

Annual Report 2023

Community Centre Grace House Organisation

“Enabling the community to become sustainable through education, family support and health care”

Compiled in conjunction with:

Loung Chhiv

Executive Director and Project Manager
Community Centre of Grace House Organisation

Chan Dani

Director and Social Worker

Seam Sara

Director and Manager of Disability

Pheng Sreyleak

Admin and Accountant



To meet Community needs – a new class – Bunnies and Puppies



2023 started at CCGHO (Grace House) with several building projects underway and a large number of students in both the general education and special needs programs (there is a wait list for special needs). The highlight of this time was no doubt the introduction of another early childhood class with students being enrolled at three years of age. There is very limited access to early years education in Cambodia, especially when parents are unable to pay. There is no kindergarten or early years schooling for these young children. In 2016, a “Ducklings and Kittens” class was established providing two half-day sessions throughout the week. This was led in Khmer and aimed at younger children. The structure of this early years class is founded upon play and focusses on developing numeracy skills, Khmer literacy, and very basic English.

In 2023, Grace House responded to the community’s needs by establishing an entirely new class for the very early learning years students. The need came from increasing pressure from families in the surrounding villages, and from local authorities asking when Grace House can accept new referrals. The demand was evident. This additional class will promote the community’s capacity by educating their children from a young age; supporting and empowering new families and/or siblings of current students; addressing poverty and the education gap; and strengthening connections amongst Grace House, the local authorities and community members.

The initial proposal for the classroom was to renovate Preahkoun House. After due consideration and discussions with the team here, there was a concern that this space would

be too far away from the rest of the school. Luckily, an anonymous donor provided funds for the construction of a new classroom. The water pump and well were relocated to make room and the classroom fitted snugly between the ducklings and kittens classroom and goat class. Funding from SE Asia Foundation covered resources such as chairs and tables, teaching resources and one year salary for a teacher and an assistant teacher. Bunnies and Puppies opened in February with 10 students in the morning and 13 in the afternoon. Yuret was employed as the teacher and Houg as the assistant.

English and General Education

Grace House continues to provide English lessons and general education to children from the two villages surrounding Grace House - Kor Kranh and Spean Chreav. Enrolments increased to 150 students as a result of the new early education class. There are now ten classes: Bunnies and Puppies (3-4 yrs), Ducklings and Kittens (5-6 yrs), Chicks and Bees (6-8 yrs), Buffalos and Crocodiles (8-10 yrs) and Lions and Dolphins (10-14 yrs). Attendance is high amongst the students, with peak enrolment of 160 reached in December (77 girls and 83 boys).

What is concerning, and currently under investigation, is the decreasing numbers amongst the part time students attending from 3.00 – 4.00pm. The year started with 28 students (10 boys and 18 girls) but dropped down to 12 in December (10 girls and 2 boys). It is understood that the students are required to attend extra classes at state school, however, English is not being taught consistently here and a solution needs to be found to ensure the continuous learning of English for our students after graduating from Grace House.

Computers in the classroom, a key strategic goal of 2023, has been achieved. Initially, our anonymous donor provided a laptop for every teacher and then Lee Shafford (USA) worked tirelessly throughout the year to raise funds to purchase 20 laptops. These 20 laptops are now a full class set used by each of the three older classes each week as part of the teaching schedule. Lee has also donated two new data projectors to be used in the classrooms. An additional projector will be purchased in 2024 (anonymous donor).



*Lee Shafford checking out the computers in use!
Great new desks and chairs too!*

Loung, Teacher Chhalin and Volunteer Ann visited Caring for Cambodia to hear about ideas for classroom set ups. As a result, two rooms have now been refurbished with colourful new desks and chairs (as seen the picture on the previous page) to allow for greater flexibility in classroom design and learning.

To have the classrooms sponsored takes the financial pressure off an already tight budget. Adding to a long terms sponsor for Buffalos and Crocodiles, Dolphins and Lions, Chicks and Bees and Ducklings and Kittens classrooms are now generously sponsored by Niall Robinson, a new supporter of Grace House. Thank you Niall, this helps us enormously.

New t-shirts were also provided to all students as part of an anonymous donor.



New T shirts for all the students!

Special Needs Education

There are 34 students in the special needs unit with 11 staff. Ratio of staff to students is high to provide one on one support as required. Parents are very supportive of the work done by the Grace House staff and say their children are much calmer and happier at home as a result. The children generally love to come to their classes to see their friends and be part of the activities and therapy provided. Activities outside the classroom are enjoyed, particularly working in Ron’s Garden, cooking the crops and visiting the monks at Wat Atvear. The highlight of the year was that three of our students have now been able to enrol at state school and are coping with the structure and learning. This is a real and invaluable achievement – congratulations to the students, teachers and families concerned.

Koy (disability manager) works closely with Dani (Social worker) and the parents, setting goals for each of the students.



Students from James Cook University

James Cook University and Curtin University (both from Australia) continue to visit Grace House each year in February and November respectively as part of their final year placements.



Curtin Students

The University students worked closely with the special needs students, bringing and making resources, workshopping with the staff, donating money for improvements as well as leading some classroom lessons.

This collaboration is a huge success for all concerned.

It's a real "win win" situation!

Staff Development and Networking



Special needs expo in Phnom Penh

In January, Loung, Marianne and Ann spent two days in Phnom Penh visiting Cambodia Children's Fund (CCF), attending a special needs' expo and shopping for resources.

They had been invited by Nicky Ward who had previously spent time at Grace House (Volunteer artist in residence) before moving to Phnom Penh and taking the position at CCF. It was interesting have been invited to look around the school and see the work being done by the students. CCF is an inspiring project.

Head teacher Chhalin completed a course run by TDSO on curriculum development and used this knowledge to support teachers to develop goals for their classrooms.



CLLC Meeting in Siem Reap

CLLC - as part of the SE Asia Foundation, Cambodian Leadership Learning Community (CLLC), offers several NGOs in Siem Reap the opportunity to attend monthly meetings. These are either face to face when Bill is in country or via zoom calls when he is at home in the US. These are important mentoring and networking opportunities for the Project Manager and the senior Managers at Grace House.

Attendance is free for staff.

In March, all staff attended a weekend one-day workshop run by Plastic Free Cambodia. Initiatives were developed to reduce single use of plastics and children must now bring their own water bottle and not bring snacks in plastic bags. There has been a reduction in rubbish around the grounds although the message regarding the burning of plastic has still not been fully absorbed.

Staff and carers working with the special needs students attended a workshop in November run by Women's Resource Centre. This was part of the 16-day campaign ending violence against women and girls under the theme "UNITE".



Staff attending the Women's Resource Centre workshop

Staff numbers have remained relatively stable, although during the year we said goodbye to Chhalin (Head Teacher) and Yuret (Kittens and Ducklings).

Teacher Srey Kun was promoted to Head Teacher in September, Young was promoted from assistant to replace Yuret and Mutita joined as a new assistant.

Congratulations to staff who graduated in 2023! We are very proud to have Srey Kun (English Literature), Kimeart (Law) and Sreyleak (Accounting) amongst our team at Grace House. Ex student Reaksa also graduated (along with Sreyleak in Accounting). Thanks to Grace House donors who have assisted with some of the course fees.



Congratulations to all our 2023 graduates!

Families and Social Work

Dani continues as the social worker on a part time basis. There were 145 families sending children to Grace House in 2023 with 112 families in General Education and 33 families in the Special Needs Unit. The beginning of the year saw Dani working predominantly handling enrolments and overseeing the settling of the new students.

Once the new sensory room was completed, Dani was also involved in the training of staff in using the various resources in the room. The connections made with Karuna Battambang Organisation in 2022 have proved to be invaluable with several families of the special needs students travelling to Battambang for assessment and medications if required.

Dani met with the Commune Chief twice monthly. The first is a general meeting to hear about what is happening in the village, while the second is specifically discussing issues associated with women and children.

Most of Dani's work is centred on the families and children. There are constant enquiries for enrolments to Grace House either in general education or within the Special Needs. Many of these come through other NGOs and paperwork and documents must be confirmed to be accurate and available. Families are visited and the needs of the family identified and addressed if needed. Dani is integral in the planning of the parent teacher interviews three times a year and speaking with the families to ensure their attendance.



Dani meets some of the parents

In July, Dani organised a meeting for parents to discuss how to support their children's learning at home.

Core business for the social worker is Child Protection and Dani attended workshops during the year for updates and ensured that staff attend refresher courses. First Step provides free courses and all teachers attended with Grace House closed for the day. Dani works with the carers and staff within the special needs unit to ensure they understand and adhere to the policy. Dani also attended a workshop run by OIC (Speech Therapy specialist in Phnom Penh). Here they discussed techniques carers and teachers could use to ensure children with disabilities (particularly those who were non-verbal) were not at risk of abuse and could identify if they were.

Lastly, Dani continues to work closely with 9 families to provide additional support. Family sponsorship has dropped away in recent years with only 3 donors providing funding at this time. This needs to be addressed in 2024.

Improvements at Grace House

1. Sensory Room



A sensory room was constructed at the beginning of the year providing a dedicated enclosed space specifically designed to meet the needs of students with a developmental disability, learning difficulty, or sensory impairment. For students with disabilities who have difficulty focusing, concentrating or regulating their emotions, a sensory room provides them with activities that engage their various senses through touch, sound, light and movement. Such activities either focus on stimulating or calming the senses and the sensory room can be used for individual time or with groups.

Thanks to a grant from SE Asia Foundation, an old storeroom was extensively renovated, extended and repaired to create a room easily accessible to the other special needs rooms. The room was furnished with sensory matting, dimmed lighting, air-conditioning, fans and a mounted data projector with speakers. Sensory toys of various textures, sensory touch wall lights, exercise balls, bean bags and other resources that would enrich the learning experiences of the students were also purchased.

Whilst the sensory room was specifically designed for the special needs students, all general education students had the opportunity to experience the room, particularly for yoga sessions. The two younger age classes (ducklings and kittens, bunnies and puppies) use the room weekly with the benefit of the development of emotional learning and calming strategies. Furthermore, the room offers the perfect space for the showing of educational movies as well as physical activities such as Just Dance to improve coordination, fitness and brain function. The general education classes enjoy their time in the sensory room and look forward to their scheduled lesson, but they would like to go every day!

The room offers specific benefits to the students with special needs (cerebral palsy and autism) in particular. The advantage of having this larger sensory room has already been noted by the staff. There are three special needs classes at Grace House and each of these classes use the room at least twice a week and always on a Monday as time in the sensory room on a Monday provides a calm and safe environment for the students to refocus after the weekend. Having the room so close to their home rooms, allows the teachers to access the room at any time and it is large enough to share with another class if needed. There are times when some students become very unsettled and need time out. This room and activities within, can

reduce overall arousal quickly, rebalancing emotions and attention. Teachers have found that learning is quicker when in the room. Sensory equipment is designed to help students concentrate on the activity in hand and enhance memory. Each week a new set of activities and resources are set up in the room. The students understand the word sensory and understand how to do the activities. As with the general classes, the special needs students would love to go to the sensory room every day. Particularly in the hot weather just to be in the air-conditioning! The parents have been very surprised that Grace House now has a sensory room and have commented that their children are much calmer. Parents would like to join in and be part of the activities, especially when it is hot – they too appreciate the air conditioning!

2. A refurbished library

Money raised from St Ursula's College (Toowoomba, Australia) and Unity College (Caloundra Australia) was used to completely refurbish the library. Books were sorted and all books not appropriate for the students were donated to TDSO and Spean Chivit Youth Resource Centre.

The walls were freshly painted, new bookshelves, flooring, beanbags and seating were purchased. The children now enjoy a bigger space with a range of Khmer and English books suitable for their reading levels and culture. Library lessons are included as part of the weekly schedule.



Kids enjoying the new library

3. Refurbished Special Needs classrooms

The first special needs rooms were built in 2012 and have had very little maintenance over the subsequent years and hence needed some sprucing! Donations from St Ursula's (Australia) past staff group and St James Place Cardiff (UK via Trustee Annette) provided for painting, new windows, new flooring and repairs to the ceiling for the three classrooms. A new partition wall was built in Parrot classroom to make a separate room at the back. Funds from Curtin University were used for this project.

4. Shade areas



The new roof over the playground

Two very important and well used areas of the school are the playground and the football field. Unfortunately, the weather is often either too hot or too wet for outdoor play and games lessons on a Friday. Thanks to a generous donation, both areas are now covered and shaded.

Further refurbishment of the sports field is being undertaken in 2024.

5. Stage



With work planned to add shade to the sports field and a little corner begging to be used, we allocated a donation from Fumi Hill to build a stage for the students to use for monthly presentations and annual graduation ceremonies.



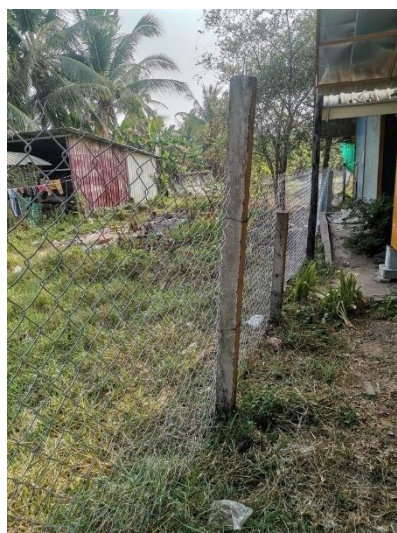
A wheelchair ramp was added to ensure access for all. On the “to do” list now is to paint the back wall with something bright but simple so as not to distract from stage performances!

Thank you Fumi!

6. Dog fence

Local dogs and chickens wandering into Grace House had become a problem and when a student was bitten at the beginning of the year, we knew we needed to take action and do something to make the grounds safer for our students and staff. We needed to add a new fence along the boundary to our old property and upgrade the one between GH and the road to the village.

Thanks to our anonymous donor who funded the fence along the road and to Emily from Curtin University for following up with a donation to buy new fence for the length of the side between Grace House and private land that used to be part of Grace House. It’s a huge improvement but students and staff are also continually reminded not to feed any animals that wander onto the property.



7. Flagpole



It is now a regular part of the school routine for students to assemble and sing the national anthem. A new flagpole (and flag) was donated by the students from Curtin University in November. The flag is raised on Monday morning with the morning class singing the anthem and lowered Friday afternoon with the afternoon class singing the anthem.

This is also a time when the Project Manager speaks to the children about any particular issues he needs to bring to their attention. This might include a reminder about litter, not bringing plastic to school or simply being kind to each other.

Volunteers and visitors

Unfortunately, the number of volunteers has not increased. Tourism numbers are down generally in Siem Reap, and this corresponds with the number of volunteers working in NGOs across the city.

2023 really saw the first influx of long-time volunteers since Covid. We have really missed them so were very happy to welcome back Ann, Clare and little Grace (Australia), Marianne (UK/France) and Nicki (UK) who returned at various times in the December 22 – February 23 period, Nancy (USA) returned in June with Marianne back again in December 23 along with Bridget Cordory returning for her first visit in a number of years. A huge thank you to you all. We couldn't do what we do without you!



2023 volunteers (In alphabetical order from left to right): Ann, Bridget, Clare, Grace, Marianne, Nancy, Nicki

Students from James Cook (February) and Curtin University (November) continue to work at Grace House as part of their final placements, working with the special needs students. One local Khmer volunteer from ACE worked with the part time students for three months.

Hair Aid Australia visited in May and trained staff with some hair styling skills.



UK Trustees Annette and Carmel visited the project during the year, bringing with them resources and news from the UK.

Bill and Sophal from SE Asia Foundation visited Grace House on several occasions to inspect the new buildings and classrooms funded through grants to Grace House and to provide mentoring to the Directors of the centre.



Governance in Cambodia

The Grace House committee in Cambodia consists of Executive Director Chhiv Loung plus Directors Chan Dani and Sarang Seam (Koy). Under Cambodian Law it is legal for staff members to also be committee members.



Chhiv Loung



Chan Dani



Sarang Seam

Reports are presented in February each year to the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Finance and Economics.

Governance from the UK and Ireland

Grace House Cambodia Trust (GHCT) was set up as a support for Community Centre of Grace House Organization (GHCCO) in Cambodia. The Trust supports, advises and contributes towards fundraising and grant applications for Grace House.

The Board of Trustees is comprised of Diana Mihalop (Chairperson), Jennifer Jones (Treasurer) Joshua Nowak (Secretary), Annette Wood and Carmel Phelan.

GHCT must ensure that evidence is provided to show that CCGHO is complying with Cambodian Law, maintaining a good standard of management and keeping up to date with reviewing policies and adhering to national agreements.

GHCT, through their own UK fundraising initiatives, grants and donor support, release funds raised to CCGHO in Cambodia.

Reports are submitted to the UK charities Commission annually based on a year ending June 30th every year.

Working together

Grace House continued to work closely with the following organisations: Plastic Free Cambodia, Friends' International, Safe Haven, First Step Cambodia, Women's Resource Centre, Travel EdAsia, SE Asia Foundation, Chab Dai, Caring for Cambodia, Cambodia Childrens' Fund, Karuna (Battambang), TDSO (Teacher Development Support Organisation), Australian Centre for Education (ACE) and with the local government departments: National Social Security Fund, Tax Department, Ministry of Interior, Provincial Governor, the National Employment Agency, Angkor Hospital for Children.

On behalf of all those who work and learn at Grace House, we would like to thank all supporters who either give their time, their money or their expertise to make Grace House the great Community that it is.

In addition to donors already mentioned, special thanks to St Ursula's College and Unity College from Australia who have supported us for over 13 years, SE Asia Foundation and Danson Foundation both have a long relationship with us, Evolution Yacht Agents (Spain) have sponsored Buffalos and Crocodiles for a while now plus friends and supporters from the UK, France, USA and Canada plus, of course, our local community with local organisations and NGOs from Siem Reap.

Goals for 2024

Many of these are dependent on funding, however some can be achieved through teamwork, networking and striving to be a better NGO.

- Develop a three-year rolling strategic plan with the emphasis on becoming sustainable around the pillars of finance, leadership and talented staff.

- Provide teacher training for four general education staff in teaching English as a second language through TDSO (2 starting in April; 2 in October)
- Increase the number of part-time students studying English
- Provide advanced training for our senior staff and carers in the special needs unit to source and provide an education focus to student learning
- Increase the number of cerebral palsy students attending Grace House through the creation of a class specific to their needs (Penguin Class)
- Increase the number of volunteers coming to Grace House
- Continue the refurbishment of the classrooms
- Encourage and nurture greater connection between the community and Grace House through the formation of a mothers group

Alan Cordory



It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Alan Cordory in September 2023.

Alan was an integral member of the Grace House team from the early days in 2008 whilst Project Manager at Globalteer. He then joined Grace House on a permanent basis working alongside his wife Bridget until returning to the UK at the end of 2018.



Alan was a man of many talents. His strengths lay in his ability to solve any problem whether associated with health and safety, maintenance of the school facilities and grounds or the financial accounts. He will be remembered for his initiative in setting up the electrical school, training young people of the village to become certified electricians. Sparkies, a social enterprise was soon established and worked to rewire many of the homes within the village. Alan welcomed all to his life, volunteers, staff, local khmers, Siem Reap westerners and friends around the world. We all have many treasured memories. Our deepest condolences to Bridget and all Alan's family and friends. Alan will be remembered for his genuine compassion and love for Cambodians and their country. He has a permanent place in our hearts and a spot on the veranda outside the library!

Annual Report 2023

10:00 AM
01/24/24
Accrual Basis

Grace House Community Centre Organization Profit & Loss January through December 2023

	Jan - Dec 23
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
40000 · Donation-Unrestricted	
40001 · Volunteer Donations	3,300.00
40000 · Donation-Unrestricted - Other	13,932.06
	17,232.06
Total 40000 · Donation-Unrestricted	17,232.06
40050 · Donation-Restricted	
40051 · Disability Day Care	10,834.55
40052 · Foster Care Home	8,987.50
40053 · Bunny and Puppy Class	12,125.00
40054 · Duckling and Kitten Class	7,000.00
40055 · Chick and Bee Class	7,000.00
40056 · Buffalo and Crocodile Class	5,670.00
40057 · Dolphin and Lion Class	7,000.00
40058 · Family Support	7,400.00
40060 · Ron's Garden	250.00
40061 · Sensory Room	5,900.00
40062 · University Fund	1,500.00
40050 · Donation-Restricted - Other	25,730.00
	99,397.05
Total 40050 · Donation-Restricted	99,397.05
43100 · General Sales	48.00
44000 · Bank Interest	185.91
	116,863.02
Total Income	116,863.02
Gross Profit	116,863.02
Expense	
60300 · Bank Service Charges	154.41
60500 · Clothing	1,829.00
60600 · Computers and Office Equipment	8,040.00
60625 · Construction	1,344.55
60675 · Electricity and Gas	1,127.46
60700 · Equipment and Tools	8.37
60800 · Food Aid (Rice)	1,917.37
60850 · Food for Centre	1,163.37
61100 · Hospital and Medical Aid	125.87
61300 · Insurance	2,109.79
61700 · Material-Electrical	1,739.37
62000 · Meal/Snack/Fruit	305.07
62100 · Miscellaneous	508.85
62700 · Printing and Photocopying	690.05
62900 · Rent Expense	3,800.00
63100 · Repairs and Maintenance	15,312.48
63500 · Salary Expense	48,715.00
64300 · Staff Training	195.00
64900 · Supplies-Cleaning & Household	236.73
65100 · Supplies-Education & Books	5,869.06
65500 · Supplies-Office	747.04
65700 · Supplies-Personal Hygiene	670.17
65800 · Telephone and Internet	159.00
65900 · Transportation	127.25
66500 · Tuition-University and Fees	540.00
67900 · Vehicle Expense	47.14
68500 · Visas and Workpermits	35.00
68700 · Website	102.00
	97,619.40
Total Expense	97,619.40
Net Ordinary Income	19,243.62
Net Income	19,243.62

10:00 AM
01/24/24
Accrual Basis

Grace House Community Centre Organization
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2023

	Dec 31, 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
10950 · Cash in Bank	
10951 · Bank account of ABA Bank	35,349.89
Total 10950 · Cash in Bank	35,349.89
10960 · Cash in Safe	3,611.83
Total Checking/Savings	38,961.72
Other Current Assets	
11510 · Staff Loan	1,410.00
11700 · Land lease Deposit	3,000.00
Total Other Current Assets	4,410.00
Total Current Assets	43,371.72
TOTAL ASSETS	43,371.72
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
30000 · Opening Balance Equity	39,715.50
32001 · *Unrestricted Net Assets	-15,587.40
Net Income	19,243.62
Total Equity	43,371.72
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	43,371.72