2009 Annual Report

Mr. Vichetr Uon, Mr. Aaron Marshburn and Ms. Dawn Schary
Introduction

The Sao Sary Foundation is a nonreligious, non-political, independent humanitarian and child-centered development organization. SSF collaborates with local and international nongovernment organizations and with the national and local government to ensure effective and accountable programming.

Contact Information
#181, Group 5, Peanica Kam village, Rokha Thom commune, Chbar Morn district, Kampong Speu province, Kingdom of Cambodia

Mobile: +855 12 471 106,
+855 11 428 896

E-Mail: info@ssfcambodia.org
Skype: sao.sary.foundation
Website: http://www.ssfcambodia.org
Blog: http://ssfcambodia.blogspot.com

Fair Trade Shop
Contact: Mr. Emir Mujezinovic
E-Mail: info@baraba.es
Website: http://baraba.es/

My World Wish Campaign
SSF in collaboration with the Global Colors to run a campaign called “My World Wish”. It was created to provide opportunities for disadvantaged individuals around the world through making wish bead necklaces. More information about MY WORLD WISH please its website http://www.myworldwish.com/

Bank Account
Account holder: Sao Sary Foundation
#181, group 5, Peanicha Kam Village, Rokha Thom Commune, Chbar Morn district, Kampong Speu province, Cambodia

Bank: ACLEDA Bank Plc.
# 61, Preah Monivong Blvd., Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Account number: 05002061881211
Bank code: ACLBKHP

Online donation:
http://www.ammado.com/donate?ssf
Message from the Director

On behalf of the SSF team, I am pleased to present the Progress Report for the 2009 fiscal year, which covers our operations from September 01, 2008 to August 31, 2009. This marks the second time that SSF has been able to produce an annual progress report since the founding of our organization in 2006.

The purpose of this update is to keep our donors and supporters informed about the operations of the Sao Sary Foundation as we continue to grow. Made possible through the efforts of Mr. Aaron Marshburn, SSF has continued to benefit from the service volunteers from around the world who have worked hard to improve the ability of our organization to make a lasting impact in our community. In order effectively document the work we have done during the past year, Aaron spent two weeks at the SSF compound in Kampong Speu, conducting interviews with SSF beneficiaries and learning about the current state of affairs in Cambodia and the operations of the Sao Sary Foundation. His assessments have been included in order to clearly illustrate the importance of our work, the special aspects of our organization, and the specific details of the programs and projects we have instituted in order to combat human trafficking, violence, and exploitation in all of its forms in Cambodia.

As a non-profit organization, we rely fully on the support of our friends, donors, and volunteers who, through their actions and contributions, join us in our fight to improve the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable people in Cambodia. Consequently, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you our utmost gratitude to all of our funding partners (Riverkids, Groundwork Opportunities, Global Colors, and IMAXX Smart Webs Solutions), and individual donors and contributors. Without your efforts, it would not have been possible for us to continue to protect at least fifty children (95% are underage girls) at high risk for being trafficked in addition to assisting more than one hundred of the poorest and most vulnerable families in order to ensure they can protect and care for their children themselves in the future. While there is still so much work to be done, you can take pride in the knowledge that together, we can and will continue to make a real impact on the lives of the people living in extreme poverty, as we move forward into 2010.

Remaining Sincerely Yours,

Vichetr Uon,
Executive Director/Founder
E-Mail: Vichetr@ssf cambodia.org
Skype: sao.sary.foundation

Mr. Vichetr followed up growth of a malnourished boy that SSF adopted after his family left him for death
Current State of Affairs in Cambodia

After 30 years of social turmoil, genocide, and armed conflict, Cambodia continues to face developmental challenges, as the country remains one of the poorest in Asia.

Although absolute rates of poverty have fallen between 10 and 15% over the past ten years, the majority of rural Cambodians continue to live below the national poverty line, equating to an income of less than $0.50 per day.

In Kampong Speu, the province where SSF works, 57.8% of the population fall below the poverty line and 90% of the population do not have access to a sanitary toilet. For Cambodia’s poor, insufficient education, vocational training, and employment opportunities are unable to provide the income to meet minimum needs.

Despite recent improvements in rates of primary school enrolment, a chronic lack of resources in the education sector, over-crowded schools, and insufficient hours of classroom instruction have all continued to hamper the effectiveness of public education in Cambodia. In poor rural areas, children complete an average of 2.4 years of schooling compared to 5.4 years among the richest. Approximately 65.2% of the literate population of Kampong Speu province has not even graduated from primary school, and 72.6% of all literate females have not graduated from primary school.

Since gainful employment is often impossible to find in the poorest and most isolated rural communities, rural-to-urban and cross-border migration by vulnerable families and individuals has become increasingly common. In the process, many become victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, labor exploitation, begging rings, or forced marriage.

Many women and girls in Cambodia, including ethnic Vietnamese, are lured away from their homes with promises of better opportunities as domestic servants, but are later coerced into sexual exploitation. The majority end up in and around the urban areas of Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Sihanoukville where there demand is the highest. It is estimated that there are close to 80,000 to 100,000 sex slaves and prostitutes, which means that 1 out of every 150 people in Cambodia is a sex slave or prostitute.

Cambodia remains a major receiving, sending and transit country for human trafficking. The most recent UNAIP report concludes that many factors have contributed to the rise in human trafficking in Cambodia. Poverty is the most significant, followed by unemployment, socio-economic imbalances between rural areas and urban centers which are intensified by an increase in tourism, and a lack of education and safe migration. In a recent survey conducted by the International Organization of Migration, 62% of trafficked victims who escaped from Thailand reported that the original reason they left their homes was to find jobs to help support their family.

While adult men who migrate willingly to comparatively richer countries in Asia continue to find themselves exploited for forced labor in the agriculture, fishing, and construction industries, women are trafficked primarily for forced labor in factories, domestic labor, and sexual exploitation.
Sadly, according to the most recent report by ECPAT Cambodia, nearly one third of the victims trafficked for sexual exploitation are children. The U.S. State Department has estimated that approximately 600,000 to 800,000 children a year are trafficked across international borders. UNICEF estimates are higher, suggesting that as many as 1.2 million children are trafficked every year worldwide.

With well over half the population below the age of 20, Cambodia faces a growing problem of providing gainful job opportunities for its young population, which increases the drive toward cross-border migration, and perpetuates the cycle of vulnerability that results in human trafficking.

Although Cambodian laws prohibits kidnapping for forced prostitution of persons of any age, there are no laws prohibiting child pornography, and Article 42 of the Cambodian law code states that sexual abuse not involving penetration is punishable only as a misdemeanor. Regardless, very few arrests are made each year to enforce these laws, so there is little legal protection for the young and vulnerable. Combined with these loosely enforced laws, the legal age of consent is just 15 years old, foreign pedophiles come to Cambodia in order to have sex with “children” as international norms place the age of consent at 18. Although the number of tourists visiting Cambodia has declined since the recent financial crisis, a significant proportion of foreign tourists who visit Cambodia come primarily to take advantage of the low-cost of prostitution and easy access to child sex workers without fear of prosecution.

Although the press often pegs foreign demand as the reason behind the growth of the Cambodian sex industry, Daniela Reale, an advisor from Save the Children said "local demand is the force driving this abuse.” Moreover she stated that “70 percent of all brothel patrons are native to Cambodia.” Children are forced into prostitution and their services openly sold, often to regional businessmen and government officials. Often times, according to Mark Capaldi from Ecpat International, “these brothels and criminal networks are being supported and protected by high ranking officials.” This has been widely cited as one of the primary reasons for the limited success of international efforts to reduce child sex exploitation and human trafficking in Cambodia. Widespread corruption in the government and the weakness of Cambodian law enforcement agencies has hindered the effectiveness of key initiatives that have sought to prosecute child sex offenders.

The extreme lack of commitment from Cambodian law enforcement agencies to prosecute sex offenders is reflected by the 2009 first quarter report on sexual trafficking and debauchery cases in Cambodia. There were only 80 reported rape cases countrywide affecting 85 victims, 52 of whom were minors. However, it is highly unlikely that these figures adequately reflect the nature of the problem. Estimates from UNICEF suggest that 1 in 36 cases of rape are ever reported to the authorities, a number that is likely much higher in Cambodia. To make the situation even grimmer, of the 80 reported cases, there have been NO convictions for these crimes.

This May, Cambodia’s Secretary of State announced that the country expects to see an increase in prostitution and human trafficking throughout the rest of 2009 as the unemployment rate continues to climb during the economic downturn. The IMF has projected that Cambodia’s GDP is likely to fall by at least a half percent. During the first two months in 2009, textile exportations plummeted nearly 30 percent from the same period in 2008, while dozens of factories have had to close down due to a lack of orders. This has left more than 50,000 workers jobless.
Garment factory closings are only one indication of problems the world financial crises poses for Cambodia’s poor. Since 2008, Cambodia has continued to experienced rising prices, especially for fuel and food. According to a recent CDRI report, transportation and housing materials have increased by 27%, respectively. Food prices have increased by 36.8%, and the prices for rice, the country’s staple crop, have doubled. Rising inflation has hit Cambodia’s poor the hardest, where the poorest 40 percent of the population spend nearly 70% of their daily income on food.

On the bright side, many local farmers have benefited from the rise in food prices. However, only about 34% of rural families were able to produce a surplus for sale, partially because 21% of rural households do not even own land.

For Cambodia’s extremely poor, obtaining sufficient food continues to be a daily struggle. According to the same report by the CDRI, 50% of households reported cutting back on food as a way of coping with high food prices, making it almost impossible for many families to provide proper nutrition for their children. Additionally, school dropout rates are highest among food insecure families who are forced to keep their children from school in order to work to support the family. 98% have contracted new debts since March 2007 in order to cope with the current shock, a statistic that has shown little signs of decreasing significantly in the near future.

Even though Cambodia already receives around $600 million a year in aid from international donors to help its development, prospects for a quick turnaround seem unlikely. As the global economy slows down, foreign direct investment and assistance is likely to decrease dramatically.

The five vulnerable children who parents run away after they cannot manage the debts they borrowed from micro-finance institution and local moneylenders. Those children right now are living with their oldest and disable grandparents. Please
About SSF

The Sao Sary Foundation is a nonreligious, non-political, and independent humanitarian organization devoted to ending human trafficking and helping poor children and families gain economic independence in impoverished communities. SSF centers around our children; thus, child sponsorship is our basic foundation. SSF was founded in 2006 and officially recognized by the national government of the Kingdom of Cambodia as a non-profit organization in 2007.

**FAMILY, EDUCATION, AND SAFETY IN CAMBODIA**

Kampong Speu Street children with their hopefulness and trust SSF can support them to go to school as well as getting them some skills to generate cash for their families buying food but unfortunately, SSF excused as couldn't expand the service to reach them.

SSF values and promotes the rights of children, thus, we work to create opportunities for meaningful child participation in all of our programs. We have the potential and responsibility to make our country [Cambodia] one in which every child has the opportunity to fully develop all aspects of his/her unique personality and talents within a supporting family, community and society. We value these eight principles which guide our work and relationships:

1. **We value people:** SSF is committed to developing equitable relationships through listening to and respecting people's ideas, morals, and culture.

2. **We are open and responsive to change:** SSF believes that openness to change begins with the individual. SSF and its staff welcome feedback; we seek to learn from our mistakes, as well as our successes in order to build an organization committed to reflection and learning. This will enable us to develop appropriate and effective strategies for achieving our vision.

3. **We are professional:** SSF is a non-profit organization committed to excellence. We provide equal opportunities to all of the children, families, and volunteers we work with, regardless of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religious and/or political affiliation.

4. **We are honest:** SSF is both accountable and transparent. We take ownership and responsibility for all of our actions, while being open and honest in all that we do.
5. **We are committed to helping those in need:** SSF is committed to working with needy children, families and other vulnerable people. Our belief is that sustainable development should stem directly from the people and that through self-empowerment, capacity building, and participation they can improve their lives.

6. **We are committed to peace and justice:** Peace and justice are at the heart of any program that SSF creates. SSF is an organization that conducts business in the most peaceful way possible, without causing any harm to other people, animals, or the environment. We aim for the equality and justice for all children.

7. **We realize the importance of all of our partnerships:** Whether it is long term or one-time donors, specific program partnerships, and/or strictly volunteer efforts, SSF acknowledges its donors and partners regardless of age, gender, disability, religious or political affiliation. SSF depends fully on support provided from our donors and/or partners.

8. **We do not have any religious affiliation:** At SSF we do not incorporate any religious practices in our work, nor do we force any religion upon our beneficiaries. We do however, need financial assistance from any and all types of funding partners, whether religiously affiliated or not. In our work, we seek mutual respect through understanding among our multi-faith staff and communities.

### Our Vision

SSF believes in a proactive approach to protect children from any form of violence, exploitation and abuse. Rather than waiting until it’s too late, SSF strives to identify at risk children and provide sustainable assistance to both the children and their families.

### Our Mission

SSF works to achieve lasting improvements for children living in poverty in Cambodia’s poorest communities, through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives by:

- Enabling deprived children, their families and their communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefit from their societies.
- Inspiring deprived children, their families and their communities to socially and economically empower themselves to be agents of change in their own lives and for a more equitable world.
- Preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse against children- including commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labour and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting and child marriage.

### SSF and Cambodia’s Millennium Development Goals

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal nine-year basic education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Forge A Global Partnership For Development
Summary of Major Projects and Goals

What Makes SSF Unique?

While there are many NGO’s and other aid groups that focus on helping people who have been victimized by human trafficking and sexual exploitation, SSF is special in the fact that it seeks to identify children at high risk for being trafficked in order to prevent them from being exploited in the first place. To achieve this goal, SSF has created a standardized system that allows the organization to input data collected from initial assessments of the family’s history in order to determine the level of risk faced by each child considered for support.

Similar to the process used by insurance companies, factors such as family size, parent employment status, debt levels, literacy, gender, land ownership, the prevalence of alcoholism, drug use, and HIV within the family, and the family’s financial status are assigned different values according to their causal significance, using past data from trafficked children to determine their relative importance. Children who score above a certain level are then selected for aid.

Unfortunately, due to current financial constraint, SSF has identified far more children at high-risk for potential trafficking then they can fully support. A special emphasis is placed on protecting girls older than ten years old, as statistics show that they represent the highest risk of being trafficked, primarily for sexual exploitation. Girls are also more likely to be deprived of the chance to attend school as Cambodian society largely considers the education of women as unimportant, since women traditionally remain at home and do not work.

SSF understands that it is nearly impossible to help the affected children without also helping their families. Although some victims are trafficked by strangers, a much higher percentage are trafficked by someone they know, a fact that illustrates that family and community members play a major role in either facilitating or preventing human trafficking. Furthermore, The Ministry of Social Affairs and Youth Rehabilitation found that nearly 47% of those who managed to return to Cambodia after being trafficked to Thailand stated that their mother facilitated their forced migration, usually in order to settle escalating debt or alleviate the extreme poverty of the entire family.

SSF also recognizes that the factors that contribute to human trafficking do not stop at the children’s immediate family – it is a community wide problem. As a result, SSF has increasingly become involved in projects such as well building that benefit entire villages, many of whom have no access to clean drinking water, forcing the families who live in them to spend up to 50 percent of their daily income simply to buy water from outside sources.

Nick and Joke, our supporters in Belgium provided some white rice, milk and sugar to Aem Em, 72, vulnerable grandma who care for three-grand children.
Ensuring access to quality education for children is a high priority, proving time and time again to be a highly effective mechanism for preventing children from becoming involved in commercial sexual exploitation. Although SSF does not run its own school, the organization provides the children with daily pocket money, bicycles for transportation, uniforms for school, and all the school materials they need in order to attend state schools, in addition to hiring tutors and conducting seminars in the compound to help supported children to succeed academically.

Although the primary goal of SSF is to prevent human trafficking, the organization has also committed itself to preventing all forms of violence, exploitation, abuse, and discrimination within the communities in which it works. In order to achieve these goals, SSF emphasizes the importance of responsibility.

Sadly, many parents who were themselves raised in difficult circumstances do not fully comprehend their role in improving the lives of their children. SSF’s Livelihood Program, which works in conjunction with its Child Protection Program, has sought to provide opportunities to the poorest families to begin earning money using the skills they already posses, or teaching them new skills they can use. The poorest families are given a chance to double or triple their daily incomes by providing startup capital for them to open small businesses. This helps to show these families that they can be responsible and help themselves, instead of relying on others who ultimately exploit them and their children.

Because SSF recognizes the importance of family in improving the lives of supported children, the organization places emphasis on allowing them to live with their families, in their own communities. The majority of those that SSF supports live at home as opposed to placing them in institutionalized care where they are unable to assist their younger brothers and sisters. Moreover, child adoption programs and the like displace the children from their communities and families that make up an important part of Cambodian life. However, in abusive households, SSF recognizes that living at home is detrimental to the development of the child. Additionally, some villages are so far from the nearest school that it would be nearly impossible for the children to travel back and forth each day, especially when the route is dangerous. If supported children live more than 6 km from their school, then the children are given a place to stay at the SSF compound, which is close enough to their homes that they can frequently visit their families.
The SSF Compound is more than just a shelter that provides a safe place to stay and food to eat, but also a place for learning. The greater goal of the Sao Sary Foundation is to teach the children skills that will allow them to succeed on their own once they grow up so that they will be better equipped to provide for their families. SSF understands that protecting them from harm is only a solution that will help them for the present. Social and financial education is of paramount importance, in order to ensure that they will be able to succeed throughout their lives.

SSF seeks to instill the idea that one must be able to think for oneself, and truly desire more than a life of hard labor and poverty. Without successful parental role models, the children that SSF supports have had few chances to learn simple life skills that many people take for granted, such as financial responsibility and the importance of learning. By teaching them vocational skills such as haircutting, massage therapy, cooking, and customer service, SSF hopes to provide them with a chance to develop long-term business strategies that are fostered through confidence-building involvement. Through operations such as the compound’s banana cake business, SSF seeks to provide the children with the tools they need to become independent leaders in their community.

Everything that happens at the SSF compound is done in a way to support community involvement. Everyone involved with the organization, including the staff, is treated the same with mutual respect. Everyone lives and works together. Whereas Cambodian culture is based around a hierarchical structure that requires obedience to elders, SSF has worked to establish a supportive environment where everyone’s ideas can be heard. In fact, the children are encouraged to try to come up with ideas of their own, a characteristic is not often taught in Cambodian schools. The same ideas are promoted within the communities, because it is equally important to teach adults about the benefits of listening to their children. Sadly, few people in Cambodia recognize the importance of giving back to their communities as interpersonal relationships often stop at the family level. While the children are taught about the importance of volunteer efforts and the ways they can work to solve the problems they see in society, SSF has also instituted mechanisms that provide for monthly community wide meetings. By pooling their ideas and their resources, SSF understands that the communities will be better positioned to respond to their own problems in the future.
**Child Protection Program Overview**

SSF's Child Protection Program aims to alleviate child poverty in Cambodia's poorest communities, while preventing all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse against children, especially commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labor and child marriage.

This is achieved through a comprehensive and integrated one-to-one child sponsorship program that takes care of each child's needs in terms of health, education and social welfare. Currently, SSF supports 50 children, half of which are fully sponsored.

**Health:** The majority of supported children have had little in the way of medical care before their involvement with the Sao Sary Foundation. Health assessments are conducted immediately when the child has been selected for aid. Additionally their progress is traced through monthly follow up appointments while full medical checkups are conducted every six months, with the goal of improving and maintaining the overall physical and mental health of all sponsored children during their participation in SSF’s Child Protection Program.

**Education:** In order to ensure access to basic education for all program participants, every child is enrolled in public school. This includes providing bicycles if necessary, all required school materials, pocket money, and daily meals. Moreover, SSF offers informal English and computer literacy classes in order to prepare each child with the skills that are required for success in the workplace and in institutions of higher learning.

**Social welfare:** The organization places importance on supplemental training that seeks to build social skills that many children do not develop at home. Examples include health awareness, social morality, human rights, legal rights, goal setting, craft skills, vocational training (sewing, haircutting, small business management, etc), and agricultural skills (vegetable gardening, poultry raising, composting, etc).

**Shelter:** Although the SSF compound provides shelter to children with no other options, its primary focus is to serve as a support within the community to reinforce the organization’s mission and goals. Additionally SSF has pursued partnerships with local Buddhist temples (for boys) and run own compound (for girls) as an alternative to living at home in special circumstances.

**Income Generation** – Because emergency aid only offers a temporary solution to a long-term problem, SSF encourages supported children to take responsibility for their own future in order to ensure that they will not always need to be dependent upon aid to survive. Following emergency measures that include helping families to settle their outstanding debts that prevent them from doing anything other than pay interest and purchase food for their families, SSF has sought teach children the skills they need to earn money through participation in projects such as the banana cake selling operation located at the front of the SSF compound.
Child Social and Financial Education

The Sao Sary Foundation places special emphasis on providing social and financial education for the children that SSF works with. While providing children with shelter and food is important, SSF knows that such forms of relief are only temporary solution, and do little to equip the children to provide for themselves later on in life. In order to accomplish this goal, SSF has sought to provide the supported children with an opportunity to learn real life skills in a controlled environment through their participation in homegrown small businesses that also provide their families with money to live on.

Since the last report SSF has continued teaching the children how to make artificial flowers for sale in the local market. Because of rising food costs, which force many poor families to live “from hand to mouth,” SSF has also sought to teach the children important agricultural skills. At the compound, SSF raises its own chickens in addition to laying the groundwork for a straw mushroom growing operation once spores become available. Recently SSF has reached an agreement with a neighbor to turn an unused plot of land into a vegetable garden. Working together, the children cleaned up the lot and have begun to prepare the beds and plant banana trees. SSF hopes that the success of the operation will encourage the children to bring these ideas back to their communities as there are many places suitable for the cultivation of vegetables that are currently unused.

The banana cake selling operation has provided a hands-on opportunity for the children to learn business and marketing skills. When the operation was launched about a year ago, the business only earned about 3 dollars a day, but recently, SSF has been able to earn up to 5 dollars per day selling banana cakes in front of the compound, using methods that the children can see in action. One of the primary ways that SSF has been able to increase profits has been through product differentiation as the operation has expanded to sell not only banana cakes, but also yam cakes, and taro cakes. The hope is that the children will see that they can use their own initiative and skills to produce products that people will want to buy. There are many places to buy banana cakes in Kampong Speu, but the others are only available at SSF.

Furthermore, the SSF has conducted seminars to teach the children about the proper ways to deal with customers. Although they are often very shy when trying new things, through practice sales exercises, SSF has tried to show them that customer service and a hardworking image are very important aspects of a successful business. Several weeks ago, the children came up with the idea to clean up the area out in front of the compound to make the stand more attractive and draw attention to the storefront. It is hard to tell whether or not this has impacted the sales in such a short time but it is a step in the right direction. The most important message we want them to understand is that they can implement their own ideas in the future.
Livelihood Program Overview

Although SSF is an organization that is primarily concerned with the welfare of children who are in danger of being exploited as a result of their family’s extreme poverty, many families are unwilling to allow SSF to fully help their children because they need their children to stay at home and work in order to support the family. In order for these families to allow their children to return to or stay in school, SSF has sought to provide alternative ways for poor families to earn money in the form of start up capital for small businesses that help families to use the skills they have to earn income. Examples include grocery selling, morning glory and vegetable gardens, and cake baking. In order to achieve this goal, SSF treats each family as a special case. Providing both technical assistance and start up capital, the organization helps families to learn or expand upon skills that they can use to reduce their level of poverty and raise their standard of living. Key aspects of SSF’s Livelihood Program include support for their children, work planning/goal setting, financial grants, and continued technical assistance, all of which are regularly monitored through evaluation mechanisms.
Support for their Children: UNICEF has estimated that 158 million children aged 5-14 are engaged in child labor worldwide - one in six children in the world. Additionally a report from the International Labor Organization published in 2000 has suggested that almost 75% of the child domestic laborers don't receive any pay. Child Labor usually interferes with children’s education, as poor families from pressure their children, especially underage girls, to drop out of school and get jobs using forged paperwork to circumvent child labor laws. The key to preventing child labor lies in ensuring that all children go to school and that their education is of good quality, so providing families with other ways to earn money is critical. If children are unable to attend school because they are needed to help support the family economically, SSF supports the child’s education in conjunction with their family to ensure the head of the household can run their business without needing their children to drop out of school. With each family selected for support, the goal is that by the second year they are able to support their own children’s education. However if it is not possible, SSF will continue to sponsor the child’s educational needs.

Work Plans/Goal Setting:
Helping the families to set goals and create a successful business plan is the most important part of the Livelihood Program. Most of Cambodia's poorest people lack a sense of direction when conducting their daily work, often failing to understand the link between their expenditures and profits. The Household Work Plan allows them to focus on what they need to do daily, monthly, and yearly in order to run a successful business.

This is accomplished by establishing what SSF refers to as the “New Routine.” The idea is to help targeted families to switch to unique and more financially sustainable activities that can support their entire family, instead of allowing them to continue repeating low-income generating jobs that do little to raise their standards of living. For instance, instead of waiting to harvest one crop before planting another, SSF encourages farming families to use successive plantings for continuous harvesting. Through basic training in work management skills, SSF helps each family to reach higher levels of productivity, resulting in increasingly higher living standards.

Financial Grants: Due to their extreme poverty, selected families do not have enough financial resources to start businesses on their own, even if they have the drive to do so. As a result, SSF provides initial grants from approximately $75.00 to $250.00 in start up capital. Additional support is sometimes provided in order to expand or improve the business once it has proven viable. SSF does not provide the cash to families directly, but rather purchases everything the families need to get started.

Currently, SSF does not propose new kinds of businesses or careers to target families. Instead, every venture SSF helps to establish already exists within the community. At the same time, the families must agree put forth fresh ideas designed to carve out a special niche, either through the use of new techniques that increase productivity or through product differentiation and other marketing strategies.
Methodology:
Every business or career that SSF supports already exists within the community. However, SSF works within the community to make family businesses and techniques more productive, introducing families to our New Routines (see below).

What is the New Routine?
SSF’s New Routine is a method to switch target families from repeating low-income generating activities to unique, financially sustainable activities that can support the entire family. For example, currently one SSF target family has used the planting of morning glory, a vegetable crop, on one ridge and waiting for harvest before planting another, rather than successive plantings for continuous harvesting. Under SSF’s New Routine, they will become more productive through more frequent planting for daily harvesting.

Technical Assistant:
Technical support is provided to every SSF family to ensure they meet a high standard of work. This links to SSF’s Follow Up mechanism.

Follow Up:
SSF has set up a two year mechanism to follow up on every SSF target family. Weekly visits at their family residence or their workplace are conducted by SSF staff. This will monitor how target families can run their businesses and technical advising will then be conducted to further their knowledge and business skills.

Evaluation:
At the end of each one-year period, SSF will evaluate target families on their economic improvements and self-sustainability by measuring income and capital improvements. A family economic assessment form has been developed for this evaluation.
Progress with other Programs and Projects

Cerebral Palsy Pro Program Progress

Started in March of 2008, SSF’s pilot project to benefit disabled people in Cambodia has been extremely successful thus far. Although no reliable information regarding the prevalence of disabled people in Kampong Speu is available, the DED has estimated that there are about 600 such people in this province who are affected by mental or physical birth defects. **

Unlike in many other countries, the government has done nothing to help those with physical or mental disabilities – just for the deaf and the blind. Unfortunately, a large percentage of the people in Cambodia, a predominantly Buddhist country, believe that disabled people were born with problems because of the bad deeds they have committed in a former life. As a result they often have little desire to help them, for fear of having the same problems in their next life. Even those who view Cambodia’s disabled with a kinder eye, think that it would be better for them to die, in hopes that they will be reborn into a better situation. The effect of these misguided beliefs is that many are forced to exist separated from the rest of society.

Recently, SSF has hired Pongaphotra In, a young man who is committed to educating the poor communities in Kampong Speu about the realities of physical and mental disabilities. He is thankfully rehabilitating Socheat, a sixteen year old girl with cerebral palsy who lives at the SSF compound because her father died from AIDS and her mother is HIV positive. He uses a Japanese form of physical therapy called Do Sahou. As Socheat improves, this helps his greater goal to prove to her community that it is possible to reintegrate children with disabilities into society. “At first even her family did not believe that she could be helped,” he said, “but after working with her for several months, she has learned to sit up on her own and even express herself to some degree.” Before, she could do nothing but lie in bed. SSF can only afford to pay for therapy twice a week, however the children who live at the compound provide both extra help in addition to the encouragement she needs to continue working towards being able to feed herself, and perhaps, someday learning to walk on her own.

Although the high costs of medical screenings and therapy have prevented SSF from working with any more children at the moment, the organization hopes to use Socheat’s success story as an example to prove to other communities throughout Kampong Speu that there is still hope for children born with cerebral palsy or other disabilities.
Well building with Groundwork Opportunities

This past year, SSF was able to install another well serving 30 households with approximately 150 household members in a sub-village called Kraing Rohong, through a partnership with another organization called Groundwork Opportunities. Formerly, the residents of Kraing Rohong had to buy all of their water from other sources at a cost of at least 35 cents per day, almost half of the money they earned from gathering and selling palm leaves that are used for rooftops. The rest of their income had to be used to buy food and repay the debts, leaving them unable to save for times of crises, or medical emergencies.

Barely able to survive each week, the children of Kraing Rohong had no opportunity to attend school during the day, because their families needed their help to provide for the family. This is an unfortunate condition that prevents them from being able to break the cycle of poverty that persists in Cambodia’s poorest communities. Hungry and uneducated, many of the villagers have been forced to take out loans they could never repay. The result is that they become susceptible to human trafficking when people come to the village posing as legitimate businessmen, promising a better life in Thailand or in bigger cities in Cambodia. The reality is that they arrive at their destination and find themselves exploited, abused, and often times, worse off than they were before.

Young boys taken to Thailand are often subjected to slave-like conditions, where fearing for their life is a part of their daily reality. Young girls are persuaded to move to Phnom Penh to work in garment factories, but usually they end up being sold to brothels where they are forced into employment as sex workers. This puts them at high risk for contracting HIV and leaves them displaced from their families with no hope of ever returning. The well, which was built in two weeks during April of 2009, has provided the entire village with access to clean water, alleviating a major financial burden on behalf of the entire community. This will allow them to start saving money that they will be able to invest in small businesses to generate regular income in the future. SSF also worked in cooperation with well-contractor to train five of the villagers in the proper ways to maintain the well, so that they will be able to fix any problems themselves, without wasting precious resources to pay outside contractors. In many ways, the ability to fix their own problems is crucial to their future success as the villagers increasingly begin to understand that they do have some control over their lives.
World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse – 19 November, “Child Participation in Preventing Abuse and Violence against Children”

Abuse against women and girls is on the rise in Cambodia, according to a government report released in November of 2008. Nearly one fourth of all females in Cambodia have suffered from domestic violence. Moreover, young girls have increasingly become targets of sexual assault, according to the most recent Cambodian Gender Assessment Survey, also released in 2008. The report, released by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, said the growing use of drugs and alcohol by men was leading to malicious behavior against female Cambodians. The report also said that more than half of all women felt domestic violence was justified in some cases in what it called “a mentality of passive acceptance” that has prevented efforts to end the problem. As a result, SSF believes that increased education and stop hunger are the most important factors in changing the attitudes that allow attacks on women and children to go unreported.

Although in the last decade, great progress has been made around the world to inform people about the realities of child abuse, last year SSF was one of only five organizations in all of Cambodia took the opportunity to recognize the worldwide Child Abuse Prevention day on November 19th. While the other groups focused primarily on writing to politicians, SSF has approached it on a community level, where understanding of what constitutes as child abuse is at a minimum. Although nearly everyone recognizes that violence against children is wrong, many parents and children do not understand the emotional harm inflicted on children through other forms of abuse that are not as easily recognized.

Small group discussion about definitions and terms of child, child rights and abuse on 19 November 2008 at SSF compound.
In a pretest conducted before the all day educational session, SSF concluded that 95 per cent of the participating children did not know or understand the meaning of words and terms, “child, child rights, child responsibilities, domestic violence, and abuse”, whilst the other 5 per cent were unsure of their meanings. When asked about domestic violence, most participants could only give us answers relating to physical violence or abuse such as hitting and beating etc. Their concept of different forms of abuse such as emotional harassment and child neglect was minimal. Throughout the day, the 45 participating children met in small groups in an attempt to define and better understand important concepts and criteria of child abuse. At the same time, equal focus was placed on informing the children of their rights and responsibilities as children in a family.

SSF believes that every child has the right to live without fear of their parents or guardians, and that every child has the right to earn an education. These are both ideas that are not currently prevalent in Cambodia, especially in rural areas that suffer from a general lack of education. Violence can have severe implications for children’s development. In the most severe cases, it can lead to death or injury, however it can also affect children’s health, their ability to learn, and even their willingness to go to school at all.

Violence destroys children’s self-confidence and can undermine their ability to be good parents in the future, a major factor contributing to the perpetuation of domestic violence all over the world. By seeking to increase awareness about the realities of child abuse and domestic violence, SSF hopes that the 45 children and adults who participated this past year in Child Abuse Prevention day will serve as role models for the rest of the community, while SSF plans to expand upon last year’s success this coming November. In the words of Licado Spokesman, Vann Sophat, “What a child needs to do,” he says, “is go to school and gain knowledge to become a well-educated citizen for the country in the future.”

**Expansion of the SSF Computer Literacy Project**

The mission of SSF’s computer skills training project can be summed up as, “increasing awareness of the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Cambodia’s Poorest Communities.” By giving children from poor rural backgrounds increased access to computers and information technology, SSF seeks to reduce the discrepancy between the quality of education between rural and city students. Lack of computer proficiency is one of the main problems that prevent rural children from being able to attend college, where computer skills are necessary. The fear is that children from poor rural backgrounds will fall too far behind to catch up to students with access to higher quality education, effectively barring them from the chance to ever attend and graduate from college.

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**Participated children were took the photo with 19 November logo provided.**
SSF’s Computer Literacy Project was established in early 2008 with partial funding from the Riverkids organization, based in Singapore. At the project’s onset, one class was set up twice a week to allow supported children the chance to learn how to use computers. The first step was to teach the children how to use Windows XP, the operating system used in the majority of Cambodia’s businesses and universities. Because most of the children lack a high enough level of English proficiency to type in English, the next step was teaching them how to use Khmer Unicode and Khmer Limon typing methods that allow them to use their native language on and off line. After learning the most basic computer skills, the curriculum expanded to teach children how to use Microsoft Office, including training in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, Publisher and Visio.

However, overwhelming demand from participating students and the lack of sufficient computers in addition to the need for a dedicated volunteer willing to teach the classes has thus far prevented the program from achieving all of its goals. This year, SSF is seeking to find donors willing to sponsor its Computer Literacy Project. SSF currently has 4 old computers; a number the organization seeks to increase by fifteen in order to better meet the needs of the participating students. In total, the projected cost of creating a new computer lab and hiring a teacher for one year will be $8,400.

Although significant progress has been made, a lot still needs to be done if we are to succeed in reducing the computer literacy gap between Cambodia’s cities and poorer rural communities. By receiving computer skills training, they will increase their chances of obtaining better paid, safe and long term jobs. Even having just one family member who is able to secure an adequate monthly salary is an immense help in relieving the most difficult aspects of living in poverty that lead some families to feel the need to sell their sons and daughters into exploitative situations.
Expansion of English Teaching Initiative

English is one of the most important skills that Cambodian children can learn, opening up opportunities for work in tourism, and laying the groundwork for future study at university where English proficiency is a must. Children coming from poor rural areas almost never learn enough English to have a chance to succeed in college, even if they can raise the money to pay for schooling, which is rarely possible due to the high costs.

Currently, SSF has a great need for a long term volunteer to teach English at the compound. Although short term volunteers come occasionally to provide a week or more of class, sporadic learning is not enough to effectively develop the language skills they need. Furthermore, different teachers employ different teaching strategies. In our experience this usually confuses the children, making it harder for them to consolidate their knowledge and progress. It is challenging to motivate the children to study hard for one week, when they know they may not be able to learn again for another month, but a long-term volunteer would be best equipped to tailor the curriculum to the needs of the students.
Green Initiatives and Recycling Awareness

Few Cambodians have any idea about the realities of climate change, nor the need to move towards more sustainable methods of trash disposal. Most places lack a centralized garbage disposal service. As a result, trash is disposed of either by burning it, releasing large amounts of greenhouse gases, or by throwing it out into the streets. Piles of trash and debris can be seen on nearly every corner, from big cities like Phnom Penh or Siem Riep to the provincial town of Kampong Speu. The problem is that people simply don’t know what to do with the waste they create. The closest thing Cambodia has to a trash service are the hordes of homeless children and adults who pick the garbage for pieces of plastic and metal that they can sell to recycling corporations for $0.50 to $1.00 a day.

Although SSF’s recycling awareness project is currently in its infancy, one of SSF’s goals for the rest of 2009 is to expand upon the work of visiting Polish travelers who set up different waste receptacles intended for different kinds of garbage. Similar to what many countries have been doing for some time, SSF hopes to increase community awareness about the benefits of sorting trash for proper disposal by using its own compound as an example. Cleanup days and adopt-a-road projects are also in the planning stages.

SSF is currently drawing plans for ways to help poor communities bring trees and plants back to their villages, as the majority of nearby vegetation has already been cut for fuel or building huts. Instead of focusing primarily on beautification, SSF has and will continue to encourage families to try to maintain a home vegetable garden to alleviate the constant pressure of buying food from outside communities. By helping communities to grow more of the food they eat, they will not only save money but also reduce the amount of emissions released by the trucks that currently bring in food from far away.
Global Connections

Over the past six months, SSF has increasingly sought to tap into the resources and ideas of foreign travelers through the organization’s participation in couchsurfing.com, a website that offers travelers a free place to stay in return for their services during their visit.

Recently, a Taiwanese traveler, Kuang Yi Wu, spent three weeks at the SSF compound teaching the children the skills needed to perform Chinese massage and haircutting, skills he learned working in his mother’s salon in Taiwan. He said, “for me, the most important thing for the children to learn is not the skills themselves, but rather that they build up confidence in themselves so they are capable of learning trades that they can use to earn money.” In the beginning, he started working with all of the children to teach them the most basic skills. As they progressed he was able to select the children who showed the most promise and greatest interest for more specialized learning, approximately six to eight children for each trade. Again, the focus was placed on the practical application of these skills. The children learned by cutting each other’s hair. “Pyke,” as the children know him, even let them cut his own hair! Even if the children never become barbers or masseuses, at the very least they will never have to pay someone else to perform these services for them.

The community atmosphere at the compound SSF allows everyone to put forth their own ideas and try to implement them. Through his work at a five star hotel, Kuang Yi Wu also helped to encourage the children to improve their customer service skills, and he served as an example for the children who work at the banana stand. As he says, “A smile is every bit as important as a good product for the success of a business.”

Not all of the travelers who come to SSF work directly with the children. SSF has also sought to benefit from the expertise and connections of travelers to improve the ability of the organization to accomplish its goals. A Bosnian volunteer, Emir, who spent just 4 days living at the compound, helped to lay the groundwork for a future export business whereby the handicrafts produced by the children and their families could be exported to Europe or the United States where they could be sold at a higher price with the proceeds benefiting the work of the Sao Sary Foundation.
To make use of his advanced skills in marketing and sales, he spent most of his time in the communities learning about the products that poor families can produce. Before he left, he purchased a variety of different products ranging from bead necklaces to Khmer scarves to take with him back to Barcelona where he works. He plans to sell them there in order to determine which products have the highest demand. If he finds that he can sell these products for a profit, he plans to set up an export business that will benefit both the poor families in Kampong Speu and the organization. He paid one family 10 dollars for a handful of necklaces they were able to make in one day, nearly twenty times as much as they normally earn. Even so, he expects to sell them for 100% profit in Barcelona, money that he plans to donate back to the organization which will redistribute the earnings back into the community.

Lastly, many of the people who come to SSF leave desiring to make an effort to help the organization. One recent American volunteer, Aaron, has plans to return to his university in Georgia where he hopes to convince other students like him to come to SSF with their ideas, a place that allows everyone to help in their own special way. Making use of the resources of university students around the world has the potential to unlock gratis expertise in a wide range of special skills, including fundraising, agriculture, community development, business, education, and finance. Also, the direct exposure to people from other countries and cultures increases the children’s awareness of the world outside of Cambodia, a country where most children grow up never leaving. Aaron also hopes to set up an American base for SSF which would be able to facilitate fundraising from American donors while serving as an additional avenue for grant applications for companies based in the United States.

If SSF can continue to build partnerships with people around the world, the organization will be stronger and able to continue expanding its operations to do more each year to help the extreme poor in Kampong Speu and advance its efforts to prevent more children from being exposed to violence, exploitation, and human trafficking.
Some Feature Stories highlight

Mam Yoeun:

One of the communities that SSF has recently targeted for aid is the Prey Chheuteal village in the Samrong Tong district of Kampong Speu, where nearly 70% of the inhabitants live in extreme poverty, meaning that they earn less than 50 cents per day. Most of the villagers are illiterate and lack the skills necessary to improve their lives on their own, especially families like that of Mam Yoeun who have been affected by circumstances beyond their control.

Several years ago, she tried to divorce her husband who beat her and her children, but he demanded that she give him all of the family’s belongings. After he threatened to kill her, she was forced to sell their rice fields to pay him, leaving her with nothing to support her family of four and ailing mother, whose medical bills forced the family to borrow a sum of 25 dollars from a money lender at a high interest rate.

After only 20 days, her debt soared to 150 dollars, an impossible sum to repay as she could never earn more than 4 dollars a day collecting bamboo to sell at the market. Faced with such tremendous debt, all four of her children were forced to drop out of school, in an attempt to support the family. In 2008, SSF worked to settle the debt with her creditors and reclaim their land that they now are able to use growing morning glories to support the family. Additionally SSF has agreed to sponsor her sixteen year old daughter, Phalla, to return to school and live at the SSF compound. Sadly the mother’s health has deteriorated, and as a result, Phalla’s chance to earn and education and learn important life skills at SSF is crucial to the continued wellbeing of her family.

Mei Savoeun:

Mei Savoeun’s family, which also lives in the same village, has recently been selected for support. Her husband left home in search of better work opportunities in shared Cambodia-Thailand border and never returned, leaving her alone to care for the entire family. After their cows died, the family borrowed 75 dollars from a money lender in order to try to find a new way to earn money and pay for family health problems. However, a lack of basic business skills prevented them from earning enough to pay back the debt with interest, a sum that amounted to nearly 375 dollars after 3 years.

In Cambodia, families in this situation often bribe government officials to change the age of their children to 18 so that they are eligible to work in the garment factories that surround Phnom Penh, just as the family had done with their oldest daughter. When SSF arrived in at their home in December of 2008, the family was trying to cobble together enough money to do the same for Neath, who was only fourteen at the time. Their debt was too high for SSF to settle outright, as the money could be used to help many other families. Instead they bought the materials for the family to start selling cupcakes to the rest of the village. Although inflation and the extreme poverty of those who seek to buy the cupcakes have limited the success of the operation, it illustrates the greater goal of what SSF seeks to do. Instead of solving their current problems with money, only for them to fall back into debt later on, SSF tries to find ways to help these families become self sustainable so that they can provide for themselves in the future. While they have hopes and dreams for what they would like to do, they have no idea how to achieve them. For this family, Neath and her chance to receive an education is their best hope.
Koy Kly:

Although the primary focus of SSF is to protect children at high risk of being trafficked, the organization also understands that the macro level causes of the extreme poverty that leads to human trafficking start at the community level. To respond to these problems, SSF has attempted to expand its operations to help alleviate the poverty of selected families in high risk communities in hopes of creating a healthier community in general. On such family that has been recently selected for aid is the family of Koy Kly, a retired civil servant whose debt has spiraled out of control.

Although his government pension provides his family with almost 50 dollars a month, his wife’s chronic health problems forced him to begin selling his future pension checks to creditors at a poor rate in order to get cash advances to pay for her treatments which could not wait for the first of the month. Even this money has not been enough to cover her medical bills, and he was forced to borrow money from local lenders. He is now in debt almost 500 dollars and his monthly pension can only pay for the interest on his loans, leaving his family little hope of getting out of debt, let alone healing his wife. Because he does have a regular source of income to provide for his family in the future, SSF decided to spend 330 US dollars to help him repay the enough of the debt to minimize his interest payments to the point that his monthly pension will eventually be able to settle his current debt.

Sadly, his situation is only one example of many instances of this same problem. In Cambodia, doctors often exploit the ignorance of poor Cambodians who have no way of knowing whether or not the doctors are telling the truth about their health problems. Too often, doctors will tell their patients that they have Typhoid or Malaria, recurring illnesses that require extended treatment at a high cost when in reality a simple antibiotic pill will cure them for pennies on the dollar. It is particularly easy to exploit Cambodia’s poor who due to their lack of understanding of modern medical care, think that only expensive treatments can cure them. As a result, they often refuse to see local doctors whose services they can afford in favor of expensive treatments that put their family into debt to the extent that they could never repay them on their own. Initiatives to increase the health awareness of those living in extreme poverty is a solution that SSF is seeking to implement in the future, in hopes of preventing more families from finding themselves in the same situation as Koy Kly’s family.

Nhem Sok:

Some families in Cambodia are so poor that, anything would help to improve their standards of living, even if there is no way for SSF to completely bring them out of poverty or offer a way for them to do so by themselves. One such instance is the family of Nhem Sok, a 47 year old mother of 6 whose husband is a violent alcoholic and mental health. Nhem Sok approached SSF earlier this year after her husband came home drunk one night and tried to kill her. You can still see the scars on her throat where he wrapped his hands around her neck. Since SSF intervened, the violence has stopped, and two pigs were purchased for the family in hopes that they could start to earn some money raising them for sale. Although SSF was unable to help all six of her children continue their education, one of the daughters, who showed exceptional academic ability and desire to learn, was selected for full support. In a few years she will finish her secondary schooling. SSF has high hopes for her that she will be able to pass the college entrance examinations and become the first person in the history of her family to be able to study at the college level.
Ming Mao:

The case of Ming Mao illustrates how difficult it can be to help many families living in extreme poverty. Six years ago, Ming Mao’s husband died from an ongoing condition he suffered during his service as a soldier in the Khmer Army of Cambodia, leaving her alone to care for her eleven children. In an attempt to alleviate the strains of providing for so many children on her own, SSF provided the capital for her to use her baking skills to sell cupcakes to the school children who ride by her village every day on the way to school, a business that has allowed her to double her previous daily income to approximately one dollar per day of work.

Sadly, as the world economic crisis has started to affect Cambodia, it has been increasingly harder for her to earn money selling her cupcakes. Although her cupcakes cost approximately 3 cents each, the children who buy them from her cannot afford to pay her any more for them. Many children can only trade her for rice. Although she needs rice to feed her family, she desperately needed money to repair her house that could not protect her family from the elements during the rainy season in Cambodia. To respond to this, SSF was able to provide 150 dollars to assist in building a new house for her family that could house all of her children, in addition to providing support to allow one of her eleven children to continue school in hopes of one day learning skills that she could use to better provide for her family in the future.

Nou March:

One of the main goals of the Sao Sary Foundation has been to enable families to better provide for themselves so that have a chance to better their situation on their own. One low cost way that SSF has identified to help families with limited access to water has been to provide them with large water containers that cost about 30 dollars, which enable them to store water in their homes, instead of having to walk to the nearest well or buy water at a high cost from outside sources.

One such family is that of Nou March, a 50 year old woman who lives in the Kraing Rohong village where SSF recently implemented a well, to provide water for the community. Not only does this allow for improved hygiene and the chance to bathe at home, families with water containers can more easily start home vegetable gardens that allow them to grow some of their own food and teach them important agricultural skills that they can use in the future. More importantly, by showing them that they have the chance to improve their own lives, SSF hopes to encourage them to try to fix their own problems instead of begging others to do it for them. Currently, SSF has identified more than 100 families in Kampong Speu that could benefit from a water container, but so far, funding has only allowed for two families to receive one.
Saem Aat:

Mrs. Saem Aart received white rice, soaps and eggs after deliver the fourth baby

The Saem Aat family has a particularly heart-breaking story. She moved from Kampong Speu to Phnom Penh with her husband in hopes of finding work selling morning glories, but they were unable to earn enough money to live on. In a last ditch effort, they began to work as fishermen for another family, but were heavily exploited, earning just 30 dollars for more than six months of work. Unable to afford even the most primitive house, they lived along the river until a storm came and washed away everything they owned.

Left without a penny to their name they hitched a ride to Kampong Speu where they squat on some land in the Kraing Rohong village belonging to another family. In Cambodia, the law code contains a provision that allows a family to assume ownership of land that they have lived on for a period of five years without dispute. As a result they have been subjected to harassment from the current owners who fear that they will lose their land. Sadly, Saem Aat’s family has nowhere else to go. Lacking birth certificates, the family had little in the way of legal rights, and the children were unable to enroll in state schools, which require the family to produce legal documents that prove when and where their children were born.

According to UNICEF, around 51 million births go unregistered every year in developing countries. In Southeast Asia alone, UNICEF estimates that approximately 5 million births were not registered in 2006. Although birth certificates are supposed to be provided free of charge, poor families are often required to pay around 15 dollars to receive them. Sadly this bars them from any sort of legal protection in matters such as child labor, child marriage, underage military service, or repatriation to Cambodia if they fall prey to traffickers. In order to allow their children the opportunity to receive an education, SSF paid for the entire family to get the necessary legal documents for their children to attend school, in addition to providing basic necessities such as soap, food, and cooking utensils to alleviate the worst of the families misfortunes as they try to care for an infant and the rest of their children.

Kim Mai:

Ms. Kim Main and household members with SSF opened grocery selling store

The case of Kim Mai’s family illustrates that both men and women are subjected to human trafficking. Her husband went to Thailand alone with thirty other men from the same village in order to work illegally as fishermen along the coast. During a fishing outing, a storm struck suddenly, and her husband drowned after his boat capsized leaving his wife alone to provide for the family’s four children. After his death, the inlaws forced Kim Mai and her children to move out, and they worked hard to find a new life for themselves by selling morning glories, but they were unable to make ends meet.

Desperate, the family agreed to pay someone 30 dollars to take her eldest daughter, only 16 at the time, to Phnom Penh to work in a garment factory during a period when the family could only earn 20 dollars in an entire month. Without the money in hand to pay for her job placement they were forced to take out a loan, which with interest, took nearly six months of hard work for the family to repay.

Sadly, all their efforts amounted to nothing. Their daughter fell in love with a man there and she became pregnant. Shortly thereafter, he left her, forcing her to return home with yet another mouth to feed. Without any alternate way to earn money, the family sent the next oldest daughter to work in the capital, the same as their eldest daughter, by the time that SSF arrived to help the family. Providing start up
family to earn money in order to protect the rest of the family’s children from meeting the same fate. To give the family a chance to better their lives in the future, SSF also sponsors Soeung Reasney, the youngest daughter to continue her education.

Huy Sophon:

The case of the Huy Sophon family illustrates that even when families do possess marketable skills, the difficulties of life in Cambodia for those who live in extreme poverty often prevent them from being able to raise their standards of living. After the husband became disabled through combat, he was forced to fall back on his catering skills to try support his family, as there is currently no pension program for soldiers who are injured during service. Although he is able to earn about 900 dollars per year catering weddings and other celebrations, his ongoing health problems in addition to those of his wife have prevented them from being able to save enough money to buy the house they live in. As a result, their problems are further compounded by the 120 dollars in yearly rent that they have to pay as his job requires him to live close to the town center.

At one point the family managed to save 500 dollars to start a new life but repeated bouts of malaria and a stillbirth forced the family to sell nearly everything they had in order to pay for the medical costs. Due to the seasonal nature of Cambodian celebrations, her husband’s work is concentrated during the winter months in Cambodia, so that during the rainy season, the family has been forced to borrow money in order to cover their daily expenses. After years of borrowing with bad credit, they were unable to prevent the death of their five year old daughter because they could not cobble together 40 cents fast enough to rush their daughter to the hospital.

As their debts doubled every year at 360 percent annual interest, they could not repay their loans the family found itself in debt over 400 dollars. The sweets that Huy could produce, earning 5 to 10 dollars per day could only cover their interest payments, leaving them very little money to live on, and nothing in savings. Because the family possesses the skills necessary to earn money regularly, they were selected by SSF as a prime candidate for the SSF Livelihood program that along with its Child Protection Program, serve as the backbone of the organizations operations. Through their participation SSF was able to reduce their debt to a manageable level that will allow the money they earn to be paid towards the principle instead of simply covering the recurring interest towards the debt that they owe. In several months, the family should be able to repay the remaining amount, offering the family a new chance to start saving again.

Piseth Hoeuring:

Every year, far more Cambodian students graduate from high school than are able to enroll in university studies. Those who do come primarily from rich families can afford to support their children during their studies and pay approximately 1,500 dollars per year in tuition fees, room renting, food and accommodation, daily pocket money and school materials. Although university classes are taught in Khmer, the national language of Cambodia, the majority of their textbooks are in English, another factor that further hampers the abilities of students from the poorest communities to succeed at the university level, even when they would otherwise be smart enough to do so. Because there are few opportunities to learn English and computer skills in poor rural communities, few impoverished children are adequately prepared to even gain acceptance into college.
At 24 years of age, Piseth Hoeurng is the oldest of the children supported by SSF and ranks as one of the select few in Cambodia who ever make it to the university after growing up in extreme poverty. Although he had always dreamt of moving to Phnom Penh to get his degree in computer science, he was almost unable to finish secondary school when his family tried to force him to drop out and work in order to support his family. Faced with no other option he elected to move to a Buddhist monastery, where he could continue to learn English and receive guidance from the monks. Eventually SSF found out about his case and managed to link him to a wealthy family in Singapore who agreed to sponsor his studies. However, Piseth was, at first, unable to accept the sponsorship out of fear for his younger sister Nang, who had recently been forced to drop out by her family. In order to allow Piseth to accept the chance to fulfill his dreams of graduating from college, SSF was able to fully support her to live at the SSF compound where she could live much closer to her school. Previously, if she wanted to learn she had to walk approximately 6 km along a dangerous road and considering the extreme poverty of her family, she could not have otherwise continued her education.

In 2007 Piseth was enrolled in Norton University in Phnom Penh where he is pursuing a degree in computer science in hopes of one day becoming a graphic designer. After two years of studying, he will still need almost 3,000 dollars in support to be able to earn his degree. Every morning he wakes up at 4:00 am to go to the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh to practice his English with foreigners before his morning classes. Outside of his class work, Piseth has also recently started to volunteer with the professor who runs the university’s database management system, as he understands that work experience is crucial to finding a job in Cambodia’s depressed job market. For him to be able to find a good job and support his family in the future, he has to take advantage of every opportunity to learn the skills he needs, a project that takes up almost all of his free time and prevents him from returning home to see his friends and family except on special occasions. Still he is happy despite his continued difficulties. In his own words, “Someday I will return to my pagoda and people will admire me, instead of looking down on me because of my family’s poverty.”
With gratitude to our friends, funding partners and donors

Mrs. Dale Edmons
Dr. & Mrs. Ken Nickles
Mr. Aaron Marshburn
Ms. Johanna Urban
Mr. Emir Mujezinovic
Ms. Phoebe L. Swan
Mr. In Pagna Photra
Mr. Nick Steemans
Mr. Jim Rorabaugh
Mr. Daniel Nelson
Ms. Emma Jonne
Ms. Chea Sinuon
Mr. Kea Sopheak
Ms. Sou Kalyan
Ms. Janina Uhl
Mr. Nagulan Kandaramy
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Mr. Loh Teck Chuan
Ms. Tan Xue Yan

Mr. Barton Brooks
Mr. Bartlomiej Jan Skorupa
Dr. & Mrs. Paul Marshburn
Drs. Randy & Margaret Beahrs
Mrs. Dan & Melinda Marshburn
Ms. Margaret O’Leary (Maggie)
Mr. Chua Sow Ngang (William)
Mr. Thiago S. Pimentel
Mr. William (Bill) English
Mr. Kuang Yi Wu (Pyke)
Ms. Yulia Savitskaya
Mr. Ismael Romero
Mr. Artur Kasprzak
Ms. Him Chenda
Mr. Seng Sam Ol
Mrs. Donna Ursini Lewis
Mr. Neo Chee Keong
Mr. Lim Chit Loon
Ms. Cheryl Neo

Mr. Andrew Galuppi
Ms. Kelly Merslich
Mrs. Phanneth Bun
Ms. Caren Hayward
Mr. Richard Loizey
Ms. Amy Throndsen
Ms. Mindy Lipsitz
Mr. Vichet Uon
Mr. Goh Ann Tat
Mr. J.P. Zundel
Mr. Rob Sexton
Ms. Rhian Pitt
Ms. Joke Thijs
Mr. Ky Leng
Kit Mitra
Valerie Proctor
Mr. Tan Soon Siang
Mr. Koh See Hai
Ms. Dawn Schary
Summary Statement of Financial Performance

**Income**

- Private donors: $1,905.00 (8%)
- Global Colors: $3,500.00 (15%)
- Groundwork Opportunities: $6,300.00 (27%)
- Riverkids: $11,630.00 (50%)

**Expenditure**

- Operations and Administration: $7,122.24 (27%)
- Livelihood: $4,625.75 (18%)
- Child Protection: $14,369.53 (55%)

Expenditures by Programmes
**Loss or Profit**

![Expenditures by Projects](image_url)

- Back-to-School: 46%
- Operations and Administration: 19%
- Child Social & Financial Education: 9%
- Cerebral Palsy: 5%
- Micro-Credit: 5%
- Cottage Industry: 3%
- Water and Sanitation: 7%
- Emergency Needs: 6%
- Credit and Administration: 7%

![Loss or Profit in US Dollar](image_url)

- Revenues: $23,335.00
- Expenditures: $26,117.52
Future Plans

Plan Activity

Child Protection Programme

- Register protected children in state school for academic year of 2009-2010.
- Follow up and monitor their education at state school and child quarterly reports and newsletters release.
- Develop child profile, history and success to seek sponsors and share about him or her progresses.
- Hire English, computer and general knowledge teachers to provide extra tuitions to those protected children.
- Provide like-skills education, social and financial education to those protected children.
- To continue the Cerebral Palsy Project.
- To seek financial support from any donors who would like to collaborate with SSF in running food house project for street children, beggars and other vagabonds in Kampong Speu provincial town.
- To provide restaurant management and operation skills training to some street adults.
- To seek financial support from any donors that would like to collaborate with SSF in running adult literacy class who never enrolled in state school.
- Exchange study, study tour and picnic
- To continue the Global Connection Program to connect SSF to reach more friends, donors, visitors and supporters to expand SSF target areas and populations.

Livelihood Programme

To assist poorest and the most vulnerable families and their target communities through:

- Helping those target beneficiaries to develop household plan and budgeting,
- Weekly follow up, consultation, and guidance,
- Quarterly, six-month and annual workshops to share their progresses and challenges,
- Malaria and dengue campaign with insecticide mosquito nets distribution,
- Educating key persons within the villages where we work to ensure they can develop project proposal for dropping somewhere to get money for development of their village or community,
- Studying community economic movement to reduce their direct expenses their pocket money directly to wholesalers
- Helping them to form and strengthen village based self-help banks (or self-help group),
- Enabling at least one hand-pump well for 50 families in Kampong Speu province,
- Raising their awareness and assisting them to setup home-grown organic vegetables, natural compost and other organics,
- Raising awareness regarding hygiene, health care and sanitation,
- Assisting them in construction of household latrine,
- Providing them water filters to draw them attentions over safe or clean water for drinking,
- Setting village based rice bank and providing some rice as in-kind capital for further development of the bank with ensuring poorest and the most vulnerable families can borrow rice and can repay back after their harvest and etc.,
- Running animal bank especially for cows and sows
- Pilot microcredit project to minimize poorest and vulnerable families from borrowing moneylenders with a highest annual interest rate that they couldn’t effort in repayment.
- Running fair-trade businesses for assisting poorest and the most vulnerable families to ensure their produces are able to reach domestic and foreign markets with a fair-price.
- Develop family stories, background, case study and success stories of both supported and unsupported to share the progress as well as seeking long-term sponsors to the families.
Output Expectation

- At least 50 children at high risk for being trafficked that SSF helped protect so far will be able to benefit from the Child Protection Program through activity plans above.
- At least 90 teenagers including street children who are illiterate especially girls will be able to attend informal class of Khmer literacy and numeracy running by SSF to ensure them ready to get some business skills training through.
- At least 30 informal students above will select to receive training skills on restaurant running and managing.
- Other 100 children at the same situation will be identified and develop their case stories to invoke for donors or sponsors.
- At least 350 poorest and the most vulnerable families that SSF supported so far will be able to continue supporting with all mentioned activities in the Livelihood Program above.
- At least 5 hand-pump wells will be able to install for five poor villages that they demand water at most. At least 250 families will be directly benefited from them.

Tentative Budget by Projects
Below are the tentative budgets classified by Projects and Programmes that SSF seeks funding partners to pledge us grant which is possible implemented the programs benefiting directly to at least 750 poorest of the poor families and 240 vulnerable children and at high risk for being trafficked. US$ 90 only per beneficiary.

**Child Protection Programme**

- Child Back to School: US$ 33,514.66
- Life-Skills Education: US$ 15,103
- Child Social & Financial Education: US$ 4,309
- Khmer Literacy & Numeracy: US$ 2,361.00
- Foreign Language: US$ 1,472.00
- Computer literacy: US$ 20,354.00
- Higher Education Promotion: US$ 2,188.30
  (Support poor student to study at university)
- Cerebral Palsy: US$ 14,436.00
- Food for Hope (Street Children): US$ 21,402.00

**Livelihood Programme**

- Basic Needs Assistance: US$ 21,402.00
- Food Security: US$ 5,350.00
- Cottage Industry: US$ 14,328.00
- Community Based Organization Foundation: US$ 8,233.76
- Micro-lending: US$ 14,125.00
- Water and Sanitation: US$ 18,967.00
- Operation and administration costs: US$ 162,520.00
Country Statistics

The Human Development Report 2006, United Nations Development Program:

- GDP per capita is US$ 460
- 34 per cent of the population lives on less than US$ 1 per day
- Life expectancy at birth is 51 years for men and 57 years for women
- 140 of every 1,000 children born die before age five
- 32 per cent of births are attended by a skilled health professional
- 73.6 per cent of adults are literate

- 59 per cent of the population lives without access to an improved water source
- 45 per cent of children under 5 are underweight

Statistics from other sources

- 37 per cent of children have stunted growth and 7 per cent have muscle wastage
- 42 per cent of children 14-17 years old work
- 43 per cent of children 12-15 received corporal punishment from their parents
- 23 per cent of rural households have access to institutional finance

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2 Human Development Report 200, Ministry of Planning, Cambodia
3 National Research Study on Children’s Perceptions of Violence Against Children, Child Welfare Group, 2005