

## Cross-Country Ultramarathon the Cambodia Run Challenge Raises Over \$125,000 to Combat Poverty

- This second iteration of the Cambodia Run Challenge will see three volunteer runners, Mark Ferguson, Jonathan Gordon and Alex Reinert, cover 330km in seven days.
- The Run intends to raise awareness of poverty in Cambodia by cutting through some of the poorest villages between Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.
- The Cambodia Run exceeded its initial goal of \$100,000 within weeks from launch and is now working towards its stretch goal of \$200,000.

Phnom Penh, 29 November 2019 – The Cambodia Run Challenge (“the Challenge”) returns for its second iteration, continuing its mission to grow awareness of poverty in Cambodia. The Challenge is the first charity ultramarathon in Cambodia and works to raise funds for Temple Garden Foundation (“TGF”), a charity which engages communities in the Chi Kraeng district.

“We are very excited to once again hit the road for the Cambodia Run Challenge,” said Challenger founder and runner, Mark Ferguson, a former professional cricket player in Hong Kong and Scotland. “The first run in 2017 was a memorable and inspiring experience which pushed our personal boundaries in the name of doing good. I look forward to hitting the road again in this beautiful country with new runners Jonathan and Alex.”

Mark is joined this year by seasoned triathlete and three-time Ironman World Championship participant Alex Reinert and budding runner Jonathan Gordon. On 2 December, they will begin their 330-km long, cross-country odyssey in Phnom Penh, passing through some of the country’s poorest villages before capping off their journey with the Angkor Wat International Half Marathon in Siem Reap on 8 December 2019.

The Challenge has garnered much attention and successfully hit its initial goal of USD\$100,000 weeks after its relaunch in September this year. The Challenge is now working towards its stretch goal of USD\$200,000, buoyed by the generous support of donors and supporters. All proceeds will be funnelled to TGF’s activities in four key areas: children’s education, health, income generation, and sanitation.

“It’s a pleasure for TGF to team up once again with the Cambodia Run Challenge,” said Brad Levitt, co-chair of TGF. “The efforts of the runners go a long way in supporting our initiatives, which have empowered 59 villages and over 50,000 villagers through programmes for vocational training, childhood education, reducing childhood malnutrition and more. With the funds raised by the Challenge, we are able to continue our work to create concrete, sustainable change in the communities we touch.”

According to the [Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2019](#) (MPI), 37.2% of Cambodia’s population still live in poverty despite the country seeing one of the largest reductions in its MPI value<sup>1</sup> (7.1 per cent a year). [An additional 21%](#) of Cambodians are marked as vulnerable to poverty. Although most

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<sup>1</sup> The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is an international measure of acute multidimensional poverty which accounts for deprivations in education, health and access to amenities that affect a person’s standard of living. It complements traditional monetary-based measures of poverty.

Cambodians are living above the poverty line, [the World Bank](#) has reported that a reduction of \$0.50 in consumption per capita for each Cambodian would potentially double the country's poverty rate.

Through TGF's work, 88% of the households in the communities they are involved in have access to working latrines, double of the national average. Over 40,000 enjoy sustainable access to improved water sources, leading to an 83% reduction in waterborne disease cases in the community since 2012.

The Cambodia Run Challenge is also supported by Manulife Cambodia, Contcept Communication and Salween Group Pte Ltd. Donations can be made via the event website, <https://thecambodiarun.com/>.

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About the Cambodian Run Challenge (<https://thecambodiarun.com/>)

Founded in 2017, the Cambodia Run Challenge is a cross-country ultramarathon aimed at raising awareness of poverty in Cambodia. In its second iteration in 2019, the Challenge has exceeded its initial goal to raise USD\$100,000 and is now working towards a stretch goal of USD\$200,000.

The Cambodia Run Challenge 2019 is headed by Mark Ferguson, a former professional cricket player in Hong Kong and Scotland. The Challenge was born after Mark attended a 2016 fundraiser by the Temple Garden Foundation, where he learnt about the work the Foundation was doing. Being a lifelong sportsman, he decided to do a cross-country ultramarathon – something that had not been done in Cambodia before.

All funds collected by the Challenge will go to Temple Garden Foundation, a charity which creates concrete, sustainable change for impoverished rural communities in Cambodia.

About Temple Garden Foundation (<https://www.tgfcambodia.com/>)

Founded in 2008, Temple Garden Foundation works in partnership with rural villages in Cambodia to improve livelihoods through sustainable development and the empowerment of communities.

The Foundation support projects which maximise community participation and minimise external support in four interconnected areas: children's education, health, income generation, and sanitation.

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