

CAMBODIA

Lives and Communities transformed by the power of God



Cambodia is beautiful...and filled with sorrow. The infamous Khmer Rouge took power in 1975 and held it for 3 years. The regime, led by Pol Pot, modeled itself on Maoist China and immediately evacuated the cities and sent the entire population on forced marches to rural work projects. They set up policies that disregarded human life and produced repression and massacres on a massive scale. Nearly two million Cambodians died from diseases due to a lack of medicines and medical services, starvation, execution, or exhaustion from overwork. Tens of thousands were made widows and orphans, and those who lived through the regime were severely traumatised by their experiences. Today, the country suffers from widespread poverty (28.3% of Cambodians live on less than \$1.25 USD per day)* and has a very young population. (39% of population are under 15, 60% under 25).**

International Teams has established two programs in Phnom Penh that address the needs of this young population and serve as both trafficking prevention and intervention projects.

**Source UNDP Human Development Report 2011, ** Cambodia Inter-censal Population survey 2004*

HEART OF HOPE

Bringing a bright future and the peace of God to at-risk children and families through Jesus

Heart of Hope was created in 2007 as The Shalom Centre, a program of International Teams. It was established as a safe haven for Vietnamese immigrant children whose lives are very much at risk of human trafficking for labor and sexual exploitation.

Life can be hard for Vietnamese kids and families in Cambodia.

- These families lack identification papers, face discrimination, and have little opportunity for education.
- There is a great deal of pressure on 12-16 year olds to work full time jobs for very low wages.

- Vietnamese children and youth are at a much higher risk for being trafficked in Cambodia.

Research indicates that nearly half of the Vietnamese families have sold one of their children for sex!

In 2012 The Shalom Centre became Heart of Hope, operating as a local Cambodian NGO. Heart of Hope exists to see ethnic Vietnamese children protected from exploitation, experience the love of Jesus, and learn a trade that will provide them a better future.

Today Heart of Hope serves over 100 children from ages 5 to 17. They learn to read and write in Vietnamese and Khmer; study maths, social studies, health/hygiene and science. They learn ways to protect themselves against sexual exploitation and also learn



about Jesus and his love for them.

The children are often under pressure from their parents to drop out of school and help support the family by working in sweat shops or by being trafficked in the sex trade, but God is using Heart of Hope to bring peace and hope to these dear children.

In 2009, their prevention programs and high community involvement led them to help with the identification and jailing of a local pedophile who was convicted of sexually assaulting two children in the community.





end slavery.

International Teams

Prevention | Support | Restoration

THE LEADERS

Vin Sopheavy is the Executive Director of Heart of Hope. Coleen Briggs, an ITeams US worker is Education Director. Since 2006 they have worked together in Phnom Penh in ministry to Vietnamese children.

This is Vin's story:

We started the Shalom Centre in a building of just three rooms. We started with a Grade 1 class of 30

students, mostly 12 and 13 year olds. After one month we moved some into Grade 2. We taught Vietnamese, Math, Khmer and Bible. Most of them didn't know about Jesus. Within two months, I was teaching 40 students in three classes, with Coleen (ITUS worker) helping me. The kids in Grade 1 were 12 or 13 years old and didn't know how to hold a pencil. They would often call out, "Teacher, can you help me (to write this)?" It is hard work but we have loved the kids from the beginning.

At first we planned to just help the kids with reading, but God has given us opportunities to help them with medical needs, protect them from being molested in the community, and see them grow to know Jesus. This year, (2012-2013), is our sixth school year. We are like a family.



I am now the Executive Director of Heart of Hope. With six staff members and more than 100 children, sometimes I feel nervous in this new role, but I know God has done so much and with his power he wants us to continue. Please pray for us.

Heart of Hope's vision is 'to provide a haven of peace and learning to children oppressed but treasured by God.' Churches in Australia can partner with this ministry to see lives and a whole community changed in Cambodia.

:: PRAY

- Safety and provision for staff and children at Heart of Hope
- That the children and youth at Heart of Hope will grow in character and godliness, bringing positive change to their communities
- For positive change in Cambodia; less abuse and poverty

:: GO

- Serve as an intern with Heart of Hope
- Catalyse your church to ongoing partnership with Heart of Hope

:: LEARN

Come to International Teams training on End Slavery or let us arrange a workshop at your church

:: GIVE

- \$250 pays for a teacher to teach for a month
- \$12 covers the cost of copies for a month
- \$65 supplies milk and snacks to the kindergarteners for a month
- \$15 provides rice and other food staples each month for the older kids who stay in school
- \$30 provides first aid and hygiene supplies for all students for 1 month

www.iteams.org.au/give/

OPPORTUNITIES

ABOUT END SLAVERY AND INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

International Teams is committed to seeing lives and communities transformed by the power of God. Our ministries focus on the poor and oppressed in eight priority areas including Refugees, Muslims, Trafficked and Enslaved, Urban, Disadvantaged Communities, Children at Risk, Youth, Ethnic and Unreached.

Our End Slavery ministries seek to Loose the Chains of Injustice (Is 58:6). We are growing ministries across the globe addressing a broad spectrum of needs to end slavery from prevention to support and restoration of those enslaved.

There are an estimated 27 million slaves in the world today--more than at any time in human history. An estimated 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year. Approximately 50% of all victims are children.