

មជ្ឈមណ្ឌលសហសង្គ្រោះកម្ពុជា
Salvation Centre Cambodia
(SCC)



Writing Up
From April-May-June 2021

Submitted to
Firefly Mission

Project Title: Funeral Support

Location: Phnom Penh, Battambang, and Siemreap provinces, Cambodia.

SCC in a Nutshell



IDENTITY

SCC is a dynamic, Cambodian faith-based organization that has played a major role in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Through the loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, commitment and dedication of a team of Buddhist monks, nuns, staff, volunteers and generous supporters, SCC has been able to improve the lives of many people infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly the poorest and least fortunate families, especially children, either orphans or those adversely affected by HIV/AIDS.

VALUES

SCC is guided in all its actions by its core values which are solidarity, spirituality, compassion, human rights, good governance and democracy and rule of law.

VISION

A Cambodian society where all Cambodian people live with good health, freedom, dignity and prosperity.

MISSION

SCC commits to develop capacity and sustainable community mechanisms through faith-based networks and other stakeholders to reduce vulnerability, and to enhance livelihood, health and children's rights to education.

GOAL

SCC's goal is to significantly contribute to achieve the national strategic plan by increasing vulnerable families' and children's equitable access to health service and education.

Writing Up Hard Life Stories

The funeral project is one of many projects that has been implemented by Salvation Centre Cambodia (SCC) for the poorest families of deceased people in the coverage areas of Phnom Penh municipality, Battambang and Siem Reap provinces. The program is funded by the **Firefly Mission from Singapore**.

The purpose of this program is to support the poorest families who recently lost a family member, are struggling financially, people living with HIV/AIDS, elderly people with disabilities, homeless people, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) who have no money to arrange the funeral event for their dead family members. We have cooperated with NGO partners, local authorities, community leaders and village chiefs as part of our networks in order to implement this program for the people in need. The main objectives of our funeral support donation are: 1) Arranging the funeral for the poorest families who lost a family member and don't have enough money to arrange the funeral event on their own. 2) Help meeting the most urgent needs of the poorest families and share condolences to relieve their suffering from money problems and their recent loss.

The process before providing the family of the deceased with financial support is the following: After we receive the information from the family, the neighbors, community leaders, NGO partners, or local authorities, SCC staff visits the family to get exact information about them and their living conditions. Then we let them fill out the form of cash request for the funeral with their signature or thumbprint (if they are illiterate). After that we get a confirmation from their village leaders or SCC's NGO partners to make sure that they are truly in need.

We work very carefully before and while providing the funeral support to the poorest families and donating money to them. The reason is that we are afraid of being scammed by people who want to exploit our organization. Funeral support is very valuable for the poorest of people in Cambodia and we provide it to all types of families in need without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, political beliefs, or religion.

Significantly, SCC would like to share three stories of the funeral support implemented in Phnom Penh, Battambang, and Siem Reap provinces from **April-May-June 2021** for your information as follows:

1. Funeral Write-Up in the target area of Phnom Penh City



Photo took at the veil of monk's temple on May 27th 2021

Mrs. Kuon Pech, female, age 53 year-old died on 26 May 2021 at Sixth village, Tonle Basac Commune, Chamkar Morn district, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She died of heart attack. She has got 8 children, a daughter and 7 sons. For the about last eight years, she have lived with her neighbor. Every day, while she was alive she always goes to help sell gasoline for the neighbor in order to earn a living. At the age of 30 to 45, she owned a small house covered by very old zinc on the roof in a slum located in the above-mentioned address, where she lived with her husband and only two or three children live

together. Some others her children have lived with others and their aunts/uncle. According to the neighbors, she has an uncertain occupation and her husband is a construction worker. Almost all the time, her husband was a heavy drunken. Her made money, but he did not save for in case of any emergencies. This family spent more than earned. Speaking of her daughter and sons, all of them living in this family did not go to school. When these children have grown up, they all are unskilled people. Therefore, heavy manual labors are required. Most of them work as manual laborers to earn daily life, such as construction worker. These sons sometimes quarreled with their own brothers. Some of her sons are in prison because they used drugs. So the important message is to say no to drugs.

While she was alive, she sold the house and then moved into a rented house. Less than few months after renting this house, she stopped renting because she had no money to pay for the house. At that time, she and her husband went to their respective places to live, her husband has lived with his nephew, whereas she lived with her neighbors, the daughter and sons have separated and living in different places. Sometimes they took refuge under the veil of the monk's temple, sometimes they took refuge on the veil of neighbor's house with the reporter and neighbors were somewhat sympathetic to this family. At this point, the reporter remembered the Buddha teaches a truth that: "Being born as a human being is very rare, human life is difficult." Knowing this, we should conduct meritorious more in this life.

Regarding the dead body, her family members have a little money to perform her funeral ceremony. Even though her family members are so poor and facing hard situations caused by COVID-19 pandemic in the community, they still hold a small funeral cremation for her. Her funeral was organized by the family, including relatives, neighbors, local authorities and also a participated a Buddhist monks.

By their pitifulness, they helped to manage her funeral event. On the funeral day, neighbors, relatives, friends, local authority participated in the cremation for condolence. To help deceased family's burdens, the village chief contacted SCC staff and asked for help because they knows that SCC has available budget for funeral support to provide for the poorest families' funeral. Then SCC staff offered 40 US dollars based on SCC's budget plan for contributing towards deceased family. Evidently, SCC staff took photo of receiver (family members) who received donation as cash from SCC staff. At last, Mr. Mak, her son felt really excited and he would like to express his gratitude for SCC's staff and Firefly mission from Singapore. He expressed that this donation was very useful and fruitful for poorest family.

2. Funeral Write-Up in the target area of Siem Reap Province



Mrs. Yot Savieng receiving fund from SCC staff at her house on 8th June 2021

Mrs. Yot Savearng, female, age 51 year-old, a wife of the diseased who was passed away, currently live at Prey Krouch village, Krabei Riel commune, Siem Reap district, Siem Reap province. She got three children which two daughters and a son. The eldest daughter got married and lived with a husband by their own house, and others children lived with the family. The second daughter dropped out of school and work as a dishwasher at a restaurant in the province, she earns only 100 USD for salary per month. Separately the youngest son graduated from high school, unfortunately, the family did not have money to pay the school fee to continue his studies at university, otherwise he temporary dropped out of school to find work. Present time due to the spread of Covid-19 disease in communities, all sectors of education, tourism, industry and enterprises have been closed. As we all know Siem Reap province is a tourist destination with many temple ruins, a UNESCO World

Heritage Site and is considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World that attracted many tourists from all over the world. In this situation, no tourists come to visit Angkor Wat Temple, it became a quiet place and the people here used to live relying on selling souvenirs to guests, some people living in this province are still have low income and some have migrated to Thailand to work having money to support their families.

Nowadays, Mrs. Yot Savearng lives in the smallest house of the village which was built of old zinc and low-quality wood. She doesn't have any permanent job to do besides doing farm-work which was only needed in the rainy season. The family have raising three buffaloes to used plow the field, these buffaloes hard to take care of, every day she has to cut the grass and take care them when lets them eat out of the field. Since her husband got sick can't do any work, the family tried to find money sent him to treatment at a hospital but unluckily it's not get secure.

Bemoaned, Mr. Han Hav passed away on 4th June 2021 at the age of 53 years by diabetes chronic disease, he departed from his family forever never back again. It was a seriously shocked for her wife and children who lost their beloved one. Regarding Mr. Han Hav died, his wife and children had less money to buy a coffin and funeral ceremony arrangement, in that too, with the kindness people surrounding, relatives and neighbors came to help arranged the funeral ceremony follows the Cambodian tradition. Mrs. Yot Savearng sadly said that **“My husband died because of incurable diabetes, the family tried sent him to the hospital for treatment, and the doctor helped but could not save him, right now he passed away, the family arrange the funeral follow Buddhism to dedicate his spirit and hope that he will receive the merits and rest in peace”**. There upon, the relatives' people, neighbors, and particularly the village chief raised money from other charity people in the village helped her family 200,000 Riels and from the Krabei Riel commune colleague helped 300.000 Riels for her to buy materials for arranging of her husband's funeral.

Moreover, the relatives who participated told Mrs. Yot Savearng to contact SCC Siemreap branch asking for help. Our staff, Mr. Nuon Sothea came her home to share condolences and offered 40 USD to the suffered of the poorest family which was donated by the **Firefly Mission from Singapore**. The family of disease received 40 USD in cash from the SCC staff to arrange a funeral cremation for her husband.

3. Funeral Write-Up in the target area of Battambang Province



Photo took at Mrs. Keo Ravy's house on 15 June 2021

Mr. Sin Nuth, male, age 47 year-old passed away at his house on April 24, 2021 because of chronic disease, it's located at Suos Ei village, Peam Eak commune, Eak Phnom district, Battambang province. Mrs. Keo Ravy, is a wife and there are three young children who live together, two boys and a girl. Among three of them, two young children are still studying primary at state school in Peam Eak commune, separately a first daughter dropped out of school to help mother's work. After organized a cremation of husband, currently she is living in difficulty and the house mostly dilapidated, after her husband died she has no money to

repair the house. Due to the current situation, there is a spread of Covid-19 in Cambodia, almost sectors deteriorating including tourism, crafts, textile industry, education, especially the national economy completely collapsed.

Mrs. Keo Ravy, age 41 year-old, a former wife who has been lived with Mr. Sin Nuth for many years, when he was alive the whole income depend on him, but now he died, she said "the death of my husband is the biggest bemoaned, while he was alive, he worked a construction worker and have a little money to support the family, even though her family live together in poverty but he never used violence in the family, he always take care and high responsible". Right now the loss of a husband, she has to go to work to earn money for raising the children. Normally, Cambodian people living in rural areas each family must have farmland to grow rice and to do agriculture. Differently, Keo Ravy's family very poor and no any farmland, after losing the lovely husband who is the pillar of the family and the most important person responsible for the entire family. Nowadays she lives as a widow and faces a difficult situation, moreover, the whole burden in the family belongs to her, every day because of money she leaves home early in the morning to work as a child care worker at the Sovannaphum Child Care Center in Battambang Province. Due to lack of education and illiterate, the job she got not highly paid, she earns only 300,000 Riel exchange into USD 80\$ per month to manage household expenses, and it's difficult for her family because there was no money left to repair the house.

By seeing the hardly of the mother, the first daughter dropped out of school to find a job to help ease the mother's burden, nowadays she is 17 year-old, still young and in the situation of Covid-19 community outbreak, it's much more difficult for her. Anyway, she tried to get a job as a cleaner in a guesthouse, during this time there were no tourists or guests staying in the guesthouse, hence she was paid only 150,000 Riel exchange into USD 38\$ per month.

At the time her husband died, the family have less money to buy a coffin and arranged funeral event. In that too, with the participation of generous heart people living around the village, relatives and neighbors came to help and raised money to organize the funeral ceremony follow the Khmer tradition. In the cremation funeral event, the village chief and the neighbors who had received funeral services from SCC, they told Mrs. Keo Ravy to contact SCC Battambang branch asked for help, SCC staff arrived at her home to share condolences with the family and donated 40 USD which sponsor by **Firefly Mission** from Singapore, she received 40 USD in cash from the SCC staff to arrange a funeral cremation for her husband. Taking this opportunity she raised the hand with 10 fingers again would like to express her deep gratitude thanks to SCC and Firefly Mission are always kind and generous assistance to help the poorest families with their loving-kindness and compassion.

All human beings are dead, whether are rich or poor, young or old they all die the same. The only difference is that wealthy people organize a solemn ceremony, many relatives, friends, neighbors participated. On the contrary, the poorest people even the coffin to cover the body have no money to buy at the time of death not to mention the money spent on organizing the ceremony for many nights. According to Buddhism causes of suffering are: cause of fear, cause of hunger, cause of debt, cause of sickness and the greatest is the sorrow of death desolation of this planet. Because when we are about to die, all the organs in the body stop working due to their function, stop operating due to the commands of the mind. At that time, the eyes no longer seeing, the ears become congested, the nose no longer smells, the tongue stops tasting, the body stops receiving hot and cold elements all of which make the body suffer terribly for nothing. Therefore, human being should try to do meritorious indeed from now onward.

To sum up, the activities that SCC has done in the past and is continuing to do almost have the support of all quarters and are being disseminated in all areas in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang provinces. The advantage of sponsoring at a funeral for the poorest families are important and helpful for the deceased who has passed away. They take these donate to organize the funeral and settle some of their livelihoods as well. Members of the family who had died are very satisfied with the activities of the SCC and Firefly Mission are doing. Most people said, they were very excited about these precious donations and it is very useful for them during the short of money for a funeral arrangement.

In addition, the poorest families, village chiefs, community leaders, NGOs partner, and local authorities want **Firefly Mission** to continue to help the poorest families in their villages and all poorest people in Cambodia.

Last but not least, we would like to express our profound thanks and gratefully to **Firefly Mission members from Singapore, and all Singaporean people** who always have the loving-kindness (Metta), compassion (Karuna), sympathetic joy (Mudita), and equanimity (Upekkha) to all of Cambodian people with your generous sponsorship our funeral support. We can't tell you how much all of us at SCC and all Cambodian people appreciate your contribution to our cause. Furthermore, thanks to your donation, we will be able to have funding support to run our funeral support program continuously. May you all be free from suffering.

May the triple gem Buddha, Dharma, Sangha bless you all.

With Metta,

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