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Dear friends of Aziza's Place,

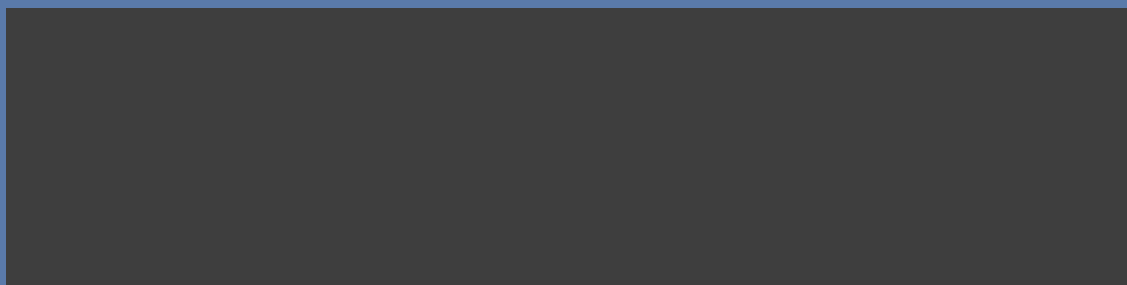
2018 brings many changes to Aziza's Place and we have plenty of good news to share with you. Our numbers at the center have been growing and we have been starting new initiatives. Every day, we are helping more and more children in the communities around Phnom Penh. Read all about it in our February newsletter.

This edition, we'd love to share the following stories with you

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Picture of the month

Celebrating 11 Years





On the 14th of February our staff and children celebrated the 11th anniversary of Aziza's Place with games, dancing and a big cake. Thank you for supporting us!

The story of... **Sokheang**

Sokheang joined AP in August 2016 at the age of 8. Originally from the Provinces, Sokheang moved with her two younger siblings to Phnom Penh in 2016.

At first, the children lived with their grandparents, who were already resident in the capital. However, Sokheang's mother was not pleased with the level of care the grandparents were providing to them and decided to move to Phnom Penh to care for them herself. This resulted in Sokheang's mother moving to the Steung Meanchey dumpsite area where she tries to make a living for her family by collecting plastics.



Today, Sokheang is 10 years old and studying in grade 2. Upon joining AP, she was two years behind her peers and was incapable of reading or writing the Khmer alphabet. Attending AP's extracurricular classes and receiving extra tutoring, Sokheang has been steadily improving her Math and Khmer reading. She is always progressing and putting more and more effort into her studies. She is a mature child, who takes responsibility for her younger siblings and helps where she can at home. She loves AP's swimming classes and recently swam her first lap independently. She greatly admires her mother and has a close bond with her. We look forward to seeing Sokheang's successes at school and AP in the next years.

Introduction to AP's new enrollees

We are very happy to welcome six new children who were accepted into AP family after they successfully passed through the requisite three-month probationary period.

In October 2017, we offered seven children from the communities we serve to join AP's programs. Every child welcomed into Aziza's Place is required to pass through a three-month probationary period. During this period, the children are assessed on their behavior, how well they integrate with the other children already at AP, their willingness and their commitment to learning in our supplemental education classes and in the local public school, and the level of cooperation from their parents. Most importantly, we watch to see that the new children are happy and fit in well at Aziza's Place.

From day one, the children exhibited very positive attributes and integrated very well with other AP children. They quickly learned the do's and don'ts and were well behaved, all the while being happy and joyous. The transition for these new entrants was made easier because of their several siblings that were already at AP, which provided

further support and comfort to the newbies.

These are AP's new enrollees (from left to right):



Liza (6 years old) and her older brother Bona (9 years old), cousins of Samphors and Youbin, who have been with AP since 2016; Sreytoch (6 years old) and her older brother David (8 years old); Kakda (6 years old), the younger brother of Morn, who has been with AP since 2014; and Reaksa (6 years old). Through our Community Outreach, we continue to support Rotha (8 years old).

Sadly, one out of the seven children who had settled-in easily had to leave AP because his parents decided to move back to their province. Given how seamlessly Rotha blended into the AP family, we decided to continue providing support, in the least for his educational expenses, through our ever-expanding Community Outreach efforts.

Expanding our programs... AP Broadening its reach

In addition to accepting six new children into AP in 2017, we embarked on new initiatives **introducing community-based access to education in the provinces** closest to Phnom Penh as well as to new communities within the city limits.

This initiative grew out of recognizing the growing need for educational support to communities outside of Phnom Penh, especially given the dearth of NGOs active in the more rural communities. AP funds school fees, uniforms and educational necessities in return for regular updates from their parents to effectively monitor progress on each child's monthly attendance rates and school results.

In 2017, we also started to provide this *educational support* package to children from our communities whose medical conditions and needs precluded them from participating in the AP programs and activities. **We are planning to expand our medical services as part of a greater healthcare program.**

Finally, since the start of this year, we **start opening our doors to partner NGOs**, offering them the opportunity to join our supplementary education classes and extracurricular activities. Today, five children from our partner organization MAGNA join our daily extracurricular classes at our center.

Our management team and our Board are very excited by these developments as we prepare to increase our reach even further in the future!

Expanding our programs... Making a Splash

In July 2017, we expanded our Sports Program by organizing swimming classes, with the goal to teach our children at least one swimming style (breaststroke). We believe it is a critical skill to have in life.

None of our children could swim properly at the start of the program, but today, after 12 classes to our pilot group of 10 children, the secondary school children can swim independently, with the primary school children being almost there as well! Given the popularity of the program, we are hoping to be able to expand the program to more of our children.

Many of our staff have observed that these classes not only bring the children new technical skills, but also have a positive impact on their self-confidence and general happiness. Swimming class is something most of our students look forward to all week.



Blog: AP Children on the Move

In December 2017, Sreypha was invited by the Cambodian National Karate Team to join a training program in Japan. She wrote a blog of her impressions and experiences. You can read her blog [here](#). Last month, one of our graduates, Ny, went to Denmark where she is participating in a 3-month cultural exchange project. Halfway the program, Ny wrote a [blog](#) to share her first impressions.



New Director of Finance and Operations

We are happy to announce that as of Dec 1, 2018, Chanphoumy Choeun joined the Aziza's Place team as Director of Finance & Operations. Phoumy brings some very recent and relevant experience to this position, having spent the previous nine years working in accounting and finance, including the last three years in a similar role at a NGO in Battambang.



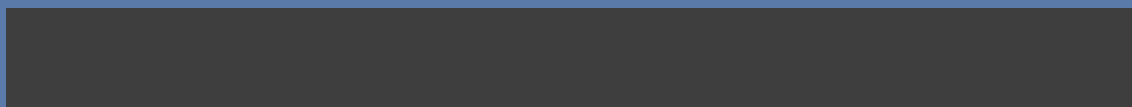
Chanphoumy Choeun



Coincident with Phoumy's arrival, we had to say farewell to Bopha Vong, who was the Director of Finance and Operations at AP for the past seven years. Bopha will be missed given the vital role she played in developing and implementing AP's finance systems and overseeing the annual audit process. Hers was a constant presence at AP and she will always remain a part of the AP family. We also want to wish Bopha the best of luck in her next venture running her family's bakery in Phnom Penh.

Video of the month

I Can Sing (and paint) a Rainbow





At the start of the year, we had four experienced [Girlguiding](#) volunteers from the UK joining our center to carry out some fun and creative home-improvement projects, while also teaching our children new English vocabulary through a song.

More News

Revamped Website

We have revamped our website. You can consult our annual audit reports, read our latest brochure and revisit older stories in the newsletters archive on our improved *Finance and Reports* page [here](#).

WEDO: social workers visit

Aziza's Place welcomed 20 social work students from Hong Kong. We took the day with WEDO Global's students to introduce them to our way of working with vulnerable children. We also showed them the living conditions of our families. We hope this experience inspires these future social workers to work effectively in the communities they will serve. We thank the students for the contribution they made to our families during [the visit](#).

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