



A self-help enterprise by local artisans with disabilities

More info. www.gftv-sr.org

COVID-19 initiatives www.gftv-sr.org/covid-19.html

Media Release

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People with disabilities battling the corona storm: Hang on, you are not alone!

Imagine waking up every day not knowing how you are going to feed your family. This is a reality for many parents living in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia where over 40% of the rural population live below the poverty line.

The COVID-19 virus is having a devastating impact on the health and wealth of people around the globe. However, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that *"the impact of COVID-19 may be more significant for persons with disabilities"*. Prior to the pandemic the United Nations identified persons with disabilities as the most marginalized group for being able to achieve their needs. Now, they are urging *"industrialized nations to help those less developed"* and to reassure people with disabilities *"that their survival is a priority"*.

Tourism and textiles are the two largest industries in Cambodia and before the COVID-19 outbreak the tourism industry was already experiencing a dramatic decrease in business. A recent analysis by the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank indicated that a fall in income of only 50c per day per person would see 50% of the population fall below the poverty line. Now, there is no tourism business at all and jobs that once sustained some of the poorest people in the nation have disappeared. When hunger endures, what follows is starvation.

[Genevieve's Fair Trade Village \(GFTV\)](#), a small social enterprise that operates a not-for-profit retail shop in Siem Reap, Cambodia is working hard to assist people with disabilities and their families survive the pandemic.



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The shop is a platform for developing sustainable livelihoods for local people with disabilities. It provides opportunities for them to learn and produce handcrafted products to assist them to earn a fair and sustainable income. It also supports other projects such as Full Belly Farm and Workshops and Wheels. Full Belly Farm is a small urban farm that provides transitional housing for families who were previously homeless and with at least one member who has a disability. Workshops and Wheels a new project to help generate business opportunities for tuk-tuk drivers with disabilities who were already struggling to feed their families.

Like many tourism businesses across the globe, the shop has closed and now they have no income at all. GFTV is in the process of resetting their operations and creating an online shop in an endeavour to generate some income. However, it will take a modest amount of cash, and a lot of time and energy to get the online store operational. In the meantime, they urgently need your support.

Two weeks ago, they launched a [GoFundMe crowdfunding campaign](#) [[YouTube video](#)] and started operating a local [foodbank](#) [[YouTube video](#)]. Their goals are to help feed families with disabilities, until they can return to taking care of themselves and to continue operating as a social enterprise so that these families have something to come back to when things improve. They are also working closely with other local community organisations and sharing resources as the list of families in genuine need of help is growing rapidly.

Last week they delivered food care packs to 28 families living with disabilities in and around Siem Reap and yesterday they delivered 1,400 eggs to [ABCs and Rice](#), a local NGO, to help feed the 70 families they support. However, they need more funds to help these families battle the corona virus storm. Together as a caring global community we can help them **hang on** and let them know they **are not alone!** [[YouTube video](#)]

No matter how big or small your donation will make a difference. For details on how to donate and other ways, you can assist, visit the GFTV website: www.gftv-sr.org/covid-19.