

Lien AID Annual Report | Issue FY2016

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# W A T E R



IS LUXURY, BUT IT SHOULDN'T BE.



*8 out of 10 people without improved drinking water sources live in rural areas.*

\*Source: World Health Organisation 2015

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# The Gift of Water

Clean water and sanitation is fundamental to the well-being and prosperity of a community. Over the past ten years, we have worked directly with communities to implement clean water and sanitation projects in Asia, and in the process touched the lives of more than 900,000 people.

Experience in our early years helped us understand the importance of local government support and the need to change health behaviours and attitudes. We found that rural communities in Asia which were already poor due to geographical barriers and isolation, were further disadvantaged as agencies tend to prioritise providing clean water access to the more accessible communities. We also realised the need to engage and support communities in the initial years after completion of new infrastructure.

We began to concentrate our resources on last-mile communities in Asia, where we know our work can make the greatest impact. We learned to tailor our solutions to work with, rather than against, existing political and institutional structures. Local government participation and capacity building, community outreach, regular monitoring and post-project support, are now crucial components of our programmes and initiatives.

More than 200 million people in Asia still lack access to clean water and sanitation but we believe that the financial and human resources, and technological solutions to this challenge exist. We know that individual efforts, including ours, are insufficient, and are actively seeking collaboration at a wider scale to tackle the complex and systemic challenges that prevent clean water and sanitation access in last-mile communities. To achieve sustainable access, we are also experimenting with different approaches to empower local communities and governments to help themselves.

We will continue to act as an enabler and as a catalyser, striving for the day when sustainable access to clean water and sanitation becomes a reality for everyone.

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*Access to clean water and sanitation is estimated to lead to an additional 272 million school-attendance days for children each year.*

*\*Source: World Health Organisation*

# Our Journey

## Formative Years

### 2006 to 2009

Lien AID began in 2006 seeking to improve the quality of life in developing countries by addressing basic water and sanitation needs. Our early years were spent experimenting and exploring different approaches, technologies, geographies and focal areas.

## From Projects to Programmes

### 2010 to 2013

This period marked the transition from the delivery of individual projects to a more focused and structured programmatic approach, leading to the creation of our current flagship programmes. We also strengthened the educational and community outreach elements of our work to influence the behaviour of local communities.

## Sustaining and Scaling Impact

### 2014 to Present

Moving away from an infrastructure delivery approach to a service delivery approach, we are now working on sustaining, improving, and scaling positive outcomes of our flagship programmes in existing and new geographies.

150k

515k

906k  
beneficiaries

### Communal & Institutional Sanitation

In 2006, we started constructing public sanitation complexes - "WaterLoo Stations" for urban communities. These evolved into integrated WASH facilities for schools and district hospitals, which were replicated across Cambodia, China, and Vietnam.

### Sanitation Marketing

In 2010, we pioneered a national WASH campaign in Cambodia using social marketing to promote household WASH products and services and strengthened the supply chain for such products.

### Community Water Enterprise (CWE)

In 2011, we launched the CWE programme to establish community-owned small-scale businesses providing treated drinking water to rural poor communities living in floating and flood prone locations.



### Post-project Monitoring

In 2014, we began to collect performance data of water services established under our 2 flagship programmes so as to improve the effectiveness of our work.

### Domestic and Agricultural Solutions

Through our Water for Life and Livelihood, and Village Development projects initiated in 2007, we built water infrastructure and gave basic agricultural training to improve rural livelihoods in China and Vietnam.



### National Hygiene Campaign



To encourage safe hygiene behaviour, we worked with popular Vietnamese celebrity Xuan Bac on a nationwide behavioural change campaign in 2010.

### Global Charity Award

In 2011, we were recognised by the Soong Ching Ling Foundation for our efforts in Yunnan, Sichuan and Shanxi.

### Village Water Management (VWM)

The VWM programme was launched in 2012 to train Student Village Officers to champion and implement water solutions for rural poor mountain villages in China.



# Our Achievements in 2016



3 COUNTRIES • 111 VILLAGES • 19,474 HOUSEHOLDS

*Convenient water supply and sanitation services are estimated to provide time savings of 20 billion working days per year as well as an additional 320 million productive days gained due to improved health.*

*\*Source: World Health Organisation*



# The Jaggery Trader



**Pilot Project in Tetma Village, Myanmar**

A solar-powered and gravity-fed piped water distribution system was extended from an existing tube well to eight water points at six surrounding hamlets, bringing access to clean water closer to 1,400 villagers.

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***“The people here are my family, my relatives and my friends. My biggest motivation is to improve life for them.”***

*U Maung Win, Water Management Committee Member*

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Ko Hmat Kyi, 46, is a small business owner in Tetma village, Myanmar. He supports his family through his palm tree and vegetable plantations. To make enough jaggery for trading, he has to climb 30 tall palm trees twice a day. In the past, Ko Hmat Kyi had no choice but to send his eldest son to fetch water in the day as his time was fully occupied with his jaggery business.

To get clean water, his son often had to travel to a neighbouring village and queue for two to three hours to wait for his turn. This also meant that on days when he went to collect water, he would have to miss school.

Ko Hmat Kyi reflected that gaining better access to clean water has not only made life more convenient for his family, but it also led to an improvement in the school grades of his eldest son. He was able to pass his university entrance exams and now studies at an university in the city of Yangon.

ON THIS PAGE: A man climbs a palm tree in Tetma village. Strapped to his waist are earthen pots used to collect the sugary sap that is used to make jaggery, a major source of income for the villagers.

# Community Water Enterprise

The Community Water Enterprise (CWE) programme applies the principles of a social enterprise model delivered by training selected water entrepreneurs and local governments. There are now 64 Community Water Enterprises operated by local village entrepreneurs across 10 provinces in Cambodia, providing access to treated drinking water for nearly 300 rural villages.

*“Life has gotten better, I can earn income and spend more time with my family. We now use clean water for drinking and cooking. My children are healthier.”*

*Sou Sok, Water Entrepreneur*



64

**Community Water Enterprises**

77%

**of communities had increased take-up rate of treated water after the 1st year of operations**

5%

**of entrepreneurs' earnings go back to the community**

\*Percentages are averaged across projects.

# The Lady Boss

**S**e Hin came to Anglong Tean village from Vietnam 20 years ago in search of a better life. She started off by working long, strenuous hours as a farmer. One year, the area was hit by a big flood and her crops were destroyed, taking with them her only source of income. Unwilling to let her young children go hungry, she took a bank loan and opened a provision shop.

Before the Community Water Enterprise was established in Borey Cholsar Commune, Se Hin had to buy imported water or fetch water daily. Today, with better access to affordable clean water, she can finally make more porridge and coffee to sell, and earn more income to support her family.

“Business is good now”, she told me. “People used to spend twice as much on imported water from Vietnam. Now they have more money to buy snacks and drinks. I have more income to send my children to school.”



# Village Water Management

The Village Water Management programme in China delivers clean water projects through Student Village Officers living and working in rural poor communities with acute water needs. There are now 66 rural piped water schemes operated by village committees across 7 provinces in China, providing clean water access to rural households in 32 counties.

*“The learning curve was steep but it was a great experience which allowed me to grow from a young graduate into a mature grassroots worker.”*

*Zhang Li, Student Village Officer*

**1,074**

**Student Village Officers**

**66**

**rural piped water schemes**

**63%**

**funded by local contributions**

\*Percentages are averaged across projects.



# The Last Fall

**W**ang Bangxian lives in Tiantaishan village, Guizhou province, China. On a rainy day many years ago, she set off on the journey home after fetching buckets full of water. In a hurry to get home to her infant son, she tripped and fell, breaking her foot and spilling the water. For half a month afterwards, Wang Bangxian was bedridden. Her husband had to sacrifice farming time to fetch water for the family. As farmers who depend solely on their crops for income, their livelihood was threatened.

Over time, she was able to get back to her normal routine but her foot still hurts to this day. Wang Bangxian was overjoyed when Village Water Management (VWM) programme brought access to clean piped water right to her home. She no longer has to carry heavy loads of water along treacherous mountain roads, and has more time for farming and raising livestock.



# Advocacy & Outreach

**A**s part of our efforts to increase global awareness of our work and our mission, in 2016, we participated at the World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden, and organised a conference and commendation event in Beijing, China.

## **Commendation Ceremony & Conference in Beijing, China**

We organised our first conference and commendation event in Beijing in May where we took the opportunity to share the programme outcomes as a result of our strategic partnership with the China Association of Poverty Alleviation and Development in the last five years. Commendation awards were presented to outstanding student village officers, local partners, individual and corporate donors at the event. Government authorities and local media also participated in the event.

## **World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden**

We exhibited at the 2016 World Water Week in Stockholm, to raise awareness of our work in Asia. The thematic focus for World Water Week in Stockholm 2016 was “Water for sustainable growth”. The Week also included topics on the implementation of water-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the new climate agreement.

Using the tagline “Clean water is Luxury | Clean water is For Everyone”, through our booth, we highlighted the difference in clean water accessibility between developed and rural areas. The booth received positive response from people who visited the exhibition.



# Water is Luxury

*Singapore is a city of luxury that plays host to lavish social life and many designer brands. But there is one home-grown luxury that few talk about: access to clean water.*

In Asia, access to clean water is a luxury many cannot afford. For millions of rural poor in the region, clean water can be up to 1,260 times less affordable than in Singapore.

But few Singaporeans know about this. To raise awareness of the crisis, we decided to turn clean water in Singapore into the luxury water brand, Eau.

We launched “Asia’s most expensive water”, priced at \$1,260 a bottle in Singapore’s CBD and invited hundreds of guests into our water bar for a taste. It was there they learnt about the water crisis in Asia and our ongoing efforts to bring clean water to the region.

Response to the campaign was amazing, and the videos were viewed more than 1,000,000 times.

## What people are saying:

*“It’s actually a very thought provoking campaign to make you realise that how precious clean drinking water is when most of the time we took it for granted, while some of our neighbouring countries are deprived of (it).”*

- Dennis Yeo, Facebook user

*“I think this is a phenomenally run campaign about educating people.”*

- Guest at the pop-up water bar

*“Millions of ppl (people) in Southeast Asia still drinking from rivers and rain water...appreciate what we have!!!”*

- Minh Quan, Facebook user

## Key highlights of our campaign:

**400**

visitors at the water bar

**1.38M**

accumulated video views

**424K**

visits to our campaign microsite

**67%**

growth in mailing list subscribers



# Not a Commodity, But a Luxury

**W**hen volunteers Min and Garima set off for Siem Reap, they were excited to discover the city but equally anxious to contribute effectively. They had been working together with Conjoint Consulting on a evaluation study for Lien AID to better understand villagers' perspective of clean water and the Community Water Enterprise initiative.

Over the course of one week, they spoke to more than 100 households in the communes of Msar Krang and Ta An. They ran focused group interviews to gain a better understanding of the real situation on the ground. The group also went door-to-door, and was often overwhelmed by the warm Khmer hospitality they received.

Throughout the trip, the pair experienced life in the suburbs; from sipping warm Khmer tea with noodles and rice in the early morning, to venturing around the villages on bike. They also had countless conversations with everyone from the village chief, water promoters, entrepreneurs, the water management committee to the villagers – and heard many different perspectives. More importantly, they began to understand the importance of clean water to the rural poor.

“Having lived in cities most of our lives, we often overlook the value and significance of clean water given our easy access to it, especially in Singapore where water is potable”, they reflected.

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*“We embarked on this journey with a mentality to contribute whatever we can, but gained much more from the conversations and kind hospitality from the local team and the villagers.”*

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Min and Garima had embarked on the journey with the mentality to contribute whatever they could, but instead gained much more from the conversations and kind hospitality they received in Cambodia. Their experience taught them a lesson – to cherish what you have and be appreciative of it.



# Together, We Make Change

In 2016, Lien AID brought clean water to more than 89,000 rural poor in Cambodia, China and Myanmar. This was made possible through our continued efforts to forge close alliances with local communities and partners, to whom we would like to express our deepest gratitude:

- AECOM
- Allen & Gledhill
- CITIC Envirotech
- Embassy of the Czech Republic to the Kingdom of Cambodia
- Green Cross International - Armani
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Singapore
- Ministry of Rural Development Cambodia - Asian Development Bank
- Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation
- Sabana Real Estate Investment Management
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Cambodia

## Implementing Partners:

- China Association of Poverty Alleviation and Development
- Provincial Department of Rural Development Cambodia
- Myanmar Engineering Society



Ms. Dee Dee Lau at the Lien AID commendation award ceremony in 2016 in Beijing.

In 2016:

**\$1,362,603**

received in funding from local governments and communities.

**\$427,373**

received in funding from third party donors.

**At Lien AID, 100% of third-party funding goes directly towards our clean water projects.**

**We look forward to partnerships with more non-profits, private sector organisations and governments to enable a future where everyone can have sustainable access to clean water and sanitation.**

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***“What my colleagues and I found to be particularly meaningful is that we are using our own professional experience and expertise to support the project and resolve drinking water issues in rural China... I personally feel that it is my most successful project in my history of working with the company.”***

*Ms. Dee Dee Lau,  
CITIC Envirotech*

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# Our Governance

## Board of Directors:

Michael Sim  
Chairman

Alex Koo  
Director

Ong Lay Khiam  
Director

Steve Puckett OBE  
Director

Lee Poh Wah  
Director

Elaine Lim  
Director

Tan Chin Hwee  
Director

Puah Aik Num  
Director

Tan Soon Keat  
Director

The Board of Directors provides leadership to the Management, sets strategic vision, direction and long-term objectives for Lien Aid. It exercises active oversight on all the activities of Lien Aid and ensures that proper and effective internal systems are in place to monitor the achievement of Lien Aid's goals and long-term objectives.

Our Directors, who are all non-executive, receive no remuneration and successful leaders in their respective fields, collectively, bring a broad and diverse range of expert knowledge, skills and experience. Directors are elected on a 2-year term basis and generally, do not serve more than three consecutive terms.

The Board meets at least three times a year and more frequently when needed. The Board establishes Board Committees as necessary, to assist it in the discharge of its functions. The key committees that have been established are set out below.

### **Audit Committee: Ong Lay Khiam (Chairman), Michael Sim, Alex Koo, Puah Aik Num**

The Audit Committee reviews the audit plan of external auditors and assistance given by the Company's officers, the annual financial statements and the auditor's report on annual financial statements before submission to the Board of Directors, the effectiveness of the Company's material internal controls including risk management and the legal and regulatory matter that may have a material impact on the financial statements, related compliance policies and programmes.

### **Partnership Committee: Steve Puckett OBE (Chairman), Elaine Lim, Lee Poh Wah, Tan Chin Hwee**

The Partnership Committee works between the Board and the Executive team to develop, consider, review and recommend partnering arrangements to members of the Board, with the aim of furthering the reach and effectiveness of Lien AID.

### **Technical Advisory Panel: Puah Aik Num (Chairman), Tan Soon Keat**

The Technical Advisory Panel reviews technical conceptual and design proposals of all selected projects prior to construction tender, provides advice on how to resolve specific issues/ potential issues that arise for particular projects, and brings in volunteers with the necessary technical skills and experience, who can provide Lien AID with on-site technical assistance for specific projects.

## Key Financial Management Policies

### **Reserves Policy:**

Lien AID's programmes are principally funded by contributions from the Lien Foundation. We work closely with our principal contributor for our funding needs and aim to hold adequate funds to meet our operating expenditure and ongoing programmes.

### **Conflict of Interest:**

All directors, members of sub-committees and staff of Lien AID are required to read, understand and follow the conflict of interest policy and make full disclosure of interest, relationships and holding that could potentially result in conflict of interests. All directors and key management staff are required to make an annual declaration of any or no conflict of interests.

## Our Core Values

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**Innovation**

**Constant Learning**

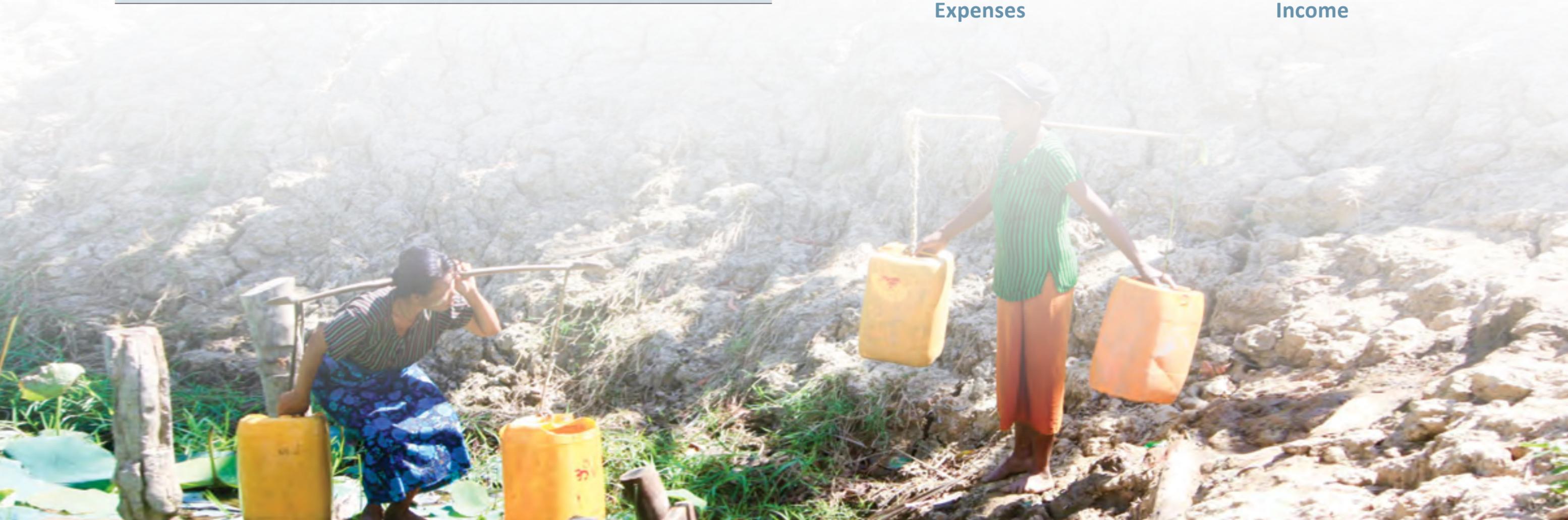
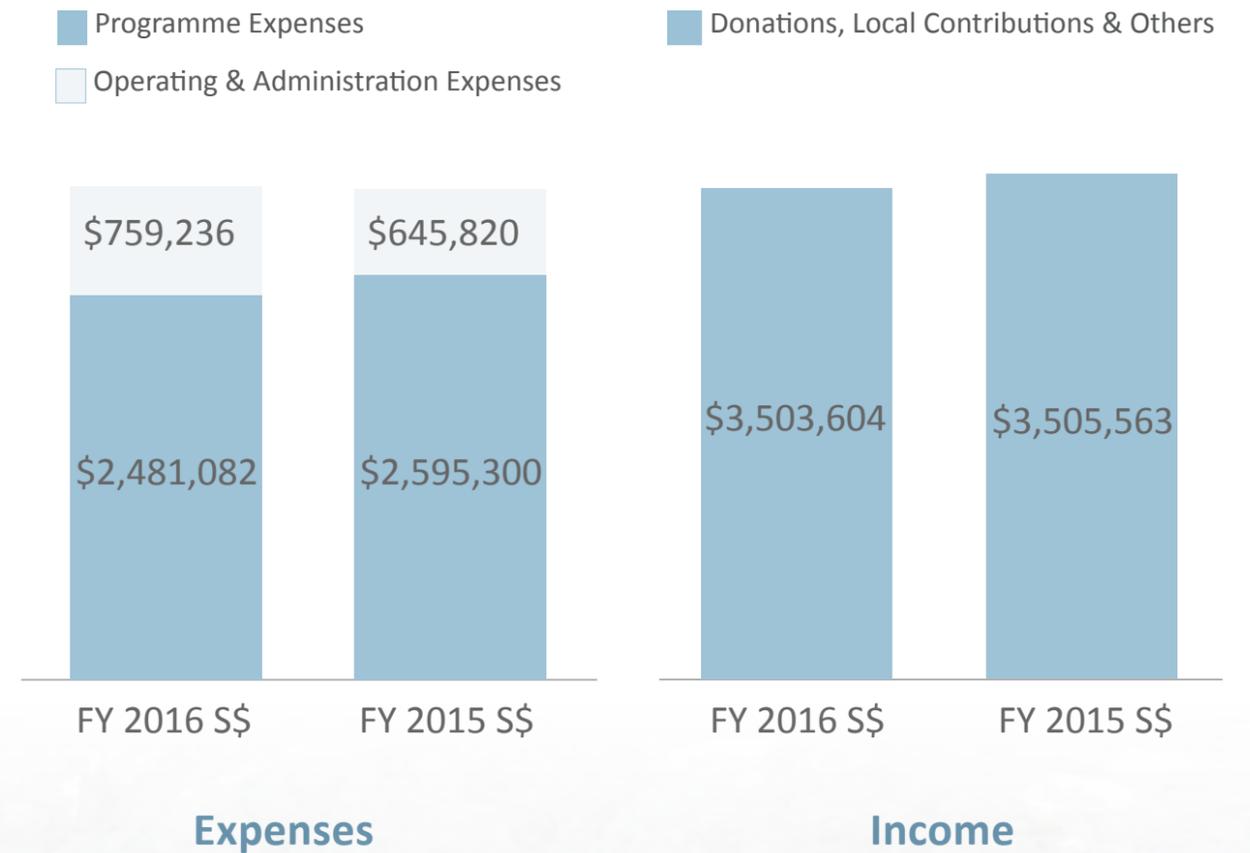
**Effective Teamwork**

**Accountability**

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# Financial Statements

FUND (In Singapore Dollars)		FY 2016 S\$	FY 2015 S\$
Grants/ Funds/ Other Income	\$	3,503,604	\$ 3,505,563
<b>TOTAL FUND</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,503,604</b>	<b>\$ 3,505,563</b>
Expenses			
Programme Costs	\$	2,481,082	\$ 2,595,300
Other Operating and Administration Costs	\$	759,236	\$ 645,820
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>3,240,318</b>	<b>\$ 3,241,120</b>





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