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*“There has been unusually severe flooding in Cambodia, not once, but five times since the beginning of September.”*



*The above photo shows a completely submerged rice field. If they are under water too long the young rice basically drowns.*

*“It is quite likely there will be future food shortages in some parts of the countryside.”*

## ***Cambodia is experiencing the worst floods for more than a decade***

Life, which is never easy for many in Cambodia, is extremely challenging at the moment. Heavy rains and the overflow from the Mekong River have caused unusually severe flooding in Cambodia, not once, but five times since the beginning of September. And unfortunately more rain is forecast.



The flooding has caused massive damage to infrastructure, property, rice paddies, crops and livelihoods. Almost 250 people have died – approximately half of them children. 17 out of Cambodia’s 24 provinces have been affected. The scale of what is happening in Cambodia

during these floods is almost unprecedented in the country.

The National Committee for Disaster Management reports that:

More than 1.2 million people have been affected

34,000 families have been evacuated to higher ground

More than 205,000 houses have been damaged

An estimated 1,400 schools remain closed and have not been able to start the academic school year as planned.

Floods have inundated the town of Siem Reap five times since early September. Tourism has been dramatically affected, which of course directly affects those who work in tourism related jobs. However, the flow-on impact is felt by almost everyone in Siem Reap in one way or another. The town revolves around tourism.



Hundreds of thousands of tourists usually flock to Siem Reap annually to visit Angkor

According to the World Food Programme, latest reports indicate that almost 10 percent of rice crops have been completely destroyed. Both short-term and long-term food security is a major concern. It is quite likely there will be future food shortages in some parts of the countryside.

The price of rice has already risen significantly. A 50kg bag of rice, until recently selling for \$29, now costs \$40.

One of our partner organisations, ConCERT, have donated 250 kgs of rice which we are distributing to needy families. On behalf of the people who will receive the rice – THANKS!

<http://www.concertcambodia.org/>



*“The price of rice has already risen significantly. A 50kg bag of rice, until recently selling for \$29, now costs \$40.”*

*The photo on the right shows children in our community on the way to school. In order to arrive at school by 8am (to have breakfast), as many parts of the roads are damaged and under water, they need to leave home at around 6 am.*

The total impact of the flooding is difficult to assess until the water recedes.

We are in close communication with our Commune and Village leaders. Fortunately, in our target Commune, Doun Keo, there has not been too much damage to the rice crops. There are some families who have experienced crop damage and are concerned that they will suffer food shortages. Helping Hands staff will monitor them and assist where and when needed.

The same can't be said for the infrastructure in our Commune – many kilometres of road are virtually destroyed. As soon as the water recedes we will do all that we can to help repair the roads and culverts that have been damaged or destroyed.



The main road that connects many villages to Siem Reap is cut in numerous places. A lot of residents in our Commune travel up to 40 kilometres by bicycle to work on construction sites in Siem Reap.



Flooding has made it impossible for most to get to work. And those who do make it are finding most worksites closed owing to flooding. Thus, for many weeks now there has been little income available to many village families.

We have seen an increase in seriously ill people

who need our help during the floods. The floods prevented them from getting to their local Provincial Health Centre in the early stages of their illness and as they got sicker Helping Hands was called upon to assist. A number of people have literally had to be carried out of the villages through the floods.



Our school is still open. Remarkably the students are happy to wade through water to get to school. But our Siem Reap based teacher has not been able to get to the school at all lately.

Sopheap, our teacher who resides in the village of Prasat Char, has been taking all of the classes. Sopheap normally only

teaches in the afternoon as he attends lectures at university in Siem Reap each morning. However, the flooding and road damage have prevented him and his fellow university students from exiting the village.

## ***A VOLUNTEER'S STORY – The challenges of getting to the school and delivering uniforms. By Graham Smith.***



*Before and After.  
A student proudly models his new uniform.*



*Thanks to Soren and the team at SMILE CLOTHING for the generous donation that helped purchase the uniforms.  
<http://smileclothing.co/>*

*Thanks also to JWOC for their contribution of school uniforms.  
<http://www.journeyswithinourcommunity.org/>*

My name is Graham Smith, I'm from the United Kingdom, and I am the latest volunteer to work with the Helping Hands team.

I have been working in the village of Prasat Char at the Iqbal School, teaching English to the children there. My time as a volunteer with Helping Hands Cambodia has been filled with challenges, but it has been exciting to overcome them. During my stay, Cambodia has faced its worst floods for a decade, with the Siem Reap area being particularly affected.



This has made it a challenge just to get to the school and village. The last two kilometres of road out to the school proved to be a real challenge to navigate.

Initially the wet weather meant that this stretch of road was particularly muddy and impossible to drive down on a motorbike if it had rained within the last few days. We made the effort to trudge through the mud for a few days but it was evident that this wasn't a long-term solution to the problem. After some discussion it was arranged for us to be picked up in one of the villager's ox-carts and taken the last 2 km through the mud to the school. The experience was a lot of fun and it allowed us to get to school every day, which was the most important thing.

Unfortunately, the flooding continued week after week and the situation got more and more difficult. The main road to Prasat Char (and many surrounding villages) is in a really bad way. It has been completely washed away in some sections by the flood, so in some places there is no road to the village anymore! Some parts are even too deep for the ox-cart to cross, so we had to wade through. We nearly lost Aline in the strong current!



At the end of the month it was time for the kids to get their new school uniforms for the year.

Aline, a selfless French lady who has a long history with Helping Hands Cambodia, dedicated weeks of her time measuring the kids and then sorting and altering uniforms.

*The Helping Hands school can be seen in the background of this photo.*



Each student gets two bottoms and two tops, and there are over 250 students so a lot of uniforms are needed. Without Aline's tireless work it would not have been possible.

The sheer amount of uniforms we had to give out combined with the challenges presented by

the floods made it an adventure to get to the school each day. The excitement on the kids' faces as they swarmed around the school building was fantastic to see, and their biggest smiles came when Aline gave them each a packet of dried banana chips along with their uniforms as a treat. Some of them changed out of their old dirty uniforms and into their sparkling clean new ones right away, and the difference was fantastic to see.

*NOTE: People sometimes ask why we give them white shirts considering the environment they live in. The reason is that in order to attend the government school they need to have the official school uniform, which is a white top and blue bottom. By providing them with this we are enabling and encouraging them to attend the government school.*



*Even the "main road" before we cut off for the village was badly damaged by the floods and lorries. Luckily Kamsan wasn't scared to get dirty and push the tuk tuk through... I was more than happy being the photographer! - Graham*



*We have never seen the water this high at the school.*

## **HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO FOR A NEW OUTFIT? by Aline Bersoullé**

What I am going to relate is a short story about a young boy about 10 years old, who, despite the floods, came to get his new school uniform at our school in Prasat Char Village.

Graham, a young Scottish volunteer, Komsan, our new teacher, and myself, Aline (an old French volunteer who has come to Prasat Char for seven years in a row!!!) were giving out the uniforms to the students. This is a very big job as we have over 250 students and it takes quite a few days. It was made so much more difficult this year because of the severe flooding affecting Cambodia.

When we gave this particular young boy his uniform we did not know how far from the school he lived. On our

way back from the school, travelling by ox cart, we saw him walking along in deep water.



We offered him a lift, but he did not want one. We think he was just too shy. We had to stop our journey for a while, then continued on again in the ox cart and once again we saw the young boy walking in the water. Then we realized he had walked at least 6 kilometres in the water (in the jungle) to get his uniform. At times the water was so deep he had to hold his new clothes above his head.

I can testify, walking in deep water is not exactly like walking on the seaside! It is very, very tiring and can be difficult or dangerous in some places, especially when walking alone.

Getting to the school in the floods is very difficult. Because we had lots of uniforms we had to go part of the way in a tuk tuk, then we walked in deep water and finally finished the journey by ox cart. We sometimes had to push the tuk tuk through deep mud (it is supposed to be good for the skin!!). I must say that the three of us were proud and glad to have done it. Villagers saw that volunteers were coming to the school to see if everything was all right. I wanted them to know that even if we could not do much to help them during the floods we had still come. Just saying to people we are with you, we are thinking about you, it isn't much, but perhaps it helps a little.

*I would also like to point out that Aline just doesn't volunteer her time every year in Cambodia but she also works tirelessly back home in France making handicrafts that she sells to raise fund for Helping Hands. And every year she manages to raise a remarkable amount of money. - Deborah*



***We really appreciate all of our donors*** and it's simply not practical to mention everyone on here, but we would like to send out a special thanks to a young boy, **MATTHEW ACCARPIO** for his wonderful donation. Along with his donation, Matthew from America, sent a letter. In it he wrote, *"I wanted to donate money to the children. That has always been my biggest dream."* He asked that his donation be spent on school uniforms and breakfast for our students.

Thank you Matthew – the students all now have their new uniforms.

## Postcard from a Staff Member

**Hello, I am Sopheap.** I work for Helping Hands Cambodia as a teacher at the Iqbal School in the village of Prasat Char.

I would like to tell you a bit about the health and hygiene programme that we teach at our school.

Our school opened in 2007. In the beginning we did not teach health and hygiene, we mainly focused on English. We now teach health and hygiene lessons every Monday. The reason we decided to start teaching health and hygiene was because we could not help but notice the poor standard of the student's hygiene. They never brushed their teeth, washed their hands before eating or after using the toilet, washed themselves or their clothes. The people in the villages are not educated in health and hygiene and don't understand the importance of it. Often the children were sick with diarrhea, stomach ache, ring worms, tinea, etc. We are now teaching the students with health and hygiene DVD's on the computer.



So we started to teach our students health and hygiene. After each lesson we always said to the kids, “please go home and teach your parents and your brothers and sisters everything that you have learned from us.”

We also provide the students with toothbrushes and also make sure they wash their hands at school. Before class starts they have to brush their teeth and wash their hands. We also give them school uniforms.

Now all the children look healthier and cleaner and have a better standard of hygiene.

We teach them many different lessons, such as: using clean drinking water, hand washing, nutrition, diarrhea, using the toilet, personal hygiene, care of the environment, dental care, worms and parasites, tuberculosis, rabies, malaria and dengue fever, skin problems (ring worms, tinea, boils, impetigo, scabies and head lice), eye care and the importance vitamin A.

Rabies has been an issue in Prasat Char village. Before we taught health and hygiene a teenage girl died after being bitten by a cat. After she was bitten her family did not seek medical advice. Some time later she became sick and died very quickly. Her family took her to see a doctor, but it was too late and he could not help. Now when anyone from the village gets bitten by an animal they know to go and see the doctor within 24 hours so they can get preventative injections.

Tuberculosis is also a problem in the village. Many people have died from tuberculosis. Now it is unusual for someone to die from it in Prasat Char, because the parents have learnt from their children that when they cough for a week they should go to see a doctor and be tested. They do not wait until it is too late like they used to do and they also understand about using the medicine correctly.

I think we are doing a very good job and the health and hygiene lessons are having a positive impact on the health of the people of Prasat Char Village. It is very nice to be able to make a difference.  
Thanks!  
Sopheap



**Note: After learning about tuberculosis the children went home and told their parents about it, causing some adults to get themselves checked and they found they did have tuberculosis. As long as they take the medicine properly they will recover.**

***PHOTO GALLERY – they say a pictures tells a thousand words....***  
*so here are a few more photos of the floods.*



*The view from our office in Siem Reap.*



*On the way to our Commune.*



*The only way to get around.*



*The road behind our school.*



*A road being destroyed by the fast moving water.*



*One of many damaged culverts.*



*Behind our school.*



*Our school vegetable garden.*

**DONATING** - Please remember to let us know if you want a tax receipt. Details on how to donate are below.

***Our contact details:***

Deborah Groves - Founder  
0412 665 656 (in Australia)

*Email contact is the best way to get in touch initially.*

Ho Chanty - Director

012 286 382 (in Cambodia)

+855 12 286 382 (from outside Cambodia)

Web: <http://www.helpinghandscambodia.com>

Email: [mailto:grovesphotography@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mailto:grovesphotography@yahoo.com.au)

## HOW TO MAKE DONATIONS



The work that Helping Hands Cambodia does is only possible because of the generous financial support of our donors.

There are a number of options for making donations. Simply choose the option below that suits you best.....

Do you want to deposit **directly to our bank accounts**?

Do you want to donate via **Paypal**?

Do you want to post a **cheque** or money order?

Are you an **Australian** and require a **tax receipt**?

Are you an **American** and require a **tax receipt**?

Please go to OPTION 1

Please go to OPTION 2

Please go to OPTION 3

Please go to OPTION 4

Please go to OPTION 5

### OPTION 1 – Deposit directly to our bank accounts

#### Australian bank account details:

Bank: St George Bank  
Account Name: Helping Hands Cambodia  
BSB No: 114-879  
Account No: 419 526 714

#### Cambodian bank account details:

Account Name: Helping Hands Cambodia  
Account Number: 743105  
Bank: ANZ Royal Bank (Cambodia) Ltd  
Swift Code: ANZBKHPP

### OPTION 2 – Donate via PAYPAL

- ❖ This method allows you to send money to an email address.
- ❖ Just go to [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)
- ❖ The relevant email address to send the payment to is:  
[helpinghandscambodia@yahoo.com.au](mailto:helpinghandscambodia@yahoo.com.au)

### OPTION 3 – Sending a cheque or money order via post

You can send a postal order or cheque, made out to *Helping Hands Cambodia*, to:

Helping Hands Cambodia  
PO Box 3870  
Caloundra D.C., Qld, 4551,  
Australia.

#### **OPTION 4 – If you require an Australian tax receipt**

**Global Development Group** is an umbrella organisation that we partner with in order to be able to issue tax-deductible receipts to Australians and Americans. There are several options for making tax-deductible donations via Global Development Group.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** When making a donation via Global Development Group you must make sure you mention that it is for **project J213**.*

A. By secure **CREDIT CARD ONLINE** at [www.globaldevelopment.org.au](http://www.globaldevelopment.org.au).

B. By **CHEQUE**: Post to Global Development Group,  
56 Goorari Street,  
Eight Mile Plains, Qld, 4113.

Don't forget to include a note containing:

- a). the total of your donation
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

C. By **DIRECT DEPOSIT** to Global Development Group's bank account:

Account Name:	Global Development Group
Account number:	10200094
Bank:	Commonwealth Bank of Australia
BSB:	064-118

Don't forget to email us your donation details. [info@globaldevelopment.org.au](mailto:info@globaldevelopment.org.au). Please include:

- a). the details of your deposit
- b). Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

#### **OPTION 5 – If you require an American tax receipt**

**Global Development Group** is an umbrella organisation that we partner with in order to be able to issue tax-deductible receipts to Australians and Americans. There are several options for making tax-deductible donations via Global Development Group.

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** When making a donation via Global Development Group you must make sure you mention that it is for **project J213**.*

A. By **CREDIT CARD ONLINE** at <https://www.globaldevelopment.org.au/usa/donations.php>

B. By **CHEQUE**. Post to Global Development Group USA Inc.  
1314 Longwood Oaks Blvd  
Lakeland, Florida 33811 USA

Don't forget to include a note containing:

- a). the total of your donation
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

C. By **DIRECT DEPOSIT** to Global Development Group's bank account:

Global Development Group USA Inc

Routing Number: 263179804  
Savings Account Number: 39599501

Bank Information:  
Mid Florida School FCU  
6040 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, Florida 33813  
(863) 688-3733  
[www.midflorida.com](http://www.midflorida.com)

Don't forget to email us your donation details. [info@globaldevelopment.org.au](mailto:info@globaldevelopment.org.au). Please include:

- a). the details of your deposit
- b). that your donation is for Helping Hands Cambodia Project J213
- c). the name and address to mail (or email) the receipt to.

Thank you for caring!