



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

Presented at the Annual General Meeting of First Hand on 23rd March 2020

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First Hand is a Singapore Registered Society UEN: T08SS0216L under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
Our fund-raising events are overseen by the Singapore Commissioner of Charities.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of First Hand,

Thank you again for supporting this charity and making 2019 a really fantastic year. There were a lot of changes to the team at the start of the year which presented its own challenges, but as a team we have managed to achieve the following:

- The number of volunteers who have actively helped this past year is 23
- Over the past financial year, we have been able to send **\$55,950.80 to Damnok Toek**, and **\$28,836.06 to Mothers Heart Organisation**, to continue their hard work with caring for vulnerable families and children.
- We raised an impressive **\$72,784** at the Singapore Chic Party in November, of which \$57,294.54 was sent directly to our Cambodian partners, which was an **increase of \$12,247.54**. This was a brilliant event which sold out in record time, and thanks to all of our volunteers.
- **Numama** held a great concert for First Hand, and raised \$17,000
- **Ukuladies** held a highly successful concert which raised \$9,222 for First Hand.
- We went on a **service trip to Damnok Toek** in April to deliver requested donations of educational games, toys, bags, shoes and clothes, and to understand their current and changing needs.
- As a team, we went on **three social events** in Singapore to build on the relationships created by volunteering together.
- We held an **information session** evening for new volunteers, which attracted 5 new volunteers to join the team

All of these achievements have been made possible by the support network of volunteers, supporters, partners and sponsors.

There were significant changes to the committee this past year, and we sadly had to say goodbye to Annette Woschek who left Singapore. Tori Gaver-Enger, Kathy Lewis, Kerry Cracknell and Melita Gerber also all had to step down from the committee roles due to other commitments (congratulations to Kathy for the arrival of her twins!).

As a result of this change, we were delighted to welcome so many new volunteers who have joined the team, each bringing exciting and new ideas for 2019 and 2020. We are really proud to be part of an organisation where each individual can make such a difference to our partners in Cambodia, and we feel very privileged to be part of something that has such a positive impact to those who are in need. It is also a rare possibility that you can easily trace where each dollar raised here in Singapore is then spent in Cambodia. This transparency is incredible and makes all of the hard work worth it! This organisation only exists from the hard work and dedication from each volunteer – we thank each and everyone of you for being part of such a special organisation.

Kindest regards

Claire Graham

FIRST HAND PRESIDENT | 2019/2020

FIRST HAND MISSION AND VALUES

First Hand has been in operation since 2008. Due to the transient nature of Singapore, there is always a shift of volunteers each year. In order to retain the key mission of First Hand with new members, we set out the key values of First Hand for everyone.

We are a Singapore-based group dedicated to helping vulnerable children and families in Cambodia. We help smaller NGOs who find it difficult to get adequate funding. We are made up of 100% volunteers with no salaried employees. First Hand supports and advocates for our Cambodian partner NGOs (Damnok Toek and Mother's Heart) in 3 main ways:

1. Hosting fundraising events in Singapore
2. Collecting and delivering requested donations-in-kind
3. Organising Service trips to Cambodia to serve and understand 'first hand' our partners' needs.

First Hand has a **mission** that was articulated in our founding constitution:

- Provide practical and financial support to those most in need in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia
- Seek out others concerned about the plight of those in need in the region
- Nurture relationships between those that need help in the region and those wanting to help
- Provide our members with personal, meaningful ways of aiding those in need

In 2019, we prepared our five **core values**:




We now aim to prepare our vision statement, which we will be working on at the next Strategy Meeting.





















OUR VOLUNTEERS

As a 100% volunteer organization we are completely reliant on the kindness, generosity and time given by our volunteers. We welcome anyone with a passion for volunteering – think about how you can use your time, professional skills, social network and ideas to make a change in the lives of vulnerable women and children in Cambodia.



Our current committee

 Johanna Schnappauf (Treasurer)	 Juliet Neal (Secretary)	 Claire Graham (President)	 Evelyn Abbott (Member-at-large)	 Annette Harling (Vice President)	 Sandra Pineda
 Sandra Majendie	 Karin Hesse	 Alexandra Bailey	 Tina Madsen	 Anna Renzema	 Nela Preidl
 Uma Babu	 Tanya Rawal	 Victoria Giaefer-Enger	 Kate London	 Seenu Samuel	 Elaine McGough



CAMBODIA - OUR PARTNERS, SERVICE TRIPS & IMPACT

An important part of fundraising for First Hand is to be able to demonstrate integrity with where the money is being spent. We need to be able to provide absolute assurance that we have 'first hand' account of how the funds we raise here is helping our Cambodian NGO partners, including their current and future needs.

During our service trips, we can check on how the projects that we have funded are progressing while also informing ourselves so that we can be more inspired and effective advocates back in Singapore.

Damnok Toek help vulnerable children and youths via their 3 centres in Neak Loeung, Poipet and Kep.

They are working with:

- At-risk children and victims of trafficking
- Street-working or street-living children
- Young people living with physical or intellectual disabilities
- Victims of any kind of exploitation or abuse

Mother's Heart is Cambodia's first and only crisis pregnancy counselling service. They empower, equip and educate women so they can choose the best future for themselves and their babies. Their main centre is in Phnom Penh and in 2018 they opened a new centre in Battambang.

Service Trip To Damnok Toek, April 2019:

In April, four First Hand volunteers (Evelyn, Melita, Uma and Annette) travelled to Poipet in Cambodia to visit the Damnok Toek on a self funded trip. Much of the money First Hand raises goes directly to this NGO which runs amazing projects supporting vulnerable families and children in Poipet for over 25 years.

Here Damnok Toek offers The Transitional Care Facility Project and Group Home Project as well as The Reception Centre Project. Their main goal is to reunite and reintegrate the often traumatized children with their families.

The volunteers were delighted to see 'first hand' that the funds that we raise are so well spent and to understand how we can provide further support. It is amazing that we can track each dollar raised in Singapore to where it is spent in Cambodia, and how much of a difference it makes to the lives there. The purpose of our trip was to learn more about their child-protection projects, to understand their needs and to show our engagement and commitment to raise funds to assist them.

The volunteers also took over 150kgs of supplies including educational toys, sports clothing, books and school supplies. A special thank you to all our friends in Singapore who donated school supplies and clothes. These were gratefully received by the families and children.

Please take a look at the Damnok Toek 2019 Trip Report kindly written by Annette Harling (appended to this report) to find out more about the trip, and what the volunteers experienced when visiting this amazing charity in.

Our intense trip was a life changing experience with massive impressions – although it can seem hopeless, it is so rewarding to learn that, what is being done, really does matter. Damnok Toek offers



amazing and very impressive projects that do make a big difference for so many vulnerable children and their families – kindly find out more on www.damnoktoek.org

At First Hand we are even more committed to raise as much funds as possible to support Damnok Toek. Thank you to all the fantastic Damnok Toek colleagues who took so good care of us.

OUR PARTNERS RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Damnok Toeks achievements in 2018 (2019 Annual Report to be published in May 2020)

- The Income Generation Activity Scheme provides loans of up to \$300 to help families start small businesses, offer training a close support. 36 families were supported in 2018
- In July, Damnok Toek won a prize the Prix Caritas prize from Caritas Switzerland for its outstanding work. Through this prize Caritas wanted to reward Damnok Toek and its work toward the marginalized children since its creation in 1997. Caritas was especially impressed by Damnok Toek's project in Poipet. In average those projects provide services to 3500 children and their families each year.
- **Poipet:**
 - 136 children attend Drop In Centre activities every month
 - 26 children stayed in the Transitional Care Facility Project, of which 12 were reintegrated either into their family or another NGO or Group Home
 - At the Border Drop in Centre, 30 children arrived on their own, and 88 children were referred or reintegrated through the project
 - 43 Children stayed in the Reception Centre project, which 24 were reintegrated into their family or another NGO
 - The Non-Formal Training Project is one of the most unique and successful projects with an average of 300 children attending daily in Poipet
 - In the first quarter of 2018, Damnok Toek opened up a Futures Office in Poipet, which is a one-stop resource office providing referrals for training and job leads, information regarding vocational training, and technical support to assist with resume building and computer training. In 2018, Damnok Toek counselled 146 people of which 80 received soft skills training, and 36 found a job thanks to 6 partnerships signed with Poipet private companies.
- **Neak Loeung:**
 - 23 children live at the Neak Loeung centre that provides shelter for children and young people living with physical and/or mental disabilities. Residents benefit from medical care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychosocial support, and attend school outside the centre when appropriate.
 - An average of 150 children a day attend the unique Non-Formal Education training project
 - In July 2018, Damnok Toek started a new project for Children with Disabilities (CWD). Facing discrimination and neglect, and being exposed to many dangers on the streets, abandoned CWD were placed in Small Group Homes (SGH), a family-like environment that contributes to the proper development of each child and guarantees their rights to develop, learn, grow, and participate. Since July 2018, DT has taken care of 16 children with severe disabilities and has contributed significantly to their development, increasing their chances of independence and success in their future lives. Allied to the SGH, DT opened a Day Care Center (DCC) that holds an educational space and also two rooms dedicated to Physical Therapy and Sensory Stimulation. The DCC is connected to the SGH and provides CWD with access to the rehabilitative and educational care they mostly need.



- **Kep**
 - 16 young adults with mental disability live in the Kep Center

Damnok Toek costs

- General Costs - \$338,985
- Project Costs - \$217,016
- Total - \$556,001
- Donations in total \$626,864

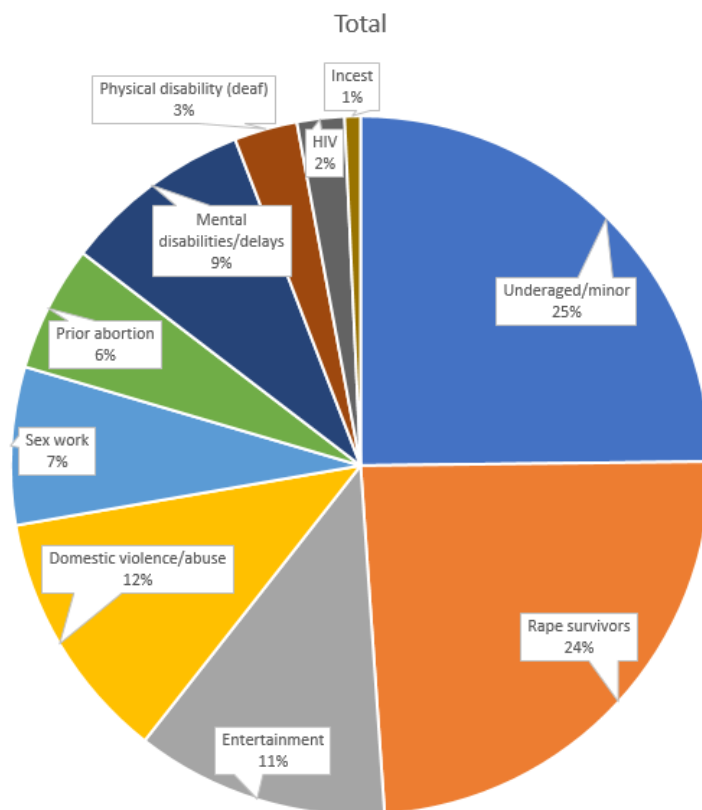
Mothers Heart achievements in 2019

Mother’s Heart Organization is the first and – still is – the only crisis pregnancy center in Cambodia

There are two centres, one in Phnom Penh and one in Battambang.

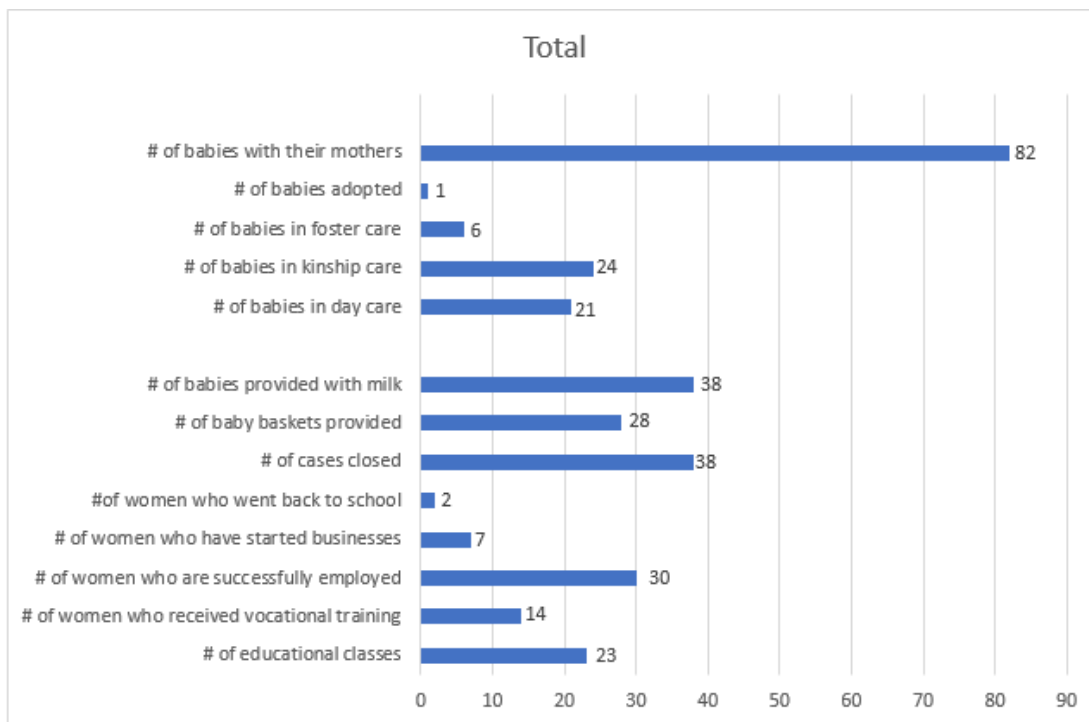
In 2019, a total of 101 women entered their Pregnancy Support Program and a total of and 84 babies were born.

Since 2010, Mother’s Heart has served 324 women and 319 babies. Most of the women come from different vulnerable backgrounds:





Mothers Heart has conducted counselling sessions, provided free medical and health care, as well as facilitated social support services needed to ensure the actualization of the women’s rights and the rights of their children.



Mothers Heart Costs

- Operational costs: \$105,823.56
- Program Costs: \$ 209,647.92



FUNDRAISING EVENTS

First Hand's primary way of raising funds is through events in Singapore. Due to Singapore regulations, First Hand has a permit for three months each year to approach potential sponsors and hold events for fundraising.

In 2019, we applied for one permit to cover the full three months for one event. On 9th November, we held a black-tie evening at a private residence called Singapore Chic. The event was a dinner dance, with auctions and prize draw to raise funds.

The First Hand team worked hard to contact as many potential sponsors as possible to gather suitable prizes for the auctions and prize draw, and all of the guests were invited to bid on the luxury items through the evening. The party was a huge success with the tickets selling out in just over a week, and many people on the waiting list.

In addition, the guests were entertained by singers Chieko Sato Trevatt (mezzo-soprano) and David Tao Chen Ming (baritone) accompanied by pianist Vincent Chen, whilst magician Yu Ji, Meta Illusions, performed magic tricks. MC DeeCee hosted and acted as the auctioneer for the evening which was very entertaining. Throughout the evening photos were taken by Vinod Rai Sharma, NIN9 Studios.

Blu Kouzina kindly agreed to provide all of the food for the evening, including support staff and the welcome drink which was very generous.

The team had gathered a fantastic number of auction prizes from our sponsors as set out below, which we displayed on the night for the guests to view and bid on throughout the evening on live and silent auction. Everyone was very enthusiastic about getting involved with the auctions, with a number of items attracting numerous bids.

The evening ended with dancing under the stars until the early hours.

The event was a huge success, and a total of **\$72,784** was raised of which \$57,294.54 was sent directly to our Cambodian partners, which was an **increase of \$12,247.54 from the previous year.**



SPONSORS

First Hand is very grateful to all of the brilliant sponsors who made this year’s fundraising event possible. We included all of their logos on our social media, website, in the event programme and also in newsletter to our members. We are happy to publicise the companies who have supported us.

For a full list of our sponsors please see the [Sponsors](#) page of our website.





SINGAPORE BASED PARTNERS

Our Singapore-based partners help First Hand by offering their services free of charge.

- We are grateful for our free web hosting provided by E-Alchemists.
- In mid-2019 we changed to a new office address and great co-working space courtesy of ClubCo in Capital Square. This is where we also hold our monthly committee meetings.
- We also have amazing partners in Singapore who support First Hand in a variety ways, such as the two musical groups Numama Choir and The Ukuladies – thank you!

If you or your organisation would like to partner with First Hand, please do get in touch.

END OF REPORT