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#### 2009-10 NHS Governing Council

18 person (7 women) with Chairman and Secretary seated either side of the Kampong Chhnang Deputy Provincial Governor representing the Ministry of Interior and Provincial Authorities.



**Teresa Carney**  
ARC Programme Co-ordinator meets a new self-help group...



... and visits a motorcycle repairer

## Latest News

### Opening our new horizon by being open to all

NHS wants everyone to know "how we are doing", what we say about our progress, and what others say, whether good or bad! We give, in reverse date order, information about the latest developments and comment.

#### 19 September 2014

A meeting of representatives from Kampong Chhang and Kampong Thom met in Takhmau with supporters and staff to celebrate and mark the formal handover of the top management to their new joint Board of Directors and Governing Body.



Secretary-General John Lowrie had led NHS/NHU from 2009 when beneficiaries asked him to help to establish their organization and to raise funds for it. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen difficulties (described [here](#)), this process took much longer than he anticipated. Even now we have had to make changes required by the Ministry of Interior in order to have and to keep our own registration. Accordingly, the members are confident that they no longer need to retain John as an expatriate in the senior job. Instead, in due course, the new Board will appoint their own new Director. In the meantime, Mr Khat Bun Heng, who steered the new registration process, will take charge. He will work closely with the new Board made up of old and new members from the two provinces. John, along with Andy, Ming and Ray (right), will continue to serve as consultant advisers.

View the formal handover document [here](#)

NHU is very fortunate to have the services of Bun Heng. He has been a manager of international and local NGOs for many years, working with John at Ockenden international where he made an outstanding contribution in his project that helped pave the way for the localization as Ockenden-Cambodia. He has extensive ties in Kampong Thom and has worked in several provinces including Rattanakiri with indigenous people there. This knowledge will be valuable in the new work with Kuoy ethnic minority people and for NHU to partner more with John's continuing role with the "Mondulkiri Indigenous People's association for Development" ([MRDC](#)).

John suggested that new Board and first AGM should conduct an updated "SWOT" exercise. The strengths and opportunities are clear. They have been independently verified by external evaluations and audits. However, members must be wary of weaknesses and threats. They must keep up best practice and international standards. Indeed they have shown their willingness to do so with the handover documents.



The Board Members thanked John as well as Andy, Ming and Ray (right) for their support and work over many years. They also congratulated [Kosal](#) (far right on main picture) on his achievement of replicating the NHS computer and English classes with his own school, now with 150 boys and girls.



### 15 July 2014

NHS and John Lowrie in particular have been involved in vulnerable child issues for many years, and the dubious orphanage issue since 2007. He was asked by the travel industry to suggest safe, reliable options to tourists instead. Read his article [here](#).

### 07 July 2014

#### **Savoeung: An Inspiration to Poor Children with Disability and a Development Aid Success Story.**

Congratulations to our Honorary Treasurer CHANN Savoeung and [VisionFund](#) on his appointment as Chief Executive Officer for Mongolia.

Who would have thought all those years ago in Prek Loung Pagoda, Battambang Province, that the ordinary lad in this old photograph would go so far in life? He demonstrates the best of what can be.



Savoeung was no ordinary lad. Despite being an orphan, disabled, and once a refugee, he overcame adversity and prejudice through sheer determination to complete his schooling, higher education and professional training. He worked as he studied to pay his way, starting in a print-shop for four years from 1996. Then he became an unpaid volunteer in a small credit organization to gain experience towards his degree specializing in accounting.



That enabled him to gain his first professional posting with Aphvat Strey Organization (a local Women's Development Organization). He then moved on an up to [Handicap International](#) as Chronic Illness Project Manager/Deputy Country Admin Co-ordinator. Then he became Finance Manager for Ockenden International [now <http://www.ockendenprizes.org>] where he played a pivotal role in ensuring the financial viability as the organization converted to a local autonomous NGO. That safely accomplished, he entered VisionFund not long after it evolved from World Vision. He has not only achieved in Cambodia, but has now become an international country manager, a great advert for professionals emerging from within the developing world.

Savoeung's story, like [Visal's](#) and others who have worked their own way out-of-poverty for their families, makes our efforts worthwhile and the inevitable frustrations bearable. Unfortunately there are still many more children in similar need, especially remote rural girls who, unlike boys, do not have the chance to stay in pagodas to be able to attend education. This is why programs such as NHS's here or [World Vision's](#) are so important.

Best of luck to Savoeung, his family, and the team in Mongolia!

### 09 May 2014

Our General Secretary met Sir Alan Beith MP in the United Kingdom, who asked for and was given details of the case for further consideration by Sir Malcolm Bruce MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Overseas Aid and Development Committee. Sir Alan expressed regret that no solution acceptable to NHS beneficiaries had yet been offered or found. More details can be read [here](#).

## 10 February 2014

Congratulations to our longest and now most famous "beneficiary" Kosal - please see his [update case study](#) with features of him performing in public and in the media. He has now started his own social work project in Kampong Chhnang.

## 08 January 2014

Readers will be aware that our beneficiaries were shocked and disappointed when the Charities Commission declined to investigate fully their complaint.

They are not alone. The UK National Audit Office (NAO) examined the Charities Commission, reporting that it "was failing to investigate abuses properly, wasting taxpayers' money and putting the good name of the charity sector as a whole at risk". See the 04 December 2013 [comments from the NAO](#).

The Commission's Chief Executive, Mr Sam Younger, attended a meeting of the UK Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on 16 December 2013. He responded "I recognise what the NAO report says about the need for improvement in registrations and our compliance and investigations work, and we have already made progress in implementing their recommendations. I agree that we must sharpen our approach to handling the most serious cases that involve deliberate abuse or mismanagement of a charity."

The NAO has today notified us that there will be a further review of the Charities Commission's approach to investigation of charities before the next UK national election due by mid-2015. Our case papers are on file. We hope that the case will serve as a powerful example of why charities must be held to account by or on behalf of beneficiaries and donors, and why overseas development aid and resources must be used effectively.

We wish to thank the UK MPs who have taken a close interest in the case, from all three major political parties: – Mr Oliver Letwin (Conservative Minister for Government Policy in the Cabinet Office); Mr Andrew Mitchell (Conservative, former DfID Minister); Mr Nick Hurd (Conservative, currently the Civil Society Minister); Sir Alan Beith ( Liberal Democrat), and Ms Margaret Hodge (Labour, Chairman of the PAC).

## September 2013

We spent a long weekend in Kampong Chhnang finding out how the old computing students are getting on now that they have finished high school. Some were away in Phnom Penh doing scholarship exams for entry to university. This year the national examinations for high school leavers were delayed because of the national elections, so now that they have got their results they are anxious to find a university quickly as most classes start in October. A couple of students have started working, but we hope they will find better jobs soon.

Three students have been accepted by PNC for IT courses. One is offered a two year course on system and network administration or web developing. The other two will do a six month data entry course after which they will work for Digital Divide Data, a local social enterprise that provides jobs and careers in computing to disabled and disadvantaged young people. One of the two students had a bad motorbike accident a few months ago and had to have pins put into his shoulder and down his leg. He is still using crutches and it will be a few months more before he recovers properly and is ready to start his course at PNC in January.



We also taught the new group of students to see how they are doing in their computing class with Visal. We had two sessions with each group and taught them about tables in Microsoft Word. They did well and seem bright. We hope to see them again soon to teach them Logic and give them some career advice so they are prepared for their future when they finish high school next year.

We also bumped into Kosal, one of NHS's better known beneficiaries, who has also finished high school this year. He has a passion for music - both singing and writing songs - and we hope NHS can help him to fulfil his dreams.



Visal, an early beneficiary of NHS, started his own IT business in his parents' front room in Kampong Chhnang after studying and working in Phnom Penh for a few years. We can see how his business has grown in these past two years. One customer was already waiting at his shop at 7 o'clock on Saturday morning before Visal could get his breakfast eaten! He never turns away any work and still has his "Can Do!" attitude. We were impressed how quick and how thorough he is in problem solving, always getting to the root cause of his customers' problems - no wonder they are queuing at his door! He still comes down to Phnom Penh to provide IT support to some NGOs and schools. He is now happily married and has a two month old baby boy.



### August 2013

The external audit is now underway, following on the external evaluation earlier this year.

Please look at this great [clip](#) of the programme in neighbouring Kampong Chhnang for disabled young women. This is one of the activities (for which we have funding) that we have not been allowed to arrange in Kampong Chhnang, so far!

### July 2013

NHS is of course strictly non-political and non-religious but we strongly support the rights of disabled people to be included and take part in public affairs. Our members are free to support any political party or religion of his or her choice.

Our singing celebrity Kosal, who often features in this website, supported the Opposition CNRP party in the 2013 Cambodian July National Elections. CNRP was noted for attracting the youth vote - with pop songs sung by Kosal.

Here he is pictured next to HE Mu Sochua during her successful campaign for a seat in Battambang. HE Sochua is a former Minister of Women's Affairs. To see and hear him sing, please go to his [Facebook page](#).



### April 2013



On 19 April, nine NHS students sat entry examinations to apply to join our partner NGO "Passerelle Numerique" (PNC, formerly CIST) in the hope of emulating the students who graduated last November (please see below and "Human Stories").

PNC's mission is "to enable the largest number of youths in a precarious situation access to training and skilled employment in Information Technology."

Congratulations and good luck to our students who all passed the test and will go for interview on 6 May. If they get through the interview a home assessment will come next.

### 28 January 2013

As reported on the Home Page, the complaint of members is now to go to the Ombudsman in the UK. We understand that we will hear by May.

### 02 December 2012

Visal's wedding - another happy occasion for NHS staff to celebrate! Visal has been with us since he was a high school student and later as a university student; afterwards he started working in various companies and now he runs his own IT business. As a student he got help with his education and some living expenses. Now in return he is helping NHS to train students in computing.

Visal's wife, Sophy, a very sweet girl, is also from Kampong Chhnang. They were old school mates in Kampong Chhnang but only got together after meeting up again while working in Phnom Penh.

We wish Visal and Sophy a happy life together!



### **01 December 2012**

A meeting of the Governing Council took place on 1 December. The minutes may be accessed [here](#).