

2023 IN FIGURES

23,927 children sponsored
 70,000 children supported
 1,074 sponsorship programmes
 177 development programmes
 (of which one in France)
 1,300 volunteers
 116 local staff employed in Asia
 70 local groups in France
 and overseas
 51 overseas volunteers based in Asia
 46 staff (in France and three overseas)
 8 trainees
 Expenditure of € 15.3m, of which:
 - 83.6 % charitable expenditure
 - 10.6 % fundraising costs
 - 5.8 % operating costs
 Income of €15.0m
 Voluntary contributions
 valued at €3.6m



Dear Friends,

The most significant achievement of 2023 was that, thanks to you, we managed to increase charitable expenditure in support of the least privileged families of Southeast

Asia by about €1.0m, despite the difficult economic situation.

Other 2023 headlines :

- Children of the Mekong (COTM) is in a strong financial position. We **ended the year with a surplus of €14,983.**
- We again **increased the number of children that we sponsor – to almost 24,000.**
- We **ran 1,074 sponsorship programmes**, with an average of 22 children per programme. They **involved around 1,000 local volunteer staff** in parishes, villages, shanty towns and boarding houses.
- We also **increased the number of development programmes** that we ran. There were 177 in 2023 (11% more than in 2022), involving expenditure of €4.048m.
- We **introduced an innovative system of communication between children and their sponsors**, featuring systematic monitoring of content by our ethics and correspondence committees.
- We **responded to the harrowing consequences of the civil war in Myanmar** with extraordinary measures involving expenditure of close to €5.0m since 1 February 2021, broken down as follows:
 - €2.5m on sponsoring around 3,000 children
 - €0.8m on food aid
 - €1.4m on informal schools

- We **are supporting a growing number of young people to continue into higher education**, supplementing student sponsorship with study grants. Expenditure in 2023 was €0.224m.

- To complement our provision of educational, moral and sponsorship support **we spent €2.16m on holistic training** – accommodating around 2,000 young people in boarding houses and other centres, providing nursery classes, running summer camps and offering all sorts of educational and leisure activities. This was 11% more than in 2022.

- **Our international volunteers (known as Bamboos) continued to work with enthusiasm, achieving great results.** Much appreciated by local managers, they currently number 51 in the field.

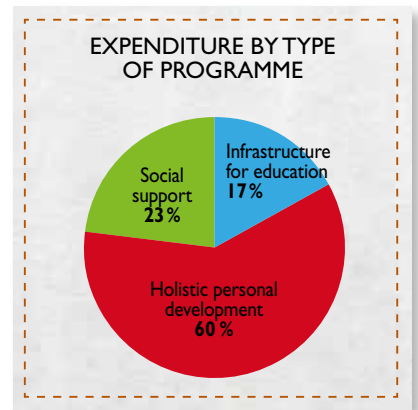
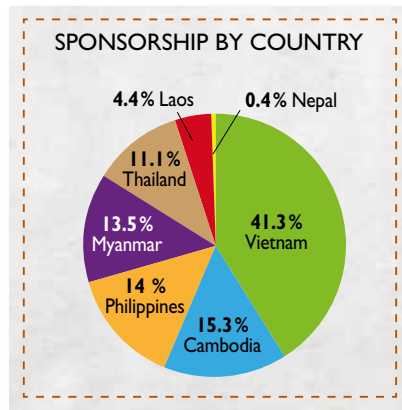
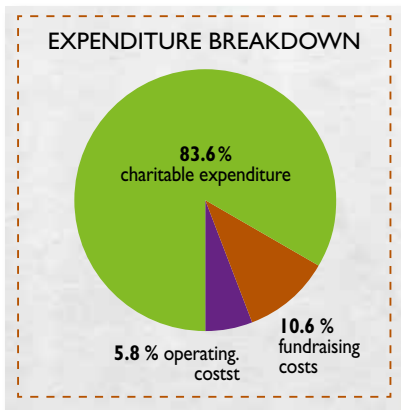
We are hugely grateful too for the unfailing commitment of all our volunteers, local group representatives and staff, and for the fierce loyalty of our sponsors and donors. Please accept this heartfelt expression of our gratitude for all that you do for COTM.

The 2023 accounts were approved by the auditors and adopted unanimously at the Annual General Meeting on 13 June 2024. **Thanks to you we can continue to pursue our goal** of ensuring that disadvantaged children grow over time to play a leading role in the development of their countries. Thank you for your loyal support.

Alain Deblock, President, Children of the Mekong



Children of the Mekong



Expenditure this financial year

The accounts split expenditure into three categories:

1. CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE (expenditure on programme delivery and management in Asia and in France)

Total charitable expenditure on COTM operations in 2023 increased by 7% to €12.804m. This is 40% more than in 2017, in a clear demonstration of how we are doing more and more to support the poorest children and families of Southeast Asia. **Charitable expenditure accounted for 83.6% of all expenditure in the year.**

Child sponsorship - 23,937 children were being sponsored at year end, 392 more than at the end of 2022. In the year 1,641 sponsorships started and 1,264 came to an end. As in 2022, numbers increased most in Myanmar and in Cambodia. Sponsorship rates, last adjusted in 2017, are currently €28 for school pupils and €43 for students in higher education (who represent 8% of the total number of young people being sponsored). 87% of sponsors support a given individual (with whom they correspond), and 13% contribute to the costs of running boarding houses and education centres. The cost of running the child sponsorship programme increased to €1.61m.



Development programmes - To complement the child sponsorship programme we undertook 177 development programmes in Asia, at a total cost of €4.049m (inclusive of programme administration and management costs of €0.439m). **They were of three main types:**

- **Supply of basic essentials and social support** - Projects designed to ensure that children have a decent standard of living, including food aid, health services, house-building and renovation and support for social structures.
 - HEALTH, HYGIENE, NUTRITION, BASIC ESSENTIALS: 50 PROJECTS
 - HOUSE-BUILDING AND RENOVATION: 7
 - EQUIPMENT FOR FAMILIES OR SOCIAL STRUCTURES: 6
 - OTHER SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL STRUCTURES: 13
 - SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: 2 (SOIERIES DU MEKONG SILK-WEAVERS OF THE MEKONG)

- **Infrastructure for education** - Building schools, and boarding houses near schools for children living in remote areas. Provision of educational equipment and materials. Supply of means of transport (bicycles, school buses).

- CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION OF SCHOOLS: 8 PROJECTS
- CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION OF BOARDING HOUSES: 16
- EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS: 12
- SCHOOL TRANSPORT: 19

- **Holistic training** - Projects included the development of all of the following:

- EDUCATION CENTRES AND BOARDING HOUSES ACCOMMODATING ABOUT 2,000 YOUNG PEOPLE (10 CENTRES IN CAMBODIA AND THE PHILIPPINES AND 77 BOARDING HOUSES IN OTHER COUNTRIES)
- INFORMAL SCHOOLS IN MYANMAR
- NURSERY SCHOOLS IN NEARLY ALL OF THE COUNTRIES IN WHICH WE ARE PRESENT
- PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES (PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, MANAGEMENT OF FAMILY FINANCES, SELF-REFLECTION ETC)
- TEACHER TRAINING, ORIENTATION WORKSHOPS, STUDY GRANTS ETC
- NETWORKS OF SPONSORED ALUMNI

In France, our two main social initiatives are “*J’ai un rêve*” (*Act for your dreams*) which introduces schoolchildren to Children of the Mekong and encourages social responsibility, and support for the master’s programme in international development and humanitarian aid (*cursus solidarit *

internationale et action sociale) at IRCOM in Angers. Expenditure on COTM projects in France in 2023 totalled €54,174.

2. FUNDRAISING AND COMMUNICATION COSTS

At €1.638m these costs accounted for 10.6% of total expenditure. They included Soeries du Mekong sales costs of €0.228m.

The main communication and fundraising activities were as follows:

- Events: like the Hong Kong exhibition of contemporary art and, for the second time, an evening held at *Les Folies Gruss* (which hosts equestrian, aerial, acrobatic and comic spectacles)

- Also for the second time, a programme *Dîners en Vert* (green dinners) held in France and elsewhere in which 1,300 sponsors took part

- A campaign entitled "Give the gift of sponsorship"

- A poster campaign donated by JCDcaux (a leading multinational outdoor advertising corporation based near Paris)

- Extensive media activities

- Partnerships with more than 50 commercial organisations and charitable foundations

- Encouraging legacy giving

- More use of IT to facilitate online donations

- And last but not least, numerous events organised by local groups of volunteers: golf tournaments, concerts, plays, Christmas markets etc

3. OPERATING COSTS

At €0.882m operating costs (salaries and office costs) accounted for 5.8% of all expenditure. They were 18% up on 2022 in the light of some exceptional items and of inflation but remain well under control overall.

4. SOIERIES DU MEKONG

Sales were up 11% on 2022 at €0.401m, of which €51,000 were made in Asia. There are 69 employees in Cambodia, of whom 95% are women. The project supports 350 people in all. In France there is one salaried member of staff, assisted by an apprentice and several volunteers. ■

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2023 - in euros

EXPENDITURE BY TYPE	Total	Funded by donations
1. Charitable expenditure	12,804,473	12 412 523
1. In France	54,174	0
Expenditure on COTM activities	39,174	0
Payments to a central body or other organisation	15,000	0
1.2. In Asia	12,584,412	12,412,523
Expenditure on COTM activities (in total)	12,584,412	12,412,523
Sponsorships and supplements	8,535,239	8,421,461
Sponsorships	6,684,438	6,683,221
Supplements (sponsored children)	205,410	205,410
Supplements (development programmes)	35,305	35,305
Running sponsorship programmes	1,610,086	1,497,524
Development programmes	4,049,172	3,991,063
Construction / educational equipment and materials	608,156	606,327
Holistic training	2,159,738	2,159,738
Social support and basic necessities	841,936	841,936
Running development programmes	439,342	383,062
1.3. Purchase of Soeries du Mekong products	165,888	0
2. Fundraising costs	1,637,925	1,162,658
2.1. Cost of soliciting donations	1,301,720	1,060,101
2.2. Cost of seeking other financial aid	0	0
2.3. Soeries du Mekong sales costs	228,365	0
2.4. Cost of processing donations and sponsorship monies	107,840	102,557
3. Operating costs	881,754	838,553
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	15,324,152	14 413,734
4. Allocated to provisions and depreciation	11,822	11,822
5. Tax on benefits	1,792	
6. Designated funds carried forward	2,659,724	2,148,724
SURPLUS	14,983	703,471
GRAND TOTAL	18,012,472	17,277,751

INCOME BY TYPE	Total	Funded by donations
1. Income from donors	14,249,285	14 249 285
1.1. Subscriptions without counterparty	830	830
1.2. Donations, legacies and patronage	14,139,672	14,139,672
Donations	13,309,106	13,309,106
Sponsorships	8,056,171	8,056,171
Supplements (sponsored children)	200,690	200,690
Supplements (development programmes)	34,992	34,992
Donations: Bamboos	289,403	289,403
Donations: programmes in Asia	3,562,871	3,562,871
Donations: activities in France	0	0
Donations: services	505,055	505,055
Donations: unallocated	659,924	659,924
Legacies and other unallocated donations	830,566	830,566
Patronage	0	0
1.3. Other	108,783	108,783
Financial income	108,783	108,783
2. Other income (not from donors)	563,392	
2.1. Subscriptions with counterparty	0	
2.2. Financial contributions without counterparty	0	
2.3. Other	563,392	
Sales: Soeries du Mekong	360,443	
Sales: other	202,949	
3. Income from public funds	171,330	
Grants: sponsorships	336	
Grants: Bamboos	168,842	
Grants: programmes in Asia	2,152	
TOTAL INCOME	14,984,007	14,249,285
4. Reversal of provisions and depreciation	83,858	83,858
5. Designated funds brought forward	2,944,607	2,944,607
DÉFICIT	0	0
GRAND TOTAL	18,012,472	17,277,751



CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND 2023 - in euros

EXPENDITURE

Charitable expenditure	1,197,316
Fundraising costs	2,286,818
Operating costs	126,378
TOTAL	3,610,512

INCOME

Volunteering	3,434,467
Benefits in kind	170,622
Donations in kind	5,423
TOTAL	3,610,512

Income this financial year

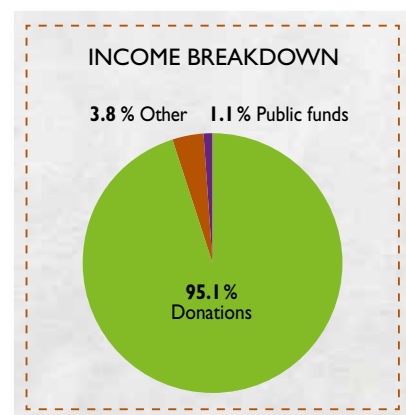
Income in 2023 totalled €14.984m, 4% more than in 2022.

Income from donors was €14.249m, or 95.1% of total income. It took the form of sponsorship (including supplements), donations of various kinds, and legacies. Sponsorship generated €8.274m, or 55% of the total. Sponsorship supplements, allocated in their entirety to activities in the field, were steady at €0.236m. Donations made to support development programmes were slightly down at €3.563m. They came from private companies, charitable foundations and from

individuals. Donations made without restriction (which totalled €0.66m) and legacy donations (of which there were nine in 2023, worth €0.83m in all) both increased.

Income from public funds of €0.171m represented 1.1% of total income. It took the form, in the main, of a grant from the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs to train and support Bamboos, in the field and upon their return, under the auspices of *le Volontariat de Solidarité Internationale* (International Solidarity Volunteering).

Other income came mainly from



sales of Soeries du Mekong products (which generated €0.36m) and of handicraft products by local groups. It accounted for 3.8% of total income. ■

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET 2023 - in euros

ASSETS

	31/12/2023
Intangible fixed assets	0
Tangible fixed assets	1,121,281
Financial fixed assets	296,549
FIXED ASSETS	1,417,830
Stocks	147,794
Prepayments and payments on account	0
Receivables	72,208
Liquid assets	7,800,853
Accruals	67,796
CURRENT ASSETS	8,088,650
Exchange rate loss	0
TOTAL ASSETS	9,506,480

LIABILITIES

	31/12/2023
Associative funds without repossession rights	936,320
Revaluation surplus	
Reserves	3,375,734
Financial year surplus	511,000
Other associative funds	14,983
EQUITY	4,838,038
DESIGNATED FUNDS	4,128,084
PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES	0
Loans and financial liabilities	0
Other liabilities	537,564
LIABILITIES	537,564
Exchange rate gain	2,794
TOTAL LIABILITIES	9,506,480