



# RCA Global Mission

# 2020 Year in Review



## Deb Wilson – Cambodia

Garden of Life is a team of people working together to provide professional training in counseling and access to a wide range of life enrichment services to bring widespread healing among the people of Cambodia. In doing so, Cambodians will “flourish” and enjoy their lives to the fullest measure.

Cambodia is experiencing a large gap in the need for life enrichment and counseling services. Overcoming the impacts of horrific trauma experienced during the Khmer Rouge regime and the subsequent Vietnamese occupation. Both inflicted deep, debilitating wounds and scars on the minds of most Cambodian people. This impact transcends generations and permeates the emotional and mental wellbeing of the following generation of young people living with secondary trauma and social dysfunction. Garden of Life is a program motivated by the love of Jesus Christ to make a significant step forward in filling this gap by training new Cambodian professional counselors and trainers who can then raise additional new counselors to serve the Cambodian people in their language. This is the first Christian, Cambodian center to serve a large number of Cambodians struggling with post-traumatic stress syndrome plus other mental and emotional well-being issues.

The team started working together about three years ago. The co-founders are from Cambodia and Australia/Sri Lanka. I (Deb Wilson) am facilitating the team and development of the organization. The team is one-half Cambodian and one-half expatriate people working together to accomplish our vision.



### Blessings of 2020

Garden of Life began providing counseling services this year! We were able to hire two part-time counselors and begin serving individual clients. To the right is a picture of **Chenda and Mey**, our two counselors, in front of our current Garden of Life Center. The gesture they are making with their thumb and forefinger is forming a heart to let you know they love you and thank God for you all.



### Challenges of 2020

Because of COVID-19 restrictions in Cambodia, only three of the six planned training workshops were held and we were limited

on the number of participants we were allowed to host. But we are pleased that, despite the challenges this year, 34 participants from about 10 different organizations received professional development training. The topics were: Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Peer Supervision, and Counseling Children and Adolescents.



We suffered setbacks this year. Two expatriate volunteers unexpectedly returned to their countries permanently. COVID-19 trapped Deb and Mark in the United States for seven months following return due to her father's illness and death. Our previous landlord for the counseling center required us to move as he wanted to move back into the building, so we needed to relocate unexpectedly. However, we did move forward and get counseling started. Praise God for His continuing work to build the Garden of Life.

### **How We Can Pray**

My husband Mark has already shared several prayer requests for Cambodia and our family (please see [Mark Wilson's Year in Review](#)). Specifically for Garden of Life, please pray for:

- Strength, wisdom, and discernment for our counselors; now two soon increasing to three.
- The professional training planned for 2021 to be successfully implemented and able to reach a solid group of growing Cambodian counselors. Planned topics include Counseling Children and Adolescents, Dealing with Suicidal Clients, Grief Therapy to support families and friends of suicide victims, Counseling Skills, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, and Self-Care.
- For income generation services to strengthen and build sustainability for the organization; for donations to increase.
- In 2021, to build a strong foundation for the organization so it can carry-on for decades to come.
- For Cambodians to find the abundant, purposeful lives Christ offers.

### **Additional Needs**

Garden of Life would be blessed to find additional volunteers who can provide professional training for counselors, supervision for counselors (online is possible), advisors in organization development and management, or financial systems advisors/trainers. Also, notes of encouragement to the team members from brothers and sisters across the world are tremendous boosts when our energies are down.

Thank you!

Deb Wilson