



1

# ASIAN OUTREACH CAMBODIA SECOND QUARTER REPORT 2015.



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# DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

*“What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like.”*

*- Augustine*

## WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY?

2

To identify what transformational ministry is, I was thinking about the incarnation of Jesus Christ, who was sent by God the Father from heaven to earth. By being fully human he built meaningful relationships, listened to the cries of mankind and understood their hearts. He experienced their joys and their sufferings. He made Himself a servant to everyone to win as many as possible as stated in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22. As sinners, we are all unclean and only the blood of Jesus can cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If God did not send Jesus to earth as a man, we would remain lost.

Over the past 21 years of experience working in poor communities through development agencies like AOC, I have come to some understanding of transformational ministry. It means a change in destructive perceptions and mindsets which affect behaviour, practices and attitudes. The challenge we face in Cambodia is the shortage of Godly role models committed to walk alongside people to address not only the physical and economic needs, but the spiritual, emotional and societal. Romans 12:2 says, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect”.

When you walk through a rural community in Cambodia, what happens when you see and/or hear children crying? Why are they crying? The obvious answer is they may be hungry. But the point is we will not know how to respond appropriately unless we get into the lives of the children, which means getting to know what is going on in their hearts and in their families.

The team at Asian Outreach Cambodia spends much of our time walking, with in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the communities God called us to, so that we can understand not just the visual physical needs, but those from within the hearts of the people we serve.



Thank you to all our friends and partners of AOC as you pray and support us so that we can touch lives one at a time and transform communities for His Kingdom.

Blessings,  
Thong Romanea

# ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

## PERSONNEL UPDATE

Chorm Chariya, the Preschool Facilitator for the Stars of Peace project resigned in June after a year due to expectant arrival of a second child to the family. Soon Sokunthea was hired in her place to begin the transition.

We had to sadly say goodbye to two valuable staff members in May. Ruth Sax from the U.K. who has been with us for a year as our Communication Coordinator and Yon Lakena who worked as an Agricultural Trainer in Prey Veng province.

A message from Ruth: *"Well what a year and how fast it's gone. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at AOC this past year as communications coordinator. I have learnt and experienced so much, moments that will be memories which last a life time. Thank you to the whole team at AOC, you are all wonderful and I will miss you all. Keep doing what your doing. Blessings and love."*

Thida Ouk, the Assistant Project Manager for Stars of Peace, completed a one-month course in Malaysia as part of a diploma program in Holistic Childhood Development she is enrolled in.

## TEAMS UPDATE

June started the season of teams and visitors with Rob King and Marcus Thompson, from New Zealand, joining the Stung Treng staff for a few weeks to help in the construction and to encourage them.

Other New Zealanders, Shane and Heather Mitchell, come to us with knowledge in CPR and First Aid. They trained the team in Phnom Penh before heading up to Stung Treng to do the same and where they will spend the next three months in various capacities, depending on the needs.

Jason Berry and Brandon Gossett from one of our partners, Neverthirst, arrived at the end of June with a donor team from the United States. They invited a couple of AOC staff members, Romanea Thong and Edith Watt, to a dinner to share about the work of AOC. It was a great opportunity to share with new and potential donors the importance and value of our partnership.

Impacting communities and changing lives is exciting and rewarding and we are blessed and encouraged by the support and partnerships that God brings along the way.

## OPERATIONS UPDATE

The 2nd quarter started off with a celebration for Khmer New Year! This is the biggest party for our AOC for the year and one we all look forward to! All the families and local board members were invited to an evening of games, food and dancing.

His Excellency, Mr Hap O'maly, from the Ministry of Rural Development, made a visit to Stung Treng to see our projects. He was very impressed with and appreciative of all we've done, especially the Water and Sanitation project. He communicated that AOC has contributed 75% towards the government's goal of making potable water accessible to every village. He was also happy to learn about the plan to build a training centre later this year.

As a result of the minister's visit, Romanea Thong was invited to represent AOC at a meeting for NGOs in Phnom Penh to receive a Certificate of Appreciation.

We had an Operations Team meeting in May to review our financial situation, led by our Finance Manager and Director.

We are grateful for donations designated towards our transportation needs. We bought a new truck and our very old van got a long awaited face-lift on the outside to the point where it is now unrecognizable!

Edith Watt, the Program Operations Director, held the first Project Managers meeting which will occur every two months. The goal is for the managers to support and pray for each other as well as work more strategically and collaboratively as a team.

In May and June, Edith also led the Project Managers and Team Leaders through a process to formulate a strategic plan for our projects for the next three years. We will continue to work on it into the next quarter.

### Prayer Points:

- Funds for projects and staff retreat
- Wisdom as we work on the strategic plan
- Children's health in the communities we work in



# PROJECT BUDGET BREAKDOWN

PER CHILD / FAMILY	Monthly	Annually
<b>Assisting Children to School (ACTS):</b>		
Sponsor a child to school (313 children)	\$10.00	\$120.00
Extra tuition class (6 classes/253 children)	\$5.00	\$60.00
Happy Children Club (3 Clubs/160 children)	\$3.00	\$36.00
Parenting training (100 parents)	\$2.00	\$24.00
Special event (1000 children/adults)	\$1.50	\$18.00
<b>Stars of Peace (SOP)</b>		
Sponsor a child (under 5) to access preschool	\$16.66	\$200.00
Provide a snack for one child in preschool	\$2.50	\$30.00
Provide pre-post natal care for 1 young mother	\$12.50	\$150.00
Support a preschool teacher	\$125.00	\$1,500.00
Parenting training and raising awareness	\$100.00	\$800.00
Health and hygiene awareness/practice	\$100.00	\$800.00
Run International Children's Day (1 event/year)		\$400.00
Run the Family Fun Day (1 event/year)		\$600.00
<b>Agriculture and Livelihoods:</b>		
Training a farmer (1 farmer)	\$38.70	\$387.00
Form Farmer Support Group	\$8.00	\$40.00
Monthly community meeting	\$3.75	\$45.00
Monitoring	\$1.67	\$30.00
Give out loans per family		\$500.00
<b>Water/Sanitation Project:</b>		
For a family to access a safe water wells (50 wells)		\$146.66
One Bio-Sand Filter (450 filters)		\$88.33
One household latrine (450 latrines)		\$128.34
<b>Community Hope Development (CHD):</b>		
Church planting outreach (22 cell groups)	\$400.00	\$4,800.00
Womens' outreach program (60 women)	\$375.00	\$4,500.00
Sunday school class (8 groups-220 children)	\$375.00	\$4,500.00
Church leadership training (3 trainings-35 leaders)	\$375.00	\$4,500.00
Business training (35 families)	\$192.08	\$2,305.00
Youth English/computer classes (80 Students)	\$375.00	\$4,500.00
Transportation (192 times for 4 staff)	\$83.33	\$1,000.00
Church leaders retreat (35 pastors)	\$125.00	\$1,500.00
Christmas outreach (500 villagers)	\$125.00	\$1,500.00

All amounts in USD

4





5

# PROJECT REPORTS

<b>HEALTH</b>	<b>6</b>
Water & Sanitation	6
Community Hope Development	7
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>8</b>
Agriculture & Livelihoods	8
Model Training	9
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>10</b>
Assisting Children to School	10
Stars of Peace	11



6

## WATER & SANITATION

Jesus uses the phrase “living water” symbolically in the Bible to represent the Holy Spirit dwelling in believers sealing them for salvation. When asked by Jesus for water, the Samaritan woman thought he meant physical water, but of course He was referring to the only thing that could quench her thirst forever.

The Water and Sanitation project has the unique opportunity to offer people water that is clean and safe water; water that is drinkable. It is physical water that is critical for the sustenance of a healthy life. But, we have an even greater calling to give the people we serve the Living Water and so we endeavour to do both whenever we go into a village to teach, build or monitor.

Mrs. Hak Sokhoeun is a village leader and pastor in a village in Siem Bouk district, Stung Treng. AOC came to her commune, Kosh Sampeay, to share that we are a Christian organization wanting to provide wells to the community. She and the villagers have benefitted greatly from the installation of a hand pump funded by Neverthirst, a partner of AOC. She said, “Thank God so much because now my family, villagers and church have clean water for everyday use and drinking. Now I won’t need to walk a long way to bring water back home, so I will be able to save and spend more time with my family. It will also give my villagers and church good health and through this project, I and the other church leaders have a lot of chances to share the gospel and build relationships; I believe that God will open people’s hearts through this project. I love partnering with AOC-Neverthirst to spread the Kingdom of God!”

It has been a busy quarter for the Water & Sanitation project in Stung Treng. We formed and trained six volunteer groups, constructed 18 wells, 165 bio-sand filters, 175 latrines, and conducted 10 community health promotions, seven beneficiaries’ training and 10 village development committee meetings.

In Prey Veng province, we delivered beneficiaries’ training and eight village development committee meetings.

### Story of Change



# HEALTH

80% of Cambodians die due to preventable disease through unclean water and inadequate sanitation practices. 70% of the rural population still do not use a latrine or water filtration system, 50% do not have any access to clean water at all. Basic health knowledge is also a large contributor.



Mrs. Theng Long is 32 with two children living in Chvang village in Stung Treng. They are rice and vegetable farmers.

The family gets their drinking water from wells, canals, ponds and streams which cause regular bouts of stomach aches and diarrhea, directly affecting their income because so much time and money is spent on getting treatment.

One day Mrs. Long heard from the village leader that AOC was coming to promote the water and sanitation project, which made her and her husband very happy. Shortly after, the AOC staff came to construct and distribute water filters and toilets to the community. She quickly registered to receive a water filter and latrine. When she started using the water filter she said, "I'm so happy because now I have clean water for my daily use and don't have to use dirty water anymore".

She believes 100% in the benefits of the water filter and she no longer has to spend time boiling the water to sterilize it; she also saves a great deal of money because the family is ill a lot less often! Now she is able to fund her children's education. She is thankful for her new clean water supply, to AOC and wants us to continue to benefit others in her community.

## COMMUNITY HOPE DEVELOPMENT (CHD)

7

In May, CHD initiated and facilitated a meeting in Stung Treng for 26 church leaders and pastors to come together to discuss ways to work more collaboratively and begin to formulate a church planting strategy to reach villages. Not only was it welcomed by the attendees to be given the opportunity to be more united and coordinated in ministry efforts and to have a common goal, but they found it refreshing to network and share ideas and opinions.

One of the outcomes of the meeting that was identified was the need for more Biblical training and teaching and evangelism skills. Another is the desire to meet together every quarter.

In Kandal province, the Youth Development Group conducted a youth forum during the first week of May for students at Lvea Sor High School in Beoung Krum village. The goal of the forum was to educate the youth on the increasing economic integration of the ASEAN countries by the end of 2015 because it has direct impact on their future as part of the workforce. One hundred students attended the event. With an attentive crowd, the CHD team grabbed the unique opportunity to share the Gospel with them!

Other activities included a meeting with 16 cell church leaders from Prey Veng and Kandal provinces to consider how to achieve independence from outside resources. Our female CHD staff member and AOC's Director of Program

Operations formed a group consisting of eight members of the women's empowerment project. The women were selected based on their commitment and passion for Christ and their communities. The goal is to disciple and encourage them to impact their families, friends, and neighbours in word and deed and to be role models for other believers.

Finally, 15 families from the HIV/AIDS Livelihood program are getting some good results from their businesses. We will continue to mentor and coach them on business practices. Seven families have accepted Christ and are praying for the remaining eight!

### Story of Change

Phat Sophea is 19 years old and lives in Lvea Em district in Kandal province. His father died when he was very young and his mother earns a living as a farmer. Sophea has one brother and three sisters.



Sophea went to Phnom Penh to study English and computer for three months to become more employable, but he quickly discovered that he couldn't use these skills because he had learned only to type in Khmer and his English was very poor. He decided to return to Lvea Em because he couldn't find a job.

He wanted to finish high school but couldn't afford the extra tuition classes that would assist him in fulfilling the requirements for the final year. Then he heard about AOC's cooperation with the school in offering computer and English classes, so he enrolled. After only three few months, he is competent on the computer to the point of looking for a job at the commune department as an administrator. He can type in English now!

Sophea said, "My family and I are so happy that I only pay 500 riel per hour for my computer class at the school. This is really amazing because it is so cheap and it is changing my life. I am so thankful to AOC for giving me a second chance to learn computer and some English conversation. I also told my brother, sisters and friends about AOC's classes and asked them to join with me. Finally, I really know about Jesus's love and his mercy. The AOC staff are role models for me. Thanks for their prayers and support".



8

## AGRICULTURE AND LIVELIHOODS

The staff of the project were intentional in empowering and exhorting the local church to impact its own community. Six volunteers were selected and trained to share the gospel and live out their Christian lives faithfully on a daily basis so that all will see living testimonies of who Jesus is. They were also equipped with skills to enable them to help the Agriculture Livelihood team monitor progress in the project, disburse loans and collect loan repayments. The volunteers enjoyed serving their community and the opportunities which often presented themselves to share about Jesus. This is just one example of AOC's desire to increase the profile of the local Church and to make it visible in the communities God has called us to work in.

During this quarter, the project focused on training 32 beneficiaries on the following three objectives:

1. To reduce environmental pollution, farming expenses and increase farming income.
2. To improve health and hygiene practice.
3. To improve nutrition in people's diets.

The spiritual was incorporated into every training, such as prayer and the involvement of the local church.

The project also formed two Farmer Support Groups and gave out loans to 46 families with each one successfully paying it back on time.

The dry season extended longer than usual into June which posed a problem with crop yield.

# INCOME

34% of Cambodians live on less than \$1 per day. The average household makes \$70 per month. At least 12% of poor people are landless, with no way of making an income. Due to lack of income and food security, many children have to work the fields rather than go to school.



## Story of Change

Barn Ein is 38 years old and lives in Meloung village with her husband, Yorn Than, and their two sons. The family has a half-hectare rice field and a small plot of land close to their home; however, the land fails to produce enough rice or fruit so the sons have no other choice but to work in Phnom Penh.

In November and December 2014, Barn Ein joined AOC's agriculture training after hearing about it from other farmers. She learned current agricultural techniques, including integrated farming, natural pesticides and fertilizer production, and organic home vegetable gardening. Barn Ein began growing bitter gourds, eggplants, long beans, water glories, leaf lettuces and other vegetables according to the seasons. She then sold them directly to villagers in her community and to other distant areas through a middle man. The competitive edge Barn Ein has over other vendors is that her vegetables are chemical free. She also started raising two mother pigs and selling the piglets.

Now Barn Ein can earn around \$450USD over a four-month period, improving income and food security. As a bonus, she can look forward to the pigs producing more piglets which can sell for \$40 each. Barn Ein says, "Thank you very much to AOC for giving me knowledge about raising pigs, making natural pesticides and growing vegetables. Before my land was unused and wasted, but I can now make money from it!"



## MODEL TRAINING FARM

The daily operation of the Model Training Farm (MTF) in Stung Treng has incarnational ministry as a central theme as we do life together with our workers. We have a number of casual day workers who are labouring alongside committed believers passionate about sharing the Gospel in words and the way in which they live. We offer a one-hour class on the fundamentals of the Christian faith that is purely voluntary, but all the casual staff have chosen to attend! By demonstrating how our Christian staff work and deal with everyday life problems, they are witnessing up close what a life dedicated to Christ looks like.

The MTF is in its third year of operation. With an infrastructure in place now, we are shifting our focus to refining and training local farmers on intensive farming techniques. With the aid of small loans, beneficiaries will be able to implement them in their own villages. We have taught 30 farmers this quarter, most of which were women!



Another focus has been on developing a Natural Pig Farming system. A total of 16 piglets were born in March. With a goal of reducing the input costs, we are in the process of putting a plan in place for bulk feeding. The next cycle of piglets will be on offer to beneficiaries along with competitively priced feed to ensure a profit for farmers. Of the 30 farmers we trained, a few specifically chose to try pig raising over farming; therefore, we hope to see the pig farming system implemented in some of the villages by the end of the year.

Some of the challenges we faced have been with the health of our animals due to the heat and humidity that have been unusually high even for Cambodia from April to June. Infections took a long time to heal and bacteria growth produced skin conditions we have had to attend to.



10

# EDUCATION

57% of children have not completed primary education, and less than 20% finish secondary school. Due to poverty 20% of children ages 5-9 are involved in child labor, this number rises to 47% for children aged 10-14. 60% of schoolteachers received, at most, secondary education.

## ASSISTING CHILDREN TO SCHOOL

ACTS focuses on the holistic development of our children, attending to their educational needs within the context of the spiritual, societal, economical and physical. To fulfill this goal, we do not limit our activities to the children, but also work directly with their parents to help them understand the importance of education, good parenting, basic healthcare and the children's rights. In addition, ACTS project staff also assist parents to look for income generation opportunities so that they can increase their independence and ability to send their children to school without our help.

As part of the ACTS program, we offer extra tuition classes to our children to augment what they learn in regular class time. They have proven to be effective in improving their school performances. In tracking a grade two group consisting of 47 students, 85% achieved high scores, 13% average and 2% got low marks in mathematics; the Khmer literature exam showed 85% with high scores, 12% average and 3% received low marks.

Each year, we provide the children with two sets of shoes for school; we gave out the second pair in May.

Cambodia celebrated International Children's Day with the rest of the world on June 1st. Our staff and the National Director and Program Operations Director joined in on the festivities at a primary school we support in Prey Veng province. The local representatives included the Chief of the District in Education, School Director, teachers, and commune and village leaders.

### Story of Change

Phorn Yaran is a 13 year old boy and a grade seven student at Porieng High School. His family consists of an older brother, his mother and father. His parents are the main leaders at their village church.



Yaran failed to take his schooling seriously the past few years. His laziness and skipping out to gamble with his friends naturally led to dismal grades. Concerned about her son's future, his mother often asked the ACTS staff for advice and guidance. Committed to coming alongside the parents, they visited their home regularly and have been a constant source of prayer, support and encouragement. They also faithfully spent time with Yaran to build relationship and provide Godly mentorship.

After two years being a part of the ACTS project, Yaran's attitude and behavior changed dramatically. He now listens to his parents and puts effort into his studies. He also consistently attends the Happy Children Club (HCC) twice a week where he excels in telling bible stories and leading games. The unconditional love of God, shown tangibly through the ACTS staff members, has greatly impacted this young man's life.

In collaboration with AOC's Community Hope Development project, Yaran's family was given a loan to start a pig raising business which has improved their income and living conditions. His parents have a renewed hope of sending their son to post-secondary school to give him a good future. Yaran has a dream to be an engineer.

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## STARS OF PEACE (SOP)

11

The Stars of Peace team approaches each day in Prek Ho by living out what they believe in. We spend a great deal of time being in the community talking to the people to learn about their needs and advocating for the children and building healthy families. Most of the project activities were established at the request of the families and community. We believe that lasting changes can only take place if the motivation comes from the people themselves. Our job is to equip them with the knowledge to make wise decisions for their children and families and to offer our support.

This second quarter of the year has been very busy with the move from a small wooden one-room building to a much bigger concrete one with two floors. We had to put the project activities on hold for seven weeks because of the renovation, Khmer New Year and school vacation.



The move was definitely the highlight of the quarter. We spent a month renovating both the inside and outside and installing a playground. We had help from some of the families and children in the community. It was a lot of work and the cost was higher than anticipated, but the decision to move was the right one. We have been able to increase the enrollment to 40 children and the children love their new space! It is spacious, airy and not hot like the old one! And the playground is a hit!

In addition to the operation of the preschool, the team visited 12 mothers and six babies. Also, 35 adults and 85 children attended the International Children's Day celebration.

### Story of Change

Kak-rona is four years old and the youngest of four siblings. Both his parents work full-time so they do not have much time to spend with him. When he enrolled in the Stars of Peace preschool last year, he quickly became known as the most well behaved student. He often gets stickers and good feedback from his teachers, but because he is so quiet, Kak-rona had a hard time making friends.

During home visits, the team learned that Kak-rona is spoiled because he is the youngest. When he turned three, the parents found him to be difficult because of his stubbornness, short temper and disrespect – attitudes he learned from other children and neighbours. The parents tried to put more effort into being with him but it was challenging because of their work schedules. When they learned that there was a preschool starting in their own village, they were excited and registered him.

The SoP team and Kak-rona's parents are delighted to see his progress in just one year. He is hardworking, kind and brave and maintains good relationships with his friends. The parents are very happy they made the choice to help him at a young age. They are grateful for the project and the care given to their child and community.

The great strides Kak-rona is making is not solely due to being at the preschool. It started with his family and the changes his parents intentionally made to help him as well as sending him to preschool. It is a fulfillment of the SoP project goal to work alongside the family, caregivers and the community to provide young ones with their basic needs, such as basic education, good nutrition, health and hygiene practices, and pre/post-natal care and support.

Kak-rona and Van are living examples to show the people of Prek Ho that they too can change their own lives first, then their families and finally, even the entire community.

**Thank you for all your support. It helps us make a difference though it is one small step at a time.**