



Aziza's Place is a living and learning center for impoverished children located in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, founded in partnership with the Aziza Ghorri Charitable Foundation (Aziza Foundation). In 2006, Amjad and Fauzia Ghorri visited Cambodia to oversee the filming of a documentary about an orphanage in the Tonle Bassac region of Phnom Penh. It was there that they met Nader Ebrahimi, who had been working to improve conditions at the orphanage for several months whilst working as a freelance filmmaker.

Amjad and Fauzia initially tried to work with the management of the existing orphanage, but soon realized that the only way to implement the change they wanted to see was to open their own center in their daughter Aziza's name. Nader took on the direction of the project, and on February 14, 2007 Aziza's Place opened its doors to 14 children. To date, Aziza's Place has grown to 24 children, with over a quarter from Tonle Bassac and the majority from Stoeng Meanchey, Phnom Penh's municipal dump site.

Stoeng Meanchey is a 3-acre rubbish dump at the edge of Phnom Penh; every day hundreds of people eke out a living picking garbage for up to 12 hours at a time, to redeem one dollar a day. The children often come to Aziza's Place with a myriad of health issues, including chronic lung infections, intestinal worms, scabies and infected abrasions, to name a few. Most of the children we work with have no prior formal education, as their families were too impoverished to pay the daily school fees required here in Cambodia.

Once a suitable facility was found and renovated, 14 children between the ages of six and fourteen were recruited based on prior education, poverty level and family situation.

Today, this number has risen to 24. The children at Aziza's Place receive three nutritious meals a day, have access to medical and dental care, and have 24-hour supervision. Each child is enrolled in school full time; the children spend half the day at the local public school, and the rest of the day studying at Aziza's Place. Here, a skilled team instructs them in English, computer, mathematics, geography, art (including sketching, clay sculpting, craft making, Photoshop, photography) and karate. In the evening, they study Apsara dance and traditional Khmer music.

For more information on Aziza's Place, please visit [www.azizafoundation.org/cambodia](http://www.azizafoundation.org/cambodia).



*Aziza's Place works in three areas: basic education, art education, and health care. At present, we are looking to expand our health care program via a unique, holistic pilot program that will ensure the children not only are protected against preventable illnesses via vaccinations, but that they are educated about their bodies and can spread this education to their families as well as fellow villagers.*

*The health care of the children at the Centre is an acute and principal concern at present. The children come from Stoeng Meanchey primarily, where they would traverse over mounds of trash for hours and hours every day. The children would often come into contact with discarded cadavers and needles, as well as human excrement and molten piles of rubbish. Serious health concerns include unsuitable drinking water, contaminated food, insect and parasite infestations (particularly in the children's stomachs), as well as chronic lung infections, Hepatitis A & B and HIV/AIDS.*

*It is our express desire to provide the children we serve with a full gauntlet of vaccinations so as to guarantee them a lifetime of safety against some of the world's most preventable diseases. The vaccinations the children will be provided include the following: polio, DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis), pneumococcal, meningococcal, typhoid, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, tuberculosis, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and Japanese Encephalitis. Worm treatment will be provided to those in need.*

*In addition to the vaccinations, we want to outfit a room at Aziza's Place with a comprehensive, well-supplied medical room where we can treat the children who have both chronic and acute health issues. Four of our children came to Aziza's Place after losing their parent/parents to HIV, AIDS and/or TB. These children deserve access to high-quality medical care so we can protect them against the same fate.*

*Included in the cost of the medical center is the cost of a part time, on-call nurse. The nurse can and will be available 24 hours a day if one of the children falls ill; this person would come to Aziza's Place to diagnose the ill child and treat accordingly. Also, this person would be required to keep detailed medical information on the children, including their blood test results, vaccination records, and records of each and every time they were ill, what treatments*

were given, as well as their height/weight so that their overall health can be carefully monitored.

In addition to providing the children with the vaccinations and building the medical centre, we seek funding for educational 'seminars' given by Dr Chenda Lim, a highly educated Khmer physician who has been working with children from Stoeng Meanchey for the past 3 years and is an expert in their living circumstances. Dr Chenda is part of team of physicians at the American Medical Center, which is overseen by Dr Reid Sheftall, a American doctor who studied at MIT.

These sessions will take place approximately twice a month, for a six month period. Topics will include food groups, how and why food gives us energy, what diseases, infections and viruses are (inc HIV, AIDS, Avian Flu, Hepatitis, Dengue fever, etc), 'our changing bodies' education for the children age 11 and over, hygiene (hand washing, teeth brushing, etc), first aid, plus great and overall emphasis on how to keep one's body safe and healthy, guarded against illness. The physician would be required to create a written curriculum for the children to learn off of, as well as conduct periodic written examinations to monitor the children's absorption of the material.