



HEARTPRINT ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2020 - JUNE 2021



ABOUT US

Emerging from a compassionate action, a Heartprint is that which leaves a positive impression on your heart.

As an Australian-based charity dedicated to improving lives and empowering futures in Cambodia, our goal is to leave a generation-spanning heartprint on the individuals of our community in Siem Reap.

Our MISSION is to cut the cycle that perpetuates poverty and build new roads to lives of elevated potential and self-sustainability.

We BELIEVE every human deserves to be treated as human and live with equal rights and opportunities.

We are REALISTIC enough to know there is a lot of imbalance in humanity and want to do our bit to change it. We know we alone can't correct a global imbalance, but by working one family at a time in our small community in Cambodia, we can help even the scales here.

Our GOALS are to build houses for people living in extreme poverty; provide structure that promotes and supports individual responsibility, education, training and self-sustainability; provide sanitation and clean water to meet basic human needs and prevent the spread of disease.

Our COVID-19 GOALS are all of the above PLUS ensuring families in our community have basic food supplies and children continue to get some schooling even though the official schools are often closed.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HEARTPRINT

It's hard to talk about Heartprint without first talking about the recent history of Cambodia. While it's true that people in every country, regardless of its relative prosperity, face challenges, Cambodians have had a more tragic trail and more "adversity mountains" to summit than most.

Forty-six years ago, in 1975, Pol Pot-led forces effectively took control of Phnom Penh and all of Cambodia when they forced city dwellers into the countryside and declared that it was now Year Zero. The next four years of Khmer Rouge control harboured some of the most brutal atrocities in modern history. Starvation, disease, and mass executions killed an estimated 1.5 million people in a country of 7.5 million.

Many, perhaps a majority, of those executed were considered to be enemies of the state because they were educated: doctors, teachers, nurses, musicians, lawyers, monks.

The brutality beyond imagination that was Khmer Rouge rule, was preceded and followed by civil war that continued until the early 1990s. When at last the brutality ended, it must have honestly felt like a Year Zero in Cambodia: starting from scratch. How do you teach children when all the books were destroyed and all the teachers are dead? How do you build hospitals, prevent and treat disease when doctors exist only in the anonymous mounds of the Killing Fields? How do you build an economy when so few can read? Without schools, healthcare, housing, or sanitation how do you rebuild communities that prosper and revive an ancient culture of great accomplishment?

It takes a lot of time and more than a village. It takes a world, really. Most of all, it takes the endless determination of Cambodians.

Fast forward to 2015 and the progress was astounding given the starting point of nearly nothing. Provincial schools had been established and there was some access to higher education. There was a growing number of doctors, nurses and hospitals. Vocational training programs. International business investments and millions of international tourists. Peace. Yet, poverty remained rampant, education elusive to too many, and people still needed a hand up. They needed lots of Heartprints.

That's why Garry, Wendy, and Riannan founded Heartprint in November of 2015 in a small village in Siem Reap, home to the famed Angkor temples.



[Watch our Story.](#)





OUR WORK

The Heartprint approach has always been a holistic one. We saw a desperate need for housing, water and sanitation and began our efforts there. But we also saw a need to help build life structures and individual accountability. Children needed to be able to get to schools that sometimes were not in walking distance. The sick and elderly needed transportation to clinics. Impoverished new moms needed a hand up in providing essentials for their babies. When Covid hit, they needed food.

The last six years have seen us maintain our original focus, while also providing a variety of support structures for the families in our village. This report is an overview of our activities. It's important to note that, as it has everywhere, Covid-19 severely restricted our activities in many areas and expanded our activities in other directions. Vaccines were not scheduled to be available in our province until mid-July. Our hope is they begin to allow us all to return to more of a normal situation in 2021-2022.

MEET THE TEAM

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE HEARTPRINTS

STAFF

BOR SREY PHEAP
SIM THANN
RAM SREY NOY
HAY SREY MAO
TEP SREY NEAR
SIM THOM
WENDY O'BRIEN

BOARD

RIANNAN DE LA TORRE
GARRY O'BRIEN
SAMANTHA O'BRIEN
TAYLA MARKS
JORDANA WILSON
BRAD O'BRIEN
MARK CALDWELL
ALEISHA HOWEY



OUR HEARTPRINTS THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

2015 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 2 HOUSES
- 1 TOILET

2016 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 13 HOUSES
- 3 TOILETS
- 2 WELLS
- 7 BICYCLES

2017 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 10 HOUSES
- 6 TOILETS
- 3 WELLS
- 15 BICYCLES
- 4 SPONSORED STUDENTS

2018 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 13 HOUSES
- 11 TOILETS
- 8 WELLS
- 54 BICYCLES
- 19 SPONSORED STUDENTS

2019 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 15 HOUSES
- 10 TOILETS
- 7 WELLS
- 91 BICYCLES
- 26 SPONSORED STUDENTS

2020 FINANCIAL YEAR

- 11 HOUSES
- 11 TOILETS
- 7 WELLS
- 23 BICYCLES
- 25 SPONSORED STUDENTS



OUR HEARTPRINTS THIS FINANCIAL YEAR



5 HOUSES



3 WELLS



26 TOILETS



35 BICYCLES



15 BABY BASKETS



30 SPONSORED STUDENTS

COMMUNITY BUILDS

Building homes, sanitation facilities and wells was the original core mission of Heartprint. Here, a house is not just a house. It's a future. It's opportunities and possibilities. Too many families in our community live hand-to-mouth and survive in makeshift structures that provide little shelter, leak furiously in our monsoon rains, and are especially unsafe for children. Most people don't want a hand-out; they just want an equal start. A safe and sanitary house that provides family safety and comes with real, individual responsibility in its ongoing maintenance helps people thrive. It helps their children get to school on a regular basis. It becomes a home.

We build stilted houses in and around Siem Reap. We construct them from concrete, steel frames and tin surrounds, with wooden floors. They have lockable windows and doors to provide safety for the family and security for their possessions.

If there is sufficient space on the building site, we also provide a toilet and well for clean drinking water if currently unavailable.

Before Covid called a halt to international travel, many of our houses were built with the assistance of interns and volunteers from overseas. All of our home projects require the building assistance of family members if they are physically and mentally able.

These houses are provided for families in the most extreme need, identified through a strict vetting process.



FOOD RELIEF (AND MORE)

When Covid-19 first shocked the world in early 2020, things also began to quickly contract in Cambodia, especially in Siem Reap which is so dependent on international tourism. Honestly, Siem Reap began to resemble a ghost town. Hotels and restaurants closed their doors, tuk tuk drivers left with no one to transport, vendors with no customers to supply. Jobs plummeted overnight with no safety net to cushion the fall. With so many already living in poverty, it quickly became evident they would be forced into even more extreme circumstances.

We knew we had to step up. Our basic mission is to build homes, toilets, wells, and support structures. Our overall mission is to help our community lift itself into financial self-sustainability and they cannot do that if they are starving.

We started a food relief program to help our families make it through what we all hoped would be a short term downturn. Originally we called on our Heart of Gold club to help with funds but soon knew we needed a lot more help than the club could support. Our clarion call was answered at a level that has left lots of prints on our own hearts and we have been able to expand our food support program to include our 62 vetted families and now have funding to continue this through May of 2022. We plan to expand this program to include a total of 90 vetted families beginning in August of 2021.

While tourists and jobs did not come back to Siem Reap during this time, until February of 2021 Cambodia did not experience large numbers of Covid cases. Many markets and small cafes remained open. Schools were open, with precautionary periodic closures.

So we took this opportunity to not only provide food assistance, but expand into more education workshops to continue to help prepare our community for the future.

But as Covid hit with a vengeance in late February, schools were closed with no opening date in sight. Once again, we had to make a tight pivot in order to help meet critical community needs. We hired a certified school teacher to help us develop weekly school packages for children in our village to try to keep their learning on track in Khmer and English. The response was overwhelming. These young people cherish their education. Some of the girls even wore their regular school uniforms to collect their weekly packets. Covid, and the resultant lack of jobs also meant that many expectant moms had no supplies to fulfill the basic needs of their newborns.

Heartprint has always distributed new baby kits and during Covid we expanded this outreach to new moms to give them some comfort and hope as they brought their new family members into the world.



THE HOPE INITIATIVE

(Heartprint Opportunities and Education)



The Objective of HoPE is to create employment and vocational training for disadvantaged people and people with special needs. We provide a welcoming place for all people to come and participate in a safe, non-judgemental environment. There are several “elective” activities within HoPE.



YOUTH GROUP

This initiative is specifically aimed to work with youth at an age that can present many choices; some better than others. By bringing them into the Heartprint community we help them develop life skills and experiences that lead them to make more positive choices. This program began in July of 2020 with a gender-based girls’ program called Bong Srey - “Big Sister” in Khmer. Five girls were hand selected to be our first participants in the ten-week programme. The girls continued with the program after their ten week pilot and in January of 2021 we added five more youth: one girl and four boys.

THE HOPE INITIATIVE CONTINUED



DANCE & MOVEMENT

Also kicked-off in July of 2020, the initial ten week program was run by 'Dance with Tola'. Its purpose is to bring together intellectually challenged children, their peers and family members to dance and move together, to help them understand they are not alone; they are important and loved members of our community. There was a second ten-week session until Covid restrictions and lack of funding required us to put this on hold. But you can see the success for yourself. ([here](#)). This is definitely a program we will work to reinstate when we emerge from the pandemic.



COMPUTER TRAINING

We began this program in 2019, prior to the establishment of HoPE, to teach critical skills to youth with goals of higher education or employment in the tourist or business sectors. When HoPE was established, we simply moved this under its umbrella. Training includes Word, Excel, Google research, Powerpoint and Khmer keyboard skills. We held regular classes until schools were closed because of Covid and plan to continue as restrictions are lifted.



ALL MINDS MATTER

Our counselling programs include one-on-one sessions as well as group sessions to help people understand they are not alone in their difficulties. Sessions are conducted with qualified counsellors and address concerns from addiction to anxiety and depression. We are also in the process of publishing a book about the effects of addiction on children and families. The book, titled, "I Know the World's Worst Secret", is about how addiction impacts our 10 year-old protagonist, Thida.



CAFE BESDOUNG

In the Khmer language, Besdoug means Heart. And in many ways the Heart Cafe helps amplify our work by welcoming the Siem Reap community with open arms, delicious food and training staff to be qualified for the hospitality industry. As the world reopens and tourists return to Cambodia, we know our cafe will grow, train excellent staff for other enterprises, and become a small profit centre for Heartprint. Some people come by just for the pumpkin soup. Stop by for a taste when you're in town.





HEART OF GOLD

Our Heart of Gold Club is our central source of reliable funding from our most dedicated donors and volunteers. Each member contributes on an annual or monthly basis and we honestly would not have made it through this Covid year without them. Their contributions fund our HoPE initiative, Community Builds and general operating expenses incurred by all organizations.

Our members stayed with us through this tough year, some even increasing their donations to ensure we were never short.

Food assistance, elderly care, baby baskets, electric bills: You name it, they helped make it happen this year.



FUNDRAISERS

We also have tremendous support from others who choose to contribute to a specific goal. Some such efforts include:

MATCH IT MAY: When it became clear we would be unable to provide critical food support on an ongoing basis without additional support, we put out a call for help. The response was far beyond what we might have anticipated and allowed us to put aside enough funding to provide food assistance to our designated families through May of 2022.

EPIC WALK: When two interns headed to Cambodia from Australia last year were thwarted in their plan to spend three months helping out at Heartprint, they decided to set off on a supportive adventure at home in Australia. The interns, Aleisha and Charlotte, decided to “go big” since they had to “stay home” and decided on a 12 hour, 50 kilometer walk from Sunrise Beach, Noosa to Dicky’s Beach, Caloundra. Aleisha said people weren’t “too surprised because crazy adventures aren’t far out of our character”, and jumped in to support their effort. With friends and sponsors following their adventure on social media, their absentee internship ended up being a real financial and morale boost for all of us at Heartprint.

CHRISTMAS GIVING: As Cambodia is a primarily Buddhist country, Christmas is not a real holiday here. But we decided to use it as an opportunity to provide both useful and just-for-fun gifts to children who rarely receive any gifts at all. Christmas 2020 looked a lot different from previous ones (Hello, Covid.), but our supporters still pitched in and we were able to provide 338 presents. Lots of very happy faces in times even harder than normal.

GIRLS WITH HAMMERS: Australia-based [Girls with Hammers](#) was a tremendous help to Heartprint this year. Because of their fundraising efforts on our behalf we were able to build one family home, two toilets and provide 35 bikes for kids to get to school.

FOR THE FUTURE

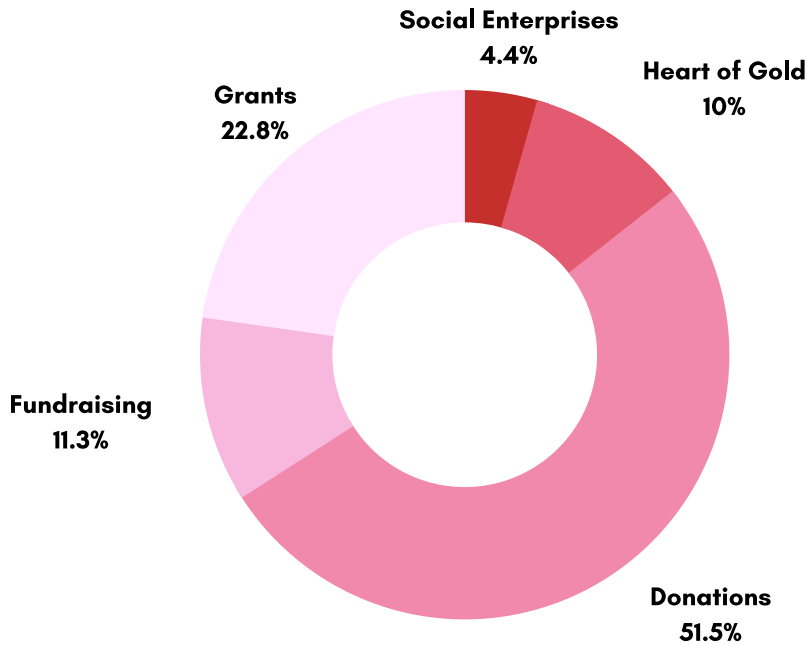
Cambodia has an aggressive national vaccination operation underway and as it extends into Siem Reap we anticipate being able to undertake some projects not possible during Covid restrictions. However, this year has taught us many things, including the importance of being agile in the face of uncontrollable events, such as a pandemic. For now we will carry on with our work as outlined in this report and as circumstances improve we will also aim for the following:

- Purchase a reliable means of transport (a small tuk tuk) to transport small groups for near-by outings, the elderly and ill to clinics, small emergency food drops, and much more.
- Restart our internship and volunteer programs as borders open. Prior to that, we aim to set up “catch-up” Zoom calls with our Cambodian team and our international donors/volunteers/supporters.
- Work to place more of our young people in local training programs.
- Restart our community swimming lessons
- Distribute donated bikes as schools reopen and continue outreach for bike donations.
- Expand the “Silent” initiative for All Minds Matter to include other participants. We aim to hold this in “Silent September”.



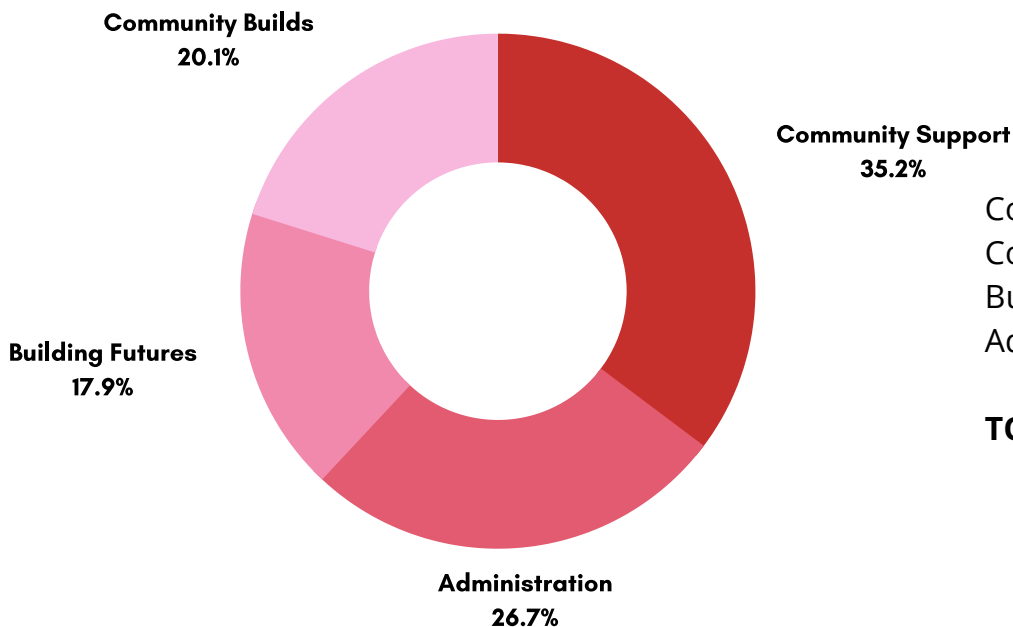
OUR YEAR IN FIGURES

INCOME



Volunteers	-\$630
Social Enterprises	\$9,315
Heart of Gold	\$21,020
Donations	\$108,646
Fundraising	\$23,870
Government Funding	\$47,973
TOTAL	\$210,194

EXPENSE



Community Support	\$61,336
Community Builds	\$35,055
Building Futures	\$31,159
Administration	\$46,465
TOTAL	\$174,015

CONTACT US!



www.heartprint.org.au



information@heartprint.org.au

