



Year End 2024 Newsletter

News from Trailblazer Foundation—

A blessing and an honor to be part of the catalyst of change...



Empowering Rural Communities in Cambodia

Ratanak, our Field Director, with School Children

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

PO Box 271767 • FORT COLLINS • COLORADO • 80527

INFO@THETRAILBLAZERFOUNDATION.ORG • (307) 399-2192 WWW.THETRAILBLAZERFOUNDATION.ORG

A Note From Trailblazer's Executive Director



Hello Trailblazers!

Wow! It's amazing to realize we are nearing the end of 2024 already, the close of our **20th year in operation**. It has been **a blessing and an honor to be part of the catalyst of change** and for making a real difference in the lives of others less fortunate.

In this newsletter edition I want to share with you all of the accomplishments that have been made with your contributions. First, **we have exciting news!** We were successful in our truck campaign to purchase a new secondhand truck for our water filter team on the ground in Siem Reap. **Look on the last page of this newsletter to see a photo** of our new truck along with other photos of the work we have accomplished with your support. We also post photos on our social media and website.

So, what's next? We have set our program goals for 2025 and **trust we can count on your continued support** in improving the health and livelihoods of our village partners.

Everyone deserves safe drinking water, sufficient nutritious food to eat, good sanitation, and a way to earn income and support the family. Unfortunately, thousands of rural Cambodian families live in harsh conditions that make their lives difficult; without assistance are **struggling to survive**.

Your gift today will **ensure that more poor rural families will have clean water and food security**, now and for years to come. Every dollar you give helps provide access to water, agriculture training and economic opportunities that will **build hope for a better life**.

Warm wishes always,

Chris Coats

Executive Director



*"Just one small positive thought in the morning can
change your whole day."*

—Dalai Lama

Health Program

Villagers Experience the Benefits

This year we conducted a **brief survey** of a random cross-section of villagers who have been using a bio-sand water filter [BSF] for more than 3 years. **We wanted to learn what their health condition** and lives were like before having a BSF and how life was different after they received a BSF. I thought you would be interested to learn what we found.

Below are the questions that were asked and the answers.

1) How many days [on average] did you lose in wages due to being sick? *1-7 days.*

2) How much did you lose in daily wages? *10,000 riels [\$2.50 USD] to 15,000 riels [\$3.75 USD]. [Wages then for these villagers range between \$75.00 USD to \$112.50 USD per month].*

This equates to a minimum of \$2.50 USD for one day in lost wages, and up to \$26.25 USD if they experienced 7 days of lost wages at a \$3.75 USD/day wage rate.

3) What did transportation to and from the doctor cost? *Patients used their own motorbike/tricycle to get to the doctor and to the pharmacy, so costs were minimal.*

4) What were your average medical costs to visit a clinic and for medicine? *104,000 riels [\$26.00 USD] to 204,000 riels [\$51.00 USD] per visit. But if one was seriously ill, the costs were around \$200 to \$300 USD.*

5) How many times did you need to go to the doctor? *Usually a patient would need to visit 2 to 5 times to recover.*

This would equate to a minimum of \$52.00 USD for two trips [at a cost of \$26.00 USD per trip], and up to \$255.00 USD if they needed to visit the clinic 5 times [at a cost of \$51.00 per visit].

It was a consensus that after using their BSF for a while they noticed that **their illnesses had gone from significantly less to nonexistent.**

Based on these responses and calculations, I believe it is safe to say that villagers experienced the benefits of having a BSF in the following ways:

A 75% increase in wages saved

A 100% decrease in health-related expenses

**This holiday season GIVE
'In Honor or Memory of' Someone Special -
Scan the QR -->**



Please visit our website for more information about our Health Program:
<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/health-program>

Health Program (Continued)

Villagers Experience the Benefits



We once again **reached and even exceeded some of our Health Program goals** for 2024: Our team installed 347 BSFs, drilled 122 wells and constructed 121 latrines.

There was training provided for each and every one of these products at the community level and individual households. Although the technology is easy, it is new, and so villagers need to be educated on the importance of the product, as well as the proper use and maintenance in order for the project to be successful.

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

— Anne Frank

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Food Security Program

Taking Steps Forward



A World Food Program report states that Cambodia has seen **significant economic transformation** in recent years. However, **progress remains fragile, challenged** by climate-related disasters that can undo years of developmental gains. A substantial portion of the population still faces food insecurity, poverty and the effects of disasters. Cambodia is currently ranked the eighth most vulnerable country to natural disasters, so supporting communities to be better prepared by providing agriculture training will **help ensure they can gain food security year-round**.

And USAID reports: *"Nearly 61 percent of Cambodians live in rural areas, and 77 percent of rural households rely on agriculture, fisheries, and forestry for their livelihoods. Cambodian farmers are extremely vulnerable to climate change-induced increases in temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, and extreme weather events. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, 45 percent of Cambodians live in moderate or severe food insecurity."*

These reports depict how important **Trailblazer's Food Security program is needed**. Once we help our villagers gain access to water through wells, and participate in the agriculture training we offer, families can **begin to take steps forward** in their health and sustainability.



Our 2024 accomplishments include:

- 9 Integrated Farming Systems training with 130 participants
- 8 homestead training with 114 participants
- 10 soil management training with 110 participants
- 7 fertilizer/pesticide training with 88 participants
- 15 composting training with 207 participants
- 2 chicken raising training with 37 participants

Please visit our website for more information about our Food Security Program:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/food-security-program>

Food Security Program (Continued)

Taking Steps Forward

This totals 686 participants. When you calculate the number of participants with the average family size of 5 persons, that means **an estimated 3,430 people benefitted** from these trainings.

Additionally, there were **98 follow-up visits** with farmers who attended our training, chicken raising and with our two Farmer Community Groups.

“Today’s accomplishments were yesterday’s impossibilities.” — Robert H. Schuller

Education Program

40,800 Students Have Graduated

Two school buildings were built this year for Kok Chan and Tapang villages. These schools were **made possible** because of the **generous investments** of donors made through our business partner **Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy**. The inauguration ceremony for both schools took place on September 9, 2024.

I thought I would take this time to share with you **what schools mean** to the education of students in rural Siem Reap province. Each primary school is designed to accommodate 480 students and kindergartens 180 students.

Since 2005, Trailblazer has “built” **10 primary** school buildings and **two kindergarten** school buildings.

By now, we can estimate that **40,800 students have graduated** from the 10 primary schools since 2005. And over the past 14 years, an estimated 4,320 students graduated from the kindergarten schools to the next level of their education.

That’s a lot of students who have had an education because of generous donors who contributed to the cause. Now these students are using their education to participate in **helping improve their own country**. We are quite proud of this accomplishment and **deeply thankful** to the donors who made it happen.



“Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time.”— Ruth Bader

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

Economic Development Program

Much-Needed Equipment and Materials

Earlier this year the **Christ Episcopal Church in Cody, WY** and the **Endowment International Outreach Project Fund** granted support for the Farmer Community Group in Pouk district, and we are ever so grateful. The grant **provided for much-needed equipment and materials**



to continue the group's success for the long-term. The farmers needed soil to raise the level of their farmland to prevent flooding of their crops, the excavation of existing ponds to ensure a year-round supply of water to use for irrigation, water pumps for irrigation purposes, and a plowing machine. Christ Episcopal Church realizes the importance of this farmer group in **helping raise rural families out of starvation**, increase incomes and, bring them into more healthy and sustainable livelihoods.

Trailblazer's Agriculture Specialist, Monypheap, has left our employ to follow her dream of getting her master's degree. We will miss her greatly, **she has done such a great job** training thousands of farmers to be more successful with their home gardens and the Farmer Community Groups to thrive and continue earning income. Ratanak will be hiring a new Ag. Specialist who will hopefully start in this position in January 2025. We will share this new staff with you in 2025.



To report on **this year's accomplishments** for our Economic Development program, our team provided 179 refresher trainings on Village Funds, conducted 4 introductions to Village Funds, and established 4 new Village Funds. **Village Funds benefit these communities** because they create a micro-loan system in the village to encourage and support development.

"Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others." — Rosa Parks

Please visit our website for more information about our Economic Development Program:

<https://thetrailblazerfoundation.org/economic-development-prog>

Other News

Two New Board Members

We are **excited to introduce and welcome two new members** to our Board of Directors who joined our team this fall. **Steven Peterson and Isabel Carvalho**. You can see their full bios on our website, under About Us/Our Board page.



Steve lives in San Diego, CA. He has experience in global corporate business systems management. Steve's work experiences led him to Central and South America, Africa, Europe, and multiple Asian-Pacific countries. He was touched by Trailblazer's work and donated a well. When presented with an opportunity to join the board, Steve accepted and looks forward to contributing to the on-going success of the Trailblazer team.

Isabel, originally from Brazil, and is currently based in New York City. She has many years of experience in global organizations in global projects across engineering, research and development, and supply chain. Isabel is passionate about working with vulnerable communities. She served as a WASH Project Manager in Nepal, and spent five months in Zambia on a comprehensive WASH strategy for rural communities. Isabel is looking forward to bringing her corporate expertise and hands-on WASH experience to support Trailblazer Foundation's mission of empowering rural communities in Cambodia.



USE YOUR PHONE CAMERA
TO SCAN THE DONATION CODE

You can make an even greater impact by setting up a monthly donation. Consider Setting Up Your Recurring Donation Today by scanning the QR Code —>

Please visit our blog to read more stories from the field:

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

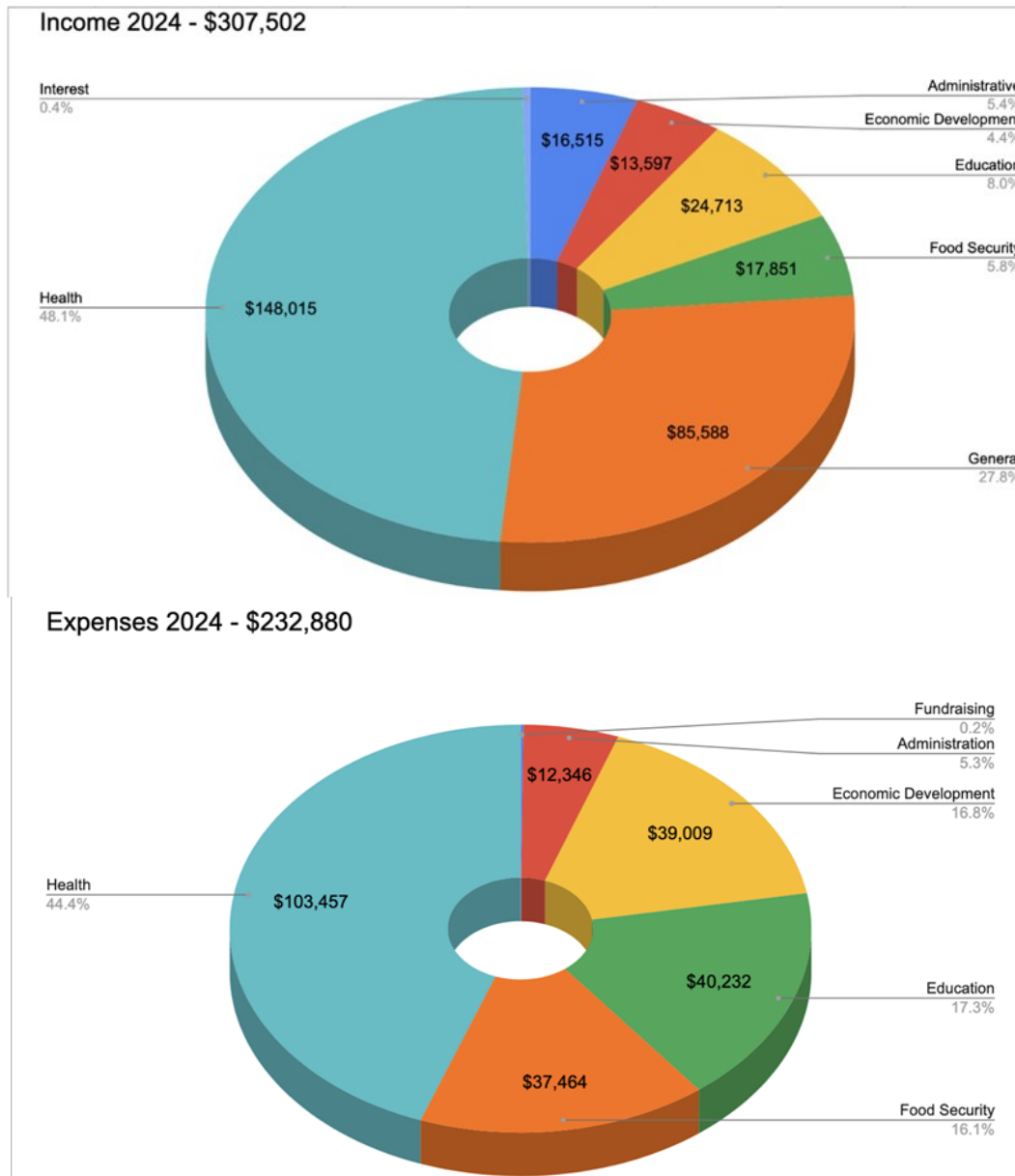
Financial Update

I thought it would be informative to share with you **our 2024 Income and Expenditures**. These figures are based on a budget cycle of October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024. I have purposely left out the school construction data as it would skew what our typical budget is from year to year for programs.

Our Health program is the largest in both income and expenditures, and focuses on dealing with **life sustaining basic needs**: water, food, sanitation. You can see that expenses for the other programs: Economic Development, Education and Food Security far exceed the income that is received for these programs. Therefore, Trailblazer must **use the General funds** that are received to maintain these programs, and where **our reserves help** us out.

You will see that we were **blessed to experience a surplus** of \$74,622, which we put into a reserve account to **protect our financial stability**. As a non-profit, income fluctuates year to year, so it is valuable to have a little extra for the "lean" times.

We wish to thank you for your wonderful support as it is your generosity that keeps our doors open and our efforts moving forward.



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 biosand 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.
- * 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.



Year End Matching! DONATE TODAY!

All donations through this month will get matched \$1 for \$1 thanks to our matching donor fund. For details visit our website.

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**.

As always, we are ever grateful for your participation and generosity. Our work is only made possible because of people like you who want to leave a legacy!

Your generous donations make a real difference in our mission. To keep our mission running strong, we kindly ask if you would consider adding 15% to your next donation to cover essential administrative costs. Thank you for your understanding and continued support!



New Truck



Santa visits Siem Reap Handing Out
Toothbrushes



Volunteer at Work Site



Staff at Work Site



Bio-Sand Water Filter donated by DonorSee
Supporters



Latrine donated by
Rotary Club Denver SE



Latrine donated by
Rotary Club Zurich



Chicken Farm Re-established
Supported by Donor Rhonda



Pull Pump Well donated by B1G1 Supporters



Re-Installed Filter donated by TAG

To Donate

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

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



Trailblazer Foundation

PO Box 271767
Fort Collins, Colorado 80527