

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

**"Enabling the community to become sustainable through education,
family support and health care"**



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Organization

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Introduction



2021 has been a mixed year for Grace House (GH); while much of the world was in strict lockdowns at the beginning of the year Cambodia had relatively low case numbers of Covid-19 and schools were able to operate with some restrictions. Although much of the community were worried about Covid transmission, the Grace House team did all they could to make the centre as safe as possible, including every student and staff member wearing a mask or visor, temperature checks and hand sanitising stations before entering and social distancing markers in place. As most of the classrooms are not enclosed this was also a benefit at this time as there was plenty of ventilation.

Unfortunately, Cambodia saw a big increase in case numbers of Covid in March and the government put strict measures in place, including the closing of schools, curfews and certain times people were not allowed to leave their village without an exemption pass.

Grace House was forced to shut its doors again, although continued to do what they could within the guidance to offer support to students and their families. This included handing out worksheets, suggesting educational activities to parents and providing therapy programmes to those in the special needs classes.

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As families in lockdown were unable to go to work and without government financial support, it became clear that several families were struggling to afford and access food. Grace House ran an emergency appeal for food packages, and with the donations given, was able to provide food packages to around 30 families for 8 months. This has made such a difference to the families who live hand to mouth.

With each passing month and with case numbers not falling enough for the restrictions to be lifted, it was not always easy for the community to keep up morale. Thankfully in February 2021, Covid vaccinations started to become available and were offered to people without charge. For some who would generally visit a traditional healer when they are unwell instead of going to a doctors or hospital, this has been a big step into the unknown but for most they understand the importance of the vaccines.

In October case numbers started to decrease and Grace House started thinking about a reopening plan. In this time the management staff ran some training sessions and discussed what may need to be put in place to support the needs of the staff and the students when returning to the classroom.

After a long wait, Grace House was able to reopen on the 8th November, the students settled back in quickly and were happy to see their friends and teachers. The restrictions remain in place and the staff are still vigilant about safety measures but it has been great to see so many students return and so eager to continue their education.



Temperatures getting down to 15C!

Education Program

Grace House runs four education classrooms, with eight classes split into morning and afternoon students. There are also extra part time English classes between 8 - 9 am and 3 - 4pm. During 2021 a total of 126 full time and 23 part time students attended Grace House to receive classes in General education and English. These students are aged between 5 and 15. The curriculum topics include science, maths, geography, computers, sports, and the arts.

Grace House also runs an early years' education program for children aged 3-5 years old which takes a more play-based approach to developing fine motor skills in preparation for further education. The children in the early years' program also learn valuable self-care and hygiene skills, to encourage healthy habits early on.



During the school closure, the teaching staff worked hard to help the children who attend Grace House to continue to access education. They set up a rota for children to come and collect worksheets created by the teachers for them to complete throughout the week. The students then returned the worksheets for the teachers to mark.



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When Grace House was able to reopen, there were safety measures put in place to allow the safe reopening of the education program. Temperatures for every child and staff member are taken at the entrance and students are monitored for any Covid symptoms. Hand sanitisers are placed around the premises, and students and staff are required to wash their hands before and after each class. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is also worn by all, either a mask or a visor. Students are seated at a safe distance from each other and the teacher, and equipment and tables are sanitised between classes.



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Students are given resources such as books and pencils, which are donated by volunteers, and GH gives them a set of school uniforms at the beginning of each academic year.

The current classroom structure is:

Ducklings and Kittens (3-5 years)
Chicks and Bees (5-7 years)
Buffalo and Crocodiles (7-9 years)
Dolphins and Lions (9-15 years)

It's important to note that children will move to another classroom based on their learning ability as opposed to age and therefore student's ages can vary in each classroom



Further Education

Grace House is currently sponsoring 1 student through Further Education, she is on an accounting course and is being funded through an individual donor.

Children with special needs

There are currently 25 students who attend the special needs education program for children with disabilities. These are split into 3 classes (Goat, Horse and Parrot) and are overseen by Seam Sarang (Koy) who is the manager of the special needs educational department and also is a Physiotherapist. There are three senior staff and eight care workers. Each student receives an individualised care plan and staff are trained on how to meet each student's needs. The staff and parents meet yearly to discuss the child's progress and to set goals for the coming year. We continue to support one student in foster care who was a previous resident at Preahkhun House, she still attends the education program, and her foster care is still supported by the Danson Foundation.



‘Ron’s Garden’ project is still running, and is where the students learn how to grow and sell vegetables; this teaches them the skills they can use to be able to work in agriculture or in the markets.

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We have 12 children on our waiting list for the special needs class and plans are in place for setting up an extra class to provide more children with additional needs with the opportunity to access education and therapy.



Family Support

Grace House Community Centre currently has one part time Social Worker, Dani Chan, who manages the family support. She makes regular visits to the families which GH assists, reviewing their needs, giving advice and signposting them to other agencies where appropriate. She also identifies any new families that may require support from GHCC and how best to give them the help they require.

Food packages

The lockdowns had a huge impact on the lives of the families that Grace House supports; both in the loss of jobs and in the curfews and physical restriction of movement enforced in areas. For families who live hand to mouth and do not have a way to keep food fresh so visit the market daily, this was an extremely difficult time. Grace House identified families who were most at risk and provided food packages with essential items for nutrition and hygiene.

During 2021, a total of 294 food packages were given to families in need.

As well as food support, GHCC distributed face masks and soaps to families in the community.



Staffing

Chhiv Loung remains the Project Manager and Executive Director, with the other committee members being Dani Chan and Seam Sarang.



Our teachers, social worker, and project manager.



Grace House special needs staff

Training

GH continues to invest in staff training to ensure the best possible service is offered to the families and their children.

To prepare for Grace House's reopening in December 2021, the management team provided internal training to the staff on topics such as teaching techniques and sharing new ideas on teaching activities.



Staff Training

Funding and Supporters

The Danson Foundation very generously agreed to continue funding the special needs program and foster care costs.

The Buffalo and Crocodiles classroom has been sponsored by a very kind solo donor. Her funding covers the teacher's salary, resources, snacks and the general running costs of the classroom.

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SouthEast Asia Foundation have been extremely kind in providing funding for food packages, bicycles for some of the students and school uniform for students. This is very much appreciated.



Special Thanks

We would like to extend our deepest thanks to the returning volunteers from different countries for their ongoing support and fundraising efforts, particularly throughout this year when they have done everything they can despite not being able to visit. We are so privileged to have such a great supporter base who care deeply about the project. We would also like to thank everyone who sponsors a family or class - your continued support is very much appreciated and keeps us going.

Working Together

This year has proved how valuable it has been to work as a community and connect with other organisations. We have had much needed support from Naga Earth to supply the community with soaps, and when Genevive's fair trade village set up a food bank, Grace House staff went to volunteer with arranging food parcels. Genevive's then very kindly offered to provide some of the Grace House community families with food parcels, which were greatly needed.



GH continues to work closely with the local government departments and the following organisations: Concert, ABCs and Rice, Friends International, Safe Haven, First Step Cambodia, Women's Resource Centre, Angkor Hospital for Children, Globalteer, Travel Education Asia, South East Asia Foundation, Chab Dai, World Mobilisation, Cambodian Children's Fund, Soulcial Trust.

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Volunteers

Due to the pandemic there has not been any volunteers at Grace House throughout 2021. The staff and students are very much looking forward to seeing both returning volunteers and new faces in 2022!



Donors

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many people who have taken the opportunity to support Grace House and the communities we work with through generous donations. We were amazed by the generosity of our donors who helped us provide food packages, masks and sanitiser to some of the families who were struggling the most in 2021.



Governance

Cambodia

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



UK and Ireland

Grace House Cambodia Trust supports, advises and contributes towards fundraising for Grace House. The board of trustees is comprised of Diana Mihalop (Chairperson), Bridget Cordory (Trustee and previous Chairperson), Jennifer Jones (Trustee and Treasurer), Joshua Nowak, Annette Wood and Carmel Phelan.

Grace House Cambodia Trust (GHCT) has been set up as a support for Community Centre of Grace House Organization (previously referred to as Grace House Community Centre - GHCC). It aims to raise awareness of Grace House, support with fundraising towards running costs and is there to give advice on important decisions affecting the charity. If there is a decision which will involve a financial implication from GHCT, then Grace House will need to seek permission from GHCT.

GHCT will require evidence that Grace House is complying with Cambodian Law, maintaining a good standard of management and keeping up to date with reviewing policies etc to continue to release funds raised through GHCT efforts and contacts.



Finances

Income 2021

Donations - Unrestricted - \$26,723.43

Donations - Restricted - \$15,154.41

Other - \$66.79

Total - \$41,944.63

Expenditure 2021

Donations - Unrestricted- \$35,537.51

Donations - Restricted- \$15,154.41

Other - \$64.59

Total - \$50,756.51

Accounts- GHCC

GH Trust Bank (Formerly ANZ Bank)

Opening Statement - \$8,023.15 Closing Statement - \$4,478.67

GH ABA Bank

Opening Statement - \$14,039.29 Closing Statement - \$7,891.35

GH Safe

Opening Statement - \$185.80 Closing Statement - \$5.02

Total funds in Cambodia

Opening Balance- \$22,248.24 Closing Balance- \$12,375.04

NB: At the end of 2021, there was £41,197.53 earmarked in the UK CAF account solely for Grace House.

Summary

2021 was a difficult year, with Grace House unable to run its education programmes on site for most of the year and ongoing uncertainty in the communities. In addition to this, the overarching impacts on the Cambodian economy affecting family incomes meant that the Grace House team had to continually review and reassess where the greatest need was for the community. The team used this time to build partnerships with other local organisations to work collaboratively to ensure that families were able to keep well and safe. Thankfully towards the end of 2021 restrictions were lifted and with Grace House being able to run classes again, the next year is set to look brighter, and we can now start getting things back on track.

The Grace House family extends so much further than the local community and our volunteers and supporters reach to all corners of the globe. With international travel still being so heavily restricted, there has been a part of Grace House missing and all the staff and students are very excited to welcome volunteers and international friends back again! See you in 2022!

Donations to Grace House Community Centre can be made via the Grace House Community Centre Cambodia website

<https://www.gracehousecambodia.net/donate>

or by contacting at Grace House directly on +855 717 036 539

or by emailing Director Loung Chhiv on

projectmanager@GraceHouseCambodia.org

