



## Community Centre of Grace House Organization

### Project Funding Proposal

Grace House Community Centre works with 3 villages in a community between Siem Reap and Tonle Sap, Cambodia. We were founded in 2008 by Globalteer, a UK charity, after it was identified that there were a number of children who were not accessing an adequate level of education, partly due to the family's needs to have as many people in the household working to earn enough money to get by, and also the Government schools who were unable to provide a full enough education to provide students the opportunities they needed to work towards breaking out of the cycle of poverty. Grace House has since grown and developed and has been able to make a difference in areas such as early years' education, an education and therapy program for children with disabilities and special educational needs, enhancing the quality of life for families by providing them access to clean water, home repairs, rice donation and giving bicycles to enable children to get to school. We have also had various social enterprise projects in the past, including electrician training and employment of local weavers to create products to sell. At Grace House Community Centre we strongly believe education and inclusion will improve the livelihoods of this generation and the next.

At the beginning of March 2020, the Government ordered all schools in Cambodia to close as a preventative measure from the spread of Covid 19. This has meant that the school of Grace House has had to remain shut, and the Government has yet to publish a date or plan for the reopening of schools. Despite Grace House not being able to run education classes, the staff have still been working to ensure the needs of the community are met, including family visits, food distribution, provision of masks and soap alongside educating the families about handwashing and hygiene measures to minimise the risk of catching Covid-19. Some staff have been regularly going in to the centre to maintain the grounds and thoroughly clean and sanitise areas. The teachers have also been providing the students with worksheets weekly, marking the returned work and giving feedback to make sure students are still engaged with education. The staff working with the students with special needs have been liaising with the families, suggesting activities and going through therapy programs which can be carried out at home, and also loaning out toys for those who do not have any at home, to provide the students with stimulation.

Many of the families which Grace House works with have been impacted by Covid 19, especially those who have been working in the tourism industry, an area which will take a long time to recover. Grace House would like to be able to give some of the families an opportunity to start their own business through micro loans, which they would not be able to do without some initial start-up costs. As many families live day to day on the small income they receive, they do not have the ability to save up for the start-up costs for a small business.

We would therefore like to be able to offer some of the families a micro loan, to the maximum amount of \$100 to use for start-up costs. This would be for a small business, such as buying chickens, frogs or fish to be able to farm and sell at the market, starting a small business stall at the market, or opening up a local lunchtime restaurant. There have been 10 families who have been identified from the Grace House Social Worker as being appropriate candidates, which would mean the total amount of funding we would need for this would be \$1,000.

The families would pay Grace House back in instalments of \$10 per month, which would mean that the money would be paid back within 1 year with \$20 interest, totalling a repayment of \$120. This would be monitored by the Grace House Social Worker, who will keep in contact to find out the success and sustainability of the business, to ensure that the family is able to keep up the repayment plan.

Providing these families with this opportunity would enable them to have a regular source of income, through Covid 19 and beyond. This will benefit the whole family and will provide extra funding for future opportunities for generations.