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# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

## Impact and Resilience



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# IMPACT OF COVID-19

As would be expected, the Covid-19 pandemic impacted significantly upon our work in 2020.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT

The economies in all our countries of operation were severely affected, primarily across two of their main pillars:

- **Garment Industry:** early on, the garment industry suffered from the lack of raw material as China slowed its production and exports, leading to an initial wave of layoffs. As orders from the West reduced and Covid impacted upon factory staff, a further wave of layoffs took place, with hundreds of factories shutting down operations completely.
- **Tourism Industry:** from March, global tourism abruptly ended. Entire countries, specific tourist hotspots and a vast economic sector from hotels, to transport companies, tour agencies, restaurants and related economic activities (*shops, souvenirs, street peddlers...*) were hugely impacted.

In addition, as the income of the general population reduced, small businesses saw a rapid decrease in their income. Lockdowns also forced many businesses to halt operations, often for extended periods of time. Without Government support, many small and medium enterprises had to reduce staff numbers, or even permanently close.

In 2020, Covid affected countries across Southeast Asia to varying degrees. Countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia faced serious public health crises, while others were able to control the situation rapidly (Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore). Some also initially appeared to have largely avoided any public health crisis (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar). However, all countries took drastic measures to fight the pandemic including closing borders, establishing curfews, lockdowns and states of emergency, reducing internal travels, opening quarantine centers, etc.

Where Covid infections directly impacted the population, health services were rapidly overwhelmed. The concentration of effort on treating Covid patients meant that many could not access regular or other specialized healthcare services, resulting in increasing overall health issues and deaths.





“I’ll (probably)  
die of hunger  
before I die  
from Covid-19”

– Mother in a Phnom Penh community

#### HEALTH SITUATION

Our beneficiaries were usually the first to feel the direct impact of economic down-turns: daily-waged workers faced an immediate reduction in their income, whilst massive layoffs among young women working in the garment factories saw many of them returning to their homes in the provinces. Many small businesses which had started with the support of Friends were forced to close. People living on the streets could not beg anymore and trash collectors could not sell what they had collected. Hunger increased, pushing people to adopt unsafe behaviors in order to survive from day-to-day.

In addition, marginalized communities experienced institutional and community stigmatization with specific actions taken by authorities to deal with unfounded perceived risks, which included targeted lockdowns, roundups and incarcerations, including of children.



# IMPACT ON FRIENDS-INTERNATIONAL

- In order to manage the huge economic impact, Friends had to immediately cut costs. This led to some very difficult decisions. Key projects, including its world-renowned Training Restaurants (Friends the Restaurant, Romdeng, Marum, Khaiphean, Makphet and Linkage) and other training businesses (beauty salons, shops etc.) were closed, and reductions made across its teams.
- The social business revenue of Friends after March virtually ended, the result being that from an organization which had been 45% financially sustainable, Friends became 100% donor dependent.
- Friends experienced a loss of funding from donors with some reducing their contribution, some having to stop grants and various proposals halted due to donors' own lack of funds.
- Many teams could not operate normally due to lockdowns, curfews and other restrictions.
- At the same time, as the organization's priority shifted to responding to serious emergencies (as they could no longer work in 'normal' conditions), various contractual objectives that could not be changed still had to be met.
- Teams experienced stress due to the risks posed to their health and safety. This was especially true for the outreach teams, but also for staff working in the offices.
- Travel bans imposed across our program areas made it especially difficult for management and technical advisors to provide in-person support to the teams and the Programs in very difficult times, when that support was especially important.

Friends had to immediately cut costs of key projects including its world-renowned restaurants

**PRE-COVID**

**45%**

financially sustainable

social business revenue after March virtually ended

**DURING COVID**

**100%**

became donor dependent



# ORGANIZATION

## How Friends-International #everydayheroes responded to the many challenges of Covid:

Friends-International responded by both mitigating the impacts of Covid on the organization and reinventing its programs and operations.

*As an organization, Friends-International faced several stress factors:*



### **COST REDUCTION**

From the onset, Friends decided to reduce the risk on its finances by making drastic cost reductions, including:

- **Closure of projects:** including the training restaurants (which were no longer generating income to support their operations) as well as other Training Businesses and ChildSafe Experiences
- **Termination of staff:** a reduction of 30% of total staff
- Relocating premises and renegotiating rental fees
- Temporary reduction of salaries of higher grades in the organization



The Team supported managers and individuals to navigate stress, answer questions and manage cases.

Only 1 staff member became Covid positive in 2020 (in Myanmar) and they have since fully recovered.

The Management team held on-going and regular crisis management meetings with Country Program Directors, key Managers, International Coordinators and Technical Assistants to respond to what were rapidly changing and evolving situations.

## COVID TASK FORCE

A specific Covid Task Force was set up to coordinate and lead all Covid-related responses. From March this team rapidly created a full set of Covid protocols for field work, office work and personal life as well as all related trainings and materials. All were updated as directives from WHO and Governments were further refined and clarified.

## INNOVATION

Friends had to speedily adapt to the new conditions created by the Covid pandemic. New initiatives and adaptations included:

- Reorganizing all our Vocational Training Businesses: new Let's Eat restaurants were designed and opened, the Beauty and Barber workshops were redesigned, and new shops were opened
- Reorganizing all Training to respond to the new market needs and the evolving employment situation: new curricula were created, aiming at more self-employment and some new placement opportunities. Online teaching was developed
- New income: to regenerate income, business plans and marketing for the new shops, services and restaurants were created targeting local markets. New sales initiatives such as online sales were organized
- Strategies were entirely revised and updated and projects and services needed to be completely restructured (new Strategic Plan / new developments): this included the reorganization of outreach teams to be better able to deliver emergency support to families
- New tools were created for rapid assessment of family and community situations. New training materials were designed and developed, including games for Covid training of children and caretakers, etc.

## FUNDING

- New donors were identified to specifically support the emergency work. Current donors were kept informed on evolving situations and flexibility was sought to ensure rapid adaptation of services could take place
- Consultancies were developed (especially in Indonesia and Thailand) to expand our reach and impact as well as to generate income





# FRIENDS ALLIANCE

The Friends Alliance comprises all Programs run or founded by Friends-International and those operating as local NGOs:



-  Mith Samlanh (*Phnom Penh - Cambodia*): founded by FI in 1994, localized in 2002
-  Kaliyan Mith (*Siem Reap - Cambodia*): run by FI since 2005
-  Peuan Mit (*Vientiane and Luang Prabang – Lao PDR*): run by FI since 2004
-  Peuan Peuan (*Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai – Thailand*): run by FI since 2006
-  Peuan Peuan (*Aran – Thailand*): run by FI since 2009
-  Teman Baik (*Jakarta – Indonesia*): local NGO since 2007
-  Friends Switzerland (*Geneva – Switzerland*): local NGO since 2008
-  Tha Ngae Chin Myar (*Yangon – Myanmar*): local NGO since 2019

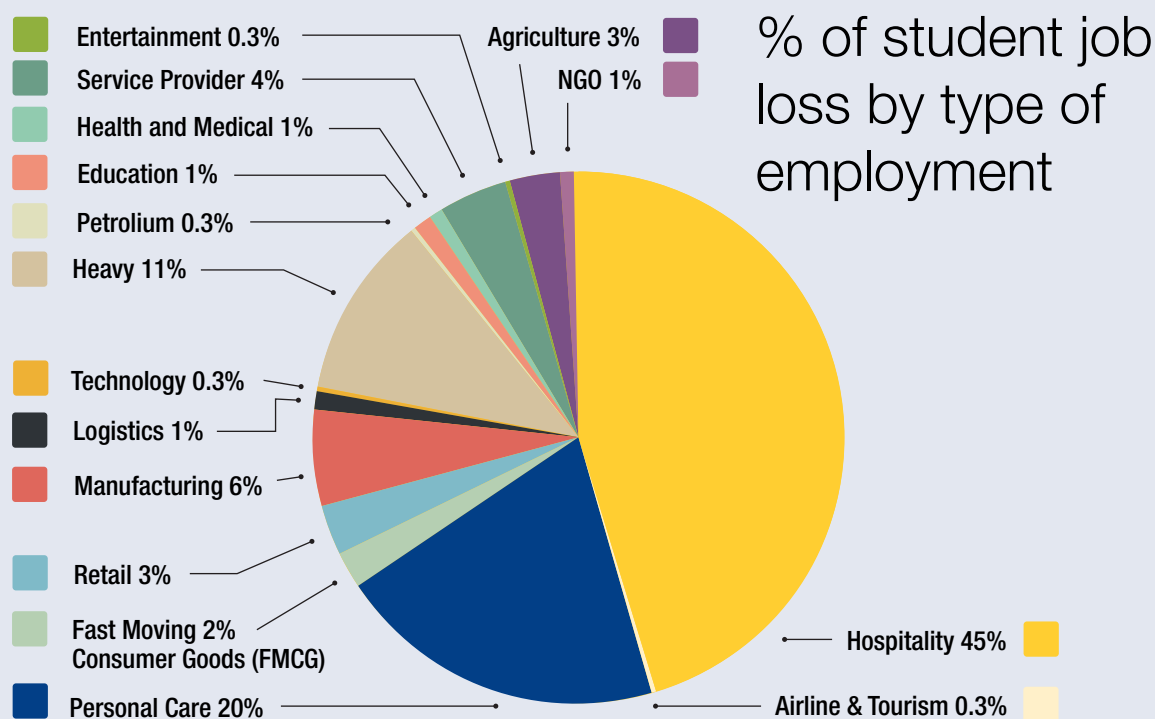
These organizations work with Friends-International and with each other under a collaboration agreement. They adopt the same standards of quality and service provision.

Their work is divided into three key areas: Saving Lives, Building Futures and ChildSafe, each organization tackling some or all of these Projects.



## COVID IMPACTED ALL FRIENDS ALLIANCE PARTNERS' PROJECTS AND SERVICES:

- Staff health was a constant concern. This was especially true for outreach teams who were in contact with many people (safety for them and for the beneficiaries)
- Lockdown and curfews prevented or curtailed activities and services. Many had to be interrupted, and in some cases specific areas were closed.
- Our services such as some Drop-In Centers, Vocational Training Centers, Schools and Transitional Homes had to be closed for extended periods of time due to lockdowns or Government regulations preventing students from attending schools
- Communities were sometimes wary seeing outsiders come to visit them
- Specific groups were more affected than others: sex workers lost customers, however more women came onto the streets in search of income. Migrants were forcefully repatriated or put in specific lockdowns, and street populations were stigmatized and often rounded up or chased out of the community
- The debt situation increased dramatically amongst families due to job losses
- Unemployment increased while employment opportunities and available salaries were reduced
- Many students of Friends Alliance Partners who had been placed in employment lost their jobs



# Consultancy Services

Friends-International continued to provide consultancy services to NGOs and International Organizations.

Main activities this year included:

## **THAILAND: 3 CONTRACTS**

Contract 1: Capacity building of 8 UNICEF Implementing partners in Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) - working with migrant, stateless and urban poor populations in Thailand. UNICEF assigned Friends Thailand to strengthen the capacity of partners to be able to provide the appropriate support with the PSEA element. In addition, Friends-International developed recommendations for UNICEF in setting up the PSEA monitoring and reporting system.

Contract 2: Implementation of the Risk Communication and Family Strengthening Support Program of UNICEF: this contract consisted in deploying emergency support to Cambodian Migrants and Urban Poor from June to October 2020 in 5 provinces of Thailand (Bangkok, Samut Prakan, Pathum Thani, Chonburi and Sakeo). The purpose of the project was to support the most at-risk families and children affected by COVID-19 and government preventive measures, to ensure that children and families could protect themselves from the outbreak and could build resilience both physically and mentally.

Contract 3: UNICEF Thailand initiated a volunteer program and asked for the support of Friends Thailand to 1) provide recommendations on the UNICEF Child Safeguarding Policy for Volunteers and 2) provide trainings to the pool of volunteers recruited by UNICEF.

## **INDONESIA:**

Contract: Following the success of the training provided by Friends-Indonesia to UNICEF's Implementing Partners in Indonesia since 2018 on building their capacity to implement the UNICEF PSEA standards, Friends-Indonesia provided support to improve knowledge of Gender Based Violence/Safeguarding principles, standards and implementation among 27 UNICEF Implementing Partners.

## **VIETNAM:**

Contract: UNICEF recruited Friends-International to support a local NGO (Thao Dan) to run an effective program to protect children in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). This work consisted of providing structural support and capacity building to Thao Dan's team and supporting Thao Dan with the development of best practice programs aiming at protecting marginalized children/youth and their families in HCMC. Due to Covid19 the implementation was delayed with support being provided online in the last quarter of 2020.



## CAMBODIA: 2 CONTRACTS

Contract 1: Friends-International provided a range of services to the Cambodian Government including research on street populations, the creation of material on Safe Migration and on Working With Street Populations.

Contract 2: Friends-International offered training through our consultancy services to 2 NGO's in Cambodia, Digital Divide Data (DDD) and Jesuit Service Cambodia (JSC) This work consisted of supporting them with understanding the basics of safeguarding and helping them to write their own Child Protection Policies. Friends-International supported both organizations with an assessment of their existing systems and with onsite trainings

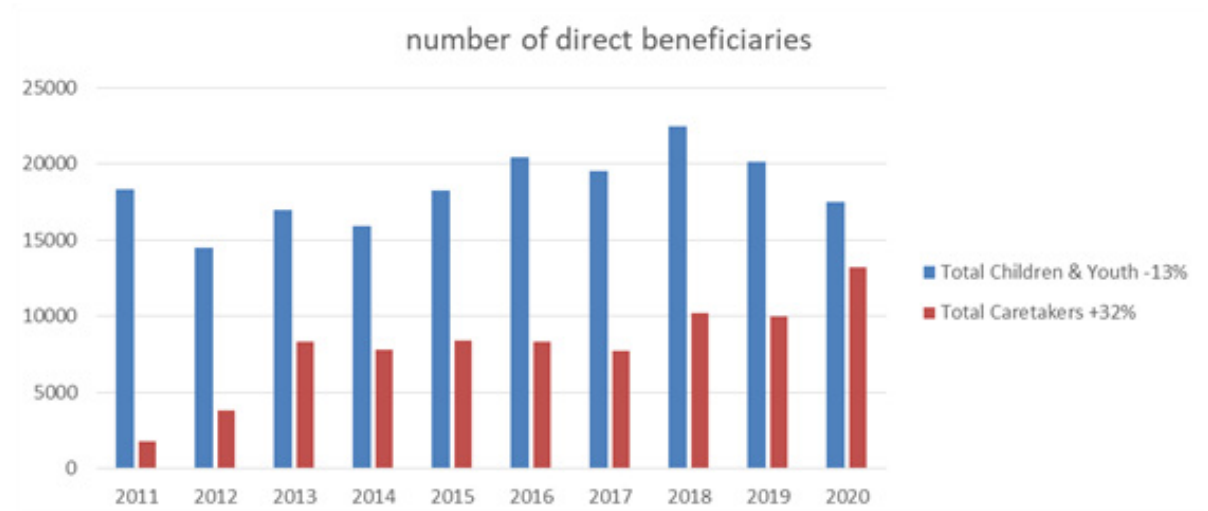
## GLOBAL:

Contract: The Oak Foundation assigned Friends-International to provide support to its grantees in South East Asia. The support consists of helping Oak grantees to develop and implement standards related to the safety and protection of children. In 2020 meetings were organized with partners from Myanmar and Cambodia, however the implementation was delayed due to the Covid pandemic.



# Statistics

The total number of direct beneficiaries across all programs represents a slight increase from 2019 of 2% (30,730 pax).



The number of children and youth reached was 17,535 - this number has remained fairly stable within a range of 15-20,000 per year since 2011 (the year 2018 being slightly higher due to a change in data collection methods. This was rectified from 2019 onwards).



The higher number of caretakers (13,195 or +32%) reflects increased work by teams in supporting families to mitigate the impact of Covid on households, alongside increased access to caretakers who remained at home (through loss of employment).



## 2%↑

(30,730 pax)

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increase from 2019  
in total number of  
direct beneficiaries  
across all programs

## 17,535

(children and youth)

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the total number of  
children and youth  
reached

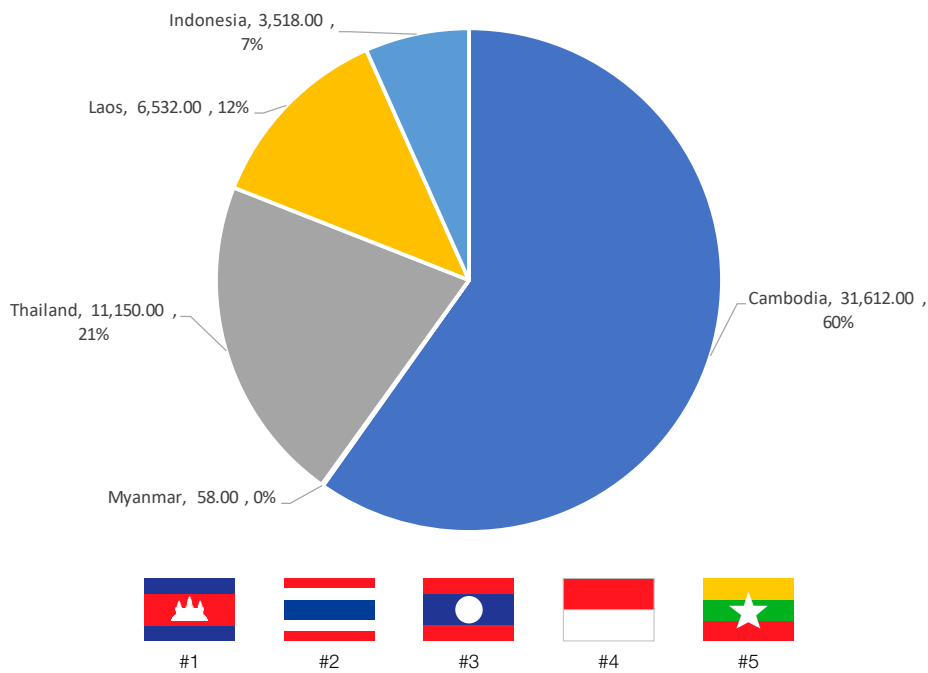
## 32%↑

(13,195)

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the number of caretakers  
needed to support families  
to mitigate the impact of  
Covid on households

### Beneficiaries by Programs



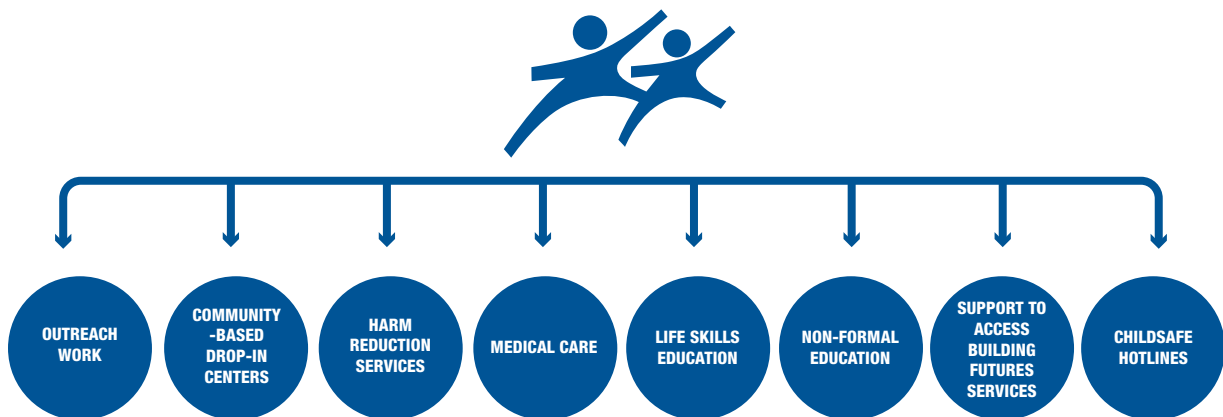
A relative decline in direct beneficiaries at Mith Samlanh and Kaliyan Mith Siem Reap is balanced by significant increases in Peuan Mit and in particular, Peuan Peuan, where reach has grown by over 200% in both Bangkok and Aran/Poipet due to emergency response measures. Teman Baik has experienced a smaller drop in direct beneficiary reach due to the lockdown in April and May and because schools were closed, meaning no school reintegration could take place. As the newest and currently smallest of the Friends Alliance Programs, Tha Ngae Chin Myar's 21% reduction in reach only represents a small drop from 54 direct beneficiaries to 44 in 2020.

Cambodia remains the country with the highest reach, however in recent years that % has reduced. This year a significant increase in reach was observed in Laos and Thailand.



# Saving Lives

Saving Lives Projects provide direct support to beneficiaries, wherever they are, to ensure their safety and well-being; these include:



## AS PROGRAMS ADAPTED TO COVID-19, OUTREACH BECAME A CORE FOCUS OF THEIR WORK:

- Systems were re-organized to allow teams to reach beneficiaries even during lockdowns. This included collecting phone numbers to ensure phone outreach could take place, building links with local shops to facilitate deliveries, connecting with local authorities, and getting authorizations for teams to operate even during lockdown periods.

➤ The number of services provided reduced slightly (-6%) to reach 1,955,532

- ChildSafe Agents were retrained and re-energized, their contacts gathered and collated so they could be reached even during lockdowns. They then became the key relay for identifying emergency cases, organizing distribution of support within their communities, and distributing school homework to children.

➤ In all Programs the work of the ChildSafe Agents became an essential part of the services. We saw a 63% increase in the number of beneficiaries protected by Childsafe Agents.

- New tools were created which allowed teams to conduct rapid assessments to identify new families in need, as well as supporting existing ones. Support included food, money for rent/utilities, transport and/or telephone cards hygiene material and masks, etc. based on the identified needs per family.

➤ A total of 4,052 families were provided with emergency support, representing 15,994 family members.

Teams were reorganized and reinforced in order to better respond to new and emerging needs, including Covid education to communities, emergency responses and support to ChildSafe Agents.

Social workers and ChildSafe Agents informed families about the risks and how they could protect their children during Covid - 21,054 families received prevention messages.



## Spotlight on Sex Workers

One group that were especially affected by the economic downturn and lockdowns were sex workers. Initially, Mith Samlanh and Peuan Mit noted a decrease of women on the streets as many returned to their families in the provinces. However, as the situation continued and worsened, the Phnom Penh teams witnessed an increase in new women coming to the streets, with 136 new sex workers identified in the second quarter of the year alone.

Despite the difficulties, teams in Phnom Penh continued outreach, even during lockdowns, providing condoms (407,006 condoms distributed), training on Covid, assessment and emergency support to prevent them having to undertake sex work.

 A total of 647 sex workers were reached.

# 647


(sex workers)

reached despite the lockdowns faced by frontline teams

## Spotlight on Drug work

In different locations, drugs users were targeted by authorities because of fears for public health and because of them staying in groups, raising concerns around Covid transmission.

Despite the lockdowns and restrictions, Harm Reduction services were able to continue and were a priority for teams who could operate during lockdowns. When outreach was not possible, the services were provided from Drop-In Centers opened specifically for drug users and the team relied heavily on ChildSafe Agents, who were trained and supported to provide more direct services.

 Teams were able to provide 1,109,436 services, only 13% less than 2019.

# 1M+

(services)

provided by teams in 2020 with only a 13% decrease.





# Spotlight on Child Protection

Covid-19 generated many Child Protection-related risks. Measures implemented to prevent and control the virus often created negative side effects on the wellbeing and protection of children. For example: risks of separation and abandonment of children, discrimination, psychological distress, child labor, domestic violence, etc.

During the early stages of the Covid-19 crisis, Friends' dedicated Covid Task Force assessed the potential risks of Covid-19 on child protection and established protocols to prevent and respond to those.

Social workers and ChildSafe Agents all received training on Child Protection in the context of Covid-19, which allowed them to stay alert on potential issues during their outreach work.

As a result, the teams offered direct protection services to a total of 7,116 individuals. This represents an increase of 63% over 2019 (4,373).

New protocols were developed to equip the ChildSafe Hotlines to better respond to new and emerging situations of distress, risk and abuse.

 **The Hotline received 4,961 calls and opened 1,940 cases.**

**100%**

(friends team)

social workers and CS agents received training on child protection in the context of Covid-19

**7,116**

(individuals)

total number of direct protection services, a 63% increase over 2019

**4,961**

(hotline calls)

ChildSafe hotline calls received, opening 1,940 cases.



# Building Futures

Building Futures Projects prepare beneficiaries to lead an autonomous life, able to live and make choices independently from Friends-International's support. These include:

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (FUTURES)

Each person (youth or caretaker) is assessed, and a case management is set up that includes holistic support (psycho-social, educational, soft skills and/or hard skills i.e. vocational training) which allows them to find gainful and dignified employment or start their own business.

## EDUCATION SERVICES

Each child is assessed, and a case management is set up that includes holistic support (psycho-social, family support and a decision on the educational support needed) which allows the child to join the public school system and remain in education as long as possible. Services can include: remedial education, support classes, school reintegration and/or early childhood education.

## FAMILY +

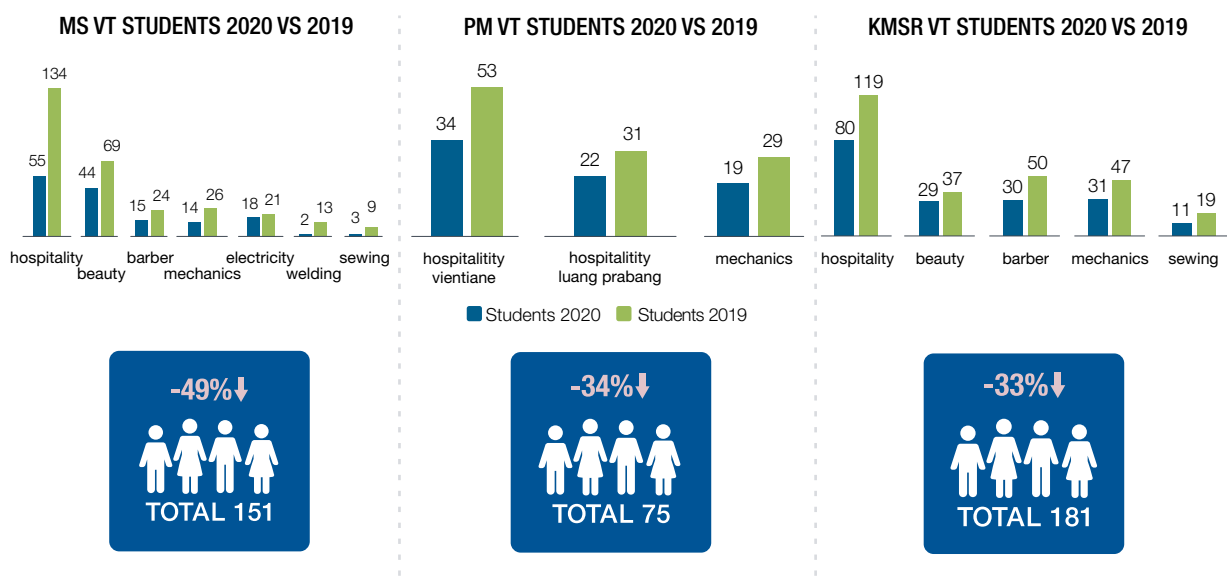
Families of children and youth are assessed, and family members are supported with a case management (that can include psycho-social support, parenting skills, access to employment, etc.). This ensures that families are able to care for their children, or that a family-based structure is in place to ensure care of the children/youth.

## Employment (FUTURES PROJECT)

### OVERALL, RESULTS FOR FUTURES PROJECTS WERE AFFECTED BY COVID:

- Vocational Training: training centers were closed, or the number of students severely reduced due to Government regulations. This led to a 52% reduction in the number of students (to 515).

Vocational Training Workshops were closed at varying times throughout the year or could only accept a limited number of students due to Covid protocols. Many key trainings with a large number of students were closed (e.g. training restaurants).





Mith Samlanh was proportionally more affected, largely because of the closure of two training restaurants (Friends the Restaurant and Romdeng), but also because of difficulties for students in accessing the training center.

Teams reorganized their work in light of this new situation:

### **VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

- New Trainings were designed and opened, including farming and sales, as well as new restaurants. For caretakers, a new initiative of training for 'survival' skills was developed: a short training and support for families to start small scale farming and poultry raising, which was very successful in the less urban areas (Laos, Siem Reap).
- Training curricula were adapted to the new market conditions (almost exclusively catering to local customers) and the new needs of beneficiaries (such as shorter trainings, specialized trainings, micro-training, internships)
- Some internships could be maintained within Training Businesses (beauty and restaurants for example) when these services were allowed to operate
- Our trainings were adapted to online formats. Soft skills, hard skills and English have been migrated to online classrooms and the teams were trained as trainers. Training materials were distributed to students to enable them to practice from home.
- Soft Skills Training was also improved and expanded to reach more students (non-Vocational Training) and was carried out online; employment readiness training for youth saw a drop of just 8%, due to the shift to online training and in-community or remote employment services.

### **SOFT SKILLS**

Soft skills training was developed further this year and switched online to enable 1,530 students to continue receiving training and support.

Thanks to these efforts, the number of youth receiving soft skills training reduced only slightly (1,151 or -8%), but the training to caretakers which is in-person due to the difficulty to have them join online training reduced by 56% (379).





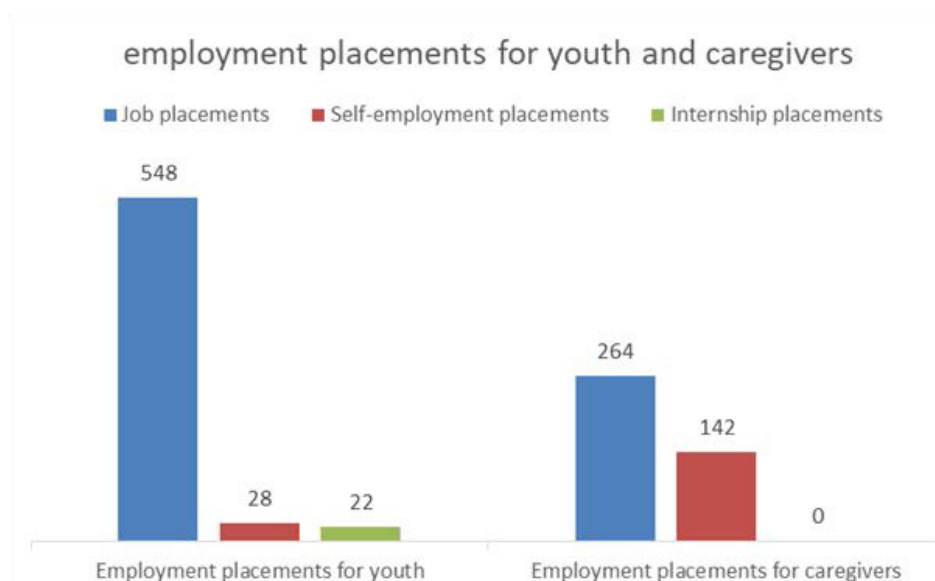
## EMPLOYMENT

However, even if some level of training could be maintained in 2020, the situation for employment was more complex as companies were not hiring, so the team switched their efforts towards self-employment (especially for caretakers).

Despite the difficult market, the results were proportionally very good, with, for the first time, more youth placed in employment than youth in training (598) – however this still represents a 25% reduction on 2019.

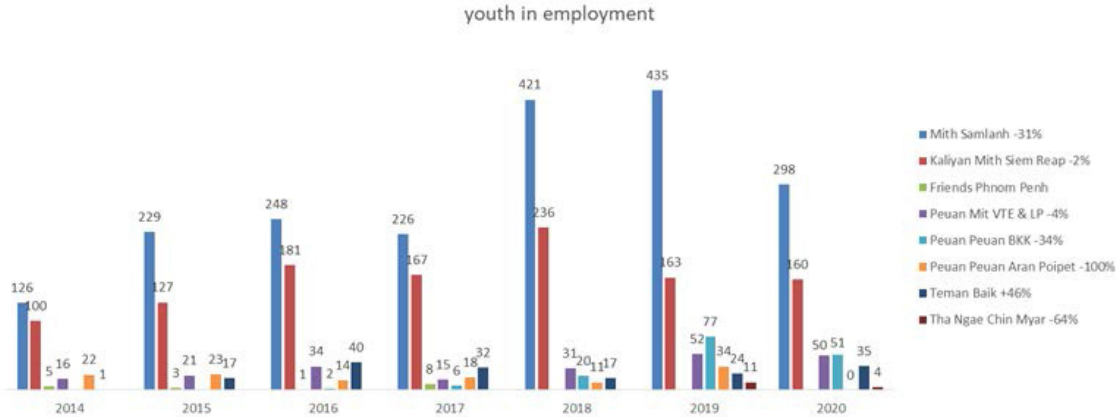
- Efforts were made to reduce the dependency on job placement, rather to concentrate on self-employment, especially for caretakers (54% of 406 placements). This included the new 'survival' initiatives (poultry, urban / semi-urban farming).
- Efforts were also made to connect and build partnerships with a wider number of potential employers, especially with companies emerging or expanding in the new context who were able to recruit.

All countries faced high unemployment and reduced availability of job opportunities. Support for employment was challenging with the widespread closure of businesses across all locations.



However, although employment results from 2020 are lower than in 2018 and 2019, all programs that were active in 2015 and 2016 were able to reach a comparable number to those years, despite the closure of the largest training businesses.

By end of December, 51% of Futures beneficiaries had lost their job due to Covid. The sectors most heavily impacted were the hospitality industry and the beauty and personal care industry.



As a result of adaptations to the new circumstances, Kaliyan Mith Siem Reap and Peuan Mit were able to maintain comparable levels of services to previous years, experiencing only small decreases in numbers. In both places, training businesses were tailored to the needs of the local market and the focus turned towards increasing the amount of micro-enterprise support.

Mith Samlanh, which depended largely on employers in the tourism and garment industries (both severely affected by Covid) saw a bigger reduction than projects which were able to develop self-employment in semi-urban areas.

At Teman Baik, the key reason for an increase in the number of employment placements was due to the hiring of a new ‘Building Futures’ program coordinator, who has effectively conducted networking with employers, especially those hiring due to new opportunities (sales, delivery, etc.), thus increasing the available number of placement destinations.

No employment placements were made in the Aran/Poipet program due to access restrictions to the Thai side of the border.

Employment results from 2020 are lower than in 2018 and 2019, all programs that were active in 2015 and 2016 were able to reach a comparable number

**51%**  
(youth)  
of Futures beneficiaries had lost their job due to Covid, the most heavily impacted - hospitality industry and beauty

**598**  
(youth)  
placed into employment, a first when comparing to youth placed into training

## EDUCATION

As noted in the 2019 report, a shift in strategy towards support to remain in school rather than reintegration continues across programs. In 2020, due to the outbreak of Covid, this was compounded by the closure of schools and the delaying of the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year to January 2021 in Cambodia.

With the exception of Peuan Peuan, the number of children engaged in Friends' education services has increased across all programs, leading to a 50% increase in the total number (1,847 children).

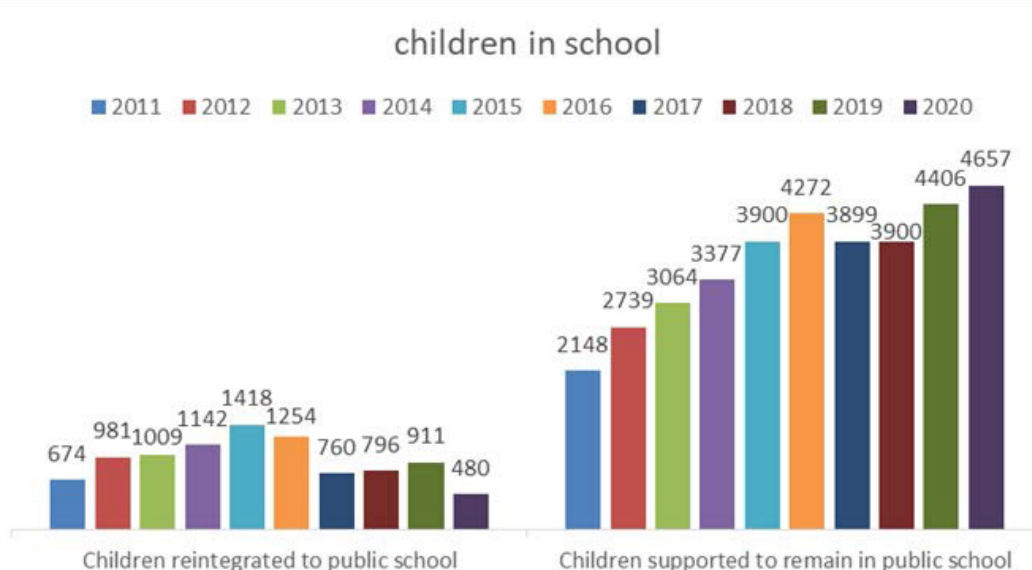
- The majority of Peuan Peuan's education activities take place in government centers, access to which was limited due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Teman Baik saw an increase from 185 in 2019 to 398 students in 2020, due to the impact of local university volunteers who were supporting the program, enabling them to increase their reach.

Support to remain in school has continued throughout the Covid-19 crisis:

- School reintegration was reduced by 47% (480), but overall support to children was reinforced (4,657 or +6%)
- Emergency support and employment support for caretakers was reinforced, especially with the impact of Covid
- To ensure that children continue their education, school material (including specially created homework sheets) was distributed to children in the communities when schools were closed.
- Where schools were closed by the government, education was replaced by mobile education and provision of lessons to children in the communities.
- In Cambodia, Drop-In Centers were opened to allow children to follow Government TV education.
- Online education was also developed wherever possible, with a remote support system being developed for children to contact teachers when needed.

ChildSafe Agents and volunteers have been instrumental in maintaining access to children during school closures, assisting in homework sheet distribution and educational support.

Because school reintegration in Cambodia was delayed to January 2021 and school reintegration campaigns and support took place in October-December, a number of the reintegrations initiated in 2020 will not be reflected in the data until next year.



## FAMILY+

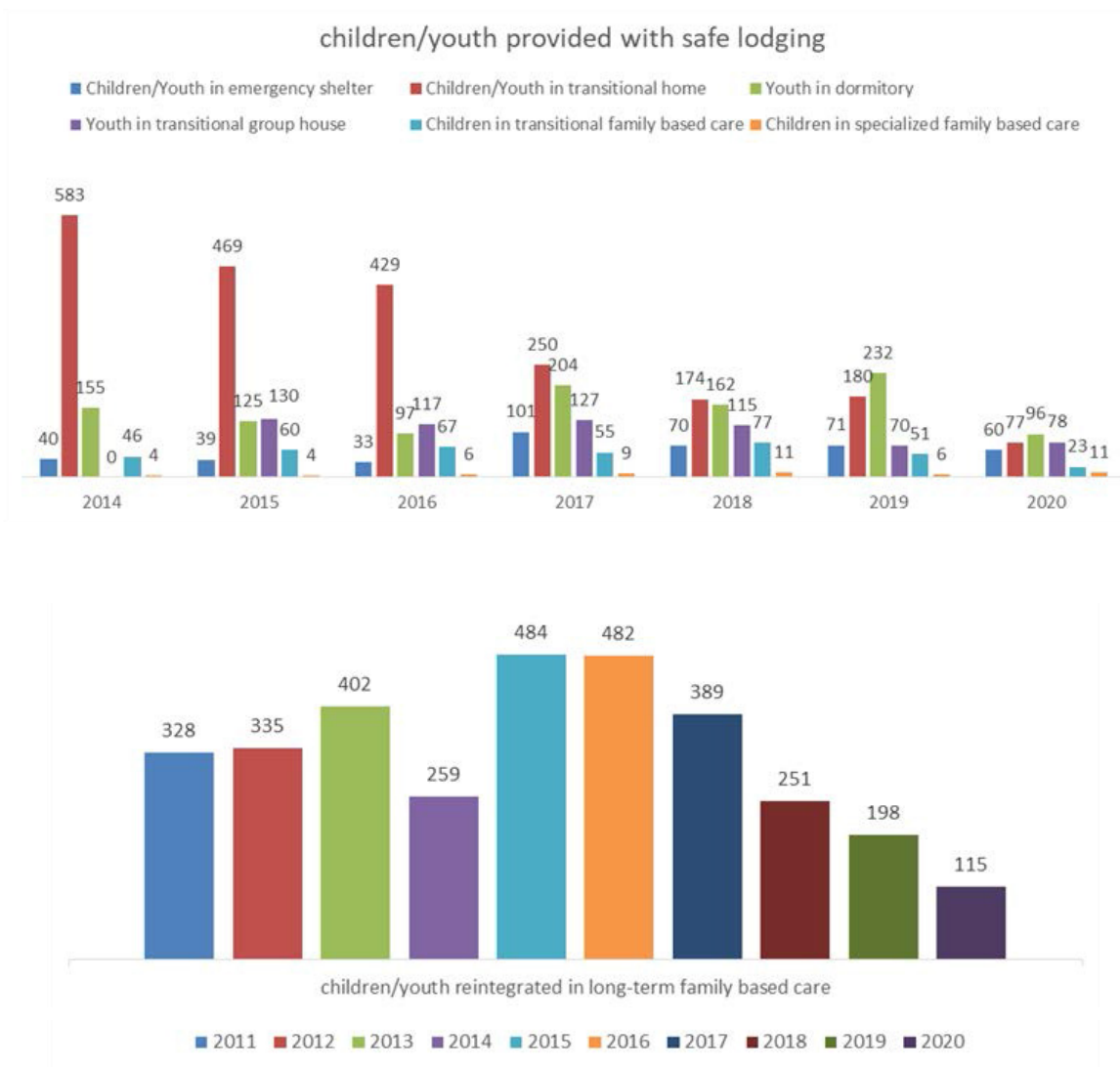
Children residing in Friends' Transitional Homes during the peak of the Covid-19 crisis were able to stay there, but no new children were accepted for safety reasons. The children in Emergency Shelters reduced by 15% (60) and in Transitional Homes reduced by 57% (77 persons).

Youth who had been staying in dormitories were supported to return to their homes when the vocational trainings closed, reducing the numbers by 59% (96). When the health threats of Covid subsided, new cases were accepted in the Transitional Homes again.

Children in Transitional Family Based Care (short-term Foster Care) also reduced by 40% (34 placements)

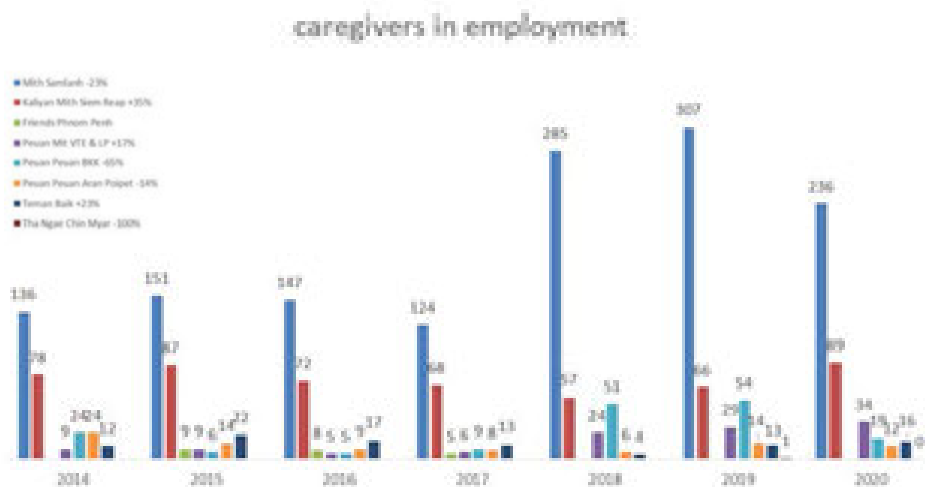
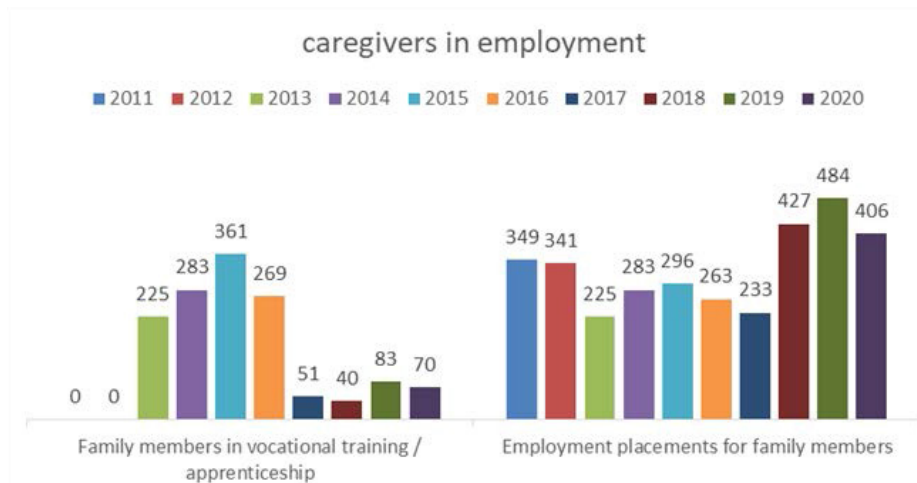
A big priority was to prepare and train the staff and children in understanding and respecting the Covid protocols.

Long-term family reintegration services decreased by 42% on average in 2020 (to 115 persons), compared with 2019. Independent living also reduced with the reduction of students in training (254 or 21% reduction). In most programs, family reintegration intake was paused temporarily.



During Covid the work to prepare families for long-term sustainability was reduced as the emergency component became the focus of needs and services. The number of caretakers in training reduced by 16% (70 persons) and the number of caretakers in employment readiness reduced by 56% (379) as most training takes place in person.

However, with the efforts towards small business start-up, the number of family members supported with employment reduced by only 16%.



The number of caretakers provided with employment support decreased at Mith Samlanh, Peuan Peuan, and Tha Ngae Chin Mar, but increased elsewhere.

While Myanmar’s drop in services should be attributed to growing political instability due to elections, the drop at Mith Samlanh and Peuan Peuan was due to the impacts of Covid-19 on staff movement and services. Elsewhere, increases are due to an increased focus on micro-enterprise and reach through emergency outreach, particularly for families whose income had been disrupted by the pandemic, with caretakers losing businesses or employment.





# Spotlight on Mith Samlanh

(Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

Mith Samlanh was especially affected by Covid, with the closure of key services (training restaurants for example) and had to adapt to the changing situation and reinvent its services and Programs:

## HUMAN RESOURCES

- Difficult decisions were made at the early stage of the pandemic, with the closure of some key Vocational Trainings (restaurants). Other savings due to the lack of income from the Training Businesses led to the termination of 108 staff, the majority of them restaurant staff. In addition, salaries were reduced by 20% for 3 months.

## SAVING LIVES

- Initially, some services were reduced (mobile bus, Drop-In Center), but rapidly Outreach became a core element of our work and all activities resumed and were reoriented.
- Systems were organized to allow for the teams to reach children and families even during lockdowns: training/re-training of ChildSafe Agents to be local relays for emergency and school homework, collection of phone numbers to ensure phone outreach, building links with local shops for delivery and remote payment, etc.
- Teams were trained in all Covid protocols, and then trained ChildSafe Agents (to protect themselves and provide Covid information in their communities), families and children, local authorities.
- Families were assessed and categorized, support was provided (including food, money for rent/utilities/transport/phone, hygiene material and masks, etc.) and families were assisted to access additional support when available. 1,200 families received support, including with the distribution of over 50 tons of rice.
- Harm Reduction services were maintained throughout to drug users and sex workers.

## BUILDING FUTURES

- Transitional Home: intake was reduced due to Covid, however, 21 new cases were accepted after the initial health threat subsided.
- The push to have Vocational Training students stay in Group Homes as a soft skill (living independently) was maintained as long as possible. When these needed to close, youth were supported to return home.
- Reintegration into families was continued when possible and work with orphanages (Residential Care Institutions/RCIs) was slowed but continued (7 RCI).
- Education: schools were closed by the Government and so Friends' education services were replaced by mobile education and provision of lessons to children in the communities. Whenever possible, Drop-In Centers were opened to allow children to follow Government TV education. School reintegration was delayed to January 2021 and school reintegration campaigns and support took place in October to December.
- Vocational Training: initially all trainings were closed. Some remained closed (Friends the Restaurant, Romdeng) due to the radical changes in their former client-base (tourists), others were restructured to better meet the new employment market and new customer base (local). New trainings were designed and some already opened (food, sales, farming, plumbing) with strong Covid protocols. Online training was designed.
- Employment: Soft Skills Training was improved and expanded to more students (non-VT) and carried out online. Placed students were followed-up to evaluate the impact of Covid on their job placement and their need for support. Job placements also continued.



# Spotlight on Peuan Peuan

(Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai - Thailand)

The Thailand Program faced extended lockdowns due to increases in numbers of infected people and the economic impact of the sudden stop of tourism (a key income). In addition, Thailand, and especially Bangkok, faced mass demonstrations from February. The economic impact on vulnerable populations of both the demonstrations and Covid was severe.

## SAVING LIVES BANGKOK

- Covid training was carried out for teams and then to beneficiaries and especially migrants (in Thai and in Khmer)
- ChildSafe Agents were trained on Covid and to support to teams to provide emergency support to families

## BUILDING FUTURES BANGKOK

- The team worked on following up the placed beneficiaries to measure impact on their employment
- Market changes were assessed regularly to identify new opportunities, allowing for re-placement and placement of beneficiaries in employment (the supermarkets and delivery services for example)
- Futures services were expanded with Partners in Chiang Mai

## SAVING LIVES ARAN-POIPET

- Reduction of services occurred on the Thai side (Aran) because of lack of access
- There was an increase in the number of ChildSafe Agents trained
- Assessment and support was given to affected families
- The project faced a huge number of returning migrants from Thailand, with a potential health crisis. Covid training was provided.

## BUILDING FUTURES ARAN-POIPET

- Increased support to the reintegration of migrants within the Government center (PTC) took place in collaboration with our partner NGO Damnok Toek

## MEL

- Thailand was the location for Friends to test new tools for assessments before having them rolled-out to other Programs.

“Covid training was carried out for teams and then to beneficiaries and especially migrants in Thai and in Khmer”



# Spotlight on Kaliyan Mith

## (Siem Reap – Cambodia)

Like all Programs, Kaliyan Mith (KM) was severely affected by Covid, especially as it was based in a major tourist destination. The sudden halt in tourism from March severely affected the income and livelihood of the beneficiaries. Therefore, the Program had to review and reorganize its services.

### MANAGEMENT

- As Covid started affecting Siem Reap's economy, immediate decisions were made to close services and reorganize to reduce costs, which unfortunately led to a staff reduction of 45% (mostly from closing the training restaurant Marum, as well as laying off support staff)
- Covid protocols were put in place and all teams were trained about Covid and protecting themselves as well as teaching beneficiaries about Covid and how to protect themselves
- As the Program reorganized its services and made a push towards social support, new social workers were hired (15 persons)

### SAVING LIVES

- Services were reorganized to respond to the Covid situation (including stopping / reorganizing services that were carried out in groups such as the Alcohol Support Groups) and staff were trained to protect themselves and teach others how to protect themselves
- The team gave a big push in Covid protection education to children, youth and families (4,079 persons trained)
- The team increased the number of ChildSafe Agents to support their work in Covid prevention and family support (total 200 trained). However, an increased mobility affected the number of Agents with many leaving the city (119 Agents active). Despite the fluctuating number of Agents, 318 children were directly protected by them in 2020
- Regular assessments of families were carried out and emergency support was provided to 966 families
- Special attention was paid to particularly vulnerable groups, including sex workers and street living populations. The Drop-In Center was initially closed, but then reopened to care for the increased number of children coming onto the streets (working to support their families)
- Hotline: the ChildSafe Hotline received 508 calls and 318 children/youth and 209 caretakers received services.

### BUILDING FUTURES

- Housing: Intake in the Housing services (Transitional Homes and Group Homes) was halted for a period to reduce risks of Covid transmission. Intake resumed in July once vocational training restarted with new protocols in place. 58 families caring for reintegrated children were supported with emergency support
- Education: The Friends school was closed following Government guidelines. Services were adapted to provide remote education support to children (online and homework distribution reaching 391 children). As public schools reopened, 1,406 children were supported to return to school and finish the school year and 454 joined the Friends schools. 1,799 children were supported to register in school for the 2021 school year and 171 families received emergency support.
- Employment: In March, the vocational trainings were closed due to Government regulations. It was decided to close Marum Training Restaurant until tourism resumed and to close the sewing training indefinitely. The team worked in providing online support to students and in reorganizing training to adapt to new market conditions. From July several trainings (Let's Eat, barber, beauty, motorcycle workshops) reopened. 182 students were trained and 102 families supported with emergency support. 376 persons received job readiness training (102 of those online) and 192 were supported with job placement. In addition, 56 small business were started and 419 persons were supported to remain in employment.
- Residential Care Institutions (RCI): KM engaged with 20 RCIs and supported 54 children/youth to be reintegrated into family-based care
- Government: KM increased coordination for the distribution of emergency support and access to Government support (via the Government's ID Poor scheme). Violence Against Children training was provided to 82 local Government staff.



# Spotlight on Peuan Mit

(Vientiane, Luang Prabang – Lao PDR)

From 28 March until 18 May, the Lao Government implemented a country-wide lockdown. During this time Peuan Mit (PM) activities were paused, depending on the activity, or adapted, and Covid-19 safety protocols were put in place. Schools throughout the country gradually reopened in the June-August period, and were fully open by the September regular enrollment period. However, the country remained closed to international arrivals except in special cases. While the local Covid outbreak was minimal in 2020, the local context was one of an ongoing recession; tourism collapsed and numerous international companies left. Marginalized populations served by PM faced escalating income insecurity.

## SAVING LIVES

During lockdown, Saving Lives projects were affected and adapted as follows:

- Outreach, Transitional Home/Dorm intake, and family reintegration placement intake were suspended
- ChildSafe Agents supported the distribution of Covid awareness materials and emergency support packages
- Drop-in Center opening times extended to the weekend, allowing for more emergency support distribution
- PM shifted its focus to providing emergency support to families who lost employment
- PM set up WhatsApp groups to coordinate with school teachers and distributed school lessons to children.

Post-lockdown, PM projects kept the following adaptations:

- All project schedules restored while following Covid safety protocols
- Covid-19 awareness raising incorporated into all outreach sessions and for all open cases
- Emergency support and school materials distributed as needed
- Luang Prabang Dormitory was closed due to funding reasons. Currently, Vocational Training students in Luang Prabang are provided accommodation in group homes as needed.

## BUILDING FUTURES

During lockdown, Building Futures projects were affected and adapted as follows:

- A Transitional Home isolation room and 2-month food/supplies stock was established
- All Vocational Training (VT) businesses were paused, and VT students encouraged to return to their villages during lockdown
- Mobile Futures was paused, however Futures activities continued in the Futures office (in main Center)



Post-lockdown, PM projects kept the following adaptations:

- Transitional Home outings were restored, but less frequently and to nearby places only
- Transitional Home isolation room and supply stock remained in place
- VT curricula/business models (particularly Mini-Makphet and Khaiphaen) were shortened and adapted to focus on local clientele, due to the loss of tourism
- Futures was restored to its pre-Covid schedule, but post-lockdown employment placements focused on locally demanded business/industries. Micro-enterprise support for agricultural business increased, as it helps families to secure food needs.
- Adaptation of online job readiness training developed by HQ started, to be fully implemented in 2021
- The Mechanics VT venue was move to the main Peuan Mit office building
- Survival businesses (poultry raising, urban/small scale farming) were developed to support families and the model was adapted and replicated in other Programs (KM Siem Reap)

## CHILDSAFE MOVEMENT

- The ChildSafe Campaigns towards tourists were paused
- Campaigns targeting locals were adapted to the Covid context

## MANAGEMENT

- PM's Technical Coordinator resigned in May and since then donor relationships have been supported by a member of the HQ Partnerships Team
- Unfortunately, 7 staff were laid off due to funding reasons, and salaries of a number of staff were reduced in April and restored in July.

# Spotlight on Teman Baik

(Jakarta – Indonesia)

Indonesia experienced long periods of lockdown and high numbers of Covid cases in the population. Therefore, Teman Baik's (TB) services had to be reviewed and reorganized.

## MANAGEMENT

- Covid protocols were put in place and all teams were trained about Covid and protecting themselves, as well as teaching beneficiaries about Covid and how to protect themselves

## SAVING LIVES

- A strong network of ChildSafe Agents allowed the team to rely on them to access beneficiaries
- Street population areas (e.g. Blok M) saw many people leave to travel back to their homeland or to seek alternative sources of income



## BUILDING FUTURES

- Education: ChildSafe Agents were instrumental in providing educational support to children during lockdowns

## EMPLOYMENT

- Due to lockdowns, employment was severely affected. However, new initiatives / opportunities were identified, including practical trainings (barber) and delivery services.
- Support to small business was provided to help them restart, however conditions allowed the team to reach only a few of the affected businesses and requests.

## CHILDSAFE MOVEMENT (CSM)

- UNICEF asked Friends-International to train their NGO Partners in Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): as UNICEF was increasing emergency support to NGOs, they needed these organizations to have strong Child and Beneficiary protection standards in place. The training led to a large increase in the number of indirect beneficiaries reached by Friends. This training will also have a considerable sustainable long-term positive impact in enhancing child protection in the country.

# Spotlight on Tha Ngae Chin Myar

## (Yangon – Myanmar)

- Tha Ngae Chin Myar (TNCM) became the latest Friends Alliance member, registered as a local Myanmar Organization in December 2019, with 2020 being the initial year of operating within the Friends Alliance.
- In March, the team adapted their services and followed Government regulations limiting possible services, then, from September on, the country entered a strict lockdown.

## MANAGEMENT

- The team was being built (4 staff) and the registration of the VT restaurant (Linkage) was being explored when Covid-19 slowed/stopped these activities.

## SAVING LIVES

- The TNCM team was trained in Covid protocols
- Training was provided to children, youth and caretakers (54 persons)
- Emergency support to families was provided (6 families, 19 persons)
- A strategy to expand support to more families was designed

## BUILDING FUTURES

- The training was closed and options for reopening were developed (catering, delivery etc.).
- Activities to support access to employment were replaced by online soft-skills training (13 persons).

## CHILDSAFE MOVEMENT

- The International Family Campaign developed to respond to Covid was translated into Burmese, but available online resources to share proved scarce.
- ChildSafe Agents could not be identified as yet, but a strategy was designed to initiate this project.



# Spotlight on Friends Futures Factory - F3

(Phnom Penh – Cambodia)

Launched in 2019, F3 is a center of # unlimitedcreativity. A unique public space located right in the heart of Phnom Penh, it brings shops, restaurants and galleries together, nurturing young local creatives and #buildingfutures for youth who have previously lacked opportunities.

F3 started the year with great success, and Friends hoped to build up the sustainability of this new and strategic project, but as for all programs, self-funding opportunities were reduced and many of the business models that FI was running had to be revised.

- Vocational Training Businesses: because of Covid, outlets had to be closed, reinvented, then reopened to the local market with increasing success (when operations were allowed):
- Friends the Restaurant was closed in March. Concepts were reorganized to target local markets with the opening of a series of Let's Eat restaurants (Noodles, Lunch Special, BBQ)
- The beauty, nail bar and barber workshops were re-designed and re-opened
- The Friends'N'Stuff shop was adapted, adding new products, and new outlets were prepared (the Second Hand Shop opened in October and Design shops will open in 2021)

“F3 started the year with great success as for all programs, self-funding opportunities were reduced and many of the business models that FI was running had to be revised.”



## INCUBATION:

- **Creative Generation:** based at F3, Creative Generation is a platform to launch Cambodia's new artistic talents by celebrating, mentoring, and inspiring young, local creatives to cultivate a strong artistic vision and professional skills. the Creative Generation 3 Program was launched, and incubation trainings were completed. An application process for an award was launched. An international jury selected five young Cambodian artists from the applicants.

During the Creative Generation Incubator, each artist worked with experienced arts professionals and peers to fully develop their exhibition concept as well as work out the practical issues involved in realizing their vision.

They participated in workshops to work on other professional skills, like writing and talking about their work. These skills have real-life impact, as they apply them during the course of the incubator and exhibition. Topics included: Nurturing the creative spirit, Artwork critique, How to interpret artwork, How to make a portfolio, How to make an artist CV, Using social media to promote your art, Working with a gallery/curator, Developing an artistic concept, How write a proposal, How to give an artist talk, How to write an artist statement, How to write an artist biography, How to talk to the press. They joined artist talks and networking activities with creatives from diverse backgrounds, leading to new connections and collaborations.

Throughout the incubator, the artists were invited to give feedback on the topics they were interested in, and the program was developed with their participation.

With the success of the program, Creative Generation is supporting F3 to develop a model of incubation for creatives and innovators.

- F3 Market: was extended with 9 makers market stalls (Preloved goods shop, Skyleros local fashion designer shop, Silver jewelry design shop, Arts & Crafts shop, local natural goods shops, local plant and garden shop, swim and sportswear shop, Cambodian arts and stone jewelry shops.

## EVENTS (IN TOTAL 21 EVENTS WERE ORGANIZED)

- Cultural events (in collaboration with Java Creative Café / Creative Generation): Cambodian Urban Art opening event, Creative Generation awards events, Open mic night, "we are in this together" Creative Generation event, open air theater: "The Visit" by Durrenmatt, seven open air movie nights
- two acoustic pop nights
- Markets: a 'dog meet dog' event, weekend market, organic farmers market, Cambodian street food & designers' market
- NGO events: 70th anniversary USA/Cambodia ties event, HIV/ AIDS fight against discrimination event, Phnom Penh Tuk Tuk quest

# 9

makers market stalls

were extended at F3  
market

# 21

events

were organized by F3  
team

Because of Covid,  
outlets had to be  
closed, reinvented,  
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were allowed)







Spotlight on Peuan Peuan



Spotlight on Mith Samlanh



Spotlight on F3



Spotlight on Kaliyan Mith



Spotlight on Peuan Mit



Spotlight on Teman Baik



Spotlight on Tha Ngae Chin Myar



# CHILDSAFE

**ChildSafe (CS) is a Movement powered by Friends-International that aims to involve all actors of society (individuals, NGOs, corporates, schools, communities etc.) in building a global strong child protection system. All ChildSafe Partners and Agents are trained in recognizing risks and situations of abuse faced by children in their communities/work areas and to act effectively to ensure that children are safe. Partners and Agents also relay our campaigns to the general public and local communities.**

A long-lasting crisis like the Covid-19 pandemic magnified the importance and relevance of engaging with wider societal actors to protect children in difficult circumstances. More than ever, the ChildSafe motto, "Together, protecting children", came into force this year, with all partners joining hands to maximize the reach and services for children and families affected by the health and socio-economic impact of the crises in all countries of operations.

The ChildSafe Movement is strongly linked to the tourism industry, which suffered from the unprecedented pandemic situation this year: our partners (Hotels, Destination Management Companies, Community-based Tourism groups, Transport companies, etc.) were all severely affected, and activities like face-to-face trainings and awareness-raising sessions were drastically reduced. Still, ChildSafe teams continued to engage with partner companies still operating, by delivering online trainings (including how to protect children during Covid-19), finalizing ongoing certifications and designing and testing a new online "training journey" in 11 countries, reaching over 200 travel professionals and their supply chains.



Despite a good start in the first part of the year, ChildSafe partnerships and related activities with schools and universities were also reduced in 2020. Many had to close or switch to online formats for most or part of the year. Some schools, however, relayed our newly launched Child-Safe Family campaign and actively engaged and promoted the messages to students and their families. Building relationships with new potential partner schools and universities continued throughout the year.

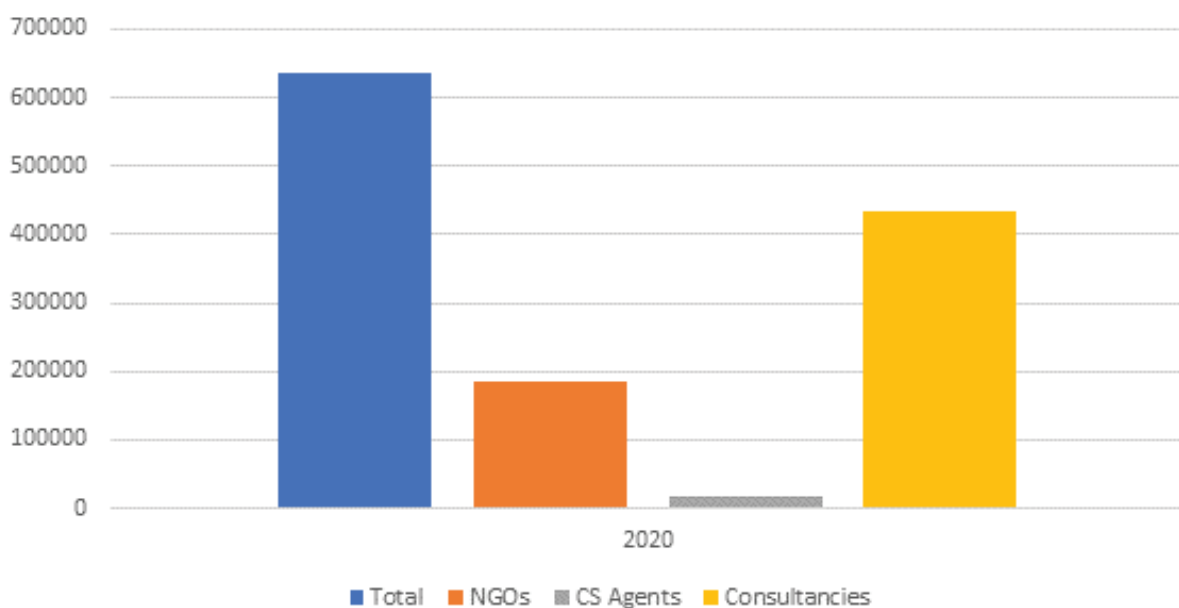
The ChildSafe network of Agents based in communities and on the streets were affected by loss of income, especially those relying on tourism or working at border crossing points. However, the Covid-19 situation also revealed the vital role Agents play in their communities when emergencies arise; many individual Agents remained very active, for example during lockdowns where they linked closely with our social workers to refer urgent cases of children in need of assistance or facing danger such as violence, abuse and mental health issues. They were also instrumental in distributing family emergency support and sharing crucial Covid-19 information and prevention messages.

NGO Partners in the ChildSafe Alliance faced an increased demand for emergency and social services from their beneficiaries, similar to Friends Alliance programs, while their funding and work capacity were reduced. The Covid-19 crisis demonstrated the importance of this alliance of partners joining hands and working together to find solutions to continue to deliver essential services to children and families. Increased collaboration and coordination between partners in countries and across countries resulted, for example, in improved funding and efficient implementation of quality standards of operation during the crisis (sharing Standard Operating Procedures and guidelines, exchange of experience and information materials, etc.).

The halt of tourism also forced us to pause many of the ChildSafe tourism-related campaigns and to close services such as the ChildSafe Experience, which had made a very promising start in the first quarter of 2020.

Despite these challenging situations, the impact of ChildSafe has increased, thanks to the reach of organizations that engaged in PSEA trainings and implementation, while the number of children reached by ChildSafe Alliance NGOs and the ChildSafe Agents saw a small decrease.

Children protected by ChildSafe



# ChildSafe Implementing Partners

ChildSafe Implementing Partners are NGOs trained and supported to develop ChildSafe activities in their areas of operations.

In 2020 there were 17 Implementing Partners that remained very active in deploying ChildSafe Agents in communities and in sharing ChildSafe campaigns.

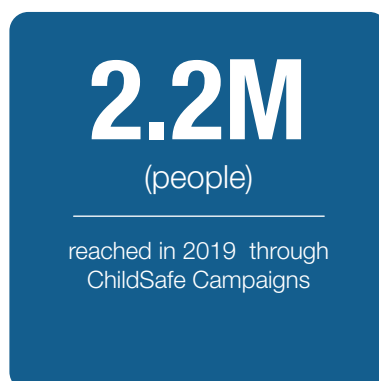
New organizations in two countries were engaged in training and implementation of ‘Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse’ (PSEA) through consultancies led by ChildSafe.

## ChildSafe Campaigns

The ChildSafe Campaigns aim at informing and changing the behavior of key constituents, by educating them about the risks faced by children and giving them ways of actively responding to these identified risks. The Campaigns are based on 7 Tips that are adapted for each constituency and for each country. From selected Tips, the ChildSafe Movement develops specific campaigns – for example: ‘Children Are Not Tourist Attractions’, ‘Don’t Create More Orphans’ and the ‘Don’t Give to Begging Children’ Campaigns.

**This year ChildSafe Campaigns reached 2,234,674 people, which is a significant drop from 2019 (-29%). It was a year of re-strategizing and re-invention:**

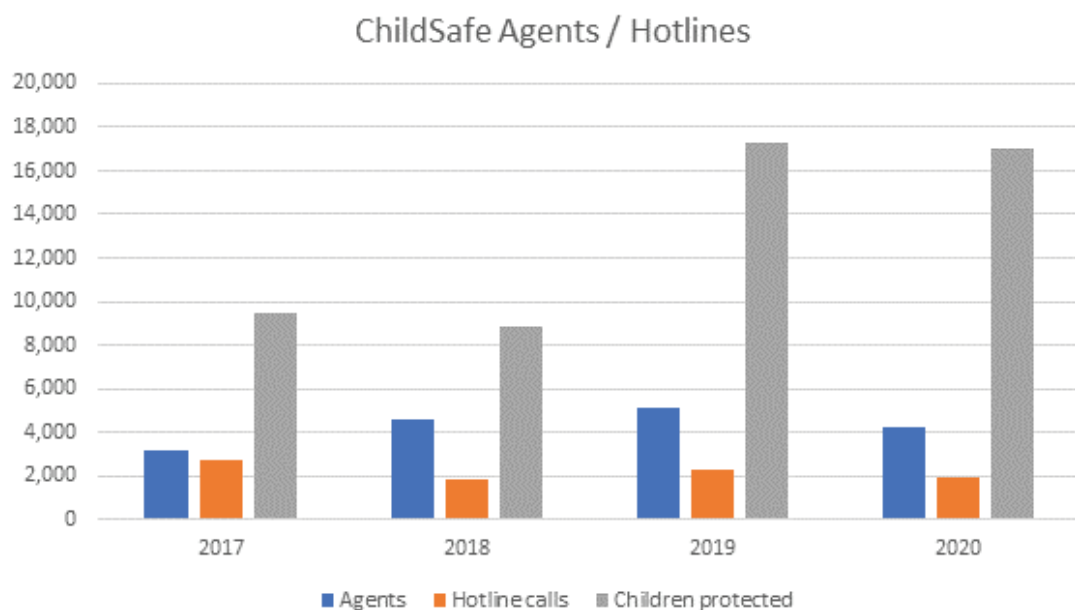
- Tourist Campaigns were suspended and are in the process of re-strategizing.
- A new campaign was created and launched early 2020 aimed at families and children, with a focus on protection and support during lockdown. This campaign was carried on social media with new visuals and the support of children from local schools (for example, ISPP in Cambodia).
- A key advocacy effort was carried out in France on a new draft law to regulate “voluntourism” companies: Two key articles of the law were passed by the French National Assembly.
- A specific new ChildSafe Campaign was launched in South Africa in collaboration with a local NGO aimed at protecting children in and around coastal tourism hotspots in South Africa. Youth beach stewards were trained and deployed with ChildSafe awareness materials at major beach destinations around the festive season, however this was halted due to a sudden lockdown.
- The Cambodian Campaign in Khmer on “Keeping Families Together” was maintained and 16 events were organized, directly reaching 40,138 persons.



# ChildSafe Agents

ChildSafe Agents are Community Members identified for their strategic situation and role in communities where children are at specific risk.

These ChildSafe Agents are identified, trained and supported to provide specific activities and direct help to children, with support from Friends Alliance and Implementing NGO Partner teams as needed.

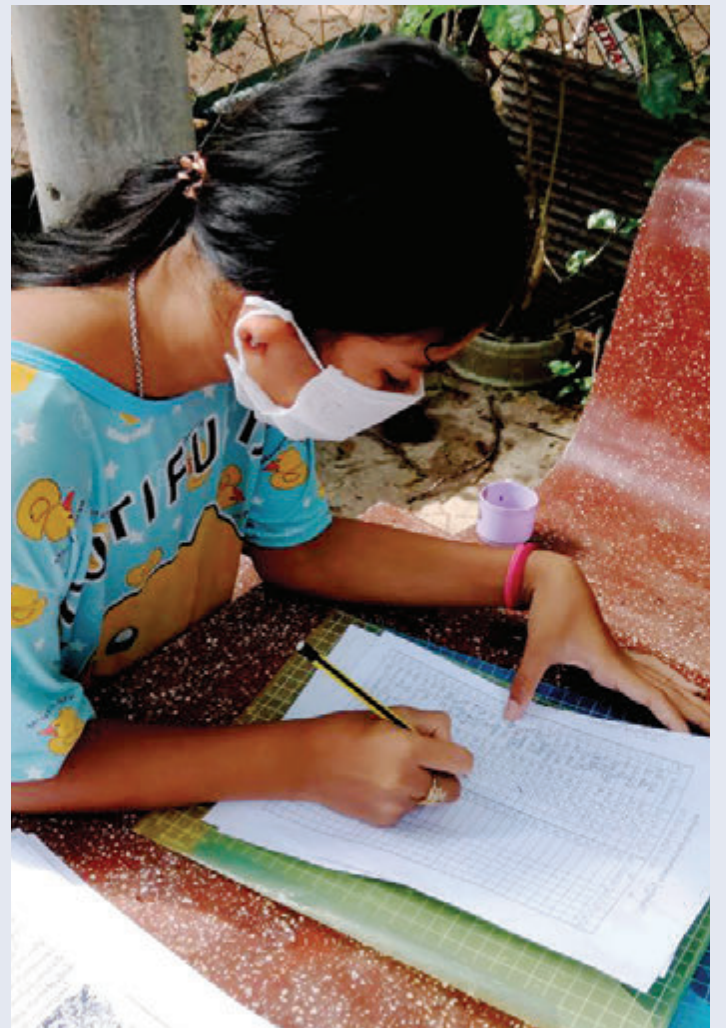


This year Agent numbers reduced slightly. Many were affected by Covid-19: some moved away or returned to their homelands, others were affected by lockdowns and other containment measures. However, teams increased their reliance on ChildSafe Agents to identify and access children and families in need and, therefore, the number of children protected remained stable, reflecting an overall increase in ChildSafe Agent activities.

Specifically, this year:

- ChildSafe Agents received training on Covid-19 through Friends Alliance and implementing partners.
- ChildSafe Agents were trained to identify new risks (violence at home, mental health and depression issues, etc.), identify new cases in communities and to provide support to families and children in need in close collaboration with the teams.
- Trainings for ChildSafe were adapted to be delivered, when necessary, from a distance (videos, phone calls, social media, etc.). Online groups of Agents and staff were created to facilitate communications and exchange of information in a rapidly changing context.
- ChildSafe Agents distributed information on Covid-19 prevention and protection in their own communities.
- Hotline teams were trained to respond to new issues relating to Covid-19 and teams were prepared for intervention to respond to cases during lockdown (referrals to health services, medical hotlines, coordination of emergency and social support etc.).





# ChildSafe Alliance (NGOs)

The ChildSafe Alliance is an alliance of organizations, powered by Friends-International, that aims at building holistic and cohesive child protection systems at local, national, regional and international levels by:

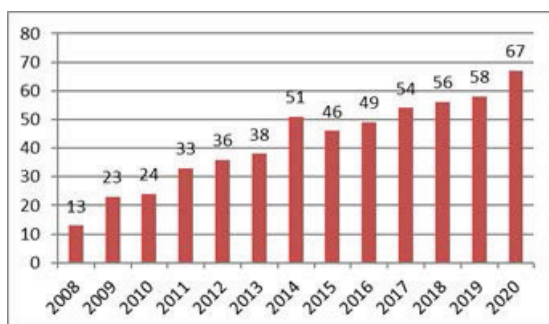
- **Coordinating** the work carried out by the different organizations to reduce overlaps and increase collaboration
- **Building capacity** of all Partners to increase the overall quality of services, using each other's skills and specialties to train others (south-south training)
- **Sharing** of good practices, models, standards and information to ensure good practices throughout the Alliance
- **Initiating** new projects by one or multiple partners to respond to issues and needs
- **Innovating** by piloting and testing ideas, using new methodologies in the spirit of social entrepreneurship
- **Promoting** the work of all partners to access direct funding to support the Alliance Partners
- **Advocating** the work of all partners to Government and influencing systems and policies

In 2020, all organizations suffered due to Covid-19; the main stresses on organizations included:

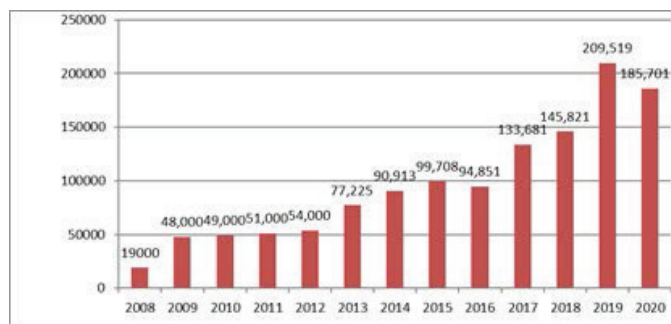
- Funding restrictions
- Closure of some activities
- Stress on staff and beneficiaries
- Increased needs of target groups and an abundance of new cases

For the ChildSafe Alliance, the situation was made difficult due to restrictions in traveling which reduced our capacity to organize field visits to provide support.

NUMBER OF CS ALLIANCE PARTNERS



NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES



Although nine new partners joined the ChildSafe Alliance this year, there was an overall contraction in the number of total beneficiaries reached by NGOs (-11%).



## Specifically, this year:

The ChildSafe Alliance team was rebuilt with the objective of optimizing resources and building on the strength of partners, improving support (including funding opportunities) and overall coordination of the Alliance.



All protocols, trainings and materials created by Friends-International and other partners were shared within the Alliance.



Support to partners was reorganized and primarily moved online. Where possible, the team continued in-the-field support.



Tools to support Partner Organizations, including assessment, Organization Development Plans (ODP) and monitoring are being reviewed and improved.

Organizations continued to develop field collaboration wherever possible (mostly same city collaboration).



12 Specialist Groups were active (including Violence Against Children, ChildSafe Agents, Futures Employment, Migration, etc.) with 27 meetings held throughout the year.

Support was provided to NGO Directors to help mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on their organizations: meetings were held to discuss the impact on their Programs and respective teams and to build adequate support.



Financial support: ChildSafe identified donors to support the Alliance in their response work (e.g. Smart, UNICEF, various foundations).



In all countries, partners remained active, and partners in South Africa, Malaysia and Jordan were further developed.



A large increase was noted in the collective number of youth placed in employment despite the difficult circumstances, showing the importance and efficiency of the Futures Program, which has been replicated by numerous ChildSafe Alliance partners with Friends' support.





## Spotlight - ChildSafe Alliance Cambodia: Partnership Program for the Protection of Children (3PC)

3PC is the nation-wide coalition of NGOs, led by Friends-International, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSVY) and with the technical support of UNICEF.

During this period, efforts were made to together mitigate the impact of Covid-19:

- A range of materials and resources for Covid-19 prevention were shared with partners, including existing WHO and UNICEF materials, but also specifically produced 3PC materials including posters, '7 Tips for Families during lockdown', basic training for staff and beneficiaries, booklets and jigsaws for children to understand Covid-19 and how to find help.
- Specialist group meetings took place with expert staff from various organizations meeting to discuss and work together on common subjects: 12 groups were operational. Meetings switched online and groups met more often than initially planned as organizations/staff needed each other's support.
- Specific attention was brought on working with Directors to discuss organizational sustainability and joint implementation, specifically on Education and Child Protection projects.
- 3PC also identified, secured and coordinated funding (from Smart) for ChildSafe activities with 3PC organizations in Poipet/Aran (on the Cambodia/Thai border).

## Spotlight - South Africa: collaboration with WESSA

Building on a partnership initiated in 2019 with the support of the World Childhood Foundation, 2020 saw the launch of the first ChildSafe campaign on the African continent.

WESSA (the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa) is a South African environmental organization promoting sustainable tourism while providing solutions to the challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality throughout the country.

On the South African shores, child labour is prevalent and situations of abuse are common.

Partner M'Lop Tapang in Cambodia has developed their expertise in working in a similar context over the past 20 years and is a ChildSafe implementer. Together, WESSA, M'Lop Tapang and Friends-International-ChildSafe joined forces to prepare surveys, define key messages and trainings and design the "7 Tips for ChildSafe Beaches" in South Africa.

The ChildSafe Beaches Project is integrated into the ongoing Youth Beach Stewards program, part of the world-renowned eco-label Blue Flag, providing youth with accredited training, with the ultimate goal of developing them for further employment in the Blue Economy.

In 2019 and 2020, over 100 youth were trained on ChildSafe and involved in promoting the new campaign.



## Spotlight - Jordan:

### collaboration with Baraka

With the support of AGFund, a collaboration was built with a new Partner in Jordan, Baraka, to develop a new ChildSafe project.

Baraka is specialized in sustainable tourism and builds community-owned, -managed, and -run tourism trails across the country that benefit local communities.

ChildSafe remotely supported Baraka to initiate the ChildSafe project:

- CS trained the Baraka team on ChildSafe principles/concepts and methodology
- CS supported Baraka to conduct basic research on issues faced by children in the country
- CS started developing 7 Tips for citizens adapted to the local reality
- CS started identifying areas of intervention and tourism partners based on Baraka's network
- CS initiated meetings and discussions with key actors of child protection locally (NGOs/Foundations, National Institutes and UNICEF)

Despite the challenging situation and the inability of the ChildSafe team to travel to Jordan, 2020 was a year of insightful preparation and design for the ChildSafe project to be launched in 2021.

## Spotlight:

### Futures Employment Project

Futures is a project developed to provide holistic support to youth and caretakers to prepare for, access, and keep gainful and dignified employment. The work is carried out by supporting various implementing partners thus creating a local, regional, national and international network embedded into the ChildSafe Alliance.

With the economic downturn due to Covid, employment was more essential than ever for youth and caretakers, while getting more difficult to access as the year progressed. Futures teams in all Implementing Organizations worked to adapt and expand services during these difficult times:

- Support to organizations was reinforced, supporting 18 implementing and affiliated organizations in five countries (Cambodia, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia and Myanmar)
- Futures processes and tools were continuously improved with a reinforced assessment of clients, leading to an Individual Plan including psycho-social support, education support, soft-skills support and hard-skills support before placement (in employment or self-employed/incubation).
- 515 (F 238) youth and caretakers were supported with hard-skills training
- 1,530 (F 836) youth and caretakers participated in soft-skills training
- 1,004 (F 537) youth and caretakers were supported with employment placements, including 170 (F 117) self-employment placements



## ChildSafe Companies

ChildSafe Companies are private entities, including schools, tourism-related companies as well as other business operators.

- The tourism industry: tourism industry partners (including hotels, tour operators, etc.) were among those most affected and many closed temporarily or permanently. However, connections were maintained and a new online training journey for companies in the Travel and Tourism sector was developed and tested with support of one partner.
- One Destination Management Company, Discova, operating in 14 countries in Asia and the Americas, was certified for 11 countries in Asia; over 200 staff members were trained and roll-out of trainings to additional staff and suppliers (i.e.: transport companies) will continue in 2021. Certification for the Americas is in progress.
- Schools were also affected by lockdowns and stay-at-home policies. However, training of teachers was delivered in the first quarter of the year and building relationships with existing and new partner schools continued for the rest of the year.

## ChildSafe in Community Based Tourism

Community Based Tourism (CBT) groups are communities and locally-owned enterprises offering unique and ‘off the beaten tracks’ experiences to visitors from all over the world. These communities are often not aware of the risks for children, including those posed by tourism, and in the last 3 years, ChildSafe has developed an expertise in engaging with those groups to improve the protection of children locally.

- In 2020, The ChildSafe team developed a new strategy to engage more efficiently and on a larger scale with CBT groups.
- CS started a collaboration with the Planeterra Foundation to develop online trainings for CBT members.
- CS maintained links with existing CBT partners in Thailand during the Covid-19 crisis.

“In the last 3 years,  
ChildSafe has developed  
an expertise in engaging  
with the Community Based Tourism”



# ChildSafe Experience

The ChildSafe Experience offers tourists and local populations experiences that are both entertaining, while also being informative about how to better protect children, as an alternative to harmful tourism activities such as ‘volontourism’ and visiting orphanages. Income generated supports the activities of the ChildSafe Movement globally.

The ChildSafe Experience started the year strongly. Activities were developed, new branding was finalized and strong collaborations were initiated with various partners in the tourism industry.

The first quarter of the year was very promising. It saw an increase both in the number of clients learning about ChildSafe and in income, bringing in \$5,982, which represented 36% of the entire 2019 income generated.

Unfortunately, due to the collapse of tourism, all operations stopped in March and the team was dissolved.

A new concept is being developed to prepare for the changes in the market and the issues the Experiences need to address with clients.

## Spotlight on Implementing Partner:

### Kaliyan Mith (Siem Reap – Cambodia)

Due to the terrible impact of the sudden drop in tourism, Siem Reap ChildSafe activities were severely affected:

- ChildSafe Agents: due to lack of income, many ChildSafe Agents left the city. The team remained active, (re)training 119 Agents to be ready to support teams for emergencies. 318 children were protected by these Agents (-17%).
- Tourism industry: work with hotels, tourist guides and operators all stopped.
- Businesses: all businesses were severely affected by the drop in tourism due to Covid, and many were closed temporarily or indefinitely. KM built a partnership with “Hotels Joining Hands” (Treeline Urban Resort, Mulberry Boutique Hotel, Jaya House Hotels) and distributed 52,800 hot meals to families impacted by Covid from April.
- Hotline: the CS Hotline received 508 calls and 318 children/youth and 209 caretakers received services.

“The team remained active, (re)training 119 Agents to be ready to support teams for emergencies.”



# Spotlight on Implementing Partner and CS Alliance Partner:

## M'Lop Tapang (Sihanoukville – Cambodia)

The pandemic had a huge impact in the lives of families and children they work with. M'Lop Tapang (MT) was nonetheless able to adapt and respond quickly to the increased needs of vulnerable and at-risk children and families:

- **Hotline:** in 2020 there were 1,808 calls received. This represented an approximately 50% increase in the number of calls to the Hotline as compared to 2019. The increased calls were mostly related to families seeking food support.
- **ChildSafe Agents:** of 510 CS agents, nearly 100 were newly certified. From the 1,808 calls, 529 individual children were supported, and over 400 families supported.
- **ChildSafe Campaigns:** during 2020, MT produced four videos for children raising awareness on online safety, and these was shared through the ChildSafe Agent network.
- **Food support:** In response to increased need of families, MT teams distributed more than 32,000 kg of rice (along with other food and hygiene supplies) to local families.
- **Child wellbeing during school closures:** When education programs were closed across the county, MT proactively worked with local authorities for permission to allow MT's Education Center and Community Center to re-open for a limited number of very high-risk children, with the focus to be on social services and recreational activities rather than classroom education. The result of this was that MT were able to provide vital wellbeing services to a total of more than 300 high-risk children and youth during times of mandated school closures.
- **ChildSafe Businesses:** MT maintained work with existing ChildSafe Partner Businesses (total 16) Find out more: <http://mloptapang.org/>

# Spotlight on Implementing Partner:

## Peuan Peuan (Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai – Thailand)

- **ChildSafe Agents:** due to the ongoing situation in Bangkok, the team relied heavily on ChildSafe Agents to provide support to communities and as a consequence, 1,525 children were protected (which represents a 500% increase)
- **Campaigns:** a series of Covid-related materials were created in Thai (some in collaboration with local businesses) for children, families and citizens
- Many initiatives with the Government were slowed down / postponed
- **ChildSafe Alliance:** Peuan Peuan supported partner NGOs on Covid protocols, including in Pattaya
- **Businesses:** a series of online Child Protection trainings for business were created and carried out (and replicated in other countries)



# ChildSafe Consultancy

ChildSafe, with the support of Friends-International and specialists from various ChildSafe Alliance Partners, offers services to organizations and donor agencies including assessments, capacity building, Child Protection and PSEA trainings.

Consultancies continued with three UNICEF country offices:

## **THAILAND: 2 CONTRACTS**

Contract 1: Capacity building of eight UNICEF Implementing partners in PSEA- working with migrant, stateless and urban poor populations in Thailand. UNICEF assigned Peuan Peuan to: Strengthen the capacity of partners to be able to provide appropriate support with the Protection against Sexual, Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) element and develop recommendations for UNICEF in setting up PSEA monitoring and reporting systems.

Contract 2: Implement the Risk Communication and Family Strengthening Support Program of UNICEF. This consisted in deploying emergency support to Cambodian Migrants and Urban Poor from June to October 2020 in five provinces of Thailand (Bangkok, Samut Prakan, Pathum Thani, Chonburi and Sakeo). The purpose of the project was to support the most at-risk families and children affected by Covid-19, and government preventive measures, to ensure that children and families can protect themselves from the outbreak and can build resilience both physically and mentally.

**INDONESIA** Following the success of the training provided by Friends-International via Teman Baik to UNICEF Implementing Partners (IPs) in Indonesia since 2018 in building the capacity of UNICEF IPs with implementing PSEA standards, Friends-International renewed the contract for another year. Friends/Teman Baik provided support to improve 27 UNICEF Implementing Partners' knowledge of Gender Based Violence/Safeguarding principles, standards and implementation.

**VIETNAM** UNICEF recruited Friends-International to support a local NGO (Thao Dan) to run an effective program to protect children in Ho Chi Minh City. The work consisted of providing structural support and capacity building to Thao Dan's team and supporting Thao Dan with the development of best practice programs aimed at protecting marginalized children/youth and their families in Hoh Chi Minh City. Due to Covid-19, the implementation was delayed and finally the support was provided online in the last quarter 2020.

**OTHER** In addition, Friends-International offered training through consultancy services to two NGOs in Cambodia - Digital Divide Data (DDD) and Jesuit Services Cambodia (JSC). The work consisted in supporting them with understanding the basics of safeguarding and helping them writing their own Child Protection Policies. FI supported both organizations with an assessment of their existing systems and with onsite training.



# QUALITY

(including Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning)

**Covid had a strong impact on the work of the Quality Team as it pushed the focus to Covid-related material and measurements, and impacted other initiatives:**

Covid:

## **UNDER THE DIRECTION AND COORDINATION OF THE COVID TASK FORCE:**

- New protocols and related material/trainings were designed for different services, translated for each country and updated regularly as the situation and information evolved.
- Specific material was created (mainly branded as ChildSafe Movement for easy sharing) including 7 Tips for Families, posters for children, booklets and games for children, for Transitional Homes, for Drop-In Centers, Foster Care, Vocational Training, etc.
- Specific material was created to train and be used by the ChildSafe Agents
- Teams were trained in all new and updated protocols to be able to protect themselves and others and teach others.

**PSEA (Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse):** material was updated, translated and added to existing Child Protection and Internal Regulations of all Programs. Teams were trained. All material was used for the training of Partner NGOs and for the consultancies.

**Risk Assessment:** the tool was expanded (to include stronger Child Protection aspects) and shared with all Programs. All Programs started completing their Risk Assessments for key services.

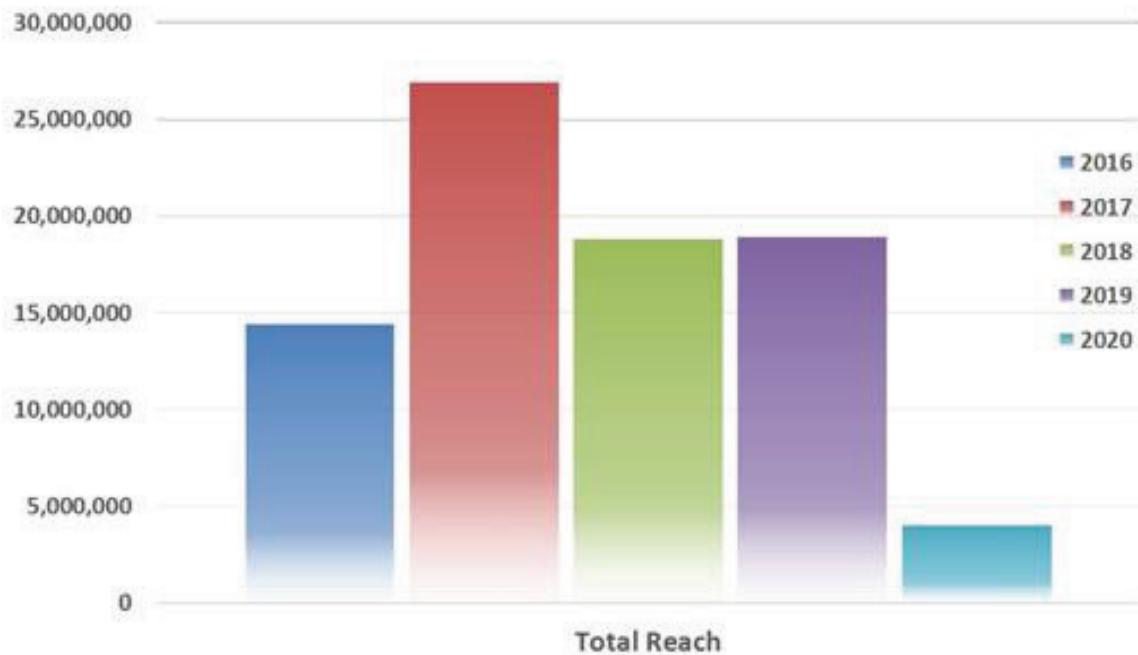
**Evaluations:** a priority was the Migration project with assessment at the Thai-Cambodian border. Evaluation/assessment tools were created and regularly improved to rapidly assess the situation in communities, for families and for individuals.



# COMMUNICATIONS

The global pandemic had a hugely significant impact upon FI communications (Comms) in 2020, but also brought opportunities to adapt and invent resources and approaches which would support our global aim at FI of rebuilding futures.

The overall reach of our communications dropped to just over 4 million (4,033,487). However, this is not surprising, given that the majority of our annual reach in previous years came from external media coverage – TV, internet, print. The rapid collapse of international travel, allied to the closure of our tourism dependent social businesses (particularly the well-established training restaurants) meant that the key ‘way in’ that many media had taken when featuring the work of FI simply no longer existed. This, allied to the fact that the media focus for last year was turned primarily onto the public health impact of the pandemic in their own ‘backyards’, meant that FI had only two significant international coverage opportunities during the year.



**Total Reach 2020 - 4,033,487**





**HOWEVER, IN OTHER AREAS COMMUNICATIONS WERE ABLE TO ADAPT VERY QUICKLY TO THE CHANGING SITUATION:**

- Providing support to the Covid task force in the creation of new resources and the adaptation of others. Strengthened relationships within Comms team, particularly in relation to design meant work on tasks was concluded more quickly and effectively.
- Comms also worked very closely during this period with ChildSafe Movement.

The existing Travelers campaign was put on hold, and a brand-new campaign focusing on support for families during lockdown was rapidly created and launched with an initial reach of 336,000.

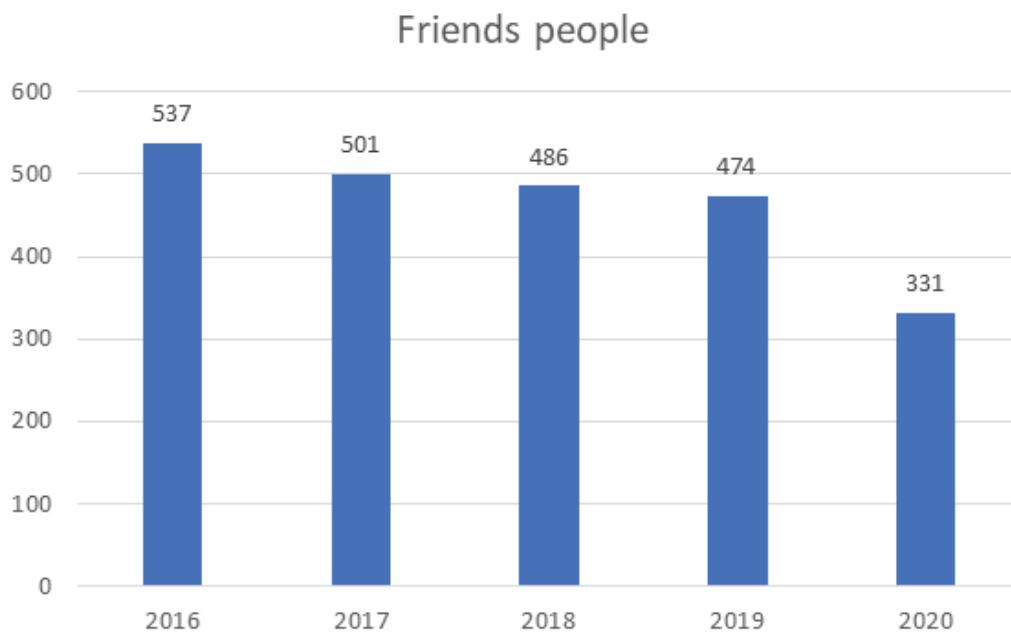
- Comms supported ChildSafe Alliance and partner WESSA in the creation, development and launch of the new ChildSafe Beaches campaign in South Africa.
- Internally, Comms continued a strong relationship with the Partnerships team, providing a range of support materials such as images and videos to use in proposals and concept notes.
- Comms embraced online presentation and public relations opportunities, particularly in relation to new global opportunities to share CS messaging with tourism and associated industry partners, and with young people, the travelers and volunteers of a very different future landscape. Tourism was a key economic driver in many of FI's operational areas, and the industry recognizes the leading role FI Comms can play in reestablishing tourism within a child protective, ChildSafe, context.
- Comms were also pleased to note overall increases in website traffic (+25%) and on social media, with a continued growth in Facebook followers (+20%).



# HUMAN RESOURCES

**Covid had a serious impact upon our teams. Difficult decisions had to be made, and our systems adapted to support all teams to the best of our capacity.**

Impact on the team structures: Covid had an immediate and unfortunate impact upon our teams as many projects were closed and cost reductions had to be rapidly put in place:



**Globally, the Friends team reduced to 331 persons (from 474 in 2019), a 30% reduction (222 people left in 2020 and we recruited 79 new staff):**

- Main terminations occurred in the vocational training restaurants teams (restaurants were closed), and also some international positions.
- Myanmar: we recruited new staff and formed an initial team for our new program in Yangon
- HQ structure was completely revamped with a new Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning International Coordinator (replacing Quality) and the creation of Saving Lives and Building Futures Programs
- A Team of Specialists formed at HQ level for Basic Training/'Friendsification' (the process of fully understanding the ethos and approaches of FI) delivery



## OUR FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACTS AND RISKS OF COVID UPON TEAMS AND BENEFICIARIES:

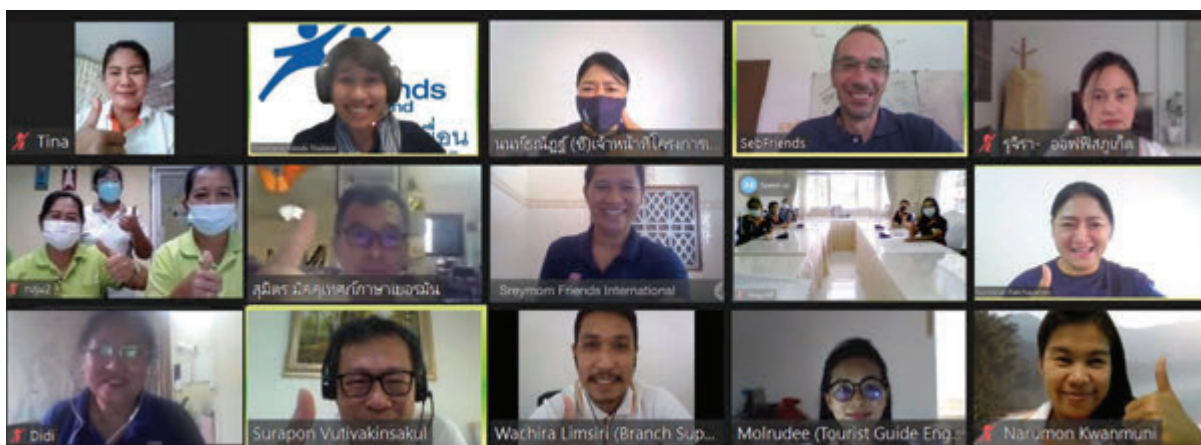
- Addressing Health risks:
- Covid Basic Training and protocols were created and implemented early 2020 to ensure the safety of staff and beneficiaries

## ADAPTING TO NEW WORKING CONDITIONS:

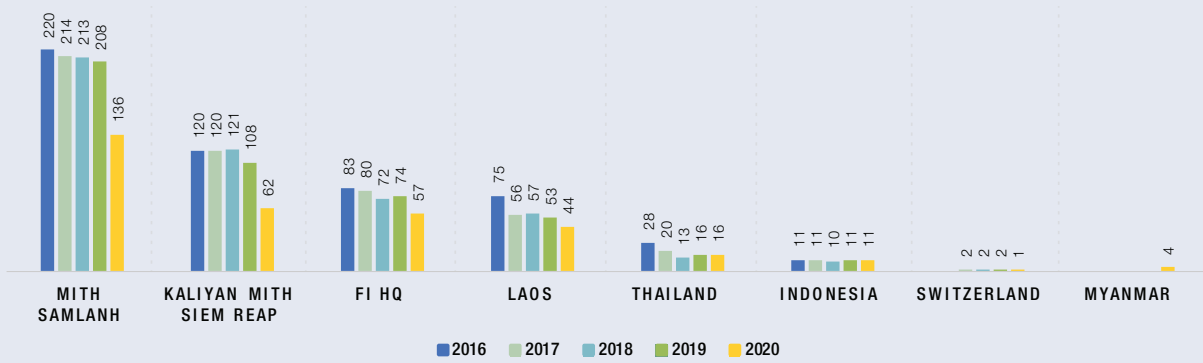
- “7 tips for working from home” and “7 tips for families during lockdown” were created and shared. These were designed to help staff deal with the new challenges posed by homestay and lockdowns
- Flexible working from home was introduced,
- Flexibility around sick leave was introduced
- Expatriates were permitted to return to their home country and work remotely,
- Flexibility for staff with children studying online was introduced
- Staff within high-risk categories (including age or chronic diseases) started working from home or were allowed flexible hours
- Tools were developed to support staff to adapt to new realities, including working from home and managing people remotely
- All field work positions such as outreach and center-based services were conducted on a voluntary basis. This ensured staff who were uncomfortable with being in the field due to the health risks posed could alternately work from home or the office
- Hygiene materials, including alcohol, gels and masks were made readily available
- Travel and visiting protocols were adapted such as avoiding groups coming to the office, private taxis for travels to the provinces, etc.
- Increased manager support and follow-ups for staff were encouraged through regular calls, informal meetings etc.

## REDUCING FINANCIAL STRESS:

- Full payment of salaries for staff under lockdown, in quarantine, hospitalized, or caring for family members was ensured
- Staff and volunteers who indicated they had particular financial needs were assessed and supported on a case-by-case basis.
- Staff loan reimbursements were delayed on a case-by-case basis (FI provides emergency loans to staff at zero interest)
- Prior to official lockdown announcements, we issued early salary payments to ensure staff had enough cash to buy food stocks



## Friends People per Program



**52%**

are female

out of all our staff globally

**51%**

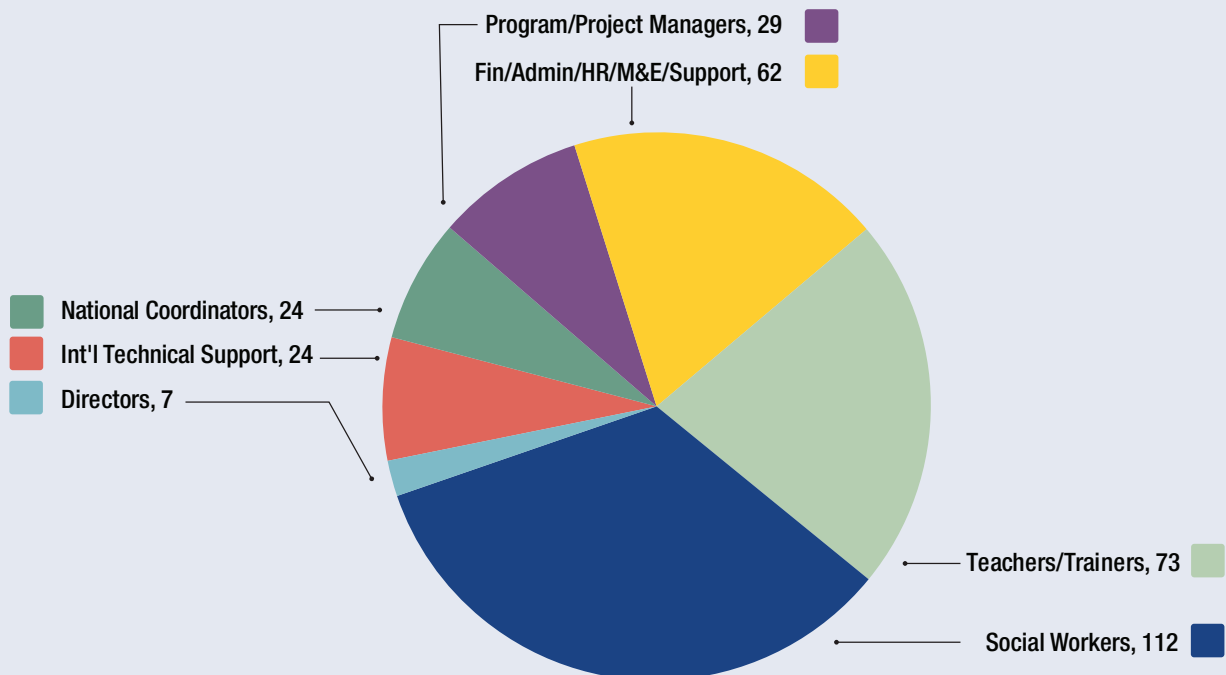
are female

out of 97 total leadership positions at Friends

**55%**

are female

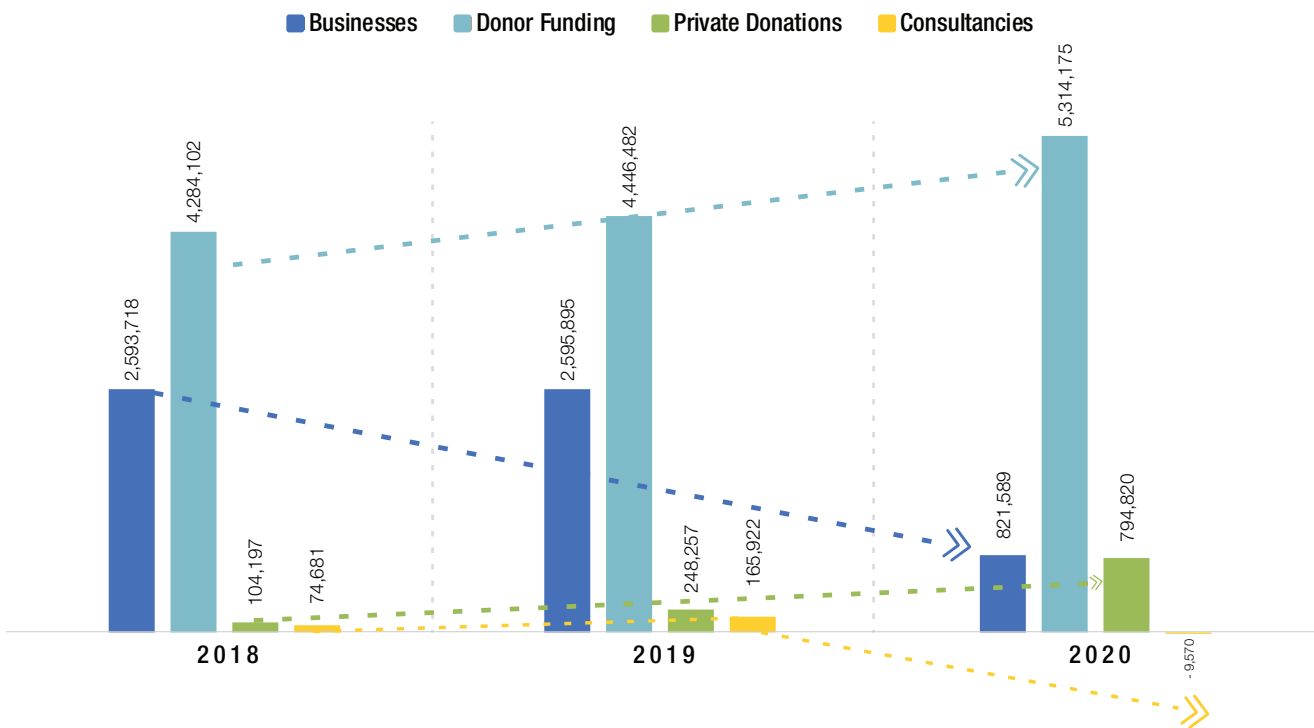
out of nine people occupying Director positions



# FINANCIALS

*NB: the full Financial Report is a separate document and is available on full on our website*  
[https://friends-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/FI\\_Annual\\_Financial\\_Report\\_2020.pdf](https://friends-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/FI_Annual_Financial_Report_2020.pdf)

**INCOME:** Friends 2020 income total was \$6,961,326 (down by 7%)



2020 saw a major change in the composition of Friends' income:

- Covid forced the closure of our vocational training businesses, which previously generated revenue for their operations as well as other Friends' activities, allowing a certain level of financial sustainability. However, with the onset of COVID-19 in Southeast Asia, after quarter 1 of 2020, Friends became a fully donor dependent organization and experienced \$1,774,306 in lost social business income.
- Other income sources, such as consultancies and trainings were also negative due to a refund linked to not being able to provide services in times of Covid (-106%)
- As a response, Friends focused on increasing donor funding to compensate that loss and donor funding increased by 20%.
- Friends also received increased support from private individuals responding to the Covid crisis through a series of successful appeals (+220%)



“In order to manage the huge economic impact, Friends had to immediately cut costs. This led to some very difficult decisions.”

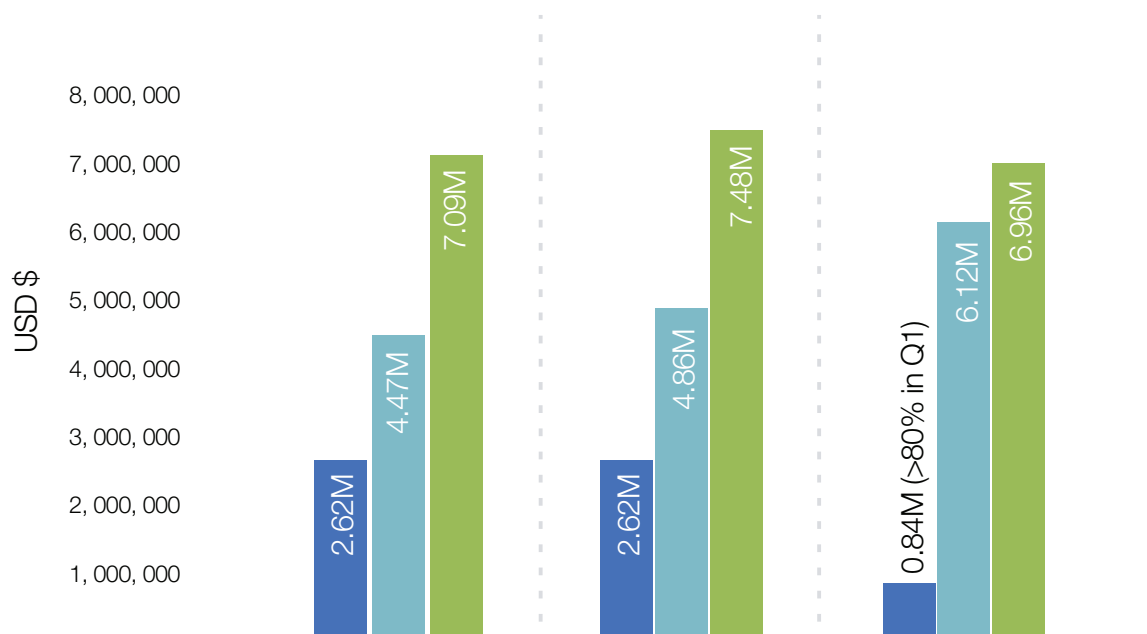
## EXPENSES

In order to cope with the change in funding, Friends took a series of cost reduction measures almost everywhere, including:

- Salaries, with reduction of staff and salary cuts (-26% for expatriates and -18% for national staff)
- Running costs (-30% rent fees, -44% utilities, -49% office supplies, etc.)
- Savings due to limitations in our ability to operate during COVID (-76% in vocational training material, -61% in sports activities, -69% in travels, -98% in meetings, Board meetings and Conferences, etc.)

There were of course strategic expenses that increased:

- Hygiene costs +303%
- Severance fees: +112%
- Family support: +477%
- IT computers for remote work: +17%
- Support to ChildSafe Alliance Partners: +58%



# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS WHO MADE OUR WORK POSSIBLE DURING THIS CHALLENGING YEAR.

Andrew Leaver • Arab Gulf Programme for Development • Atoz Foundation • Australian Volunteers International • Avery Dennison Foundation • Berea College • Boeing • British Embassy • Cambodia Children Support Foundation • CamboTicket • Campbell Scientific • Caritas Switzerland • Cellcard • Credit Suisse APAC Foundation • D Thomson Sargent • DAK Foundation • Damnok Toek • DanChurchAid • La Délégation Genève Ville Solidaire • ECPAT Luxembourg • Epic Foundation • Equitable Education Fund • Essex County Community Foundation • EXO Foundation • Familie Wiesner Gastronomie AG • Fondation Juniclair • Fondation Philanthropique Next • Fondation Pierre Bellon • Fondation RAJA-Danièle Marcovici • Fonds de Dotation Mécénat Servier • Footprints Fundraising Inc • Fossil Foundation • Friends Deutschland • Friends France • Friends-International, Inc • Fund for Education • Gerald Trevor • Gisela Stichting • Give2Asia • If International Foundation • International Monetary Fund • Ishk Tolaram Foundation • James Mizerski • Miguel Jeronimo • Jonathon Payson • Justice and Soul Foundation • Kadoorie Foundation • Kwok Foundation • Livelihood Enhancement and Association for the Poor Project (LEAP) • Lloyd George Asia Foundation • Luxembourg Development Cooperation • Bertrand Kervella • The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria • National Center for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STD • Partners for Equity • Paul Newfield • Planeterra International Foundation • Responsible Travel • Riverview Children's Foundation • Save the Children / European Union • Albrecht Kiesow Foundation • SeCoDév • Shiseido Travel Retail Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd. • Sipar/AFD • Skoll Foundation • Smart Axiata Co. Ltd. • Social Cycles • Solidarity Accor Hotels • Spellbrook Foundation • Steven Prusky • Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement Under The Royal Patronage • The Cold Mountain Fund of RCF Social Finance • The Intrepid Foundation • Tourism Cares • Trinity College • UNICEF Cambodia • UNICEF Indonesia • UNICEF Laos • UNICEF Thailand • UNICEF Vietnam • UNODC • Women in Travel Retail • World Childhood Foundation • Youth Career Initiative

