

Trailblazer Foundation

“Helping the world one step at a time.”



Annual Report
2008

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Messages from Leadership

Executive Director

Dear Supporters,

Trailblazer Foundation is unique and fortunate to have so much support for its mission and projects from all the individuals, foundations, businesses, and granting organizations that have supported us from the beginning.

Because of all their support Trailblazer had another successful year in 2009. Our area of service expanded to neighboring districts, bringing access to water for hundreds of individuals through our own well drilling team. We received corporate and individual sponsorships for delivery of hundreds of bio-sand water filters to provide potable water to thousands.

In May 2009 we launched our own Agricultural Program, designed to increase the food security of isolated communities and families, resulting in a year-round food supply, an enhancing capacity to achieve self-sufficiency and an improved quality of life. Scott Coats, Co-Founder/Project Director, attended an International Development Enterprises [IDE] training program in Svay Rieng Province to observe how the drip irrigation system, an example of appropriate technology for the subsistence farmer, increases crop yields while conserving water usage. Grounds at the Trailblazer compound were cleared, cultivated and a low-technology drip irrigation system installed. We plan to work with village councils to establish farmer-to-farmer networking support as well as provide training, resources and business development support for the marketing and sale of their excess produce.

The Trailblazer Foundation Board of Directors has grown to seven members who have a wide range of skills to continue to move us forward. Board members reside in Wyoming, Colorado, Alaska, Arizona, and Washington. Trailblazer also developed an Advisory Board, the six members reside in Wyoming, Colorado and Spain. We would welcome more Advisory Board members to enhance our skill sets, provide advice and help strengthen our team.


April 2009 we completed construction of our third government primary school in Ta Trav village. This six classroom school will accommodate 480 students. The previous school structure was made of wood and beginning to collapse due to the termite ridden conditions.

The year ahead is a very important year for Trailblazer Foundation. We have committed to a Kindergarten school construction project, which will be the first of its kind in Angkor Thom District. Construction is scheduled for completion in April, 2010. This Kindergarten will support the Cambodian Ministry of Women Affairs, Women's Development Center, serving over 2,700 females in the four surrounding villages. By allowing a safe educational setting for their children to go, these women will be able to take advantage of the many vocational training opportunities offered at the Women's Development Center. We are honored to be asked to participate in this district initiative.

It is, and always has been, the mission and goal of Trailblazer Foundation to build upon self-sustaining programs which promote community and individual growth. Therefore, as part of an exit strategy from our Siem Reap work site, our Cambodian Director and Office Manager have been trained to manage Trailblazer Foundation projects and programs in-country and stand on their own. This ensures a fluid continuation of projects and programs that are up and operating, and gives them experience in working with various business operations while providing a source of income for their family. Now we can research beginning another work site in a different area of Cambodia.

There is still much work to accomplish and the funding to support these efforts. Please visit Trailblazer Foundation's website for updates and photos of projects. We hope you join the team of Trailblazers in any way you can. Together we can help the world one step at a time. Thank you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Coats". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Coats

The Need for Water

Affects of Bad Water



Problem: In Cambodia, 1 in 7 children die before the age of 5 from preventable diseases such as typhoid, malnutrition, malaria, dengue fever. **Care International statistics 2004 in accordance with the Cambodian Department of Public Health.* The common denominator in many of these diseases is waterborne illness.

Solution: Trailblazer Foundation has installed over 160 wells in strategic locations throughout Siem Reap Province since 2005. Trailblazer constructs and provides bio-sand water filters, reducing the incidence of water borne disease, lowering infant mortality rates and improving overall health.

One of the easiest ways to combat poverty and disease is to provide access to clean water sources.

Women and children are responsible for collecting water for the family, often from long distances. When women and children spend a good part of their day gathering water they have little time or energy to farm, cook, take care of their family (especially the sick ones), clean, work to make money outside the home, or go to school.

For these people, access to safe drinking water is the foundation for the issues of health, education, food, livelihood, and gender equalization. Children are often in danger of falling and drowning in traditional open pit wells while trying to collect water for the family.

Wells are greatly needed in the countryside. Most villagers use and transport water from long distances from deep holes in the ground. Having an iron pump well or PVC pull pump remedies one initial problem: access to water. Once a villager has access to a convenient and an ample water source they can begin to think beyond basic life-sustaining capacities. A well provides villagers the ability to irrigate gardens or create fish ponds, whereby improving their food supply, ultimately their health, and creates the opportunity for income from the sale of excess provisions.



It is our goal that one in every three to five families in rural villages are provided a well as a consistent source of water, and bio-sand water filters to ensure the water is potable. All wells and bio-sand water filters are recorded with GPS locations.

Trailblazer helps establish and train water stewards, who are paid with village funds, to ensure that water access sites remain operational through ongoing maintenance and repair. Bio-sand water filter recipients receive training in their indigenous language, Khmer, regarding use, maintenance and proper water storage techniques, along with basic hygiene and sanitation practices.

2008 Highlights

An Overview

Trailblazer Foundation was incorporated as a 501(c)3 in April 2004. Since then, the foundation has run highly successful programs in rural villages of Cambodia. These programs are guided by our Mission:

By providing training and appropriate technology, we empower rural villagers to create self sustaining programs. Our focus includes water projects, school construction, and community based development in order to foster healthy families, sufficient food and sustainable incomes.

We strive to preserve the cultural integrity of the villages we work in by using a participatory model of community-based development. This model allows the villagers to identify their needs and empowers them to work in partnership with us to find sustainable solutions to their most pressing needs.



Cambodia suffered the devastating effects of genocide during Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime (1975-79). Several million people, 20%-25% of the population, died as a result of mass executions and starvation during the regime. Educated people were systematically eliminated, especially doctors and teachers. At the end of the regime all but 40 of 4,000 Cambodian doctors had either perished or fled the country, compared to an average of 250 doctors per 100,000 serving USA citizens.

All of this took place in a country already confronted by drought conditions 4 to 5 months of each year and flooding during the monsoon season the other months of the year. Cambodia's economy and infrastructure were left in tatters and as a result, Cambodia's recovery has been slow and difficult. Access to water and sanitation, an adequate food supply, education and economic opportunity is a challenge millions of Cambodians continue to face every day.



Children searching for fish in the receding waters near an ancient bridge in their village.

Siem Reap, Cambodia is one of two provinces in the country identified by the Cambodian Government and the *World Food Program* as significantly poor and food insecure. The percentage of children under 5 years old in Siem Reap who exhibit stunted growth rates is greater than the Cambodian national average [*UNICEF Cambodian Nutrition Investment Plan 2008*]. Many people we are working with now have access to water, education and vocational training opportunities, but their food supply remains tenuous and they often subsist for several months of the year on food with inadequate nutritional value.

Distributing clothing to a few of the poorest children in the village.



Water Program Spending [Wells and Bio-Sand Water Filters]

	Wells	Bio-Sand Water Filters	Total Program
2006	\$1,364	\$4,346	\$5,710
2007	\$7,113	\$12,976	\$20,089
2008	\$5,617	\$13,879	\$19,496
Total	\$14,094	\$31,201	\$45,295



Number of People Directly Benefiting from Clean Water

Approximately 1,300 bio-sand water filters have been installed in over 40 villages. Over 30,000 Cambodian school children in over 100 schools, as well as 5,000 families, now have access to clean water through the installation of bio-sand water filters.

Beneficiaries by Program

	Number of Beneficiaries of the Bio-Sand Water Filter	Number of Bio-Sand Water Filters	Schools - 3 Number of Students	Number of Village Fund Loans	Community Development - Micro-Businesses Established
2006	19,925	612	135	0	4
2007	40,180	597	320	0	5
2008	1,085	61	480	19	0
Total	61,190	1270	935	19	9

- The figures for the majority of beneficiaries of bio-sand water filters are based on an estimated 15 people per bio-sand water filter. These figures include bio-sand water filters in 115 schools with an average student population of 350 per school.
- A large part of 2008 was spent on monitoring and evaluation of our programs, community development training, laboratory testing of source water, bio-sand filtered water and stored water, and sanitation and proper bio-sand water filter use, maintenance and storage practices of filtered water.
- To date, 6 villages have established Village Funds, 19 villagers have qualified loans and 8 businesses have developed with use of Village Fund monies. Other uses of loans include: purchase of pigs and cows, the paying of hospital expenses and the purchase of rice to survive the rainy season. Village Funds are truly the villagers' own capital, Trailblazer Foundation does not contribute any money to these funds.

Cost per Beneficiary Using Average Village Size

Average Village Population	Average Family Size	Number of Wells	Number of Bio-Sand Water Filters	Total
1,200 or 200 families	6 members	67 @ \$100/each	67 @ \$45/each	
		*Based on 3 Families per Well	*Based on 3 Families per Bio-Sand Water Filter	
Total Cost		\$6,700	\$3,015	\$9,715
Cost per Person			Divided by 1,200	\$8.10

In 2004 Sras was identified as the poorest village in Angkor Thom District. Residents had no access to potable water; 79% of men and 92% of women were illiterate; only 18 out of 600 children ever attended school; and water borne diseases like malaria, dysentery and dengue fever were claiming the lives of individuals every day. Sras had received no international aid and villagers had little hope for rising above the *World Bank* poverty definition of “the poorest of the poor.”

Using a model of participatory community-based development Trailblazer Foundation began working in partnership with the people of Sras and surrounding region to improve their living conditions and achieve sustainable economic development.



2008 Program Status

Updates from the Field

To support and strengthen our work in Cambodia, TF established and registered Trailblazer Cambodia Organization (TCO) as an indigenous NGO in 2008. Two Cambodians fill the management positions. They serve as the main point of contact in Cambodia and assumed full responsibility for the TCO office, and provide a long-term presence in the region. TCO currently has 7 Cambodian staff members who work in the bio-sand water filter, well drilling and agriculture programs.

The
TCO
Team



Trailblazer completed water testing on 30% of all bio-sand water filters installed in selected villages, using a random cross-section sample, to ensure continued access to potable water and as part of our own maintenance and evaluation program.



Two potentially at-risk teenage girls have benefited from a micro-loan program that allowed them to attend a residential cosmetology program in Siem Reap city. This training provided a way for these potentially at-risk girls to escape the sad, but real, lure of prostitution as a means of livelihood for young women with no skills or family support. Now young women from their village and surrounding villages will have direct benefit from these girls' successful completion of the course. These girls have set an example for other young women in their and neighboring villages who see their success, and desire similar training opportunities.



2008 Year in Review

Successful Model

Thirty-six percent of Cambodians live below the poverty line, 20% live below the food-poverty-line and cannot meet the minimum food requirements of 2,100 calories per day. Ninety-one percent of those who live below the food poverty line live in rural areas and spend 65% of their total expenditures on food. **World Food Program Executive Board Report June 2007*

Many of the rural villages in Siem Reap Province had little to no access to international aid prior to Trailblazer Foundation's arrival. The result was residents of these villages suffered a high rate of disease, illiteracy and other devastating effects of lack of water, sanitation and food. Being the first to go into villages where there were no other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), is a true definition of "trailblazing".

But our definition of trailblazing goes much deeper. Once we arrive within a village we work within the context of the Cambodian and village culture, establishing trust, fostering relationships and supporting the village infrastructure. We find that clean water, education and community/economic development are high priorities for alleviating poverty and increasing their quality of life in a sustainable manner.

Trailblazer staff works with village, commune and district level officials on a community development plan to address growth and meet the on-going needs of villagers. We use a bottom up-approach to sustainable projects, i.e. villagers identify their greatest challenges and possible solutions, which in turn set the agenda for Trailblazer projects. This ensures they are invested in the successful outcome of the project. We emphasize the need for sustainability in order to reduce the need for ongoing international aid and ensure that during the monsoon season when they are most isolated, they are able to be self-sufficient.

We have found that empowerment and equitable participation of the villagers is key to the success of their sustainable outcomes. Using the success of our work in Sras Village, our pilot model, we are replicating this community-based development model in the surrounding region within Siem Reap Province, touching the lives of thousands.



Problem: The average wage of rural villagers in Cambodia where Trailblazer is working is less than 25¢ a day, or less than \$2 USD a week, leaving little opportunity for economic advancement.

Solution: Local labor is employed whenever possible. Education and vocational training opportunities are supported by Trailblazer funds.

We pursue projects that emphasize basic needs, health and sanitation, education and vocational training and which use appropriate technologies. As the basic need of water is met, Trailblazer works with village leadership to establish or enhance a village committee structure. These leaders ultimately manage the sustainability of projects without the need for ongoing international aid. We encourage and mentor villagers to develop their own village bank fund, which is a village-run micro-loan program built to foster sustainable economic development. This bottom-up approach gives villagers ownership and pride and leads to permanent success.

Village Funds build capital for micro-loans that qualifying residents can access. The Village Finance Committee determines residents' eligibility based on their responsibility and ability to repay. These loans provide an opportunity for villagers to advance their livelihood and exponentially multiply success, not only through economic growth, but by inspiring and motivating others to do the same. Village Funds have grown to more than \$1,000.00 USD. This is significant in a region where the average wage was less than 25 cents a day.

Trailblazer provides training and oversight to Village Finance Committees for the management of their Village Fund. We also monitor loans by conducting routine audits and provide loan books to track savings and loan payments. Village Fund systems are now being implemented in numerous villages, giving more and more villagers opportunities they did not have before.



Village Funds are indicators of the economic health of the village as a whole and its ability to maintain economic sustainability, a situation that indirectly benefits every person in the vicinity of the village. All village request-based projects are designed to ensure sustainability in order for Trailblazer (external implementer) to eventually exit the stage and allow the village community (internal activators) to successfully and autonomously continue all endeavors.



Due to flooding and poor quality roads, rural villages are unreachable in the rainy season, July through December. This obstacle creates a period of full separation between the village and NGO except for telecommunication, which is often unreliable. Without any outside assistance, Sras Village is one village in particular that has proven to be fully independent to manage its own community projects. Because of the relatively long duration of this period, the evaluation of village operations after the rainy season helps to illustrate sustainability trends for longer periods to come when Trailblazer has transferred to a role of support-as-needed.

Problem: Illiteracy rates in rural villages average 92% for women and 79% for men. **World Bank statistics July 2006*

Solution: By constructing primary schools, Trailblazer has provided the opportunity for hundreds of children to learn. Females comprise nearly half the student population.



Relationships and agreements with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Interior remain strong, ensuring the sustainability of each school constructed. The Cambodian government continues to provide paid certified teachers guaranteeing that each matriculating student receives a graduation certificate so they may continue on to secondary and higher levels of education.

The construction of a second 4 classroom building for Sras Primary School was completed May 2008. This school complex can now accommodate 640 students from the area. While helping to build schools, it is expected that students and teachers contribute. As part of the construction contract, participating villagers are given an equal opportunity to earn money and learn valuable vocational skills.



2008 Financial Statement

Trailblazer Foundation Profit & Loss by Category

INCOME		Percentage
Corporate	\$7,675.00	5.69%
Foundation/Trusts	\$71,194.53	52.79%
Grants	\$11,434.91	8.48%
Individuals	\$38,841.94	28.80%
Visitor Donations	\$5,711.83	4.24%
Total Income	\$134,858.21	100.00%
EXPENSES		
Administration	-\$11,865.96	10.35%
Agriculture	-\$263.00	0.23%
Cambodia Assistance	-\$251.50	0.22%
Fundraising	-\$8,704.73	7.60%
School Construction	-\$39,427.17	34.40%
Sustainable Development	-\$5,904.85	5.15%
Water Programs	-\$48,184.72	42.05%
Total Expense	-\$114,601.93	100.00%
Net Income	\$20,256.28	

Budget History 2004-2008

<u>INCOME GROWTH</u>		<u>EXPENSE GROWTH</u>	
2004	\$8,786.42	2004	\$4,029.86
2005	\$22,814.91	2005	\$16,099.83
2006	\$38,533.06	2006	\$45,535.34
2007	\$123,965.53	2007	\$49,399.53
2008	\$134,858.21	2008	\$114,601.93

2008 Supporters Partners and Sponsors

Trailblazer Foundation has fostered numerous relationships and worked to support the village infrastructure. Other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are more able to expand their presence and assist the villagers. We have networked with the following governmental ministries and other NGOs to provide access to water, food, medical and dental care, schools, and educational and vocational training.

*Cambodian Ministry of Education Youth and Sport
Cambodian Ministry of Rural Development
World Food Program
Global Medic
World Vision
Rotary International
Friends Without A Border
Cambodian Landmine Museum Relief Fund
National Office of Social Welfare
International British School of Beijing
Rotary clubs in the United States, Canada, and Cambodia*

Trailblazer Foundation is supported by numerous individuals, from all over the world, and businesses in Siem Reap, Cambodia. We owe all of them an immense amount of thanks.

Our Cambodian business supporters include:

The Villa Siem Reap
Ivy 2 Guesthouse
Siem Reap Hostel
Wat's Up Guesthouse
Common Grounds Café
Peace of Angkor Villa
Singing Tree Café
Rose Apple Bed & Breakfast

The X-Bar, El Camino
Rosy Guest House
Auberge' Mont Royal D'Angkor
Cool Corner
Sojourn Boutique Villas
Two Dragons Guest House
The River Garden Guest House

Trailblazer Foundation

Founders

Chris Coats, Co-Founder/Executive Director
Scott Coats, Co-Founder/Project Director

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Sorm Buntheum [Sothearos], Bio-Sand Water Filter Supervisor
Pes Phalla, Bio-Sand Water Filter Crew
Soung Chanta, Well Driller
Sok Samnang, Well Drilling Crew