

The Global Child



The Global Child (TGC) is a non-profit organization founded in 2004 to nurture, educate and mentor gifted but impoverished and/or orphaned street-working children in Cambodia. It is a 501(c)(3) organization with headquarters in Newport, Vermont. TGC provides these children not only with an education but also with life skills, a cultural understanding of their country and its traditions, and training for employment and citizenship.

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The Need in Cambodia

History

During the waning years of the Vietnam War, Richard Nixon ordered the bombing of regions of Cambodia that were close to the border with Vietnam. The US military believed that the Viet Cong were using those border regions as a safe haven. It's estimated that the US bombing killed 40,000 Cambodians. Many believe the bombing helped the Khmer Rouge grow from only 6,000 to perhaps 500,000 in only a few years. The Khmer Rouge was the communist insurgency in Cambodia that was led by Pol Pot.

In April of 1975, within weeks of US forces withdrawing from Vietnam, the Khmer Rouge seized the capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh, a city of over a million people. Pol Pot ordered the complete evacuation of Phnom Penh, telling the people that they should go into the jungle and live off the land. This story was told in the 1984 movie "The Killing Fields."

From 1975 to 1978, an estimated 3 million Cambodians died, about 1.4 million from torture and execution, and the rest from starvation. Over half the population died. Many communist leaders at the time, including Mao Tse Tung, thought Pol Pot was a madman to have killed so many innocent Cambodians just for being educated people, and for believing that so many people could live off the land in the jungle without suffering mass starvation. Even the communist Vietnamese were horrified by Pol Pot's genocide. The Vietnamese ended the genocide in 1978 by invading Cambodia and deposing Pol Pot.

Pol Pot died in 1998, but remnants of the Khmer Rouge continued to hold out in small armed enclaves in remote provinces for several more years. Though the United Nations set up a tribunal to bring those responsible for the genocide to justice, only a handful have ever been tried in a court.

Cambodia Today

Cambodia is a Communist country, officially known as the Kingdom of Cambodia. It is a constitutional monarchy with Norodom Sihamoni as King and head of state, and Hun Sen as Prime Minister and head of government. Hun Sen was a former Khmer Rouge commander who was installed by the Vietnamese after the Vietnamese left Cambodia.

The Cambodian People's Party is the major ruling party, controlling both upper and lower chambers of the parliament. Hun Sen's Communist government has been accused of corruption in the sale of vast areas of land to foreign investors resulting in the eviction of thousands of villagers as well as taking bribes in exchange for grants to exploit Cambodia's oil wealth and mineral resources. Cambodia is consistently listed as one of the most corrupt governments in the world. The position of the King is largely ceremonial, but his friends and extended family are also deeply involved in financially corrupt activities.

The vast majority of Cambodians are Buddhists. They are often shy, soft-spoken and polite in their interactions with westerners. Incredibly, most do not hate Americans for the bombing of Cambodia in the 1970s. Their unofficial currency today is the US dollar.

Some believe that NGOs (non-governmental organizations) are now the life-blood of Cambodia, and there are thousands operating there. However, many are ineffective or corrupt.

Cambodia is one of the poorest countries in the world, relying on foreign aid, and even then, widespread corruption steers funds away from where they are most needed. Most Cambodians earn a living from the land or sea, and subsistence farming employs 70 percent of the workforce.

Environmentally, Cambodia is degrading as illegal logging causes topsoil erosion and flooding. In addition, AIDS is spreading through the country, although public health campaigns are having an effect on the rate of infection. Cambodia's infant mortality rate is high, and approximately half of the children under age five are moderately or severely underweight. Children frequently are sold into prostitution. Clearly, without education and improved lifestyles, the mortality rate and percent of children engaged in prostitution, begging or collecting garbage will grow.

The History of The Global Child

The Beginning

In 2003, the current Director of TGC, Judy Wheeler, was President for the Designer Outlet stores of Manchester, Vermont. Judy hired Allan Scott-Moncrief, a Scottish painter and film-maker, to put on a film festival as an event to promote the outlet stores around New England.

Allan had just come back from Cambodia where he'd been making a documentary film. He told Judy how impressed he was with the intelligence and positive attitude of the street-working children he'd encountered on the streets of Phnom Penh. He discovered that almost none of the street-working children went to school, or had ever been to school. They had to work the streets begging or selling small items in order to earn about one dollar a day so they and their families would have enough money to eat.

Allan met a few of the parents or guardians of these children. He asked them, "If I were to pay you one dollar a day, would you let your child go to school?" Many said yes, since the dollar a day would substitute for the money the parent would lose from their child no longer working the streets. That "dollar-a-day" concept was the genesis of TGC, and continues to be a key aspect of TGC today.

The Global Child in Phnom Penh

On May 17, 2004, Alan Scott-Moncrieff and his colleagues opened the school in Phnom Penh with 11 students and as many staff. In the weeks following, they carefully selected 15 more children to bring the numbers up to the targeted 26: 13 boys and 13 girls.

The 26th child to be admitted, a 12-year old girl named Pisey, had walked 15 miles alone in her bare feet all the way from the notorious Stung Meanchey dump to Phnom Penh to ask to be admitted. She was living with her family (and 2,000 others at the dump), surviving by picking through garbage for anything they could sell. These are photos taken during the filming of a documentary, showing Pisey at the dump, shortly after she started attending TGC.



The school in Phnom Penh was located in a three-story building and was divided into a café on the ground floor, classrooms, common room, school office and a rooftop garden retreat. The café sold coffee, snacks and some merchandise, as well as crafts produced by indigenous artists. All profits from the café went to the school.

The curriculum included English, Khmer, math, creative arts, geography, history, science, social studies, ethics, culture, computers and debating. All subjects except Khmer were taught in English. Sports included karate, soccer and badminton. Students also received training in traditional Khmer dancing. Buddhist monks visited on a regular basis to instruct the students on culture and behavior.

Allan Scott-Moncrief lived full-time in an apartment close to the school and was close to the day-to-day operation over the first several years. He hired a Cambodian staff and spent a lot of time establishing and maintaining good relations with the Hun Sen government, while being careful not to have TGC associated with any corruption whatsoever. The school also had a safe house where most of the students lived, with boys separate from girls. Every student received three free meals a day at the school. Clothing was also provided in the form of simple school uniforms.

These are early photos of the students in class and posing for a group photo in their karate uniforms.



The Global Child in Siem Reap

The school moved from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap in 2008. Many rural peasants had been forced off their land and had flooded into Phnom Penh. They couldn't find work and Phnom Penh became much more chaotic and less safe. All but a handful of students made the move from Phnom Penh to Siem Reap, with many parents, guardians and staff also making the move.

The school in Siem Reap is located in a more rural setting and consists of the school itself and another building that houses six students and some staff.



The other students live with their families or guardians. Since moving the school to Siem Reap TGC has been admitting students that are not orphans, but are often former street-working, or potential street-working children because their families are so poor.

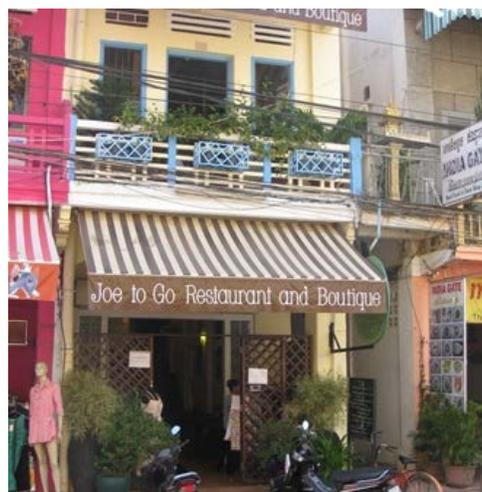
Siem Reap is very close to the temples of Angkor Wat. Each year over 700,000 tourists visit Angkor Wat, making it one of the top tourist destinations in the world. There are over 400 hotels in Siem Reap to meet the needs of those tourists. The city of Siem Reap is now a boom town, with numerous hotels, bars, restaurants, retail stores and museums that cater to the large number of tourists that arrive each day.



In December 2007 the school started a coffee shop called Joe To Go, located in the Old Town part of Siem Reap. A generous donor provided the funds for this venture with the hope that someday it could generate profits that could be used to support the school. In 2009 a gift shop upstairs called Beau Fou was opened that sells clothing, accessories and gifts. Both Joe To Go and Beau Fou are still in operation today though together they are just breaking even on revenue and expenses.

After almost ten years in continuous operation, we are very proud to have achieved success with some of our earliest students.

The photo on the right shows Pisey Sith and her mother in 2013. Pisey is the girl who walked 15 miles from the dump to the newly-opened TGC in Phnom Penh to become the last student to be accepted in the first group of students. TGC donors recently provided the funds to move Pisey's mother from Phnom Penh up to Siem Reap so she could work at Joe To Go and live with her daughter. Pisey's mother also makes hand-crafted jewelry that is sold at Beau Fou.



The photo on the left shows Pisey standing in front of Build Bright University (BBU), where she will graduate later in 2013 with a degree in accounting. She is ranked in the top 5% of over 6,000 students. Pisey is still very connected to TGC and is a mentor to younger students. She plans to start her own accounting business after she graduates from BBU.

TGC often provides assistance to the families of students, and overall provides direct and indirect financial support for over 200 Cambodians, including staff members and their families. This support of so many Cambodians is why TGC has good relations with the Cambodian government.

Implementation

Admissions - Who is eligible, and what is the process for accepting new students?

Prospective students are found through close cooperation with local village chiefs who know which children have not been allowed to attend school or have been forced to drop out and begin working. TGC Principal Dara Heng and other staff members then interview each child and their family. Students must be bright and eager to learn, and the parents or guardian(s) must fully support the mission of TGC and be willing and able to support their children as students and in their home life. After the interview, a candidate may be selected for an entrance exam, the results of which are used to ensure that each admitted student will be capable of learning at the entry educational level. This allows TGC to focus on the most desperate children while maintaining a high quality of education.

Academics

Philosophy. The number one goal is to provide high quality education to students so they are prepared to participate in the job market, particularly in Asian countries after the Asian Integration Year in 2015. TGC wants to prepare students to put their education into practice in order to help themselves, their families, and their communities. TGC is also preparing the highest-performing students to pass the National Outstanding Student Exam (NOSE) that will be taken by students from 1,189 Cambodian secondary schools during the 2013-2014 academic year.

Program of Study. The TGC program provides an education from a primary level through to high school certification and prepares them, if they desire, to then attend a local university or trade school or obtain a job and transition to living on their own. TGC follows the Cambodian Ministry of Education Program and has recently added more subjects to the curriculum. The Summer School Program is seven weeks long and has been developed to assure that all students achieve mastery of core competencies for all subjects before they move to a higher grade.

Curriculum. Subjects include:

- Khmer Literature
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Chemistry
- Social Studies
- History
- Geography
- Biology
- Earth Science
- Morality
- Citizenship (home affairs, cooking, sewing)
- English Language
- Computer
- Sports (karate, soccer)
- Arts (Khmer traditional dance, painting, music)
- Visits to temple sites in Siem Reap and other Cambodian provinces

Exams. TGC starts its academic year in October, like most Cambodian government-run schools, but the TGC program has been designed to meet a higher standard, with more frequent examinations. Monthly exams occur from October to May, with a 1st semester exam in January, a 2nd semester exam in June, and a yearly final exam in July.

Schedule. School runs from Monday to Friday, from 8 AM to noon, and 1 PM to 5 PM. On Saturdays, if there is no weekly trip, most full-time staff are off, but one full-time teacher stands by at the school. Full-time teachers rotate to provide this weekend coverage. On Saturdays, students

engage in sports and other fun activities, a mentoring program in which older students help younger students, library work with volunteers assisting, and computer class.

Student Life

Each student receives housing (if needed), breakfast and lunch, healthcare, uniforms and school supplies. Each student also receives counseling and financial support until they achieve solid employment. Financial assistance continues for students attending university, trade school, or starting a search for a job. TGC also offers low interest loans on a case-by-case basis, to help graduates pay for such things as a bicycle or small motorcycle.

Facilities. TGC has a main building plus a residence called the Wood House. Both buildings are rented and we have maxed our capacity at these locations.

Resident Students. There are only six student who live at TGC. They live there because they do not have adequate housing with their parents or guardians. A resident cook and house mother support the resident students and cook the meals for all the students. They've both been with TGC since the beginning in Phnom Penh.

Day Students. The majority of students go home to the residence of their families in the evening.

Partnerships

The Minerva Fellows Program. TGC has partnership with Union College, a private liberal arts college located in Schenectady, NY, through Unions Minerva Fellows Program. For each of the past five years, Union has sent two recent graduates to serve as full-time, live-in volunteers for an entire year. These young and eager Union grads have proven to be a wonderful addition to TGC. Most importantly, they teach conversational English both formally and through their daily interactions with students. It is rare for Cambodian students to have so much exposure to Western English-speaking young people.

The Minerva Fellows also lead sports and arts activities, help out at Joe To Go and Beau Fou, assist on field trips, put on local fund-raising events, and serve as mentors to the students. The Minerva Fellows Program is completely funded by private donors associated with Union College. Minerva Fellows serve in non-profit organizations in Cambodia, Ecuador, Africa and India. After each Minerva Fellow returns from a year abroad they must teach for one month at Union College to pass on what they've learned to other students. TGC is now the most desired of the foreign assignments that Minerva Fellows can apply for.

Union College. Each spring 6-8 undergraduate Union college students travel to TGC for a 10-week course, in which they learn about how NGOs operate in Cambodia, Cambodian culture, and get an introduction to the Khmer language. They receive course credit upon successful completion. These students are also volunteers and help out a little at the school, at Joe To Go and the Beau Fou boutique.

Other Partnerships. TGC stays in close contact with other local NGOs, sharing best practices, staff training, sporting events, and jointly participating in local events such as the Giant Puppet Parade and the events of the International Children Labor Day. TGC has been involved with over thirty NGOs in Siem Reap, and the top nine are listed below. Web sites for these NGOs can easily be found by using an internet search engine such as Google.

- Green Gecko Project
- Together for Cambodia
- Krousar Thmey
- Lotus World
- Sankheum Center for Children
- Kampuchea House
- Sunrise Children's Village
- The Globalteer
- Stepping stone

Outcomes Measures

TGC is very data-driven, and tracks the individual progress of every student on a regular, consistent basis. The outcomes measures are listed below.

Exam Scores. TGC students take exams monthly, after each semester, and the end of each academic year. If students do not score as well as desired, the exam scores are used to guide additional instruction during the Summer Program.

High School Certificate. The primary outcome is whether or not a student earns their official Cambodian certificate of high school completion. TGC is not able at this time to grant such a certificate, since there are several courses that TGC does not yet offer. All students in the highest TGC grade must take some classes at a local Cambodian school in Siem Reap during their last year to prepare them to pass their official final exam.

University Attendance and Graduation. Two of the students who were in the initial class of students in 2004 have obtained their High School Certificate and been accepted at Cambodian Universities. Pisey Sith will graduate from Build Bright University in 2013 with a degree in accounting, and Ratha Chan will graduate from Pannasastra University in 2014 with a degree in computer science.

Transition to Employment and Living on their Own. Several students have earned their High School Certificate and chosen not to attend University, but instead attended a trade school and obtained meaningful employment and are living successfully on their own.

Success in Life. Under Cambodian law, TGC is required to keep track of all students who have ever attended TGC, even those who leave before graduation for whatever reason. Most of those who have left TGC before earning a High School Certificate live much better lives than they would have, had they not attended TGC, since the oral and written English skills they learned at TGC prepared them to obtain employment in businesses that cater to Western tourists.

Reasons for Success

There are many reasons for the success of TGC.

- **Consistent Financial Support from Four Key Donors.** Two American couples, Chet and Karen Opalka and Jackie Eastwood and Mike McClurken, have provided over 80 % of the money needed to keep the school going over the past nine years.
- **Very Capable Khmer Staff.** Principal Dara Heng and Business Director Nimol Pong have proven to be extremely valuable resources for TGC. The school runs smoothly and efficiently on a daily basis as a result of their skill and dedication to the school. These key leaders are in daily phone or email contact with TGC Director, Judy Wheeler. Details on staff members can be found at the school web site, www.theglobalchild.org.
- **Excellent Leadership by the Director of TGC.** Judy Wheeler lives in Hoosick Falls, NY, in the Albany area. She was one of the initial founding board members and has been the Director for the past six years. She travels to the school every three months and stays for about ten days. She leads all fund-raising and fiscal matters and also guides the daily operation through daily email contact with Nimol and Dara. Judy has helped develop and improve the skills and performance of not only key staff such as Dara and Nimol, but has also helped all staff continue to improve.
- **Good Relations with the Cambodian Government.** The Business Director of TGC, Nimol Pong, has become an expert in governmental relations and for many years has dealt extremely well with the complex and time-consuming processes of working with the many confusing government ministries that have jurisdiction over TGC. Nimol is now sought out in Cambodia as an expert advisor in NGO processes and procedures.
- **Minerva Fellows from Union College.** The Union college recent grads have been a very significant addition to the school, particularly because they have dramatically improved the verbal English speaking skills of the students. We have written policies to guide their behavior, especially the importance of them listening to local Khmer staff and showing sufficient respect for the Cambodian culture.
- **Respect for Khmer Culture.** Several members of the Board of Directors received some advice from a Japanese business leader when we were just starting the school. He said that things are different in Asia from America, particularly in predominantly Buddhist cultures. He cautioned us to try not to change things too often, to not keep “twiddling the knobs” and experimenting a lot. He advised that change in Asian culture is often seen as bad, and is often met with significant fear and anxiety. As a result, we have striven to keep things simple and to maintain as much consistency and predictability as possible for students, parents and staff.

Lessons Learned

Some of the more significant lesson learned are described briefly below.

- **Vet the parents of potential new students.** The vetting process was somewhat limited when the school was founded because it was performed by an English-speaking Westerner who could not speak Khmer, the local language. As a result, some of the initial students did not have parents or guardians that truly supported their education, but were more interested in the “dollar-a-day” payment. For the past several years, Principal Dara Heng has conducted extensive interviews with parents of prospective students at the home where the parents and students live. Dara has been doing this now for almost three years and we feel that we have admitted students who are more likely to succeed at TGC.
- **Written Policies.** We have found that the school runs much more smoothly when as many processes are formally documented and communicated to students and staff. This was especially needed for the process of transition from TGC to either University, trade school, or employment. The transition policy clearly communicates how financial support from TGC gradually tapers off as a student moves out into the world. TGC provides financial support while TGC graduates attend university or trade school, and there is still a time period over which TGC provides financial support as a graduate starts looking for a full-time job.
- **Innovation by Volunteers.** The Minerva Fellows have developed programs for: physical education, women’s health and fire drills/escape plans. They also developed a mentor program, a debate team, soccer team, arts and crafts and a limited music class. These programs are well-written and therefore easy for staff and new fellows to implement.
- **Volunteer Guidelines.** In addition the Minerva Fellows from Union College, there are many people around the world who apply every year to volunteer at the school. We have found that it is very important to only accept highly qualified volunteers who have some concrete skills that will benefit the school. We have also developed a comprehensive policy of behavioral guidelines for all volunteers to assure that they understand the rules of the school and are prepared to show the proper respect to our Cambodian staff and to the Khmer culture.

Expense / Funding

Annual program budget. The current budget for 2013 is shown below. The Café income and expense is from both Joe-To-Go and Beau Fou.

Income		
	Donations	176,825
	Café Income	45,000
		221,825
Total Income		221,825
Expense		
	Salaries	55,000
	Occupancy	37,000
	Fees	4,700
	Program Services	47,825
	General and Administration	27,000
	Café Expenses	45,000
	Repairs & Maintenance	5,300
		221,825
Total Expense		221,825
Net Income		0

Funding Sources. TGC has been sustained for almost ten years due largely to the consistent generosity of individual donors. Sources other than individual donors are described below.

- **Fund-raising in Cambodia**

- Profits from Joe To Go and Beau Fou, though they are currently breaking even and not showing a profit.
- Events put on by Minerva Fellows and contributions from tourists who visit Joe To Go, Beau Fou and the school. This past year one of the Minerva Fellows sponsored a 10K run that raised \$6,000. Annually TGC receives about \$2,000 from tourists.

- **Fund-raising in the US**

- Sales of merchandise brought back from Cambodia and Thailand. Judy Wheeler, the Director of TGC, has extensive experience in retail, and when she travels to the school she buys clothing and gift items that she has been able to sell to retail stores near where she lives in the Albany, NY area.

Future

Strategic Plan

Goals. We have two simple goals: modest growth in the size of the school in Siem Reap and increased sustainability through increased profits from local businesses that are owned and operated by TGC.

1. **Expand the current school.** Increase the number of students from the current level of 25 to 35, at the present location. This will require additional staff and supplies, and will add approximately \$20,000 in annual operating expense.
2. **Increase Sustainability.** Reduce the long-term need for annual donations from individuals by generating more profit from businesses owned and operated by TGC. This includes expanding the two current businesses, Joe To Go and Beau Fou, as well as adding one or more new businesses.

Expand Current Businesses

Joe To Go. Joe To Go was recently awarded a “2013 Certificate of Excellence” by TripAdvisor as a business that has consistently earned high ratings from TripAdvisor travelers. This places Joe To Go in the top 10% of all businesses worldwide that are on TripAdvisor. This year we are investing \$10,000, received from an individual donor, to capitalize on the popularity of Joe To Go and increase revenue and profits by adding more seating at the current location.

Beau Fou. The boutique located upstairs of Joe To Go has also received considerable praise from tourists for its high quality gifts and accessories. We are exploring the possibility of increasing revenue and profits by going more upscale and increasing the average selling price of items sold there. This could require a one-time expenditure of about \$10,000 to pay for additional inventory.

Possible New Businesses

TGC Laundry. Local TGC staff members have done some preliminary work indicating that there is an unmet need for high-quality laundry and dry-cleaning services in Siem Reap. They've heard that some tourists in Siem Reap are unsatisfied with the laundry services provided by the hotels and might be eager and willing to pay for an outside service. We believe that \$15,000 would be needed to launch a pilot TGC laundry business.

McDermott Clothing and Gifts. John McDermott is an American photographer living in Siem Reap who is well-known for his excellent photos of Angkor Wat temples and other Asian scenes. John has five galleries in Cambodia that sell his photographs, including one in Siem Reap. We are exploring the possibility of obtaining a license from McDermott to use his photos on clothing and gift items. These would be manufactured in Thailand and sold in Beau Fou and other retail outlets in Siem Reap. You can see McDermott's work on his web site, www.asiaphotos.net. We estimate that \$10,000 is required for start-up and launch inventory.

SUNY Albany PUR Water Project. This is an existing project that is sponsored world-wide by Proctor and Gamble to provide free water-purification packets to people in the third world. They produce a simple-to-use water purification packet that can completely purify a gallon of water in about an hour.

The lack of clean water is a very serious problem in Cambodia, even in the Siem Reap area. This problem affects all of our Cambodian staff members and their families, as well as the many Cambodians who work at the several hundred hotels in and around Siem Reap.

SUNY Albany is helping P&G with this program and SUNY has reached out to TGC to explore whether a partnership with TGC makes sense to help provide this water-purification technology in Cambodia. This is still in the early exploratory stages, but TGC is very interested in becoming involved in this critical health issue. We feel that \$50,000 would enable TGC to hire a local person to be dedicated to starting a pilot program that would include help from TGC staff and students as the critical local "feet on the street" to deliver this life-changing technology to local Cambodians.

Appendix A. Maps of Cambodia and the Region

This map shows Cambodia in relation to the other countries in that region.



This map shows the location of Siem Reap in the northwestern part of Cambodia.

