



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **IN CONVERSATION WITH CHILDREN OF THE MEKONG, WHY GIVING BACK IS GOOD FOR YOU**

Wandsworth, London, Monday 24 June 2019

As part of [Small Charity Week](#), the Mayor of Wandsworth, [Councillor Jane Cooper](#) and Consort Mr Arnold Cooper attended the event "In conversation with Children of the Mekong: why giving back is good for you".

The event, held on the longest day of the year on Friday 21 June 2019 at [Hotel Xenia](#) was moderated by Riffi Khan, Creative Director of [Sunflower Productions](#) who interviewed the Trustees about the local charity Children of the Mekong on Lavender Hill, and what drives them to run a small charity.

A [short documentary film](#) was previewed during the evening on the extraordinary life of a young Cambodian adult sponsored by Children of the Mekong.

Madam Mayor, Councillor Jane Cooper said: "I only received the invitation earlier this week, but I had to come because I've been to Cambodia and seen first-hand how young people were surprised to see someone of my age. My generation was absent after the Pol Pot regime. I am delighted that such a wonderful charity is based so locally to me and I will do everything I can to support them."

Riffi Khan, Creative Director of Sunflower Productions, said: "I am fascinated by stories of why people set up small charities, especially as time poor Londoners. Effectively taking on extra work for no pay and little recognition. This was an opportunity to understand what drives them and to support a cause that is close to my heart. I'm sure we would all like to know how giving back can benefit us in our lives and that it is not a one-way street"

Jean-Marc Debricon, co-founder of the charity Children of the Mekong said: "Running a small charity is a lot of sweat and hard work but being small is our strength as it forces us to be lean and efficient. Children of the Mekong supports children to go to school in South East Asia and our charity shop on 22 Lavender Hill SW11 not only provides our office base but finances our education centre in Cambodia."

Laure Lagrange, Trustee of Children of the Mekong said: "I have been a Trustee of Children of the Mekong for 5 years and it is an absolute honour to be part of this great family and to be on a mission that gives children and young adults the opportunity to change their lives for the better. When you see it happen before your eyes - as it has with Kosal and Chhengtay, the first two beneficiaries of our [London Scholarship programme](#) - there is nothing more rewarding."

Julia Goh, Trustee of Children of the Mekong said: "We had a no gifts policy at our wedding, and instead asked our friends and family to support children in need of a good education in Cambodia by building a school. We raised enough funds to build 2 schools, teaching about 600 children. We sponsor 12 children now and when we travel out there to visit them, taking them out for lunch (with their favourite treats - soda and ice-cream), shopping for essential clothes items, it is such an enriching experience to be with them. Their motivation to better their lives, their gratitude and their joy and laughter is an inspiration to all of us and it is a privilege for us to be part of their lives."

\*\*\*\*\*

### **The Mayor of Wandsworth Councillor Jane Cooper addresses the audience**



Left to Right: Jean-Marc Debricon, Chairman of Children of the Mekong; Laure Lagrange, Trustee; Julia Goh, Trustee; The Mayor of Wandsworth Councillor Jane Cooper and Riffi Khan, Creative Director of Sunflower Productions

**The Mayor of Wandsworth Councillor Jane Cooper with a few Trustees of Children of the Mekong**



Left to Right: Jean-Marc Debricon, Chairman of Children of the Mekong; Julia Goh, Trustee; Eugenie Munakarmi, COO; The Mayor of Wandsworth Councillor Jane Cooper; Laure Lagrange, Trustee and Arnold Cooper, Consort of the Mayor

***More Pictures available on request***

**Media contact**

Laure Lagrange  
Trustee - Children of the Mekong  
Mobile: 07768 698 731  
[Laure.lagrange@me.com](mailto:Laure.lagrange@me.com)

**About Riffi Khan**

Riffi is a TV Creative Director with over 15 years of prime-time Factual television shows under her belt and a global consultant. She fell into TV because of her love of people and telling stories. As founder of Riffi Media and Sunflower Productions, she is happiest giving back and interviewing people who have overcome adversity by creating feel good content.

<http://riffimedia.com/>  
<http://sunflowerproductions.co.uk/>

**About Children of the Mekong**

Children of the Mekong, a UK registered charity (1116375), supports underprivileged children and young adults in South East Asia through education. We are the UK arm of a French charity founded in 1958. Our charity shop and office are located at 22 Lavender Hill in Battersea, London.



<https://www.childrenofthemekong.org/>

[Have you ever thought of sponsoring a child?](#)

[Facebook](#) - [Instagram](#) - [Youtube](#) - [Twitter](#)