



Development
Through
Empowerment



Trailblazer Foundation
Annual Report
2014

Message from the Executive Director



Trailblazer Foundation celebrated its 10th year in 2014! Working with the poorest of the poor is so rewarding. I feel so privileged that our efforts have resulted in having such a significant and positive impact in the lives of thousands. This success is because of the growing list of donors, volunteers, foundations, businesses, and affiliates that support our work. I wish to thank everyone for making all this change possible.

Our mission to build upon self-sustaining programs to promote community and individual growth, and which implements appropriate technologies, has empowered hundreds of individuals and families. Working in partnership with villagers we have found sustainable solutions to their most pressing needs: access to water and sanitation, food security, education for their children, and economic opportunities.

The isolated communities we work with are least likely to get assistance from other aid organizations, so without help development beyond subsistence is virtually impossible. Because we focus on basic needs first: water; food; education; and income generation, villagers have the energy and time to think beyond survival. They are experiencing a healthier livelihood and can begin to dream. They are requesting training in improved agriculture and horticulture practices, raising livestock and fish farming.

Our list of needs for 2015 is no less long than 2014's needs list was and Trailblazer's work areas have also expanded. The cost to meet these ever-increasing needs continues to challenge the budget. It has been necessary to hire more staff for the implementation, training and monitoring of our project activities as they evolve. Transportation and operational expenses have increased in order to keep up with the demands and ensure project success. Trailblazer's Board of Directors are committed. To address the budgetary limitations for 2015 and beyond, the Board is planning to enlist the services of a Development Director who will seek and secure new and sufficient funding whereby giving the organization longer-term financial stability.

Donor and grant funding has been the backbone of our financial stability to date and each year we have managed to meet our financial goals and continue our important work in Cambodia. We have been blessed that people want to be a catalyst for change. Their participation has been vital to the accomplishments that have been experienced over the past 10 years. We anticipate that our donor base will maintain and grow their interest along with their investments in our cause, addressing together the issues the poor and marginalized villagers face every day in rural Cambodia.

Thanks to everyone who have joined us since the beginning and over the last 10 years, investing their hard earned money in our efforts and achieving great success.

Sincerely,

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

Chris Coats

The Basics: Water First

Four out of five Cambodians live in rural areas, most of which lack access to even basic infrastructure. Almost half of Cambodia's rural populations do not have access to safe drinking water and a staggering 84% do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities. Rural Cambodians drinking from unimproved water sources is 22% (WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program 2012).

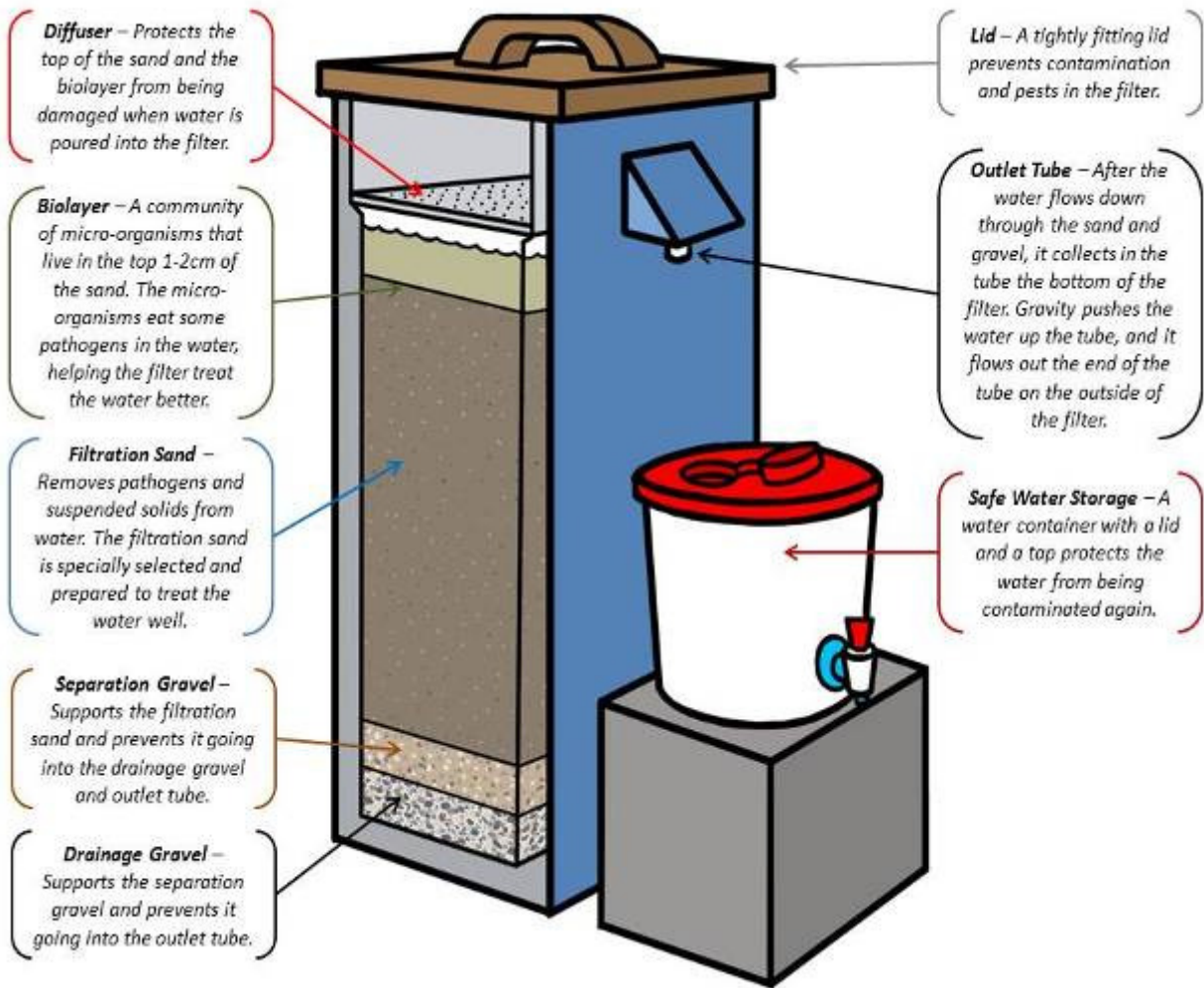
Clean water is life's most basic need, yet one in eight people of the world's population do not have access to it. Although Cambodia has an abundance of water sources, rural areas suffer from health problems due to unsafe drinking water and are at risk from pollution and human and animal waste. The lack of infrastructure development means rural populations use unimproved drinking water sources; unprotected ponds, rivers, streams, or traditional pit wells. This results in a high infant mortality rate of 82 per 1,000 live births [World Health Organization 2009].



One of the easiest ways to combat poverty and disease is to provide access to clean water sources. Bio-sand water filters ensure water from any water source is potable, immediately reducing the impact of water borne diseases. One filter produces 80 liters of potable water each day, a sufficient supply for drinking, cooking and washing for up to 15 individuals.

Eighty-eight per cent of cases of diarrhea worldwide are caused by the consumption of unhealthy water, inadequate sanitation or insufficient hygiene. In Cambodia, a country of 14.8 million, there are over 9,000,000 cases of diarrhea. With 56% of post-neonatal deaths attributed, at least in part, to the onset of diarrhea it is the number one cause of death in children under 5 years of age. To make water safe treatment is usually required. Large scale public treatment systems are scarce for much of rural Cambodia. In rural areas, a successful strategy for treating drinking water is point-of-use (POU) filtration, and bio-sand water filters are an effective low tech and affordable option as a POU filtration.

Bio-sand water filters reduce viral contamination by 90%, bacterial contamination by 90-99% and protozoan parasites by more 99%, and is also capable of removing arsenic at a rate of 87-96%. This added benefit makes it ideal for use in Cambodia. They alleviate the human suffering of sickness, death, lost employment, and the hardship of losing loved ones as a result of drinking contaminated water. Women spend less time caring for the sick and as a result have more time to pursue economic sustainability through small business or gardening. Children have more time and energy for education.



With a bio-sand water filter there is no need to boil the water after filtration to make it safe to drink. They are easy to use, save villagers' time, money for firewood, not to mention reduces deforestation, and ultimately improve the overall health of the recipients and the environment. Because of Trailblazer's implementation of bio-sand water filters over 100,000 people now have access to viable drinking water.





To ensure success of the project, bio-sand water filter recipients receive training in their indigenous language, Khmer, on the proper use and maintenance of the bio-sand water filter, proper filtered water storage techniques, along with basic hygiene and sanitation practices.

Pull pump wells are low tech and appropriate especially for women and children to use and provides water quickly and easily. Having a well resolves the issue of little or no access to water. Once a villager has access to a convenient and a sufficient water source they can begin to think beyond basic life-sustaining capacities. A well gives villagers the ability to irrigate gardens or create fish ponds, whereby improving their food securities, ultimately their health, as well as building their earning capacity with the sale of excess provisions. To date, we have drilled 646 wells, and counting.



Water access, food security, nutrition, and household income are priorities. A person must have access to potable water to improve health and sanitation, and a water resource for growing crops, livestock and fish—their source of food and commerce. Bad water is the cause of illness, malnutrition and poverty.

- An estimated 50% of underweight or malnutrition children are a result of unsafe water, inadequate sanitation or insufficient hygiene
- 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 2009*]
- Cambodia is ranked 13 in the world for stunted growth by the World Bank
- Children who are undernourished between conception and age two are at high risk for impaired cognitive development, which adversely affects the country's productivity and growth [*World Bank 2009*]



2014 Cost per Water Program Beneficiary

		Total Cost	Based on Users Per Unit	Cost per Person
Number of Wells Installed	173 @ \$220/ea	\$38,060	173 x 18 users per Well = 3,114 users	\$12.22
Number of Bio-Sand Water Filters Distributed	547 @ \$80/ea	\$43,760	547 x 15 users per BSF = 8,205 users	\$5.33

With wells villagers have access to an ample and year-round water supply for gardening. Vegetable home gardens have been successfully carried out by extremely poor families when they have a sufficient water source. With increased yields of produce for meeting their family's needs and excess for sale, improved health and income conditions can occur. As the nutrition and health status of the community improves, villagers have more time, energy and money to invest in private enterprise. We have witnessed once their basic needs are met there is evidence of internally generated economic progress activity: i.e. transportation, technology and other aid involvement.

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

History Overview and Highlights

Mission Statement

*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.*

Cambodia suffered the devastating effects of genocide during Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge regime (1975-79). Millions of people died in mass executions and from starvation leaving Cambodia's economy and infrastructure in tatters. Siem Reap province is one of two provinces in the country identified by the Cambodian Government and the *World Food Program* as significantly poor and food insecure. Access to water and sanitation, adequate food supply, education and economic opportunity is a challenge millions of Cambodians continue to face every day.

Trailblazer has a ten year history of working with authorities at the local, provincial and national, and a non-government organization network to identify, assist and monitor marginalized families and communities in improving access to water and food security beyond subsistence. Trailblazer also has a high level of trust with the people served maximizing villager empowerment and participatory involvement in project which is key to the success of sustainable outcomes.

Communities are identified through the existing priority development matrix standards set by local and national government protocol allowing for villagers to identify their needs. Because of Trailblazer's reputation for keeping its commitments Trailblazer is invited to the annual Integrated District Workshops to review the lists of identified needs and sign agreements to help using a participatory model of community-based development, funding permitting.

One of the most telling indicators for a lack of development is water access, food security, nutrition, and health status of the people. Low agricultural productivity often means there is very little surplus produce available for income generation, and low income leads to poor nutrition and poor health. The combination of little to no water access, food shortage and lack of agricultural income link directly to poor health and poor nutrition conditions. In the hierarchy order of needs, water must be met first before one can address the next level. When there is access to water, associated developments can occur to improve livelihoods and establish sustainable commerce.

Cambodia suffers drought conditions four-to-five months each year. Depending on water from the rainy season most families are limited in their agriculture cultivation to growing only one crop of rice per year, which may not be enough to even feed their family. In order to improve food security and nutrition it takes agriculture production and water access. Our agriculture program trains rural farmers in organic fertilizers, pesticides and composting, horticulture training, and mushroom production to give them the ability to grow more produce, enhance their nutrition and cultivate their economic situation.





Trailblazer accomplishments in 2014 include:

- Installation of 547 bio-sand water filters
- Drilled 173 pull pump wells
- Delivered 80 point-of-use solar units
- Distributed 370 mosquito nets to families
- Distributed 57 pairs of flip flops to primary school students
- Distributed 32 bicycles to students
- Delivered 56 school uniforms
- Distributed 2,500 fish fingerlings to establish fish farms
- Delivered 3 sewing machines
- Distributed 72 chickens to 10 farmers
- Delivered 1 cow to a woman farmer
- Distributed 50 packets of vegetable seeds
- Conducted 1 horticulture training for 10 farmers, and 1 mushroom production training for 12 farmers
- Constructed our 5th primary level school in TaTrav village and broke ground on a 6th in Romdoul



Program Status/Implementation Model

According to a UN declaration that resulted from the World Summit on Social Development in 1995, absolute poverty is "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services. In Cambodia, populations living under the poverty line of US\$1.25 per day is defined as the poor, essentially lacking the sufficient resources to meet their daily needs.

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".

Our definition of 'trailblazing' goes much deeper. Our bottom-up approach to sustainable projects ensures villagers are invested in the successful outcome of the project. Once we arrive within an identified village we then work within the context of the Cambodian and village culture, establishing trust, fostering relationships, and supporting the village infrastructure. Because we work within the government development process our project activities can be tracked, monitored and documented by the government for inclusion in their reporting. These reports substantiate the impact Trailblazer has on improving health, economic status and quality of life.

Our effective implementation method of community-based development projects is a long-term solution to alleviating poverty and increasing the quality of life in a sustainable manner. 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.

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. Our effective implementation of community-based development projects is a long-term solution to alleviating poverty and increasing their quality of life in a sustainable manner.

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, and manages the loans. These loans provide an opportunity for villagers that they did not have before, to advance their livelihood and exponentially multiply success, not only through economic growth but by inspiring and motivating others to do the same.

In 2014 there were 77 active loans secured from the village funds of 16 villages, of which 51 were with women. The total capital amount for these 16 village funds was \$4,144 USD. Interest earned on these 77 new loans amounted to \$826.40 USD. Loans were made to qualifying villagers for:

- the purchase livestock and/or fertilizers,
- purchase of rice,
- paying for medical care or funeral costs,
- starting up a small business,
- home improvements,
- purchase of motorbike or bicycle, and
- investing in more education.

This activity is significant in a region where about 30.1% of Cambodians live below the national poverty line and are still living in deprivation.

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 Funds are a clear indicator of the economic health of the village as a whole and its ability to maintain economic sustainability, reducing long-term dependence upon international aid, and 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.

The Village Fund component of Trailblazer's programs is innovative and complements Trailblazer's other initiatives for local community development through empowerment. Local ownership of management of the funds for microloans is convenient for villagers because loan terms can be optimized for local needs. Borrowers can interact with a fellow community member for borrowing and repayment and the village fund managers can easily observe how loans are used. Trailblazer's ongoing role in the established Village Funds is minimal but overall the funds are being used very effectively and the capital is growing substantially every year.

Comments made by villagers regarding the Village Fund system include: it is easy, has a low interest rate, is nearby, promotes development, and meets an underserved demographic (i.e., people who are not able to borrow from other lenders).

Trailblazer documents every donation/project activity as part of our own maintenance, monitoring and evaluation practices. Basic survey data is collected when projects are implemented and periodic follow-up surveys are conducted to monitor the project's status. These surveys provide us with vital information and results are used to improve our implementation methods for greater success of our projects and outcomes for our beneficiaries.

This survey data includes:

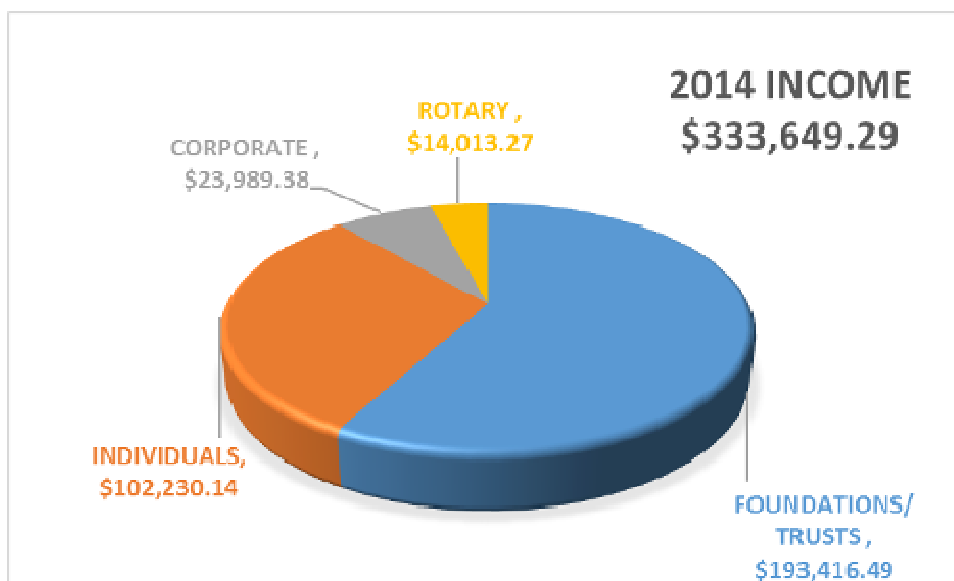
- economic status
- health condition
- family size
- location
- water source and condition
- ownership of livestock
- amount of rice stored for the season
- identified agriculture output

2014 Financials

Below is a list of the historic growth Trailblazer Foundation has experienced in its 10 years of existence.

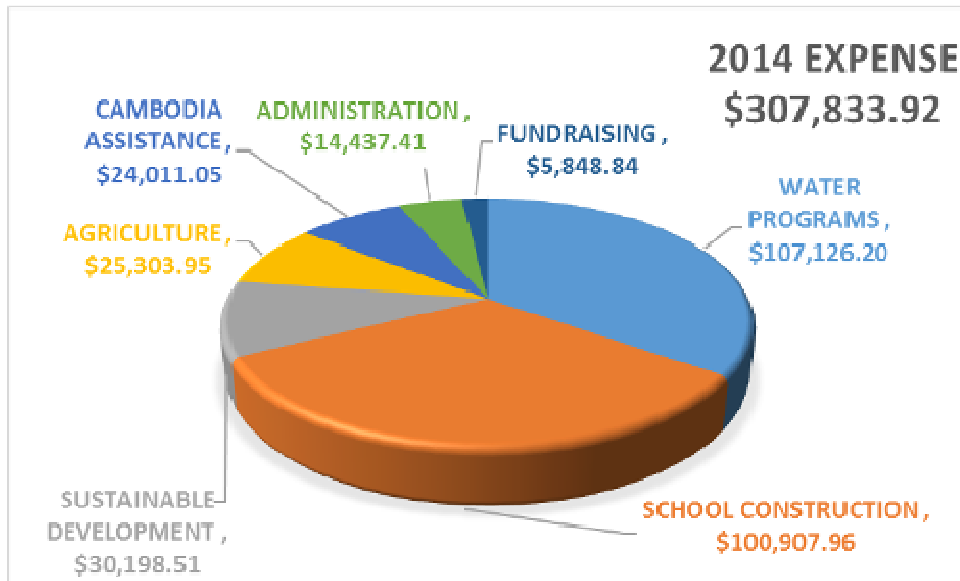
	<u>INCOME GROWTH</u>	<u>EXPENSE GROWTH</u>
2004	\$8,786.42	\$4,029.86
2005	\$22,814.91	\$16,099.83
2006	\$38,533.06	\$45,535.34
2007	\$123,965.53	\$49,399.53
2008	\$134,858.21	\$114,617.92
2009	\$182,533.39	\$190,328.42
2010	\$173,219.38	\$158,781.70
2011	\$193,802.38	\$143,917.37
2012	\$132,663.00	\$129,089.85
2013	\$191,862.65	\$205,881.49
2014	\$333,649.29	\$307,833.92

The following charts help in understanding the sources of the numbers in the table above. As you can see from the Income chart, we rely on individuals for over 30% of our funding, with Foundations/Trusts providing a substantial amount and a smaller percent provided by Corporate funds and Rotary grants.



FOUNDATIONS/TRUSTS	57.97%	\$193,416.49
INDIVIDUALS	30.64%	\$102,230.14
CORPORATE	7.19%	\$23,989.38
ROTARY	4.20%	\$14,013.27
Total		\$333,649.29

On the expenses side, 93% was used to foster projects in the field, including 35% toward water programs, with nearly 33% spent on school construction after a 3 year hiatus where no schools were built, and the remaining spent on sustainable development, agricultural and Cambodia assistance programs. Fundraising was approximately 2% of our expenses, with less than 5% for administration. Compared to other NGO's our fundraising and administrative expenses are very low.



WATER PROGRAMS	34.80%	\$107,126.20
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION	32.78%	\$100,907.96
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	9.81%	\$30,198.51
AGRICULTURE	8.22%	\$25,303.95
CAMBODIA ASSISTANCE	7.80%	\$24,011.05
ADMINISTRATION	4.69%	\$14,437.41
FUNDRAISING	1.90%	\$5,848.84
Total	\$307,833.92	\$307,833.92

Affiliates

Trailblazer Foundation has fostered numerous relationships and Non-Government Organizations [NGOs] affiliates to help support village infrastructure and provide access to water, food, medical and dental care, schools, and vocational training. Because of our excellent reputation, long-term presence and Trailblazer Foundation's effectiveness in working to help people on the ground, these organizations routinely ask to partner with Trailblazer in order to expand their presence and assist the villagers more completely. They need Trailblazer because of our 'boots on the ground', connections and solid relationships, and can mobilize villagers easier and more rapidly to implement projects.

A list of affiliates and organizations we collaborate with are:

- Naga Biofuels [our trucks and cement mixer run on biofuel];
- Church World Service [CWS] training on water testing;
- Rotary clubs in the United States, Norway, Taiwan, Singapore, and Cambodia;
- Rotary International;
- GlobalMedic from Canada for medical support;
- Friends Without a Border for dental support;
- IE3 Global Internships, Oregon University System;
- Resource Equality – International [RE-I];
- TAG Wealth, TAG Finance and 1% for solar units;
- Cambodian Ministry of Education Youth and Sport;
- Cambodian Ministry of Rural Development;
- Cambodian Department of Rural Water Supply;
- Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture.

Some of our social media and financial affiliates are:

- GlobalGiving
- GlobalGiving UK
- VirginGiving
- Philanthropic Panda
- MobileCause
- Big1Give1
- OneFilterOne Family
- Earth Protect
- Great NonProfits
- GuideStar
- EXOFoundation
- SeeYourImpact

Our Cambodian business supporters include:

HUSK
Rosy Guest House
Peace Café
ConCERT
Sojourn Boutique Villas

The River Garden Guest
House
The Rose Apple B & B
Globalteer
Grace House

Amansara
Common Grounds Café

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Mary Jo Lockbaum, Vice President
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Donald Kushner, Member

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Warren Garber
Nancy Pettus
Bill Pettus
Jim Darwiche
Pat Butts

US Office

Chris Coats,
Co-Founder/Executive Director
Jenniffer Swink, Executive Secretary

Siem Reap Office

Scott Coats, Co-Founder/Project Director
Sor Ratanak, Managing Director
Sou Sochenda, Bookkeeper
Lon Sey, General Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator

Agriculture Team

Rat Saro, Specialist
Khoeun Khoun, Assistant

Bio-Sand Water Filter Team

Sorm Bunthoeun, Supervisor
Ret Bony, Assistant
Keo Vichet, Assistant

Well Drilling Crew

Sok Samnang, Supervisor
Seng Vichetr, Assistant
Khoeun Khat, Assistant