



Dear All,

Another four months has quickly rolled by since our last update. The work of Lotus Culture to support AFESIP Cambodia in the three project areas of education, mental healthcare and especially the social enterprise (Kumnit Thmey) has progressed unabated.

There is so much to share but as we reflect on the work and the challenges, we are encouraged by all who believe in and do their bit to make it possible for the survivors to develop and to build a liveable future for themselves and their families. We have made multiple visits to Phnom Penh to build up the capability of Kumnit Thmey but more important is the stronger heartbeat of our girls in helping themselves as reflected in some of their work of transforming fabric that others have no further use for into beautiful products.



ONE Edition-Tea Coasters



ONE Edition - His or Her Pouches



ONE Edition - 'Ladies Must Have' organisers

### Social Enterprise - Kumnit Thmey (KT)

Sewing in KT started in 1st June 2011 when four survivors, trained as seamstresses in the AFESIP shelters joined. Product prototyping and an initial catalogue of products were completed using fabrics sourced in Cambodia. With this, Lotus Culture commenced marketing of the products on a B2B platform. See the product catalogue at our website [www.lotusculture.com](http://www.lotusculture.com) under the "Support Us" section.

Two projects have been completed - one was for a boutique hotel in Singapore for a customised set of bedrunners and bolster cushions and another for wine bottle holders from the catalogue for a customer in Brownsville, Texas USA. KT has secured four more projects and had to turn down one as the order book is filled till end January 2012. The decision to increase the production capability by some 50% has been taken.

Special thanks to Mrs. Sokha in guiding Pisei, Srey Leak, Chantou and Srey Mom in their work and development. After completion of the two projects, all four went on a well earned trip home to their villages to be with their families. The savings scheme has also been implemented to encourage our girls to set objectives that would make a difference to their

lives and to save for that objective where KT would support at 10% interest for every 10-week cycle. The girls have also shown a desire to learn English to develop themselves beyond what they can do now. This is welcomed and is being explored as an education and skills development project, rather than as a cost of the social enterprise. Another seamstress, Soroth has since joined the team in October 2011. The sixth position is now available to anybody in AFESIP shelters who is ready for re-integration.

In addition to completing the project work, the girls have also completed a batch of ONE Edition products. This was made possible when we were sourcing for fabric for our first project and saw the opportunity to recover fabric leftovers, which were being thrown away by furnishing vendors in Singapore. We selected the high quality fabric ends and thanks to our two volunteers who painstakingly, yet happily pieced them together with clever sewing accessories and detail instructions for the girls to put together. These ONE Edition products are a showcase of the quality of work of KT and symbolic of the Lotus Culture mission on the transformation of lives of the survivors.



ONE Edition Classic Tote



ONE Edition - Triplet Cushion Covers



ONE Edition - Timeless Tote

We thank the Singapore business community in Cambodia/USA and the Singapore companies with strong sense of corporate social responsibility who are customers of KT. We are encouraged by the business success thus far but continued efforts are needed to ensure we will continue to grow and so be able to impact more lives. To this end we welcome assistance from our network of customers, donors and supporters to establish and develop leads to have a good flow of sewing projects in the pipeline.

So far, Lotus Culture has donated USD22,693/- for the development, start-up costs and working capital of KT. Some USD10k is still in the KT bank account and given the flow of projects and income from ONE Edition products, breakeven target over 2 years of operations is achievable and may be reached earlier.

Another type of social enterprise is being explored to create work and income in villages where parents are compelled to sell their children in order to survive.

#### Education & Skills Development



Lotus Culture funded the Saray Osiose (French NGO) training classes to teach weaving to survivors still living in the AFESIP shelters. This is to provide survivors with another handicraft skill to secure employment when they leave the shelters. Sixteen

girls from the shelters took the course and crafted large vases and other containers. Further

discussions are required on how to progress the skill development and refine the products so that the survivors can use the skill to supplement their incomes.

English lessons for the KT staff are also being explored.

So far, Lotus Culture has donated USD2,175/- to support education and skills development.

### Mental Healthcare Projects

Lotus Culture is one of three organisations providing funds for the project to develop the staff, capacity and management systems of the Psychology and Counseling Division of AFESIP to deliver a consistent model of care to the victims of trafficking and sexual abuse at all three shelters of AFESIP.

Candace Blasé from the U.S. (a qualified trauma specialist volunteer funded by Lotus Culture Ltd.) who leads in the project has reported good progress made with practical changes to reallocate funds to higher priority areas, development of staff capability to deliver the programmes and to develop the Cambodian-specific trauma assessment tools and treatment modalities. Weekly open studio groups, regular art therapy sessions and the number of residents receiving psychological counseling sessions are being monitored. There is coordination with several international experts for psychosocial care of the victims and better development of a comprehensible work plan till the end of 2012.

We are now awaiting the funding request from AFESIP for the 2012 plans.

In July 2011, Lotus Culture received a request to provide USD16k of the USD26k for the purchase of a plot of land directly adjacent to the Siem Reap Centre. The land is approximately 600 sq. m. and an opportunity not to be missed to expand the existing facility to provide more space for the psychology programme and other functions located in Siem Riep centre. This request was quickly approved and the funds remitted to secure the land.

So far, Lotus Culture has donated USD25,689/- to support mental healthcare projects.

### Our Volunteers and Fund Raising

Donations received since the incorporation of Lotus Culture till end October 2011 amounts to SGD156.8k, of which disbursements amounting to SGD63k to support Education & Skill Development, Mental Healthcare and Kumnit Thmey, have been made.

From the initial wave of donations received and donations from the directors of Lotus Culture a reserve of SGD60k had been set aside. This is to be able to respond to new opportunities to make a difference or drawdown on any shortfalls in raising donations for the ongoing projects and commitments made. There is another SGD32k available for projects being considered.



We are grateful for the support of employees in Vitol Asia Pte Ltd and the Vitol Charitable Foundation in UK for adopting Lotus Culture for a year till June 2012 and their pledge to raise SGD80k. Despite their heavy commitments, four executives of Vitol made the time to visit AFESIP's Tom Dy centre and Kumnit Thmey on 12th and 13th of August 2011. They encouraged all the girls they engaged with and carried over a large load of donated fabrics for the ONE Edition products. Lotus Culture has received donations of some SGD35k in September 2011.

7 November 2011



We are also grateful to Professor Albert Teo from the Centre of Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy in NUS and the NUS business school students David, Zhi Hao, Darius and Justin for their efforts and the open sharing of learning points in the consulting practicum over the last 10 months.

Raising awareness on human trafficking and fund raising by Lotus Culture is an on-going activity. Securing projects and marketing of KT products remains a priority.

The year 2011 is drawing to a close and the season of caring and giving is upon us. As we move into the festive seasons, let us also remember those who are less fortunate. Your continued support in donations will help impact and transform more lives. Thank You ALL for your generosity!

Warmest Regards  
Sylvia, Lai Har and Pak Kheng

7th November 2011