



FIRST STEP CAMBODIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Protecting Cambodian's children together

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DEAR PARTNERS, DEAR FRIENDS,



Flexibility and adaptation have been two key words for us and our partners in 2020. The impact of the current pandemic has significantly affected our operations. Following our risk management plan and the guidelines from the Ministry of Health we have been obliged to cancel some of our activities involving large group gatherings. We took this as an opportunity to build on the skills of our trainers and social workers which are the essential pieces of our work. Relying on our high standards of operation and our high staff members' value and skills, we innovated with the development of customized training need assessments and training courses for some of our partners. We believe this, coupled with our other capacity building activities is a great contribution to the strengthening of the child protection system in Cambodia. In particular it gives teeth to the Guidelines on basic competencies for the social workforce in Cambodia launched in early 2020.

Our work with the National Committee for Counter Trafficking and the Ministry of Education has also been fruitful: the guidelines created for sexual abuse and trafficking prevention will be integrated into schools curriculum of primary and secondary schools.

The issue of sexual abuse is still a blight on Cambodia's society affecting both boys and girls. As with any other forms of violence, it is a disease we can prevent.

This is why in 2021, we will put all our energy to search for innovative strategies and continue to implement our activities to impact positively on the protection of children in Cambodia, being involved in both prevention and response strategies through our respective direct support and prevention program.

In this long-term battle to protect children from violence and particularly from sexual abuse, having the right information is fundamental to our mission. The workshop we held, where thirty media institutions were represented, aimed to strengthen the capacity of journalists to report sensitively on the topic of sexual violence. Higher levels of quality of information distributed to a national audience will help to raise awareness, involving a wider range of actors and make everyone understand that cases of sexual abuse or violence are not accidental but must be apprehend as a long-term issue resisting to borders and time.

Kindly,

YAIM CHAMREUN

Executive Director First Step Cambodia

YOU MADE THIS POSSIBLE IN 2020



We supported **140 child** survivors of sexual abuse or displaying sexual harmful behaviors.



We supported **146 family members or caregivers** of children survivors of sexual abuse or displaying sexual harmful behaviors.



As a response to Covid-19, **50 of our clients** benefit from a direct, unconditional cash transfer.



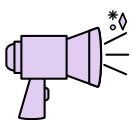
We conducted 53 and supervised 11 workshops reaching **1123 participants**.



A total of **380 child protection practitioners** have been trained through our capacity building program.



We distributed **6864** information educational and communication materials to our target audiences via our networks, events, and program activities.



We delivered a workshop to **40 media professionals** representing **30 media institutions** that shared **12 press items** about our programs.



Our Facebook page, the leading social media channel in Cambodia, has increased by 20%, reaching **3306 followers in December 2020**.



We contribute to the launching of **two systemic guidelines**: the "Guidelines on basic competencies for the social workforce in Cambodia" and the "Educational curriculum on the prevention of human trafficking".

many thanks!



1. DIRECT SUPPORT

TO RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE PANDEMIC ON OUR CLIENTS AND FAMILIES , WE EXPANDED OUR SUPPORT RELYING ON THE COMMITMENT OF OUR SOCIAL WORKERS AND A DEVOTED NETWORK OF PARTNERS.

PRESSURE ON LIVELIHOODS

67 % of Cambodian households, independently of their location in rural or urban areas, have reported having lost income right after the outbreak of Covid-19. 75 % of our clients currently face a high level of economic vulnerability.

In 2020, we supported all our clients through additional income support, food vouchers, in kind supports, hygienic materials (hand sanitizers and masks), and support them in the development of income-generating activities.



FRAGILIZED REFERRALS CHANNELS

Although our caseload is higher than in 2019 (+7%), we could have expected higher numbers. It seems that the school closures has negatively impacted the report of any sorts of violence made to children.

EFFECT OF COVID -19

ONLINE EDUCATION

In 2020, schools were closed for nearly six months in Cambodia, leading to severe disruption in children's routines and lives. In Cambodia, at the national level, 90% of children and 87% of caregivers have reported "(their child) learning only a little at home during school closure"; these statistics reflect our client's situations.

To mitigate these negative impacts, our social workers occasionally supported our clients with their homework and provided them with relevant information, helping them adapt to their new online curriculum.

CLIENT MIGRATION

At the onset of the pandemic, a couple of centers suddenly closed, resulting in children sent back to their communities. Consequently, seven of our clients migrated to different geographical areas and provinces, searching for their family members, negatively impacting our ability to follow-up on their cases.

As we are speaking, we face a third community outbreak in Cambodia and remain extremely vigilant to avoid any sudden migration of our clients by intensifying the frequency of contacts with the relevant caregivers.



IN DECEMBER 2020, WE HAD 286 CASES OPEN: 98 CHILDREN SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE, 42 CHILDREN DISPLAYING SEXUAL HARMFUL BEHAVIORS, 26 FAMILY MEMBERS, AND 120 SUPPORTERS OR CAREGIVERS.

95% OF THE CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS STATED THE SERVICES PROVIDED RESPONDED TO THEIR NEEDS.

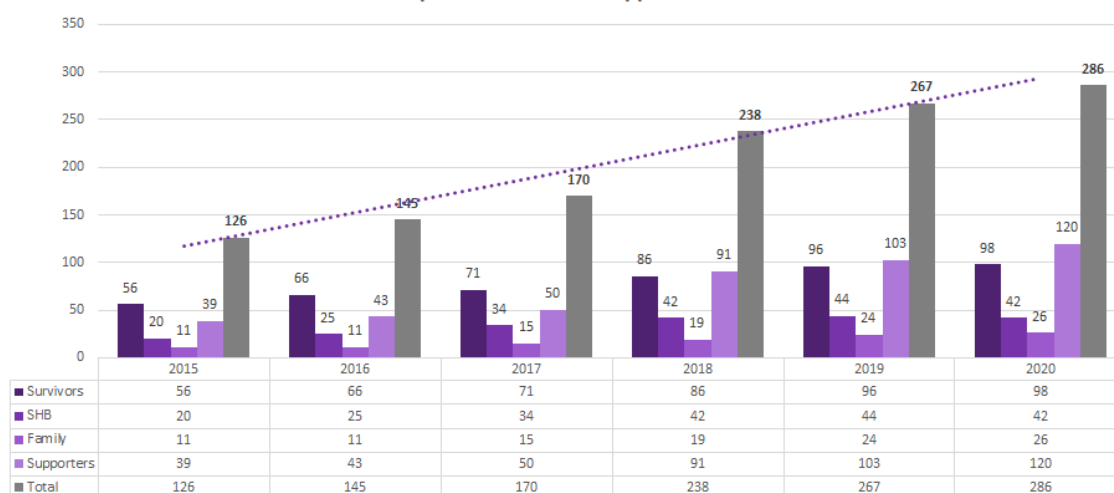
1591 HOME VISITS

50 CASE CONFERENCES

479 PHONE SUPPORT SESSIONS



First Step Cambodia Direct Support 2010-2020



SINCE 2015, OUR CASELOAD HAS INCREASED BY 126% HIGHLIGHTING A CONSTANT RECOGNITION OF OUR SERVICES AMONG OUR PARTNERS. THE GROWTH HAS BEEN STEADY AND WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO BRING SUPPORT TO AN INCREASED NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN 2021.



2. PREVENTION WORKSHOPS

DESPITE A THREE MONTHS BAN FOR GROUP ACTIVITIES, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DELIVER AND SUPERVISE 64 WORKSHOPS (+25% COMPARED TO 2019) REACHING 1123 PARTICIPANTS (+11.85% COMPARED TO 2019) RELYING ON A GROWING NETWORK OF PARTNERS.

Through our prevention workshops we aim to increase the understanding, knowledge, and awareness of those who directly engage with children, including schoolteachers, students, parents, caregivers, villagers, and relevant service providers, and, of course, children themselves. We have developed a range of informative and educational resources and tools. These are delivered in a variety of workshops and forums to both children and adults and distributed for use in organizations and community settings.

Successful results

In 2020, 90 % of children and adults involved in these two workshops reported an increase in their understanding and knowledge of sexual abuse. They felt that their capacity to protect their children increased, while children stated their awareness of the risk associated with sexual abuse was a lot higher.

Focus on the community based workshop

In 2020, we intensified our “Community-based workshops” in different communities.

We ensure the delivery of 10 workshops to “role-models” before supervising 11 workshops duplicated by the role models with their community-members.

These workshops focus on the issue of sexual abuse and the specific vulnerability of boys. 100 % of the role-models reported increasing their knowledge and felt confident in duplicating these workshops to other community members.

We see this approach as a promise for future projects as it allows us to reach an exponential number of individuals, including those living in the most remote areas, while minimizing the cost of the activities.

Our trainers pointed out that the need for supervision from the “role-models” remains critical in order to provide feedback but also to boost their confidence so they can perform well during the sessions they are delivering. A majority of them reported they would continue to raise awareness by organizing additional sessions on their own and reach new community members, both adults, and children.

ENGAGED IN 64 WORKSHOPS

53 WORKSHOPS DIRECTLY CONDUCTED
INCLUDING:

- 14 film workshops
- 29 poster workshops
- 10 community based workshops
- +11 workshops supervised



REACHING 1123 PARTICIPANTS

- 339 through the film workshops
- 618 through the poster workshops
- 166 through the community-based workshops.
- 597 children (+14% compared to 2019)
- 526 adults (+10% compared to 2019)



THE PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED OUR PROGRAMS. BY BEING FLEXIBLE AND INNOVATIVE WE MANAGED TO REACH AT 380 OF SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONALS 2020, REPRESENTING AN INCREASE OF 59% COMPARED TO 2019.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

Our organization provides specialist training, learning, and consultation opportunities to improve professionals' capacity to deliver quality services to children and families affected by sexual abuse, harmful sexual behaviors, and other common psycho-social issues in Cambodia: widespread use of violence or alcohol consumption.

Successful results

91% of the 380 trained professionals show significant improvements in their knowledge of the social issues discussed during training courses. They demonstrated an understanding of how to use the main tools to develop efficient strategies and action plans resulting in higher child's protection outcomes.



SEXUAL HARMFUL BEHAVIORS



Our training courses “Identification and response to children displaying SHB” aims to build the capacity of social work professionals to identify when a child is displaying potential harmful sexual behavior and to provide appropriate and effective initial response. Participants learn to conduct initial assessment, detect these violent behaviors and use appropriate referrals to specialist services if necessary and ensure that services are received and benefit the child and their family.

The lack of sexual education along with the easy access to online pornography contents and the lack of dialogue on sexuality related issues within families are the main drivers for the prevalence of these sexual harmful behaviors. Our work to prevent and respond to these behavior is critical to protect children from sexual abuse.

Since October 2019, we delivered a total of **9 training courses** and 12 refresher days. Based on our test methods combined with our interviews conducted during the refresher days, **93% of participants** completely agree that now feel capable to correctly identify and respond to children affected by and displaying sexual harmful behaviors.



OUR AMBITION IS TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND ALWAYS MORE ACCURATELY TO OUR PARTNER'S NEEDS IN TERMS OF CAPACITY BUILDING.

INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING

1. DISABILITY AND SEXUAL ABUSE
2. POSITIVE PARENTING
3. CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AND PRACTICES



we are constantly updating the skills of our trainers on child protection related issues.



THE CUSTOMIZED TRAINING COURSES AND TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENTS WE OFFER REQUIRE A LARGE VARIETY OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FROM OUR TRAINERS

In 2020, we provided a training need assessment to the organization Prisons Fellowship Cambodia (22 participants) and specific training courses to the staff of two partner organizations (106 participants): Agape International Missions and Angkor Hospital Children.

During these training courses which duration usually goes from three days to five days, specific learning needs in link with child protection and responding exactly to the partner's organization necessity are addressed. A broad array of topic can be addressed. Here is a non-exhaustive list of these topics:

- Reporting child sexual abuse
- Techniques for positive parenting
- Understanding of the different child's developmental stages and needs
- Awareness-raising on children's right and application in practice
- Understanding the diversity of child sexual abuse perpetrators' strategies
- Understanding sexually harmful behaviors causes and consequences
- Identify children affected by sexual abuse or displaying sexual harmful behavior
- Support a child affected by sexual abuse: Build his/her protective factors
- Soft skills for social workers (active listening or empathy etc.)
- Development of facilitation skills to deliver training of trainers
- Ability to work and deal with families having psycho-social issues
- Capacity to provide case management services under high standards
- Engaging and initiating dialogue with children and teenagers on sexuality
- Practical application of a child safeguarding policy .



WORK WITH THE MEDIA COMMUNITY

IN THIS LONG-TERM BATTLE AGAINST CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE MEDIA COMMUNITY PLAYS AN ACTIVE ROLE IN DELIVERING ACCURATE AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION TO A NATIONAL AUDIENCE AND CLEARLY SHAPE THE ISSUE OF SEXUAL ABUSE A SOCIETAL ISSUE RATHER THAN SERIES OF ACCIDENTS.

By providing a workshop to more than 40 representatives from 30 different media institutions active in the country, our goal was to reach a nation-wide audience. The workshop's first objective aimed to inform on the reality of the issue of sexual abuse in Cambodia, sharing statistics, facts, and existing strategies to prevent and respond to the problem. Participants demonstrated a great deal of interest, asking us a large number of questions on our various programs, project, and activities in the Cambodia. A large majority of them were not aware that boys were also vulnerable to sexual abuse. The second part of the workshop focused on giving media editors and journalists a certain number of tips and "rules to follow" to increase the general quality of reporting on sexual abuse.

For instance, it included a careful use of words and language and suggestions on the ways news on sexual abuse should be framed. Participants understood the positive impact of high-quality and sensitive reporting to increase the prevention of sexual abuse at the society level and, therefore, the role they can play in this battle.

Following this workshop, a total of 12 press items, including video interviews and written articles, were shared with a national audience and reached a million viewers.



COLLABORATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT

OUR COLLABORATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IS A PRIORITY FOR OUR ORGANIZATION AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STRONG NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM IN CAMBODIA.

The launch of the **“Guidelines on basic competencies for the social workforce in Cambodia”** the 21/01/2020 is a significant step toward the strengthening Cambodia’s national child protection system. Since 2017, in close collaboration with our partner Hagar we developed standards for social workers in Cambodia. in cooperation with a multidisciplinary working group including the Ministry of Social Affairs (MosVY), the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Woman Affairs (MoWA), Social Services Cambodia, and the National Institute of Social Affairs (NISA).

The high level of collaboration between government, local NGOs, and international organizations was key to the guidelines' development success. These standards define what is expected from social work professionals regarding professional conduct, ethics, and competencies. These guidelines provide guidance in the skills, knowledge, and competencies social workers need to ensure a high level of protection to children.

This is a significant achievement at the policy level and a strong encouragement for us to pursue our work on building the social workforce resources in Cambodia.



FSC played a significant contributing role with the National Institute of Social Affairs (NISA) to develop a strategic plan for the social workforce, focusing on child protection for the period 2021-2025. With our expertise and training capacity, we provided specific inputs for developing a training and capacity-building program that aims to improve social workers' knowledge and skills on child protection-related issues.

This strategic planning was officially launched on November 27th, 2020, and the next phase will be to decide the selection criteria for social workers' engagement in training courses. It is a necessity for the good implementation of the strategic plan and another step forward to strengthen the national child protection system in Cambodia.



"EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM ON THE PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING"

We actively contributed to the making of the guidelines "Guidelines book for sexual abuse prevention and trafficking" falling under the management of the Ministry of Education and the National Committee for Counter Trafficking. These guidelines will increase the understanding of the risks associated with child sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of a large variety of stakeholders, including the children themselves, and lead to additional preventive strategies at different levels. The pilot project started in January 2021 and support policies for children's empowerment increasing children's level of self-protection on sexual abuse. These guidelines are to be integrated into the curriculums of primary and secondary schools' programs during 2021.

The traditional activities related to the "Anti-trafficking human day" that usually occur in December had to be adapted because of the public health situation. The NCCT authorities produced a comprehensive video highlighting the success and challenges in Cambodia to tackle issues against all forms of violence. First Step Cambodia, which has increased its collaboration with the NCCT over the years, is mentioned as the main actor for ensuring boys' protection against sexual abuse and exploitation.



OBJECTIVES & INNOVATION FOR 2021

IN A FAST CHANGING ENVIRONMENT, WE ARE CONSTANTLY SEARCHING FOR MORE EVIDENCE, UPDATING THE SKILLS OF OUR TEAM, DESIGNING NEW PROJECT AND INCREASING OUR LEVEL OF COLLABORATIVE WORK.



RESEARCH

Our training courses on **sexual harmful behaviors** have been successfully implemented. There is in the country a growing recognition and understanding of these violent behaviors.

We have identified **additional needs in terms of categorization of these sexual harmful behaviors**. If it has been identified what behaviors are acceptable based on children's age, we would like to explore the potential inter-cultural differences in the acceptability of such behaviors.



INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING

The digital world has taken children's lives. We need to **increase online safety** and ensure children's possibilities to experience safe digital journeys.

Their knowledge of the LGBTQ+ communities in Cambodia remains low. Our social workers will understand **the additional factors of these communities' vulnerabilities on sexual abuse and violence**.

Children with disabilities are more prone to sexual abuse than other children. Our social workers will continue to **deepen their skills to identify children with mental disabilities and respond to their specific support needs**.



NEW PROJECT

We are currently looking for new funding with the hope to implement a large-scale new project where community members will be empowered and trained to duplicate child protection workshops to participants in rural communities. Being well-trained and prepared by our team, they can provide meaningful and context-sensitive information on child protection issues. We believe in **parent's empowerment** to protect their children and **the family-based care system** rather than institutional care.



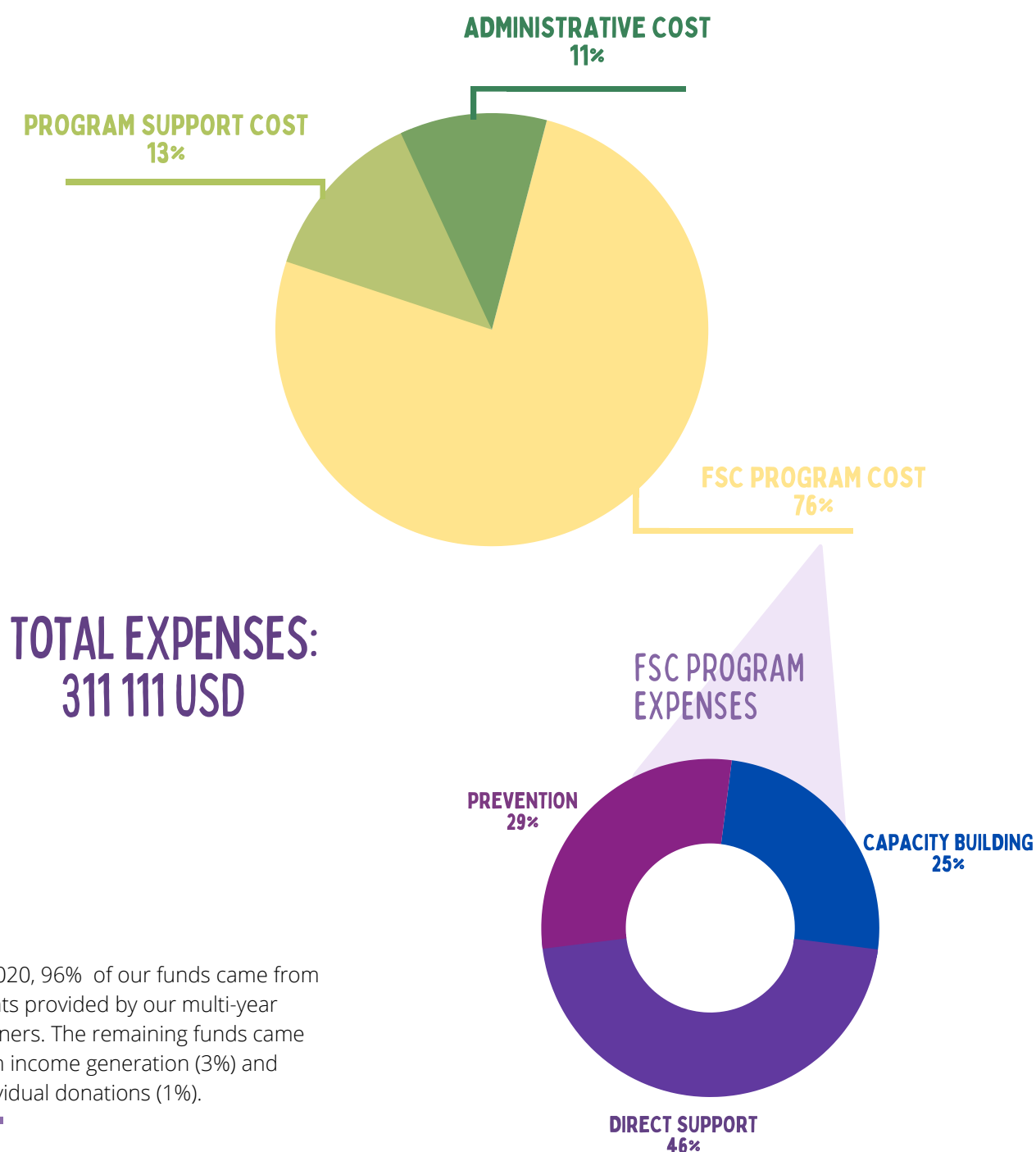
COLLABORATION

We believe that **child protection is everyone's business**. Besides working at the operational level with an extensive array of NGOs and governmental agencies at all levels, we try to engage organizations from the private sector by proposing innovative partnerships. Our objective is double: securing additional income for our activities' sustainability while raising awareness on the issue of sexual abuse to a different class of the population.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

In 2020, First Step Cambodia was able to provide its wide range of services on a budget of 311 111 USD. Our organization receives a yearly external audit to ensure transparency and high standards financial procedure. Beside we receive programmatic audits and visits from our funding partners.

EXPENSES OVERVIEW 2020





In 2020, coordination and collaborative work with our different partners has been of tremendous importance. We would like to congratulate and express our gratitude to all the partners we have been collaborating with in 2020 for their dedication to protect Cambodian's children from any sorts of violence.

MANY THANKS



We would like to express our warm greetings our group of donors for bringing their essential support to our programs. Your priceless contribution associated with our dedicated team's work is protecting Cambodia's greatest asset: its children.





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**MANY
THANKS**



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