Foundation Evaluation on Arsenic Water Filtration Systems by collecting data both in Cambodia and India; is working to assist PhD candidate research for the University of Hong Kong's survey on the issue of private tutoring in Cambodia; and is coordinating Cornucopia to film a short movie about private tutoring in Cambodia.



## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

- Presented research findings on private tutoring at meetings and conferences, including for the Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI), the World History Association (WHA), the Comparative & International Education Society (CIES), and EDUCAM
- Hosted a Survey Method Workshop in collaboration with Hong Kong University
- Wrote reports on TLBB year 1 evaluation, LSSDP year 2 evaluation and completed the Private Tutoring Report (in Khmer for TLC, and in English for OSI)
- Helped to coordinate Cornucopia to conduct filming on private tutoring in Cambodia (field and interview translation)



CRCP officer interpreting for "Private Tutoring" video - Krabei Riel

## FACES OF TLC

### HANG PISSETH

CRCP Program Coordinator



Pisseh comes from Phnom Penh, and moved to Siem Reap to pursue his interest in education program monitoring, evaluation and research at This Life Cambodia. Pisseh holds a Bachelor's of Khmer Literature and a Master's of Education majoring in Educational Management and Planning from the Royal University of Phnom Penh. He also holds a Teaching degree from the National Institute of Education. Pisseh's expertise is in educational planning, monitoring and evaluation, research methodologies, and software programs for statistical analysis. Pisseh has also worked as a teacher at Samdech Euv High School in Siem Reap, and as a private teacher, lecturer, editor, translator and researcher in Phnom Penh. Pisseh's background in research and program evaluation, combined with his experience in the Cambodian public education system and his commitment to This Life Cambodia's mission makes him a confident leader of the Community Research and Consultancy Program.

## FAST FACTS

NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH ON PRIVATE TUTORING = 444

**Number of parents who participated in the research on Private Tutoring = 23**

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE RESEARCH ON PRIVATE TUTORING = 26

**Number of training events organized by CRCP = 2**

NUMBER OF CONSULTANCY CLIENTS: 2 PHD STUDENTS, 1 FOUNDATION, 1 UNIVERSITY

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

| AS AT 30 JUNE 2012                                 |      | 2012           |
|--|------|----------------|
|  | Note | USD            |
| <b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>                              |      |                |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents                          | 4    | 166,399        |
| Staff Advances                                     |      | 4,947          |
| Rental Deposit                                     |      | 1,350          |
| Prepayments  |      | 282            |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>                        |      | <b>172,978</b> |
| <b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>                          |      |                |
| Property, Plant and Equipment                      | 5    | 7,294          |
| <b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>                    |      | <b>7,294</b>   |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                                |      | <b>180,272</b> |
| <b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>                         |      |                |
| Accounts Payable                                   |      | 1,653          |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b>                   |      | <b>1,653</b>   |
| <b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>                     |      |                |
| Tax Payable on Staff Saving Scheme                 |      | 1,327          |
| Staff Saving Scheme                                |      | 4,578          |
| <b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>               |      | <b>5,905</b>   |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                           |      | <b>7,558</b>   |
| <b>Net Assets</b>                                  |      | <b>172,714</b> |
| <b>Fund Balance</b>                                |      |                |
| Accumulated Funds                                  |      | 121,230        |
| Current Year Excess of Receipts over Disbursements |      | 51,484         |
| <b>TOTAL FUND BALANCE</b>                          |      | <b>172,714</b> |



## STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

| FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2012              |      | 2012           |
|--|------|----------------|
|  | Note | USD            |
| <b>RECEIPTS</b>                              |      |                |
| Grant Receipts                               | 6    | 144,944        |
| General Donations                            |      | 71,561         |
| Other Income                                 |      | 27,204         |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>                        |      | <b>243,709</b> |
| <b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>                         |      |                |
| Central Office Costs                         | 7    | 20,058         |
| This Life Beyond the Bars Program            | 8    | 80,254         |
| Student Assistance Program                   | 9    | 25,228         |
| Lower Secondary School Development Program   | 10   | 36,015         |
| Community Research and Consultancy Program   | 11   | 30,670         |
| <b>Total Disbursements</b>                   |      | <b>192,225</b> |
| <b>EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS</b> |      | <b>51,484</b>  |

## 7. CENTRAL OFFICE COSTS AND OTHER EXPENDITURE

|                                     | 2012          |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
|                                     | USD           |
| Travel Costs                        | 7,781         |
| Unrealised Loss on Foreign Exchange | 2,841         |
| Other expenditure                   | 1,931         |
| Staff Costs                         | 1,730         |
| Professional Fees                   | 1,007         |
| Depreciation                        | 991           |
| Office Equipment                    | 818           |
| Donations                           | 550           |
| Repairs and Maintenance             | 493           |
| Office Supplies                     | 461           |
| Bank Charges                        | 302           |
| Communication Expenses              | 235           |
| Advertising                         | 219           |
| Recruitment                         | 217           |
| Insurance                           | 169           |
| Membership Fees                     | 122           |
| Office Rent                         | 99            |
| Office Utilities                    | 92            |
|                                     | <b>20,058</b> |



## 8. THIS LIFE BEYOND BARS PROGRAM

|                                | 2012          |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
|                                | USD           |
| Staff Costs: Direct            | 27,624        |
| Staff Costs: Indirect          | 19,411        |
| Central Office Costs           | 6,772         |
| Vocational Training Program    | 6,384         |
| Travel Costs                   | 3,781         |
| Children of Prisoners          | 3,012         |
| Community Development Project  | 2,558         |
| Travel for Minors              | 2,479         |
| Capacity Building upon Release | 2,364         |
| Family Support                 | 1,556         |
| Audit Fees                     | 1,512         |
| Other Program Costs            | 1,455         |
| Fixed Assets and Equipment     | 555           |
| Repairs and Maintenance        | 551           |
| Staff Capacity Building        | 240           |
|                                | <b>80,254</b> |

## 9. STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

|                         | 2012          |
|-------------------------|---------------|
|                         | USD           |
| Bicycles                | 5,782         |
| School Supplies         | 5,059         |
| Private Tutoring        | 3,857         |
| Staff Costs: Direct     | 3,589         |
| Staff Costs: Indirect   | 3,719         |
| Travel Costs            | 1,176         |
| Central Office Costs    | 1,122         |
| Repairs and Maintenance | 738           |
| Other Costs             | 186           |
|                         | <b>25,228</b> |

## 10. LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

|                                 | 2012          |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
|                                 | USD           |
| School Development/Construction | 14,759        |
| Staff Costs: Direct Costs       | 7,700         |
| Staff Costs: Indirect Costs     | 3,052         |
| Per Diem and Accommodation      | 2,588         |
| Transport and Travel            | 2,081         |
| Professional Fees               | 1,526         |
| Teaching/Learning Materials     | 1,369         |
| Central Office Costs            | 1,184         |
| Event hosting                   | 1,003         |
| Program Stationary              | 392           |
| Staff Capacity Building         | 331           |
| Private Tutoring                | 30            |
|                                 | <b>36,015</b> |



## 11. COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY PROGRAM

|                            | 2012          |
|----------------------------|---------------|
|                            | USD           |
| Staff Costs: Direct Costs  | 18,332        |
| Staff Costs: Indirect      | 4,272         |
| Travel Costs               | 4,073         |
| Central Office Costs       | 2,145         |
| Fixed Assets and Equipment | 850           |
| Other Program Costs        | 547           |
| Repairs and Maintenance    | 227           |
| Recruitment Expenses       | 224           |
|                            | <b>30,670</b> |



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