



Annual Report 2015

Reviewing our second year in operation



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Taksenkangbloung Community Centre Inc.

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Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2015

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The organisation: History, context, aims and objectives

The Taksenkangbloung Community Centre is a day centre operating in a village near Siem Reap, Cambodia. Its core program supports specific disadvantaged children from the village to attend the local school by providing food, clean clothes, transport, basic health care and out-of-hours supplementary tuition daily.

In addition, the centre conducts outreach work in the village as needed. This includes provision of food packages, assistance with basic sanitation and first aid, provision of clothing and food supplies, infrastructure improvement, classes, movie screenings, sporting activities and social events. The centre's aim is to create a sense of community and a community hub which can operate as a source of long-term motivation and education. The centre currently employs four staff members from the local area including a local director and a local teacher. The centre aims to operate sustainably and in the best interests of the community, and has strict rules around responsible volunteering. The centre fights to keep families together and does not believe in institutional care. By encouraging shared ownership and fostering decision-making at the local level, the centre aims to provide options and empower families in the community so that eventually the village can maintain a positive standard of living independently of foreign aid.

In 2010, the centre's Australian founders were invited to visit a long-time friend's home in the village. It became obvious quickly that the village was experiencing very deep disadvantage. The most heartbreaking case was a family of 12 who were all living in a tiny, raised hut which was falling apart. The children were begging and scavenging every day to survive, and the parents were suffering from alcohol addiction. The founders were able to assist this family by repairing the tiny hut and providing food packages. Some of the children of this family are now thriving in the core daily program. This family, sadly, was not an isolated case in the Taksenkangbloung village and there were many more who asked for help.

The community centre idea evolved from there and, in partnership with the village leaders and the friend who was residing in the village, the community centre was launched in April 2014. The model for the community centre is somewhat hands-on. It provides daily engagement for the children who attend its core program. The reason this model was chosen is that, based on the experience of the village which was examined prior to the launch of the centre, one-off assistance provided by larger Non-Government Organisations to encourage school attendance had not worked. Without close support and follow-up, the provision of bicycles and school supplies alone was not sufficient motivation to break the cycle of begging in favour of attending school. Many children in the village were simply not receiving the care and support from their parents that they required to attend school. It was identified through observation and discussion with the village leaders that any assistance would need to be sustained in order to motivate for long-term change.

One of the community centre's main objectives is to change the habits that disadvantaged students in the core program may have experienced in the past and give them the support they need to attend government school and English classes. It is not the community centre's intention to replace core national schooling delivered by local schools.

Another objective is to encourage others in the village to come along each day for English lessons. It can be a challenge to sustain the motivation of the village participants who are not part of the core

program, however, the teacher Sokhean does a great job of keeping the curriculum and activities dynamic.

The children who participate in the core program are identified in consultation with the village chief. Factors include that the children may be experiencing deep disadvantage and be unable to attend local school at all because of family circumstances (mainly financial reasons or issues associated with alcohol addiction). Children may also be either begging or working and selling trinkets late into the night to support their families instead of attending school.

Highlights from 2015

This is the community centre's second annual report. We are pleased to report that the goals outlined in the 2014 annual report were realised during 2015. In addition, many other notable achievements have been made over and above these commitments.

The core program was expanded in November 2015 with the inclusion of two new boys. To accommodate the future expansion of the centre a larger, region-specific vehicle known as a 5 star was purchased with funds donated by Warrnambool College's Merri House. This vehicle is stronger than the original tuk tuk and can accommodate more children for the school run. The tuk tuk was sold and the money used to offset other running costs.

The Community Learning Centre's curriculum was improved and fine-tuned throughout the course of the year. All students tried very hard and some excelled remarkably at their studies. The English skills of all students improved very satisfactorily over the year. Repeat volunteer Sue Fraser was instrumental in the decision to introduce the 'Let's Go' English learning program which allows each student to work to their own level with monthly testing to record progress.

Furthermore, with generous donations of computers, iPads and netbooks the Community Learning Centre has been able to implement a regular 'computer day' every Friday where up to 50 children have the opportunity to learn basic computer skills.

With thanks to Sue Amos and Mortlake P-12 school, 50 children received a gift bag containing colouring books, pencils and other educational items.

Height and weight measurements were recorded in both March and November with some startling results- the smallest program participant, Malay, gained 4kgs in 5 months!

Our strong volunteer program has continued, with 20 volunteers helping out both in the classroom and on the centre's grounds over the course of the year. In addition, there were 12 day visits. Our program is strictly regulated for the safety and privacy of the children and to ensure all visits are meaningful and effective for the community. Experienced teachers from Australia assisted Sokhean to provide a lively classroom full of music, dancing, singing, games art, reading, sport and pen pal letters.

On the infrastructure development side of things, a vegetable garden and a chicken and duck breeding habitat has been established which continue to provide a food source at the community centre. In addition, two groups of volunteers completed major works on the grounds in March and April with the building of a secure perimeter fence, mending of holes in the road (which had been a problem during wet season), filling land at the back of the centre and erecting a donated shade cloth over the play area.

With thanks to the Port Fairy Rotary Club a well was drilled on-site which has secured a source of good water for washing, cooking and bathing. The community centre now also has a water filter to ensure water for cooking and drinking is free from contamination.

The outreach program continued to provide three of the villages' most at-risk families with rice each month. The program also supported the mother of a young girl through two further operations to treat her severe spina bifida.

Meanwhile, the community centre's monthly sponsorship base continued to gradually grow over the course of the year. The community centre's managing board continued to raise awareness and stay accountable to supporters through the distribution of newsletters, social media updates and presentations to service clubs. This resulted in generous donations from schools, service clubs and private donors. There were some very successful and fun events arranged to raise very imperative funds including office morning teas and some excellent parties!

Overall, the impact the community centre has had since its establishment is clearly observable in the village. Very few if any children from the village are still begging at the temples which in itself is an excellent achievement for a community which for years had been colloquially known as the 'begging village.'

Looking forward: Goals for the coming year

It is expected 2016 is going to be another bright one for the community centre. The centre has had a period of time to establish and settle, and we have seen it grow from strength to strength.

It remains imperative that we grow our monthly sponsor base so that we can continue to expand our beneficiary reach.

We have made contact with some large multi-national aid organisations which have expressed an interest in conducting research at the community centre due to the success of the model.

A major project involving the growing and selling of mushrooms in order to profit and to create a food source was pitched to the Lions Club of Warrnambool, which the club enthusiastically agreed to fund. The project will involve building an extra facility and creating employment for another local person. The project plan is available for inspection on request. The project will run for an initial 21-month implementation period and the interim results will be reported in 2016's annual report.

It is intended that a village workshop will be run by local organisation Cambodia Women's Resource Centre. The workshop will address community needs and struggles including domestic violence awareness, alcohol and pregnancy awareness, women's health and gender roles. There may also be a workshop to support students who are approaching the onset of adolescence/puberty.

Another program is proposed which will support expectant mothers in the village by providing folate and support during and after the pregnancy.

In addition, food sustainability will be improved by building on and strengthening the existing vegetable garden and fowl breeding habitat.

Administrative matters: Structure and policies

The community centre is a small, grass-roots organisation designed to create social inclusion for vulnerable families. It is an Incorporated Association under the Victorian Consumer Affairs framework and a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission. It has an ABN and is a registered Victorian Fundraiser. It operates in accordance with financial reporting and other accountability standards required of an Australian registered charity.

The Australian management committee works very closely with the local staff and places decision-making responsibility at the local level. Sothea, the centre director, displays an empathy and tactfulness that quickly earned trust and saw him accepted as a respectable authority figure in the village when he started his role almost two years ago. As well as managing the day-to-day running of the centre, he takes the very best of care transporting the children to and from the public school. He is well loved by all and has some great visions for the centre in the future. Classes in the Community Learning Centre are provided by Sokhean, a local teacher. Sokhean applies expert teaching methods and strategy to inspire and engage what can be a challenging student base. A Khmer teacher also attends to assist Sokhean.

The centre operates in partnership with the village leader and has the cooperation of the area police. It employs one lady, Reay, to care and cook for the children. The centre used to employ another lady to assist Reay but she chose to leave due to family commitments. Reay has taken on extra duties and a washing machine has been purchased to assist. A further staff member, Duern, is employed to provide nightly security and undertake a caretaker role.

The community Centre's main support model is collective sponsorship alongside various fundraising events in Australia and one-off donations.

There is an arrangement for exclusive and long-term use of the land at the current site.

We place the control of the centre in the hands of the village and local staff. In doing so we ensure shared ownership of making sure the centre is a productive addition to the community. We have strict responsible volunteering protocols and only engage volunteers as needed to support qualified local staff who are earning wages. We would never deprive a qualified local person with the opportunity to work by replacing them with a volunteer.

We believe there is never a good reason to institutionalise children by putting them in orphanages. Most Cambodian children do in fact have a community to live in. The village community is a vital aspect of South-East Asian culture and there are many different versions of the family unit. Some of our own students reside with families in the village other than their birth families because their parents are lost to them. These arrangements are reached among the families and the village.

There are no longer orphanages in Australia, and this is for good reasons. All our children reside within a family unit in the village and go home at the end of the day.

Policies which ensure services are delivered safely and responsibly are available on request by emailing us at the address below.

Financial Reports

These financial statements are lodged with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission and Consumer Affairs Victoria in accordance with financial reporting obligations. Although not compulsory for a charity of our size, they are lodged as part of our commitment to our sponsors and supporters to remain open and transparent. Our reporting period ends on 31 December each year. All values contained within the reports are in Australian Dollars.

TAKSENKANGBLOUNG COMMUNITY CENTRE INC.
INCOME STATEMENT
1 January 2015 - 31 DECEMBER 2015

All amounts contained within this report are in Australian dollars

	2015	2014
<u>INCOME</u>		
Government Grants	0	0
Donations/Bequests - Cash	7,610	15,454
Donations/Bequests - Assets	0	5,396
Sponsorship	11,670	5,980
Fundraising	15,973	13,126
TOTAL INCOME	35,253	39,956
 <u>EXPENSES</u>		
Employee Expenses		
Australia	0	0
Cambodia	12,138	7,493
Grants		
Within Australia	0	0
Outside Australia	0	0
Other Expenses (in Cambodia)		
Bank Fees	418	75
Licences, Fees & Permits	19	351
Outreach Program	2,296	1,668
Food & Other Consumables	7,663	4,797
Livestock Expenses	747	0
Petrol & Oil	1,974	869
Utilities	460	241
Repairs	158	189
School Uniforms/Shoes	238	491
School Books/Resources	696	951
Computer Consumables/Internet	504	234
Cultural/Ceremonial Expenses	127	400
Staff Training	138	0
Total Other Expenses (in Cambodia)	15,438	10,266
Other Expenses (in Australia)		
Australian Fundraising Expenses	1,240	0
Total Other Expenses (in Australia)	1,240	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	28,816	17,759
Other Income/Expenses		
Foreign Exchange Gain/(Loss)	107	(17)
Loss on Sale of Non Current Assets	(748)	0
<u>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</u>	5,796	22,180

TAKSENKANGBLOUNG COMMUNITY CENTRE INC.
STATEMENT OF POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

All amounts contained within this report are in Australian dollars

<u>ASSETS</u>	2015	2014
Current Assets		
Cash		
Cash at bank	9,520	3,389
Cash in hand	2,760	2,292
Total Cash	12,280	5,681
Other Current Assets	0	0
Total Other Current Assets	0	0
Total Current Assets	12,280	5,681
Non Current Assets		
Land & Buildings at Cost		
Taksen Community Centre	11,263	10,905
Total Land & Buildings	11,263	10,905
Motor Vehicles At Cost		
Tuk Tuk	0	1,240
5 Start Transport	3,765	3,765
Total Motor Vehicles	3,765	5,005
Plant & Equipment		
Furniture	228	149
Tools	120	120
Chickens & Ducks	186	186
Pump	134	134
Total Plant & Equipment	668	589
Other Non Current Assets	0	0
Total Non Current Assets	15,696	16,499
TOTAL ASSETS	27,976	22,180
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Total Current Liabilities	0	0
Non Current Liabilities		
Total Non Current Liabilities	0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	0	0
NET ASSETS	27,976	22,180
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Balance Brought Forward	22,180	0
Capital Reserves	0	0
Accumulated Surplus	5,796	22,180
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	27,976	22,180

Taksenkangbloung Community Centre Inc.
Committee Members' declaration

— per section 60.15 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*

The committee Members declare that in the committee members' opinion:

- (a) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- (b) the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.



Jon Burchell
Committee Member
Taksenkangbloung Community Centre Inc.

Dated this 25th day of June 2016