



Cambodia, March 2012.

## Dear Friends, Partners and Sponsors ...

Greetings to you from Cambodia. Here is an update for you on TFC activities over the past few months.

We are into the dry season. In Cambodia there are two main seasons, dry and wet. Right now, Cambodia looks more orange than green. The fields, without water, cannot develop during this period of the year, they have to wait for the wet season. For this reason, the huge rice field that is Cambodia, becomes dry and brown with the earth colors

Our TFC logo reflects the two seasons through its own colors of orange and green.

\*\*\* Very soon it will be Khmer New Year, in the middle of April. Some children feel very excited as they will be going to visit the communities where they are originally from. Others prefer to stay at home at TFC and enjoy the activities we have prepared for them for this holiday like hiking/swimming Phonm Kulen Mountain, or visiting the Cultural Village or going to a pagoda to bring food to the monks.



## ACTIVITIES

\*\*\* At the beginning of January 2012, with the help of the Angkor Hospital for Children in Siem Reap, we did several workshops about Sexuality during Puberty, Hygiene and First Aid. The students were our teenagers and our staff and we also invited staff from other NGOs too. Our grateful thanks for this to the Angkor Children's Hospital. We use this wonderful hospital frequently. Two of our children have had important surgeries there and all of the children have needed, at some point, to go there for reasons ranging from catching a cold to Dengue fever, Typhoid, nutritional checking and more ...



\*\*\* During the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of January we organized a workshop about Parenting Skills for all our staff. We invited members from other organizations to participate as well. The high level of interest in the workshop has inspired us, to go forward in developing more training/workshops on Child Exploitation and Minimum Standards of Child Care.



\*\*\*From January until the end of March we started a football league competition between organizations and schools in Siem Reap. Each team has to play every two Sundays, two matches of 20 minutes each. The enthusiasm of the children with so much energy, hope and determination, was wonderful to see. They trained each week on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons! As a big family we all go to the match to cheer our team. We arrive all together, with our big poster and shouting our

team's name again and again. We come back home hungry and tired, but very happy to be participating and being a team with all that means. If we have a win the children become very motivated and excited. I enjoy observing them speaking about the anecdotes of the match!



**\*\*\* The Sewing Centre has moved!!!** It is now near the centre city of Siem Reap and it provides a showroom for the work that a group of women from our community are doing to provide for a better future for their family as well as some income for TFC. **February 1<sup>st</sup>** saw a new step for the workshop, as in the new setting it has become a shop too. We are now able to support TFC, as well as our women sewers, through the sale of bags to the tourists of Siem Reap!!!.So, we have a small sewing shop, where a group of women learn skills and work and also help us to grow towards a better future.

We are extremely thankful to SPOTLIGHT from Australia. SPOTLIGHT continues to support us with their monthly request for bags from the sewing centre, thereby offering us a guarantee of income and stability towards our goal of sustainability.



\*\*\* The Children's House wins a few meters. At the end of January the owner of the big house we rent offered us, at a low rent, a small piece of land at the front of the house which he had been renting to others. So we now have more space for the children play. When we have funds we would like to develop a small children's park there.

\*\*\* We have a new second hand van, thanks to SIGUIENDO TUS PASOS (Following Your Steps). During the period of Christmas 2011, they performed some American musicals, and fundraised the money to purchase a van for us. Now our children can go everywhere in safe conditions. This is especially important when we go to visit the children's homelands which are sometimes far away from Siem Reap. We are especially thankful to the ambassadors of SIGUIENDO TUS PASOS, Laura, Guille and Tristán who came to Siem Reap, at their own expense, to purchase the children's transport. The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of February we went to Phonm Penh together to buy the van. They stayed several days afterwards in Siem Reap to make a film as a complete report on buying the van for TOGETHER FOR CAMBODIA to be shown in Spain.



And we have even things to thank SIGUIENDO TUS PASOS for. With their support we got brand new computers for the administrative staff, a projector and all the children got new school bags.

\*\*\* GIANT PUPPET PARADE –GPP. This is one of the most important events for young people in Siem Reap. During several weeks, some associations are invited to enjoy a workshop organized by GGP, where the young people build giant puppets and masks with bamboo and paper, all for the big parade!!! Our children learnt techniques in art and decoration and it was hard and satisfying work. On the day of the Parade it was a joy to see the youngest walking happy and proud of their work creating animals and fantasies. They sang and danced till they got to the central park where the local popular idols were waiting for them to continue with the festival.

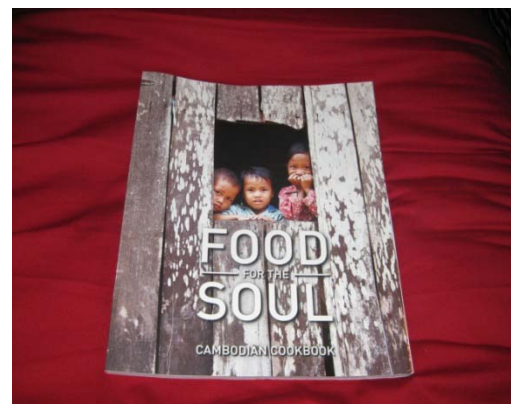


**\*\*\* At the end of February, Victoria Sinclair and Fred Grosse from New Zealand came to visit us. Their unconditional love has been coming to us since years ago. Thanks to them our children are driving bikes with excellent helmets and they help us in anything we requested of them.**



**\*\*\* Also at the end of February, Michael Kramer from Australia visited us for one week. Michael is the man who got the idea to make 100.000 beautiful cook books about Cambodian cuisine. The book has wonderful recipes from a Cambodian chef, a refugee from the Pol Pot era, who now has a restaurant in Melbourne. It has amazing pictures and information about the country's history and also about the TFC project. FOOD for SOUL, the price of this book is USD20.00. All the costs of publishing the book, the photography and the editing, were covered as donations by wonderful people in Australia. The enthusiasm of Michael is huge and thanks to him the flavor of Cambodia will cross the border and TFC will be able fund important programmes for the children such as education fees and special training programmes for our staff, etc.**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/FOOD-for-the-SOUL-Cambodian-Cookbook/193870703997061?sk=info>



**\*\*\* On 3rd March, Brett Straatemeier and Neil Jones were supposed to compete in the New Zealand Ironman, to be held in Taupo, as a fundraiser for TFC. However, the weekend turned out to be a bit frustrating for Neil and Brett, who had travelled all the way from Singapore and Hong Kong, respectively. The Ironman event was cancelled due to a freak “storm bomb” that hit Taupo on the morning of the race, with winds of up to 120km being recorded.**

However, on Sunday the organizers hosted a Half Ironman to appease the +1,600 athletes who converged from all around the world. So instead of swimming 3.8km, biking 180km and running 42km, they only had to swim 1.9km, bike 90km and run 21km! On Sunday, by the time the swim leg was due to start at 7am, the air temperature was only 7 degrees Celsius. It was pretty cold, so much so it was actually warmer getting into the water than staying out of it. Both Brett and Neil started off well, with Brett coming out of the swim only 5 minutes ahead of Neil. Half way through the bike leg, Brett had marginally stretched his lead to 10 minutes. Then a slight problem occurred; Neil had a flat tire and coupled with his refill bottle failing and technical assistance being slow in reaching him, Neil proceeded to lose significant time. By the end of the bike leg, Brett was now some 45 minutes ahead. With a personal best run time, some 30 minutes faster than his previous efforts, Neil thought he may have a had a chance to catch Brett but it was not to be; Brett actually also ran a personal best, 5 minutes faster than Neil. Therefore, the grey- haired experienced Brett was too good for the relatively inexperienced Neil. With Brett now having won the last two endurance events, Neil is becoming further determined to get his nose in front for their next challenge. **Brett ended up finishing the event in just over 5 hours with Neil finishing the race in 5 hrs 50 mins. Thank you Brett and Neil!**



**\*\*\* At the beginning of March I visited the Centre Don Bosco in Sihanoukville. They are in charge of our web and needed to update it. I am very thankful to their web masters, particularly Sambo and Preaksan, because they are very committed and have wonderful loyalty and commitment to our organization.**



**\*\*\* In the middle of March I went back to Don Bosco, this time to Kep, to visit a very good friend and Director of the centre, Albeiro. We were studying the options for future for some of the children of TFC, with the possibility of moving some to the Don Bosco centers to continue their studies. Areas of particular interest are: Social Communication, Journalism, Image and Sound, Secretarial work, Hospitality and Mechanics. During my visit, the Don Bosco organization donated to us an amazing special motorbike, for one of our young adults who do not have legs under his knees. From now on he will be able to go to school and do outings by himself. He won't need any more to depend on someone bringing him back home. This young adult, Savong, is 19 years old. He is an excellent student with a brilliant future. He is always number one in his class. Next year he will finish the last year at High School and we are looking for different options for him to continue studying.**



**\*\*\* The girls play volleyball in matches with other organizations. They really enjoy the training days and become very excited before the big match!!!**



**\*\*\* On Sunday afternoons we have “family” outings around Siem Reap. Because its sooooo hot the kids love to go to Lake Barey. We bring games, snacks, soya milk and enjoy hours playing in the water. Even the youngest, Gigi, doesn’t want to get out of the water, she looks like a fish!!!**



**\*\*\* On the 26th of March, Lidia (President) and Vanntha (Assistant Manager and Translator) participated in a training programme about Child Protection Procedures for Volunteers. This was organized by the CONCERT Collaboration Cambodia Organization.**

**\*\*\* At this time we have a total of 6 children wearing eye glasses. The most recent one to get glasses is our young Leap, who is nearly 7 years old!!!.**

**Life is good and the more we can make it that way for others the better everyone will be.**



## VOLUNTEERS

\*\*\* During December 2011 and January 2012 Alessandro from Italy was here managing a Photographic Workshop for 7 teenagers, with theory and practice and discussions. He taught the use of the camera through their hearts and minds, opening their minds to a new creative world. For many years Alessandro has been donating part of the IT that we use for the children classes, and he has provided some of the best images in photo and video that TFC has. Grazie Ale!

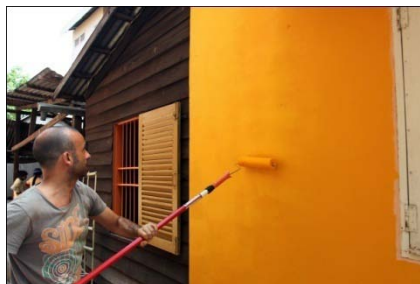
\*\*\* From the last week of December 2011 and January 2012 Nando from Spain was in charge of Yoga and Meditation in the afternoons. He participated in the outings during the week ends and in painting the sewing shop, where he dedicated many hours and effort taking care of every detail. Gracias Nando!

\*\*\* During January it was Federica from Italy, helping us with the sewing shop, choosing the colors for painting and organizing with the team over there. Grazie Fe!

\*\*\* For two weeks during January we had Dirk and Marcos from Spain. They are members of the management of TFC in Spain. They actively collaborated in repairing the sewing shop and building a very good team over there. Gracias!

\*\*\* From the 26<sup>th</sup> till the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, Rachel Martin from Australia was here. She installed a new Accounting software programme named MYOB, and she trained our Accounts Officer, Serey so she can use the programme and do her job even more efficiently. Thanks Rachel!

\*\*\* From 23<sup>rd</sup> till 28<sup>th</sup> of January the McKenzie-Martin family from Australia was here, collaborating in the maintenance of the volleyball and library. Thank you Rhonda and Philip!



Thank you to the **Hotel LA RESIDÉANCE D´ANGKOR** because they open their doors twice a week, inviting us in, giving our children the opportunity to enjoy and practice English and at the same time we meet benefactors that want contact with us. Also thank you very much for the 200 kilograms of rice that they give us every month and for ordering different handmade products so helping the community.

Thank you to **SPOTLIGHT** for helping us passes on the teaching of skills through their programme **STITCH IN TIME**. The donation of the sewing machines, a standard kind of bag and the monthly order of bags, are now a sustainable project, giving protection and a new life style to a group of 6 families. Those women get the skill and a fair salary to re-organize their lives improving in the quality of hygiene, health and education for their children.

Thank you to **EVERYONE** that through the **Child Sponsorship Programme**, the **Scholarship Programme**, **donations** for different projects, altogether make it possible that we stay on budget.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH** to **ALL** the **Staff** members for their work and to **ALL** the **Benefactors** who give us hope.

**TOGETHER FOR CAMBODIA**

**ANZ ROYAL BANK**

**2087220**

**ANZBKHPP**

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