



# Summer 2025 Newsletter

*News from Trailblazer Foundation—  
Ripples of Giving Can Change the World!*



**Pure joy: B1G1's support brings clean water and smiles  
fostering hope for a better life.**

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***Delivering health, education, and prosperity to rural Cambodia...***

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## A Note From Trailblazer's Executive Director



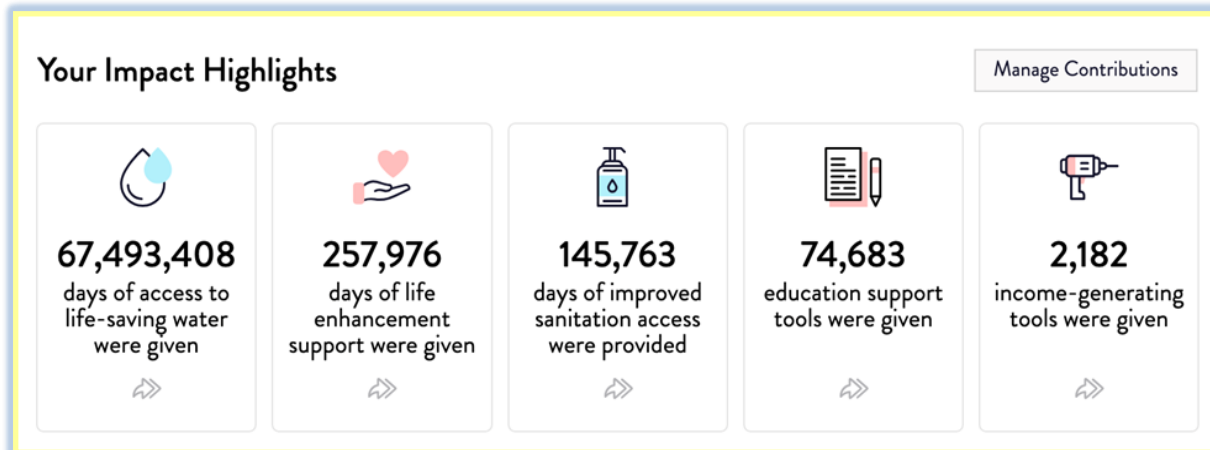
Hello Trailblazers!

I hope 2025 started out well for you. Spring has sprung! With a new year blooming all around us **Trailblazer's teams remain busy** implementing our project activities. This newsletter covers the **good work** that has happened thus far.

Your investments cause a **ripple effect** that, although you may not see it, have a **significant impact** on the **health and livelihoods of poor rural families**. Every dollar adds up and really does make a difference. Your gifts have brought **smiles to their faces** and have **fostered hope** for a better life.

Like a drop of water rippling out on the surface of a pond, your gifts produce **waves of support** and love outward. It only takes **one person's action** to spark the impact that giving generates. There is power in numbers, and when the commitment to help is made by many, their joined ripples of giving can **change the world**.

Trailblazer is a member of **Worthy Cause/Buy 1 Give 1**. Since we joined in August 2013 the funds we have received has supported our programs in a substantial way. Below are the stats B1G1 has calculated on the gifts given to Trailblazer through their donation platform. You can see here how small amounts add up to make a **great impact**.



Don't underestimate the impact you make. Your support matters more than you know. What you leave behind has an impact. **We deeply thank you** for your continued interest in our efforts and the contributions you make to **help improve the health and lives** of many villagers in rural Cambodia.

Warm wishes always,

Chris Coats

Executive Director

**"When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too."**

**—Paulo Coelho**

## A Note From Trailblazer's Board President



Hi everyone,

**We're looking to bring new, passionate folks** onto the Trailblazer Foundation's Board of Directors to help us continue **making a real difference** in rural Cambodia. If you're someone who loves connecting with others and can **help spread the word** about our work, this is a great opportunity to guide an organization with a truly **hands-on impact**.

Board members meet quarterly and help find new ways to raise funds and **share Trailblazer's mission** with a wider audience. It's a meaningful way to stay engaged—with a **low time commitment** and a **high potential for impact**.

Our current board includes **dedicated members from across the U.S.**, bringing skills in nonprofit work, media, and deep knowledge of Cambodia. Board terms are for three years, with the option to renew up to three terms.

**If you're interested in joining us**, please fill out our online application **by June 30th**. Click the QR code above.

Thank you,

Nick Munro

Board President



Nick - Board President



Kevin - Board Treasurer/Secretary



Tatsuma - Board Vice-President



Courtney - Board Member



Isabel - Board Member



# Health Program

## *The Power of Two*



Just over one year ago, Trailblazer was contacted by Dulcie Smith, the International Chair for Comox Valley Rotary Club on Vancouver Island, Canada. She and her husband had volunteered for Trailblazer in 2007. She said, "I know the need is great in Cambodia and it's a part of the world we've never forgotten. We are both now retired and have joined our local Rotary Club. I have just been appointed as the District International Rep for Asia and we will be raising funds to support international projects." They were interested in WASH programs and wanted to support Trailblazer in this way. And so the conversation began and Dulcie went to work garnering support from other clubs and donors, making presentations and appeals.

By December 2024 the Comox Valley Rotary Club had raised \$20,000 to support Trailblazer's Health program. Their funds were used to install 50 new bio-sand water filters and reinstall 197 bio-sand water filters. This is an incredible achievement and helped 247 families, which equates to a minimum of 1,235 villagers.

We send Dulcie and her husband, and the Comox Valley Rotary Club our deepest gratitude for the immense impact they have made with these rural families. Learn more about organizations we collaborate with at <https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/our-partners>.



It is no surprise that children living in households with improved drinking water and better sanitation have a lower chance of contracting diarrhea. Trailblazer's health program addresses these issues and offers the appropriate technologies rural families need to have: clean drinking water [bio-sand water filters], access to water [wells] and latrines, which help transform lives. Since January, 364 families [totaling a conservative 1,820 people] have benefited from having a well, a filter or a latrine.



*"When you give joy to other people, you get more joy in return. You should give a good thought to the happiness that you can give out."*

— Eleanor Roosevelt



# Food Security Program

## *Growing Sustenance*

*"Today's accomplishments were yesterday's impossibilities."*

— Robert H. Schuller

Farming, even on a small scale, is the backbone of food production for one's family or community, directly impacting the food security for the whole. Food security ensures that people have sufficient, safe and nutritious food to maintain a healthy life. In addition to the act of farming, training on best practices and techniques is essential to giving farmers the knowledge and skills needed to achieve a productive garden and sustain their families' food security for the long-term.

Weather can be a farmers' best friend or worst enemy. One day it's sunny and perfect for planting, the next day it's raining in torrents. In Cambodia there are six months of dry season and six months of rainy season. Learning how to manage the soil and rain distribution can lead to either the success or failure of one's crops. And if farmers lose their crops, life for their families can be quite perilous. Trailblazer's training courses are critical to helping provide rural families with more sustainable livelihoods.

After all the sweat and tears (and maybe a few curses), when the planting and growing is complete, then comes the glorious harvest. And at the end of the day, farming can bring a profound sense of fulfillment and pride in knowing you have enough food security for your family until the next season.



*Homestead Training*



Please visit our blog for more stories of impact:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/blog>



# Economic Development Program

## *Loans Can Be Life Changing*

One of the greatest challenges to economic development is access to capital. Even small amounts of funding can make a big difference. Trailblazer's longest standing effort to support the economic development of our partner villages has been our introducing, and facilitating the launch of, locally-managed micro-finance programs: what we call Village Funds [VF]. Trailblazer helps rural communities establish a VF, an innovative approach to micro-finance that enables villagers to get the capital they need to start or grow a business.

Trailblazer requires that each villager who receives our assistance (wells, water filters, latrines, bicycles) to "put some skin in the game." Specifically, we ask them to make a small contribution to their VF, as an investment into the development of their family. Thereby ensuring our work helps provide the capital for these Funds (instead of Trailblazer providing the capital).

These village funds are a village-owned and managed micro-loan program, built to foster economic development for the residents of that village. Loans are given to buy livestock, seeds or fertilizers to better feed their family; to secure medical care; to start a small business to improve their family's economic status; or to purchase a motorbike or bicycle so they can have better access to work and school.

A Village Finance Committee manages the Fund and the loans, and determines a resident's eligibility to receive a loan. Trailblazer's role is to encourage and mentor our partner villages to develop their own fund, including providing training to the Village Finance Committees, and the materials needed to track both the fund and loan payments. Additionally, Trailblazer routinely monitors each Village Fund.



Trailblazer provides ongoing trainings to the Finance Committee members of Village Funds that have requested further training, and help establish new Village Funds each year. Our trainings on existing Funds address overall fund management, loan management, and transaction management for loans to both savings groups and individuals.

So far in 2025, Trailblazer team has conducted 41 Village Fund refresher courses.

*“Alone we can do so little,  
together we can do so much.”*

*—Helen Keller*

Please visit our website for videos of testimonies and interviews:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/video-and-audio>



# Education Program

## What Donors Can Do

Primary education lays an essential foundation for students, that leads to the opportunity for higher education. I would like to introduce you to Jim D., a retired biomedical research scientist living in Kauai who understands the importance of education. Below is his testimony of his experience in Cambodia and with Trailblazer and why he chooses to support our Education Program.

*"I have been on 7 Asian trips, with trips 8 and 9 in the planning. My first visit to Cambodia was with a Small Group Tour in 2017 where we visited several SE Asia countries. We visited a rural Siem Reap home where a previous client had donated a well, and I was hooked on helping the beautiful Khmer people. Now I go solo on trips. In a way, I have been indirectly interacting with the Trailblazer Foundation since 2017 as they oversee all Siem Reap construction projects supported by the philanthropic tour company I use for travel.*

*In December 2022 and 2023 I was in Cambodia for several weeks. Cambodia has pretty much become my adopted country and I try to help as many people as I can on my trips. I have supported the construction of wells and donated money for schools over the years. On my December 2023 trip I was fortunate to meet Mr. Ratanak, the on-site Field Director of Trailblazer, at the Tapang Primary School. I decided to fully fund the construction of a new 6-room school building on the campus. The Tapang Primary School has most definitely become my adopted school and I visit them whenever I am over. When I was talking in January about supporting this project I was told about the Kok Chan Primary School building project, and I donated to that construction project as well.*



*Although I was unable to attend the September inauguration celebration at Tapang I can't wait to see the new building and teachers during my next trip to Cambodia. I am so very excited to see everyone and visit the Tapang Primary and Kok Chan Primary schools. I am extremely impressed by Trailblazer, and the exceptional Field Director Mr. Ratanak. I am especially impressed with the speed at which construction projects occur from building wells to school buildings, it all happens so fast. The tour company has told me that everything about Trailblazer's Siem Reap operation represents the gold standard for organizations that partner with them and simply loves their organization.*

*It never ceases to amaze me how fast Mr. Ratanak and his staff operate, the contractors as well. I am so very happy to be working with Trailblazer on all of these projects. I particularly enjoyed the video that was sent of the uniform, bike, and school supply deliveries at Tapang. Lots of happy faces there! Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself, and to express my profound thanks for helping me to support the beautiful Cambodian people. They have all had a profound impact on my perception of life."*



Learn about our Programs



## Education Program (continued)

*In this first quarter of the year, with the support of several donors, Trailblazer delivered 75 bicycles, 844 school uniforms, 4,200 toothbrushes, and administrative and student supplies to two schools.*



**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”  
—Nelson Mandela**

## Testimony from a Partner

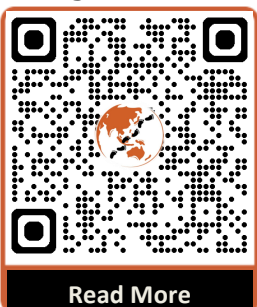
### *Recognizing Our Volunteers*

We like to recognize donors and those who have volunteered when we can. This testimony speaks to how after one volunteering experience with Trailblazer led to Dr. Faktor's wishing to share the experience with others, whereby spreading the word about our cause and ways in which others can contribute to making a difference.



“In Nov 2023 I brought a group of 10 people to Cambodia to volunteer. I am a dentist, so I was working with a local dental clinic but we brought 4 kids aged 5-18 to work with Trailblazers. This is the 4th time I've worked with them over the last 10 years. Every time we work with them I am more impressed. It's amazing to see young kids get out of their comfort zone and volunteer for the first time helping out people in a faraway land in a culture that is so different from where they are from.

The first day is always interesting as none of them are used to going away on a “vacation” and they're asked to help shovel rocks, paint, and clean water purifiers but by the 2nd day, they all found their comfort zone it was so gratifying watching them learn, and grow almost overnight. Hearing their stories every day of helping out, delivering the filters, meeting other kids their age, and going through this amazing experience is what it's all about! Trailblazers is such a great organization and I'm proud to be able to work with them. Keep up the amazing work!!! Thanks again for everything.” Dr. M. Faktor



**Please visit our website to read more stories from volunteers:**  
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/whats-in-it-for-you>



# Trailblazer Staff and Worksite

## *Our Team in Action!*

### Cambodia Staff



***As always, we're incredibly grateful for your participation and generosity. Our impactful work is only made possible by supporters like you who want to leave a lasting legacy. This includes our wonderful staff, whose dedication is supported by generous donors providing essential materials, and especially our Trailblazer Champions who give recurring monthly to sustain our work in rural Cambodia. Our vital volunteers also help carry out the work on the ground.***

### US Staff



Please visit our website for more information about Cambodia:  
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/why-cambodia>



Volunteers and Visitors

## You may wonder: How can I help?

**Below is a list of how your gift(s) can change the life of a poor rural family:**

\$20 buys a school uniform

\$50 supports a rural farmer's agriculture training course

\$75 buys a bicycle to keep a student in school

\$100 buys a bio-sand water filter for up to 3 families [15 people or more]

\$200 buys a latrine for a family [5 people on average]

\$375 buys a well for up to 3 families [15 people or more]

- \* Donate to our general fund and **help provide solid financial footing** to our programs across the board.
- \* Join the Board of Directors and help the team continue the impact we are making, we are seeking new members.
- \* Become a **Trailblazer Champion** by setting up recurring donors to sustain the difference we are making.
- \* \* Check with your employer about a **matching gift program** and double your impact. We have a growing number of donors who are taking advantage of these wonderful programs.
- \* Like us on **Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn** and encourage your followers to like and follow us. Post comments and stories about our work.
- \* Share your stories describing your relationship with Trailblazer and why you support us on **Great NonProfits**.
- \* Become a funder by conducting a DIY Peer-to-Peer campaign.



**Are you seeking an alternative way to give and receive tax benefits, you can:**

- \* Donate from your **Donor Advised Fund**;
- \* Donate **stocks or securities** to avoid capital gains tax and have a long-term impact;
- \* For those 70.5 or older, avoid extra income by **gifting from your IRA**;
- \* **Gift under your Last Will and Testament** to ensure your impact will continue for generations;
- \* Designate Trailblazer Foundation as a **beneficiary on a life insurance policy**.

***Your generous donations directly fuel our mission, we are ever grateful for your participation. To ensure our vital work continues seamlessly, please consider adding 15% to your next contribution to help cover essential administrative costs. Our work is only made possible because of people like you who want to make a lasting impact! Thank you***



# Trailblazer Champions

*Witness the incredible impact of sustained giving!*



Our supporters have helped us achieve remarkable milestones, from supplying school essentials and delivering clean water to empowering villagers with microloans and agricultural training, significantly improving food security. Imagine the even greater difference we can make together if you become a **Trailblazer Champion** by setting up a recurring donation.

Your commitment as a Champion ensures a steady flow of resources, allowing Trailblazer to plan long-term, maintain staff and expand our reach even further, creating a brighter, more sustainable future for the Cambodian people.

**Will you join us as a Trailblazer Champion today and amplify our impact? VISIT our WEBSITE to setup your MONTHLY**



[Monthly Giving](#)



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