

How you can help

Your contribution can really make a difference. A small amount goes a long way towards alleviating poverty and helping the community of Mesang build a better future.

This is what your money can do:

\$30	Contributes to educating a child at school for a year
\$40	Provides a family with chickens or ducks to breed for food and to sell eggs at the market
\$70	Buys a female pig for a family to raise and breed
\$100	Contributes to a micro loan for a family within a self-help group
\$500	Assists self-help groups to start fish farming thereby increasing their income and food supply
\$750	Support clean water and improve household sanitation for poor Cambodian families
\$2,500	Provide agricultural training, equipment, vegetable seed, chickens and ducks so 30 families can learn to sustainably feed themselves

Alternatively, you can consult our website (www.clcmelbourne.org) for a range of gift certificates which fund specific gifts.



How to donate

The Mesang Village Development Project operates entirely on funds raised by Community Links with Cambodia, a community group based in Melbourne.

Tax deductible donations can be made to Global Development Group via our website.

You can also donate direct to CLC.

More information at www.clcmelbourne.org



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Community Links with Cambodia

Help make a difference by supporting children and communities to build a better future.



Mesang Village Development Project: supporting education, improving health and livelihoods, and protecting the rights of children



Community Links with Cambodia
Australians for community development

Community Links with Cambodia

About CLC

Community Links with Cambodia (CLC) is a community group based in Melbourne, supporting community development in Cambodia's Mesang District, Prey Veng Province.

Since its inception in 2001, CLC has been raising funds for the Cambodian-based Children and Life Association (CLA), which implements holistic programs on the ground to assist children, families and villages build their own capabilities to escape poverty and improve their lives.

Since 2008, CLC has focused on Mesang's Trokheat Village supporting 120 children and 60 families through the Trokheat School Program. Based on its success, this program is now being used as a model to help CLC extend its reach to other villages throughout Mesang District.

The Mesang Village Development Project operates entirely on money raised by CLC in Australia, which funds programs implemented by CLA.



About Mesang District

Mesang is one of the poorest districts in Prey Veng Province, Cambodia – a country recovering from genocide, war and 30 years of civil unrest.

Many families are hungry and without enough food to eat for up to six months of the year. Survival depends on the labour of the whole family, which often results in children dropping out of school after only one or two years of education.

Without sufficient food and lack of access to safe water, sanitation or toilets, rates of sickness and malnutrition are very high. Lack of education and job opportunities means families, in particular children, are vulnerable to exploitation.

Since 2008, CLC's funds have been helping the people of Trokheat Village to transform their lives. Families are now growing enough food to eat and to sell in their small businesses. All children in the program are going to school. Families are learning about health, hygiene and good nutrition. Child rights training has seen the rate of child abuse and labour exploitation of children plummet and there have been no reported cases of child trafficking.

Once all families in Trokheat Village are able to meet their own basic needs, CLC's program will gradually transfer to the next desperately poor village in Mesang, and then the next, for as long as your generous support allows.



Making a Difference

The holistic Mesang Village Development Program focuses on building families' capabilities to lift themselves out of poverty. Education programs, essential to breaking the poverty cycle, are delivered in the following areas:

- **Sustainable farming** – Provides training and equipment for families to grow crops, raise chickens, ducks or pigs and start fish farming.
- **Income generation** – Provides microfinance loans, access to small business mentoring, technical expertise and advice on how to develop savings plans and identify and develop small business opportunities.
- **Education** – Education is essential to breaking the poverty cycle. As well as providing uniforms, books and classroom resources, CLA extends its education approach to encompass awareness raising in the whole village. This encourages regular school attendance, reduces drop-out rates and increases levels of literacy.
- **Health** – Health education focuses on nutrition, maternal and child health, clean drinking water, hygiene, sanitation and HIV/AIDS.
- **Food and nutrition** – Provides rice, cooking equipment and vegetable seeds to create home gardens, increase income and improve food security.
- **Child rights and protection** – Youth programs encourage young people to take ownership of the project by helping others and forging a sense of unity in their villages. The Child Protection Network, comprising village leaders, raises awareness of social issues and acts to prevent child abuse, trafficking, labour exploitation and begging.

Case Study

"CLA came to our village in 2007. They explained why our children should go to school and encouraged the families to send the children to school. Child Peer Educators also explained this to our children so they understood too.

Before, food was a real problem and I was always worried about how I would feed my children. When the rice ran out, I had to borrow money and pay it back with my labour.

Before, it was very quiet in our village when it wasn't rice planting or harvesting time. Most husbands migrate for work, and some families would lock their doors and go all together to look for work. The women worked as labourers too. I used to go Phnom Penh to work on construction sites.

CLA showed us how to make compost and build a pen for chickens. Once we made the compost, we got seeds and a watering can. And learnt how to grow vegetables.

Now, I grow my own vegetables instead of buying them at market. Before we lacked rice after harvest for seven months of the year. Now, with the organic compost the rice yield is better. We lack rice for only four to five months instead of seven. Because we sell our vegetables now we can buy rice when we need it. We have taken out loans to buy fish and pigs. We can make business raising them.

Now, men in the target families don't go away anymore, they stay at home since CLA came. Now we have our businesses here at home. Because have more money, it is easier to send our children to school now. And because they can read and write, they can help us with our business too."

Trokheat Village, Mesang District

