



**The Tiger Foundation**  
www.thetigerfoundation.com

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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **Tiger Foundation to Make a Lifelong Difference *Creating a Sustainable Future for Cambodia's Poor***

**Singapore (December 22, 2008)** – A new charitable organisation, The Tiger Foundation, has been established to help a community in Cambodia become sustainable through education programs and community engagement. Registered in Singapore, the foundation has fundraising chapters around Asia and in Australia.

The recent registration of the Foundation has been followed by the launch of the organisation's website [www.thetigerfoundation.com](http://www.thetigerfoundation.com).

"Following the completion of The Tiger Foundation's registration in Singapore, the launch of our website will help us to keep our supporters informed of our fundraising activities and of the progress we are making at Aknuwat Primary School in the Kampong Thom province of Cambodia," said Mark Philpott, President of The Tiger Foundation.

Based on four pillars – Education, Exercise, Environment and Engagement – the organisation is not interested in giving handouts, but in engaging with the community to better educate children and their families through a collaborative effort with the school and its teachers. It aims to develop lifestyle and education programs that lead to a more sustainable way of life.

The Director of the Provincial Office of Education for Kampong Thom province in Cambodia, Sou Kimtry, has given his support to the Foundation and allowed a trial of the education program for 12 months. If successful he may authorise the programs to be adopted in other schools.

In a letter to The Tiger Foundation, Director Kimtry wrote, "We believe that Aknuwat Primary School will become a model school which can be replicated throughout the province."

The Tiger Foundation might not exist today but for the actions of a young man on a motorbike adventure across Asia during Christmas, 2007.

Mark Philpott set out on his Triumph Tiger motorbike on a trip that took him through some of the poorest areas of Malaysia, Thailand and Cambodia. Born in New Zealand but now living in Singapore, Mr Philpott was exposed to scenes of such abject poverty during his trip he was inspired to create an organisation that could offer assistance.

Coming to rest outside Aknuwat Primary School, three hours north of Phnom Penh, he found himself surrounded by children fascinated with his bike.



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“My bike drew crowds wherever I travelled,” Mr Philpott recalls. “But it was this school, surrounded by the smiling faces of children – who had such amazing energy despite the poverty around them – that made me decide I had to do something to help them overcome their situation.”

So The Tiger Foundation was born, named after the bike that helped introduce Mark Philpott to the kids of Aknuwat.

Rather than becoming just another charity giving handouts to the poor, Mr Philpott endeavoured to base his Foundation’s model on the old adage ‘give a man a fish and he’ll eat for a day, but teach a man to fish and he’ll eat for a lifetime’. Instead the Foundation aims to facilitate the development of sustainable, prosperous communities by initiating ongoing projects that belong to, and are ultimately managed by, the people themselves.

“Maintaining and painting buildings, reconstructing gardens, extending a library, providing pumps for water wells, redesigning and reappointing sanitary blocks, installing irrigation and drainage systems are the very practical and important tasks the Foundation will focus on,” Mr Philpott says. “We wish to create projects in collaboration with the school and the surrounding community, so they meet a real need rather than our perception of a need, and then educate the community on how to maintain those projects.”

The four pillars have been designed to ensure long-term benefits from the Foundation’s activities:

- Education of the children and their communities;
- Exercise for healthy bodies;
- Environmentally sound projects; and
- Engagement with the affected communities and other NGOs.

Each of the four pillars has an appointed leader who has expertise in their specific area. Mr Philpott is responsible for the Engagement pillar.

“There are more than 2,000 NGOs operating in Cambodia,” he says. “They are all competing for funds and volunteers so it is critical that we engage with them to ensure we leverage one another’s networks, avoid duplication of activities and use our volunteer bases in the most effective way.

“It is essential the four areas are integrated,” he continues. “Education and information sharing among all key stakeholders is important so everyone is involved in the development of the community, and all the work is done in a sustainable, environmentally friendly way.”

The Tiger Foundation has appointed Kenny Williams as Project Manager to run the day-to-day operations of the Foundation in Cambodia, including overseeing the water and waste management projects, auditing NGOs working in the province, implementing strategies for community engagement and coordinating volunteers for various events and projects.

Larry and Sally Burke head the Education and Exercise pillars and plan to implement teaching methodologies that have proven to be most effective in educating people in developing countries.

Jaimin Desai and Hrydhal Damai, experts in water and waste management, are lead consultants for the Environment pillar initiatives.

Sandra Philpott, Head of The Tiger Foundation’s Australian Chapter, is responsible for all PR and marketing activities to support fundraising and to increase The Tiger Foundation’s volunteer network.



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