This has been a milestone quarter in the life of Free To Shine. On the 15th of February 2017, we reached the million-dollar mark, meaning that in our six years, we have officially raised more than $1 million Australian dollars to prevent sex trafficking. Thank you for helping make this possible.

TOGETHER, WE HAVE:
• PARTNERED WITH 45 SCHOOLS
• ACROSS 44 VILLAGES
• CONDUCTED OVER 24,000 FAMILY VISITS
• PROVIDED 100S OF BIKES
• DELIVERED 1000S OF SCHOOL UNIFORMS, BOOKS AND PENS
• PROVIDED 5,000 LIBRARY BOOKS
• ISSUED 432 WATER FILTERS
• GIVEN 10 TYPES OF SEEDS TO EACH FAMILY
• BUILT 13 HOUSES
• CONDUCTED 80 COMMUNITY TRAININGS
• KEPT 718 GIRLS SAFE

None of this could have been possible without each and every one of you, whether you are a donor, sponsor, or volunteer. Know that you have indescribably changed so many lives for the better.
Free To Shine’s commitment to education to prevent sex trafficking goes beyond the girls enrolled on our program. We are also committed to protecting the entire community from sex traffickers; so we provide community classes to our girls, their families, neighbors, and broader communities. We teach them about their rights and how to protect themselves and their families from exploitation and abuse. We currently teach four classes:

**KNOW YOUR HUMAN RIGHTS**
Rural Cambodian villagers are often among the poorest and most disenfranchised – many have never attended school and live their entire lives powerless to change their circumstances. Our Human Rights community classes teach that ALL humans have rights, and provide examples of how claiming these rights can lead to improvements in living standard.

**SAFE MIGRATION**
(aka “THE DANGERS OF GOING TO THAILAND”)
Irregular, seasonal migration to Thailand is common when employment is scarce in Cambodia. Even working illegally, which most do, income is considerably higher than it is in Cambodia and it allows workers to send money home to repay their debts. The problem is that migrating illegally leaves people in insecure situations where their labour can be exploited, their rights not met, and in some cases, leaves them extremely vulnerable to all forms of human trafficking. We teach the pitfalls of irregular migration so that our girls and their families do not find themselves in situations they cannot escape from.

**SEX TRAFFICKING PREVENTION**
(aka “THE PLOYS SEX TRAFFICKERS USE”)
After taking our class one of our girl’s mothers said, “I often think if my daughter is given a job in other provinces, it will be so good for me. Before, I lacked the information about sex trafficking because I did not know about it. The Sex Trafficking class has provided me with details on how to identify traffickers and how to keep my daughter safe.”

**PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**
In Australia and the United Kingdom, 1 in 4 girls will be sexually abused by the time she turns 16. Child sexual abuse is rarely spoken about in Cambodia but there is little reason to assume it occurs less often than in the West, and in fact Cambodia’s high rates of sex and gender-based violence and low rates of reporting suggest that it may occur even more frequently. We teach our girls and their communities how to recognise situations and people who are potentially unsafe, and how to respond in the event that a child is abused.
THREE HOMES BUILT

The majority of rural Cambodian families live in houses made of wood and woven palm leaves. These materials are easy to come by but lack durability in the harsh dry, and extremely wet monsoon, seasons. Not long after they are built, it is common for this style of house to end up with missing walls and holes in the roof, meaning that each time it rains the inside of the house floods. If the household is all female, or a house of children living alone, they are incredibly vulnerable to home invasions, theft, or worse. This quarter we have provided new homes for three families who truly needed them. Families that receive house builds are assessed on multiple criteria: such as their current living conditions; how many people will live in the house; whether it is a female- or a child-headed household; and if there is a parent or guardian, what is their dedication to their children’s education. Once approved, the build is a collaborative process and the family is involved in the planning and construction. We source materials from the local markets to support the local economy and the family choose a local builder they trust. On completion of her new home, one mother said to us, “I’m so happy to have a proper house; now my daughter won’t have to work anymore to earn money. She can just focus on her education”.

free to shine
freetoshine.org