



Year-End 2020 Newsletter

News from Trailblazer Foundation—

Thankfully, able to continue providing access to water...



Heng introduced BSF to villagers - Prey village

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Developing Ripples of Sustainability through Community Water Projects

A Note From Trailblazer's Executive Director



Hello Trailblazers,

Well, this certainly has been one unexpected and challenging year because of Covid-19. There have been plenty of life-altering changes that have resulted from the pandemic. Perhaps some changes brought new awareness to what is truly important in your lives. Perhaps you have taken the time to reconnect with friends and family that the prior busyness of life kept you from. As 2020 comes to an end, we hope that the holiday season brings new promise and enrichment to those who may have suffered during the year. We trust that you and yours have continued to stay safe and remain healthy.

Trailblazer has, thankfully, been able to continue providing access to water through wells, clean drinking water with bio-sand water filters, better sanitation with latrines, increased food security through our various agriculture trainings, and support of education with bicycles and school uniforms. So, despite Covid, our work has proceeded rather smoothly and will continue to, thanks to everyone's generous and ongoing support.

In this newsletter, we are proud to report to you the accomplishments that have been made in 2020 to improve health, food security, education, and economic development opportunities for rural Cambodian communities. The assistance Trailblazer provides with its products and services could not be provided without all of you, our donors, who care and have compassion to give to help those who are marginalized and with few options. Your gifts are making a real and lasting difference.

Humbly and with an eye on our goals for 2021, we seek your continued support. You can be a blessing to someone. Remember, if you donate now you will receive your year-end USA tax benefit. Please feel free to use the enclosed envelope to send a check or to process a credit card payment. Or if it is more convenient, use the DONATE button on our website to make your donation. As we approach this special holiday time, remember you can always donate in honor or memory of someone special and add that unique touch to your gift.

Thank you so much for your continued interest and support in our cause. Your participation is vital and valued.

With deepest gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Coats". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large "C" and a stylized "Coats".

*Chris Coats
Co-Founder and Executive Director*

Health Program

DONATE NOW

How it all Works

Our health program is our largest program because it deals with life's most basic needs, water and sanitation. Each fall our teams are invited to attend the government integrated workshops in the four districts where Trailblazer works: Soutr Nikum; Banteay Srey; Prasat Bakong; and Pouk. In these workshops Trailblazer learns about the different needs, starting at the village level, and makes agreements to meet those needs, based on our capacity and funding.

Trailblazer's local director, Mr. Sor Ratanak, leads our teams and mentors the senior staff by cross training them in all the programs and project activities. In addition, Ratanak sends the teams to attend the integrated workshops and other official meetings to build relations and make our work easier with good cooperation by the officials.

Integrated workshop in Pouk District



When Trailblazer learns about all the district's needs, Ratanak holds a management meeting with his senior staff to review the prior year's accomplishments, calculate the teams capacity for the upcoming year, plan for the next year's goals, and discuss the budget needs with Trailblazer's executive director, Chris Coats, before signing any agreements with the government.



Latrine Recipient



Water Filter Recipients

Please visit **our website** for more information about our Health Programs:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/health-program>

**GIVE A GIFT IN
HONOR OR MEMORY
OF SOMEONE SPECIAL**

Health Program

How it all Works (continued)

To recap what has been accomplished in 2020, as of the end of October, Trailblazer's teams have:

- installed 422 bio-sand water filters - the goal was 415;
- drilled 117 wells - the goal was 111; and
- constructed 84 latrines.

Keep in mind, these statistics do not count the two months to go in 2020! So, you can easily see that our teams are doing an amazing amount of work and exceeding our annual goals. And it is because of the wonderful support received from our donors, like you, that makes this possible. With a donation of \$80 you can supply one family with a bio-sand water filter, with a donation of \$320 you can supply one to three families with a well, and with a donation of \$175 you can provide a family with a latrine.

Well Drilling

Well Recipient



Bio-sand Water filter



Concrete molds for bio-sand water filters



Please visit our website for more information about our Health Programs:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/health-program>

Food Security Program

Agriculture Training is Expanding

There is a growing demand for homestead gardening and chicken raising training in Trailblazer's Food Security program. Villagers are increasingly turning to farming and living with their family in the countryside, partially due to the impact of Covid-19. The borders are closed, so villagers are not allowed to source work abroad and local businesses have closed, so people cannot find other jobs, leaving many villagers without income.

On a positive note, families are staying together on their family farms and do not need to migrate to Vietnam or Thailand to earn a living. They are improving themselves and growing the family business to better support the family.

This year, as of the end of October, Trailblazer conducted:

- 15 horticulture trainings that benefitted 226 participants;
- 18 compost trainings that benefitted 287 participants; and
- 24 chicken raising training courses that benefitted 388 farmers.

Compost training and practices at Kok Reusey village



Chicken Raising Training (Left and below)



Compost training and practices at Kok Reusey village



Please visit our website for more information about our Food Security Program:
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/food-security-program>

Food Security Program

Agriculture Training is Expanding (continued)

That amounts to 901 farmers who have gained knowledge on better agricultural practices to make their farming pursuits more successful. Based on the average family size of 5 persons, that is 4,505 who have benefitted from Trailblazer agriculture training service and will have better food security because of those trainings. We thank our supporters for helping make this happen. With a \$50 donation, you can support the training of one farmer.



Horticulture Trainings

HELP SUPPORT OUR AGRICULTURE TRAININGS



Compost training at Kamphem village



Compost training and practices at Kok Po village

Please visit our website for more information about our Food Security Program:
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/food-security-program>

Education Program

More Students Wait to Receive a Bicycle or Uniform

In our Summer newsletter we reported on the distribution of bicycles and school uniforms, and thank again everyone who contributed to making those projects a success.

According to the United Nations, an educated girl is more likely able to plan when she marries, when she begins having children and how many, can better look after her health and that of her family, and ensure her children's health against disease and malnutrition. According to the United Nations, nearly 12 million children could be spared from undernutrition if their mothers had received a secondary education. This makes Trailblazer's efforts to distribute bicycles even more relevant and vital, especially in underdeveloped countries like Cambodia.

For 2021, Trailblazer continues to seek support for bicycles and uniforms. There is an average of 400 to 650 students per school. We prefer to be able to provide every student that needs a bicycle or uniform at each school, which translates to having sizable goals to reach! Examples: \$7,500 to purchase 500 uniforms; \$22,000 to purchase 400 bicycles. Please don't be deterred by these large figures. We are happy to distribute bicycles, a truck load at a time, and uniforms to those who are identified as the poorest of the poor first. It is better to assist students how and when we can than not at all. We simply need to make more trips until every student needing a bicycle or uniform gets one!

Students Wearing their New Uniforms



Bicycle and Uniform Distribution



Students Riding their New Bicycles

With a \$55 donation you can provide a student with their own bicycle, with a donation of \$15 you can provide a much needed school uniform to a student. Please consider giving your support to these invaluable educational needs.



Please visit our website for more information about our Education Program:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/education-program>

Economic Development Program

A New Farmer Community Group is in View

In 2021, Trailblazer will be establishing a second Farmer Community Group [FCG] in Puok District to produce vegetables that will supply the vegetable markets in the local area, as well as Siem Reap city markets. The group will be made up of local farmers who receive agriculture training and consultation by Trailblazer. This group will benefit the local community by sharing all its interests and knowledge to all of the people around the area. The goal is to use a social entrepreneurship model to provide jobs and produce a market for the local rural farmer community. These farmers can be an entrepreneur, or an independent business person, who does not need to depend on further help from NGO or organizations.



Another activity within our Economic Development program is the Village Funds program, a micro-loan system within the village. In 2020, Trailblazer conducted:

- 85 Village Fund refresher courses to ensure that things were running smoothly and to respond to any issues or questions,
- introduced the Village Fund concept to 35 villages in anticipation they would like to establish a Village Fund in their village, and
- worked with 12 villages to establish a Village Fund of their own.

DONATE NOW

Please visit our website for more information about our Economic Development Program:
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/economic-development-prog>

How You Can Help

You Can Make an Impact

As a brief reminder of how your gift(s) can be part of changing a family's life, please see the list below. Every dollar adds up and really does help.

- \$15 buys a school uniform
- \$50 supports a rural farmer's agriculture training course
- \$55 buys a bicycle to keep a student in school
- \$80 buys a biosand water filter for up to 3 families
- \$175 buys a latrine for a family
- \$320 buys a well for up to 3 families
- \$_____ to help out as much as possible where needed most

In case you are seeking alternative ways to give and receive great tax benefits, you can:

- donate from your Donor Advised Fund.
- donate old stock (with a low basis) that has appreciated in the market and avoid capital gains tax.
- if you are 70 ½ or older you can avoid extra income by making a gift from your IRA.
- eliminate an old or unneeded life insurance policy by gifting the cash balance.

Testimonial

A Donor Highlight

We like to recognize Trailblazer supporters, be they donors, partners or volunteers, and thank them for their participation in helping make Trailblazer what it is today. This testimonial is from Colonel Dick Sargent and his wife Dr. Patricia Sargent who have been financial donors since 2019, with a focus on latrines. In the past - through Rotary International - they invested in water wells. Today, investing in Trailblazer, they are committed to helping build latrines, which will improve peoples' hygiene, their health and their lives. Trailblazer's Executive Director, Chris Coats, initially met Dick Sargent at a Lakewood Foothills Rotary club meeting in Colorado where Chris made a presentation to the Rotarian members. Dick, who served twice as President, continued to show interest, inviting Chris a number of times to present to the club, and encouraged his club members and others to support Trailblazer.

An educator, Patricia served for decades both as high school teacher and administrator, and after retirement as adjunct professor at Regis University and University of Denver. She now spends her time researching and writing about women's history. To quote Patricia as to why she supports Trailblazer's efforts, she said, "Helping other human beings brings quality to our own lives. Helping others improve their lives, improves our lives. It's so important to help other people because we have so much."

Dick flew jet planes in the United States Marine Corps, becoming a full Colonel. As a civilian, he served the community and the state by running twice for Colorado State Treasurer and once for Governor, and he served the town of Golden as City Councilman and later as Board member of the Regional Transportation District. To summarize Dick's comments as to why he supports Trailblazer: Dick is deeply moved about Cambodia's history of losing all their leaders and intelligencia during the devastating regime of the Khmer Rouge, which ruled Cambodia from 1975 - 1979. From his life experience, he has seen people who are motivated and work hard improve their lives. When they get an opportunity, they do their best to make the most out of it. Dick knows that their money can make an impact on helping Cambodians recover, and he wants to help the world in that way.



MAKE AN IMPACT TODAY

Please visit our website for ways you can support Trailblazer Foundation:
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/donate>

Testimonial

A New Board Member to the Team



In our Spring 2016 Newsletter, we highlighted an intern from Indiana University, Nicolette "Nicky" Ulrich who worked with our Agriculture team and was instrumental in "kicking off" our first Farmer Community Group.

We are proud and happy to announce that Nicky has joined our team this year as a Board of Directors member, and has also agreed to serve in the position as Board Secretary.

Nicky was born and raised in southern California, but now resides in North Carolina. She is a food system practitioner, who is passionate about food systems and the intersection of food with health, economic vitality, and wellbeing. She brings her skills and insights of the agriculture sector to build Trailblazer's programs. She spent significant time abroad in West Africa as a Peace Corps Volunteer and three months volunteering with the Trailblazer Foundation during the summer of 2016 [when she worked with our Food Security staff]. These experiences gave her a deep appreciation for cross-cultural programming and insight when working with international communities.

She currently works with local food growers and producers on these same intersections through the Cooperative Extension at North Carolina State University. She has served on several boards that focused on either international relations (North Carolina Peace Corps Association and West Cascade Peace Corps Association) and/or on food security (Partners for Hunger Free Oregon and Oregon Farmers Market Association).

She wants to serve on the Trailblazer Board of Directors because she believes she can contribute to the ongoing success and development of community programming, and is eager to support the initiatives that Trailblazer has adopted. She wants to work collaboratively to move Trailblazer forward and serve the communities of Siem Reap province.

To Donate

By Mail: PO Box 271767, Fort Collins, CO 80527

Online: <https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/donate>

Please visit our website for ways you can support Trailblazer Foundation:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/our-board>

Additional News

A Local Committed to Helping Her Communities



Trailblazer has been fortunate to enlist a volunteer, Los Vannak “Anak”, who is a native to Siem Reap province, to help us collect testimonials and stories from Trailblazer village beneficiaries. We are very happy to have her helping us on this project.

Co-Founders Chris Coats and Scott Coats first met Anak when she was just a young girl living in Sras village - the first village Trailblazer began its work in 2005. Since that time, Anak has grown to be an amazing, motivated and intelligent woman. As her full-time job, Anak works at the Ponheary Ly Foundation University in Siem Reap as a field director for Chey and Wat Bo Primary Schools, Khnart Secondary School, and the Siem Reap Girls Dormitory. She is progressing on to developing and leading workshops for secondary to high schools, and is also involved with university level students.

In her words, “At that time I was in grade 2, but I remember the Trailblazer team went to my house to have lunch under the mango trees behind my small house. Trailblazer supported building two schools in my village so the students can go to school. Besides building a school in my village, they supported more people to learn sewing, beauty salon, agriculture, well, filter, and the village fund so people who struggled can get a loan. The people in my village started from the beginning of their life in that area, I mean they started to think about life, how to feed their kids, how to keep them in school. And all of them really know Chris and Scott well. I used to volunteer with a villager survey in my village since 2012. For myself, I saw this happen, the people changed their lifestyle with help from Trailblazer. In my brain I wanted to work for an NGO to support kids in school. Now I reached it by working with PLF and I am happy to volunteer for Trailblazer. And my goal is to help more adults from my village as I can.”



As we hope you have enjoyed reading stories we have shared in past newsletters, we hope you will continue to find inspiration when you read the testimonials Anak collects from others who have received Trailblazer products or services.

Please visit our website for ways you can support Trailblazer Foundation:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/from-our-recipients>



Trailblazer Foundation

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