



# AHC BI-ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT Q1 & Q2 2021



# COVID-19 UPDATE IN CAMBODIA

## JANUARY - JUNE 2021

In 2020, Cambodia recorded just 372 cases and 0 deaths of COVID-19 but was severely affected by the secondary socioeconomic effects of the global pandemic. 72% households reported reduction in incomes, pushing millions of families into poverty and affecting short- and long-term health outcomes.

In February 2021, a sustained community transmission led to a national outbreak. Within two months, the number of cases in Cambodia skyrocketed to almost 9,000, with 30 deaths. As of June 30th, the cumulative total has surpassed over 50,000 cases and 600 deaths.

### COVID-19: Confirmed cases in Cambodia

Source: WHO





In an effort to curb the outbreak, the government and local authorities enacted numerous measures, including curfews, business and school closures, an interprovincial travel ban and a lockdown in the capital between April and May.

While travel for emergency medical purposes was permitted, the lack of public transportation, ever-changing regulations, further financial hardships and fear, created additional barriers for families attempting to come to AHC for treatment. Although the travel ban has now lifted and patients have transportation options, the risk of another wide outbreak continues to be a major concern.

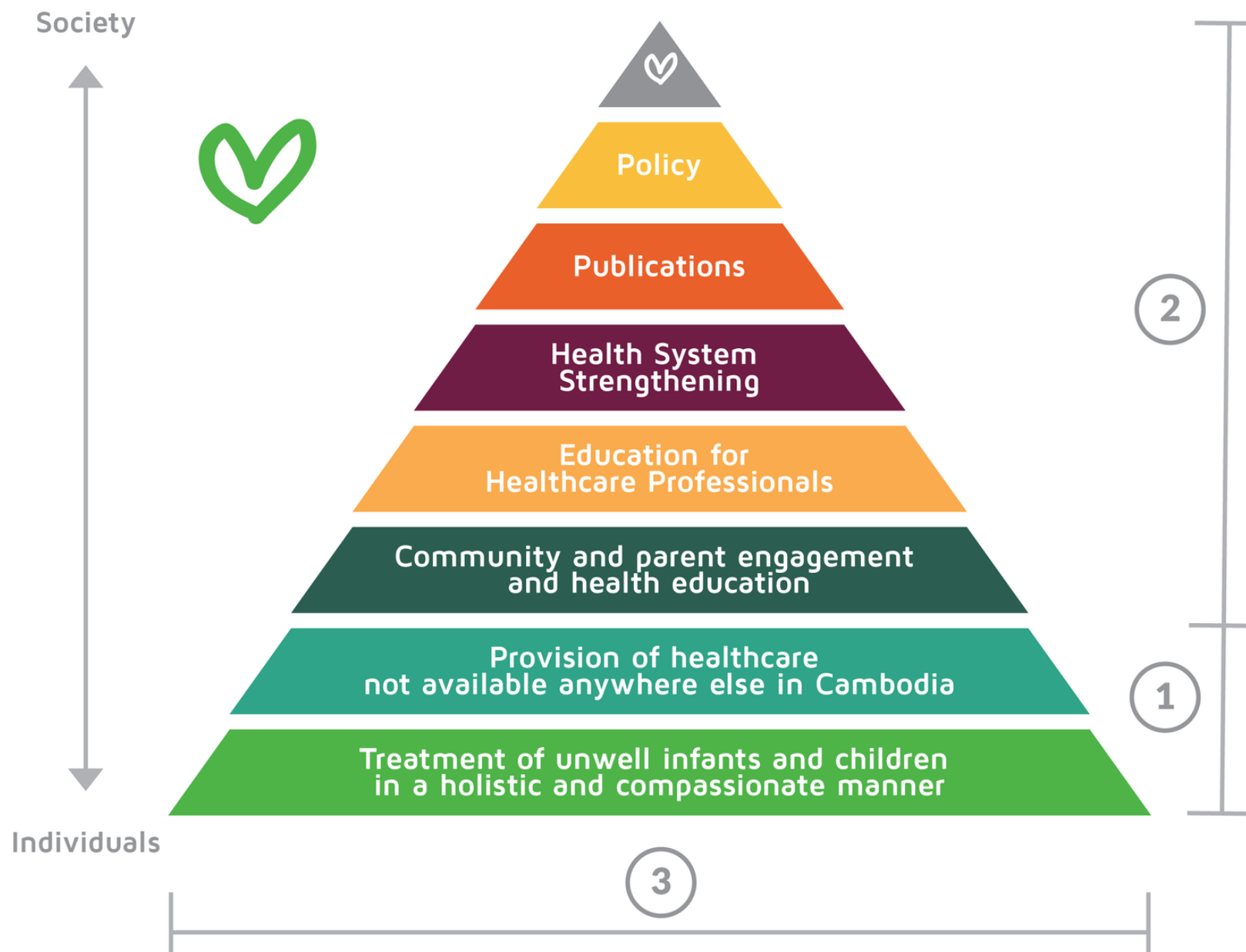
The continuing economic downturn, challenges in accessing healthcare, and vulnerability to COVID-19 are greater for over 5 million families living below the poverty line in Cambodia. The outbreak continues to disrupt essential health services, which could lead to a 35% increase in child mortality rate over the next year (Global Financing Facility).

Access to paediatric care is more important now than ever, as health resources are diverting to fight the pandemic. With your continued support, AHC remains committed to providing essential medical care to Cambodia's children to ensure that children's healthcare is not forgotten.

**Thank you.**



# AHC'S IMPACT MODEL



## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

1 Be a leading secondary and tertiary care centre delivering paediatric specialist services to children from across Cambodia

2 Build capacity in Cambodia's healthcare system that extends beyond AHC's walls

3 Run the organisation with exemplary governance to ensure sustainability and deliver accountability to our stakeholders





# PUBLICATIONS

## THE WIDEST REACH OF KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

AHC's commitment to evidence-based knowledge and data-based analysis results in robust research that solves national and international challenges in paediatric healthcare. Our research, regularly published in international, peer-reviewed journals, informs the hospital's provision of care, contributes to the national dialogue on pressing healthcare issues, and influences child health on a global scale.





## INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS THIS SEMESTER:

"Pyrites: A Perineal Mass"

Journal of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

"Impact of delays to incubation and storage temperature on blood culture results: a multi-centre study."

BMC Infectious Diseases

"Improving Treatment and Outcomes for Melioidosis in Children, Northern Cambodia, 2009–2018"

Emerging Infectious Disease

"Prediction of disease severity in young children presenting with acute febrile illness in resource-limited settings: a protocol for a prospective observational study"

BMJ Open



# HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

## BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

AHC provides tailored training, technical support and ongoing mentorship to healthcare workers along the continuum of care to increase access and improve quality within the healthcare system. We ensure the support provided in referral hospitals, health centres, health posts, and villages equips and empowers healthworkers with the skillsets needed to carry out training within themselves, ultimately, ensuring sustainability.

## HIGHLIGHT:

### SAVED BY TIMELY INTERVENTION

In Preal Village, Rovieng District, Preah Vihear Province, a farmer named Sak is one of two Village Health Support Group (VHSG) volunteers assigned to the community. Sak has been a VHSG for over 26 years, and has been participating in Participatory Action Research (PAR), as part of the community component of AHC's Saving Babies Lives (SBL) programme, since its initiation.

VHSGs are government endorsed primary health volunteers that provide healthcare information and support in their community. Since SBL began implementing the PAR methodology in Preah Vihear Province, VHSGs have identified problems and concerns around neonatal healthcare and worked to develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in their respective villages.







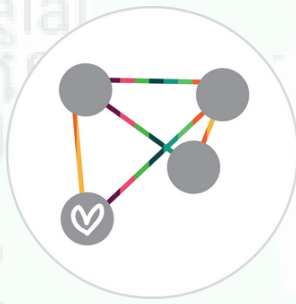
Sak was making his weekly rounds in his village and heard about Nika, a 25-year-old farmer who recently gave birth to her third child, a boy named Sophal, at Doun Ma Health Post. Although her newborn was born healthy, at 15 days old, Nika noticed an issue with Sophal's skin and took him to a traditional healer.

In Cambodia, traditional healers practice a combination of herbal remedies and rituals based on localised superstitions. Their methods stem from ancient times and the more recent civil war, and families, especially in rural areas, still depend on them today. One of PAR's monthly topics includes teaching the importance of going to a health facility instead of a traditional healer, as their treatments are actually sometimes more harmful than good, especially for newborns. Newborns are especially vulnerable and can deteriorate rapidly so going to traditional healers can waste precious time that they often do not have.

Feeling very concerned, Sak went to visit Nika's home and immediately recognised that Sophal was suffering from blisters, a dangerous sign of infection.

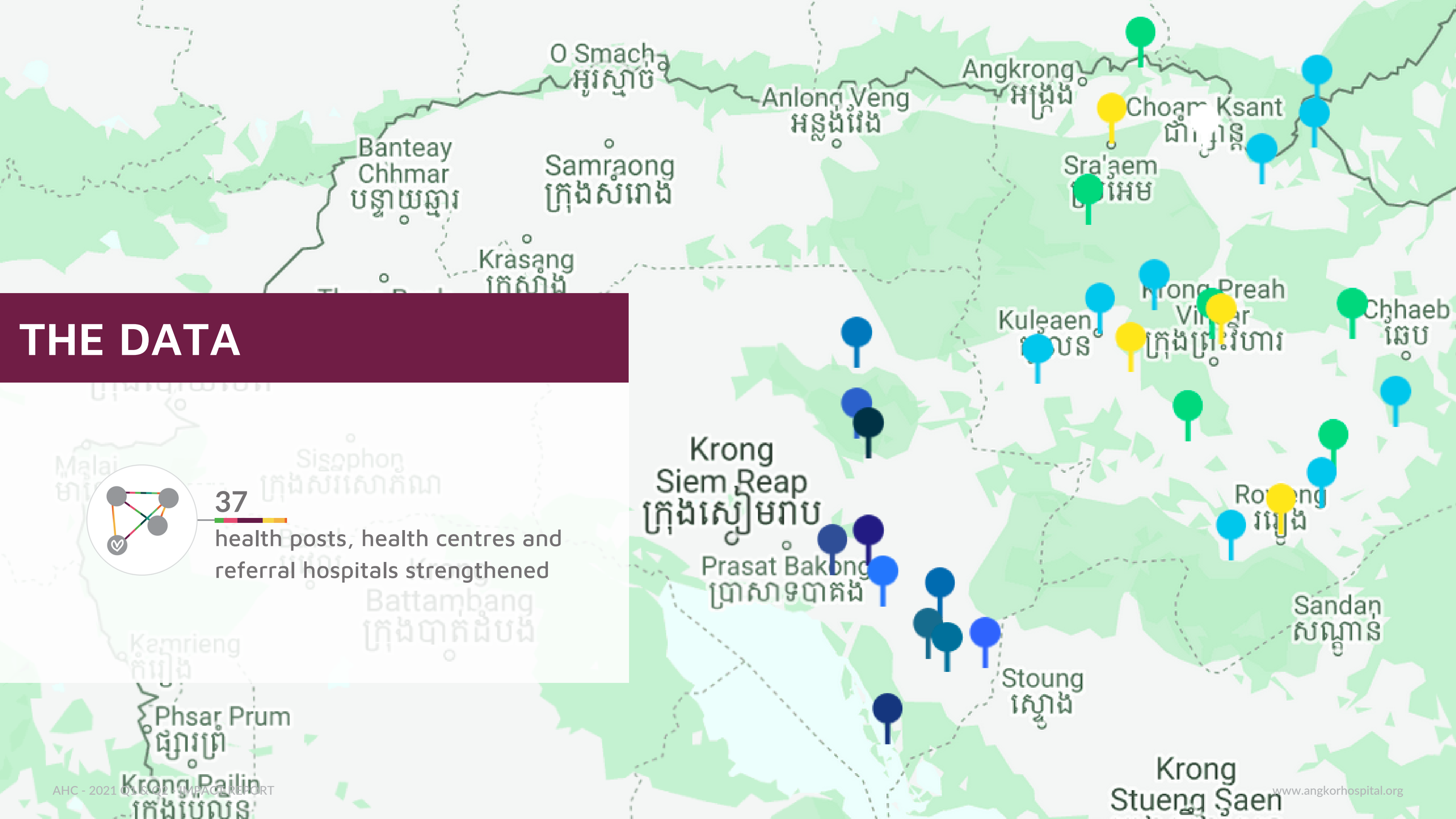
[Read more on AHC Lens.](#)

# THE DATA



37

health posts, health centres and referral hospitals strengthened





## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

### ADVANCING CAMBODIAN INTELLECTUAL SUSTAINABILITY

As one of the few paediatric teaching hospitals in Cambodia, AHC partners with government-run facilities, medical and nursing schools and private clinics to train students and healthcare staff in the highest standards of paediatric care. Since our founding, we've provided a comprehensive range of paediatric education programmes across disciplines and grades that allow healthcare professionals to go on to practice and teach in each of Cambodia's 25 provinces.

## HIGHLIGHT:

### CONVERSATION WITH DUONG VIBOL, AHC HEAD OF EDUCATION:

As one of three paediatric teaching hospitals in Cambodia, AHC's Education department has contributed to the capacity building of Cambodia's health system over the past 12 years.

COVID-19 has affected the education sector worldwide, and Vibol and his team have been exploring ways to best adapt to the new normal.

#### AHC staff

Moving continuing education sessions for staff online has allowed nurses to also tune in to continuing medical education, normally only for doctors. All attendees must pass an end-of-session quiz to ensure the quality of learning.

In the past, AHC sent staff overseas for training and welcomed volunteer mentors from abroad to share skills at AHC. Although international training opportunities have moved online, the team faces challenges with time-zone differences and the difficulty in performing required simulations. Despite these challenges, AHC has drawn upon close relationships previously made with volunteer mentors, especially for specialty areas such as oncology. This has allowed AHC's doctors to continue building capacity and consulting on challenging cases digitally throughout the restrictions of the global pandemic.



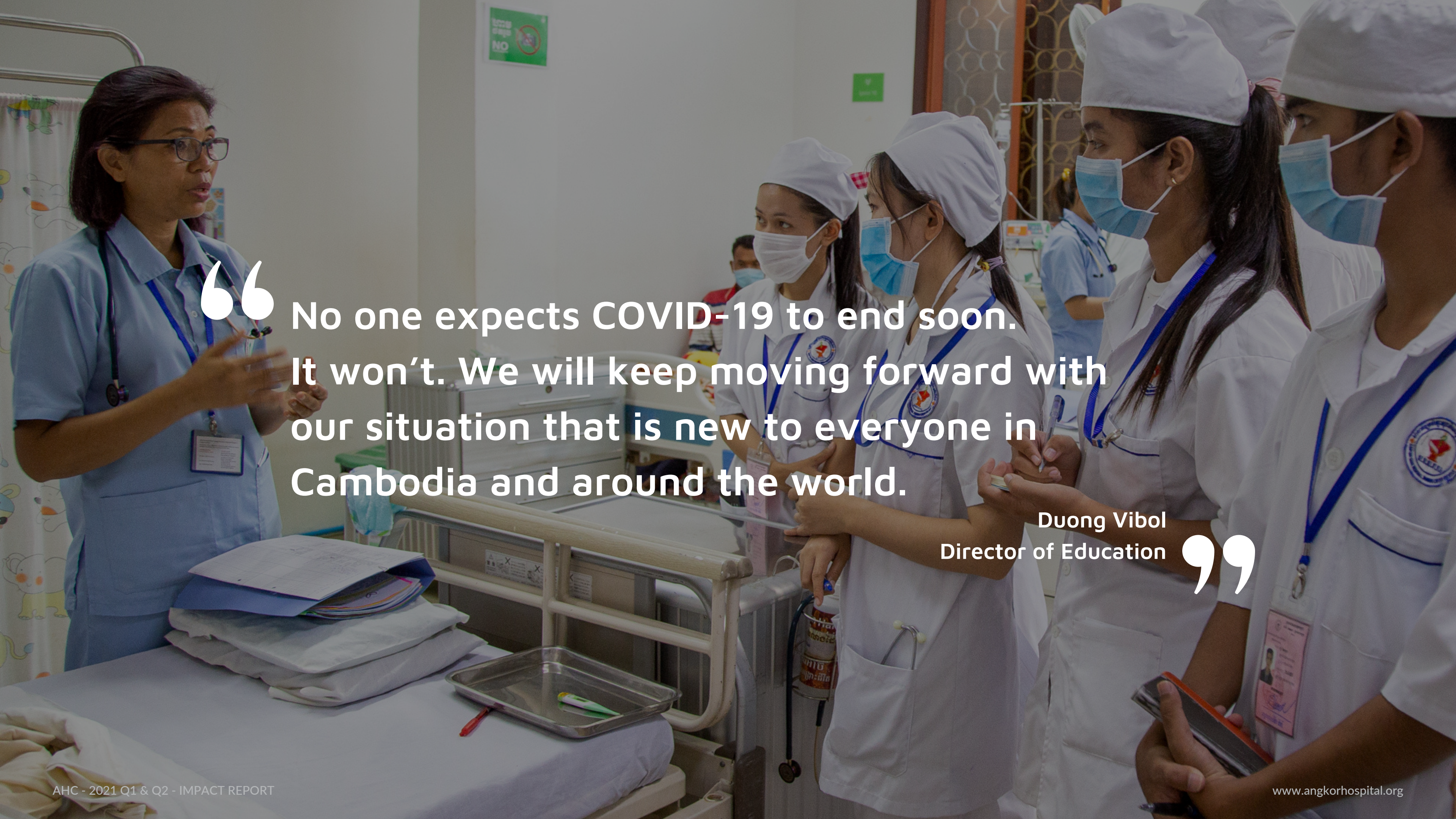


Medical students

Education facilities, including universities, moved online again in March 2021. Simultaneously, COVID-19 prevention has forced the team to reduce the group sizes for in-hospital training and mentorship.

Government healthcare staff

Before the pandemic, government healthcare staff came to AHC to learn about holistic care. Priorities have shifted within the past year since government doctors and nurses have been required to support national efforts for COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, delaying their education at AHC.



“ No one expects COVID-19 to end soon. It won't. We will keep moving forward with our situation that is new to everyone in Cambodia and around the world.

Duong Vibol  
Director of Education

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# THE DATA



16

number of participants in short courses



36

medical and nursing students educated



18,969

total attendances of AHC staff at continuing professional education sessions





# COMMUNITY EDUCATION

## PREVENTATIVE EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITIES AND CAREGIVERS

AHC's community-based, holistic healthcare initiatives deliver health education, increase access to care, address rural health inequalities, and ultimately, improve health outcomes. We partner with key actors and stakeholders within communities to provide health awareness events, first aid trainings, health screenings and other interventions that educate and empower children, villagers, and community health workers to decrease preventable illness. In the hospital, AHC provides health education to caregivers of admitted patients to help them understand and address the underlying causes of childhood illnesses, as well as develop healthy habits and behaviors, through one-on-one and group sessions.







## **HIGHLIGHT: LEARNINGS FROM AHC'S COMMUNITY TEAM**

Kong Naro, a qualified nurse who has worked at AHC for over 20 years, runs the AHC Community Department. Her team, which is comprised of herself and eight fellow nurses, two midwives and three non-medical staff, supports improving the health and nutritional status of vulnerable children and families in rural, remote areas of Cambodia.

Together with the Ministry of Health and local authorities, the AHC Community Department began working in Kra Lanh district, north-west of Siem Reap Province in 2021.

Unfortunately, the team has halted most activities since March, but remain positive and committed. To keep everyone safe, the team has broadcasted COVID-19 prevention education announcements around their targeted villages, handed out leaflets, and distributed hygiene products to households.

“ I think the silver lining here is we all got a big lesson on hygiene. In Cambodia, no one ever thought about hand hygiene before. In rural communities, we don't have proper WASH facilities, and no one minded. Now everyone in the world knows hygiene is the way to reduce infection and disease.

Kong Naro  
Director of Community ”





Despite barriers to community based health education, Naro and her team have seen a shift in behaviour and attitude in communities. Anecdotally, AHC’s medical team report a significant drop in admissions for some diseases at AHC since the hand hygiene education began, which helps to demonstrate the impact of the AHC Community Department’s work.

“ My team is still motivated. They are committed with their heart. They understand how COVID-19 spreads, they are not afraid. Once the local authorities give them the green light, they will be back out in the community.

Kong Naro  
Director of Community ”



# THE DATA



59,714

village member attendances



6,778

school student attendances



16,114

caregiver attendances (in-hospital)



# SPECIALTY SERVICES

## PROVIDING SECONDARY AND TERTIARY SERVICES AVAILABLE NOWHERE ELSE

AHC prioritises treatment of paediatric sub-specialities, a strategic response to the needs presented amongst patients and gaps within the country's healthcare system. This specialty care includes treatments in tertiary facilities, like neonatal and intensive care, as well as outpatient-based specialty services, like oncology, cardiology and neurology.

As one of the only healthcare organisations providing this service, we're establishing its importance to drive progress in specialty and routine service provision.



**HIGHLIGHT:**  
**LIFE-SAVING TREATMENT  
UNDER LOCKDOWN**

AHC treats children from all 25 provinces in Cambodia, with many traveling hours at the best of times to receive the care they need. This semester, AHC has seen about a 40% drop in the number of patients arriving at AHC for treatment. This is especially concerning for Cambodia's sickest children, particularly those in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit and Oncology Unit.

Families have been overcoming the challenges presented by the pandemic to receive the life-saving treatment they need during the lockdown, yet our doctors are concerned for many patients who have not been able to overcome the barriers to arriving at AHC at this time.



Read about Sreineang, who, together with her mother, made a 17-hour journey to AHC on a motorbike during interprovincial lockdown in April, for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia treatment.

Read about Samnang and his determined mother Bopha, who risked everything and faced many challenges along their journey from Kandal province to AHC for retinoblastoma treatment.



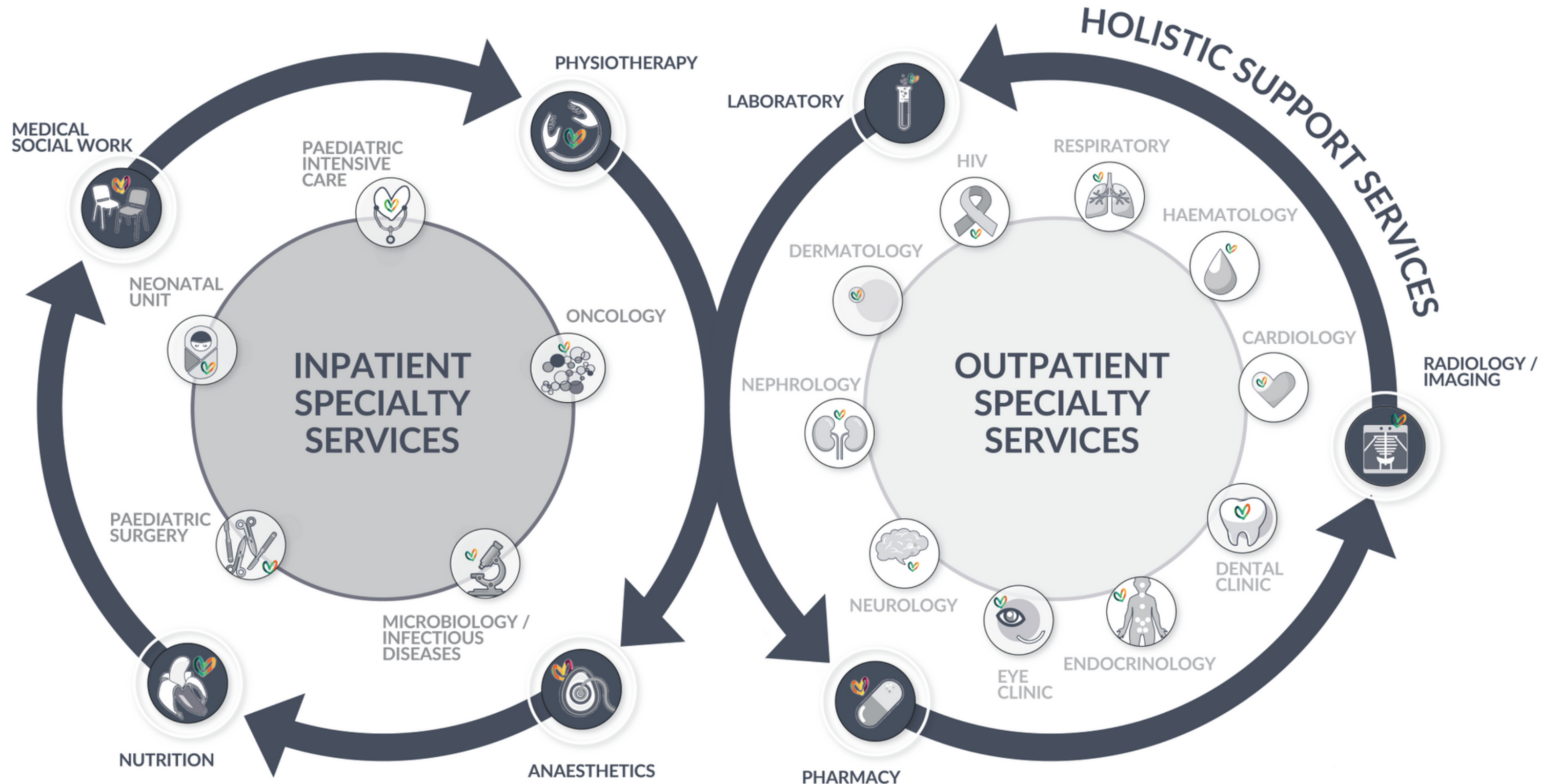


# THE DATA





# AHC SPECIALTY MODEL





# QUALITY CARE

## HOLISTIC, COMPASSIONATE CARE FOR ALL

Since AHC's founding, the organisation's vision has remained: that all Cambodian children have access to quality, compassionate medical care, wherever they live and whatever their ability to pay. Between our 19 interconnected departments, we provide over 135,000 quality treatments annually to patients from each of Cambodia's 25 provinces – delivered by staff who treat each patient as their own.





**HIGHLIGHT:**  
**USING ART & PLAY  
TO OVERCOME  
CHILD TRAUMA**

Developed in 2012, the AHC Social Work Unit is the first of its kind in Cambodia. The Unit offers holistic care for patients and families, going beyond the immediate physical aspects of illness to address the emotional, psychological, economic and social issues they may face. As challenges of COVID-19 have increased barriers to treatment, AHC's holistic support is more vital than ever.

Deborah Byrne, a child art psychotherapist from Ireland, recently volunteered with the AHC Social Work Unit. She coached the team in art and play techniques to enhance a child's sense of well-being and assist with children's learning, behavioural, emotional and social challenges.



“ I want to support children because they have no control over their situation and need to be given the time and space to heal.

Deborah Byrne  
AHC Volunteer



Art and play is a form of child counselling, helping children express their experiences and feelings through a natural, self-guided and self-healing process. Social workers use these techniques to better understand and help resolve any psychological and psychosocial challenges like abuse, trauma, loss of a loved one, or chronic illness.



“ Children find it difficult to express their feelings through speech. So using play can help them relax and open up when we ask questions.

Deborah Byrne  
AHC Volunteer ”

Unfortunately in Cambodia, one in four children have suffered emotional abuse, while one in 20 children have been sexually assaulted. Deborah hosted training sessions on topics ranging from understanding the different professions of play, sensory motor trauma, loss and grief, PTSD patient safety, and clinical note taking. Using role-play and real-life case studies, all trainings focused on issues specific to the Cambodian context.



“ Art and play therapy has been valuable because we can ask our patients questions indirectly while they play. We have a variety of toys and art materials. Slowly they can start to relax and be less anxious, and then start to share their feelings.

Rath SreyPov  
AHC Medical Social Worker



As challenges of COVID-19 have increased barriers to treatment, AHC’s holistic support is more vital than ever.

[Read more on the AHC Lens.](#)

# THE DATA



24,793

total patients treated this semester



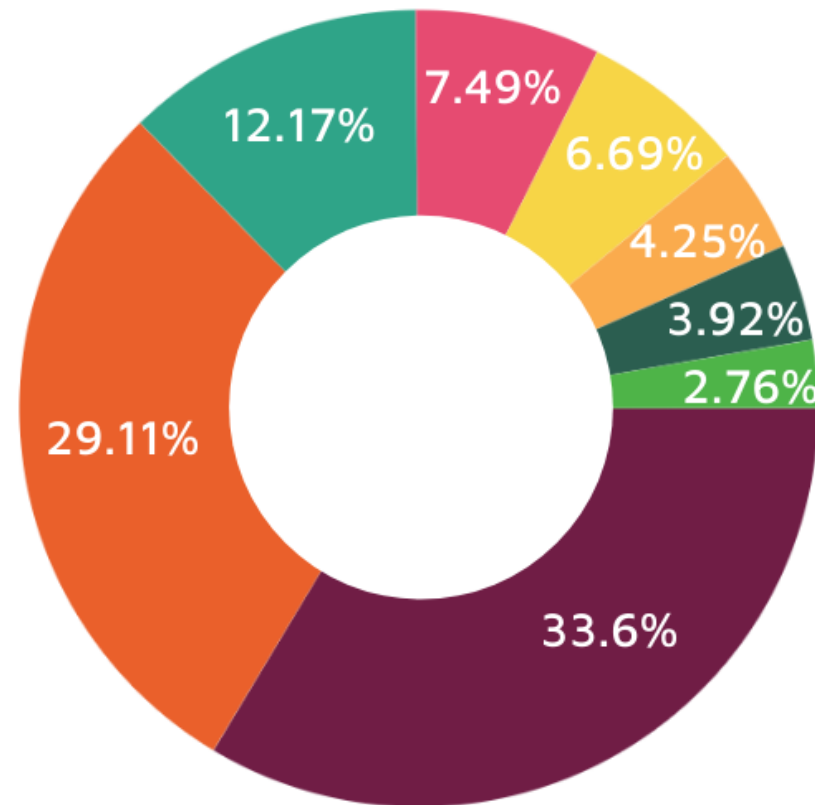


# FINANCIALS

## Use of Funds

Total funds used

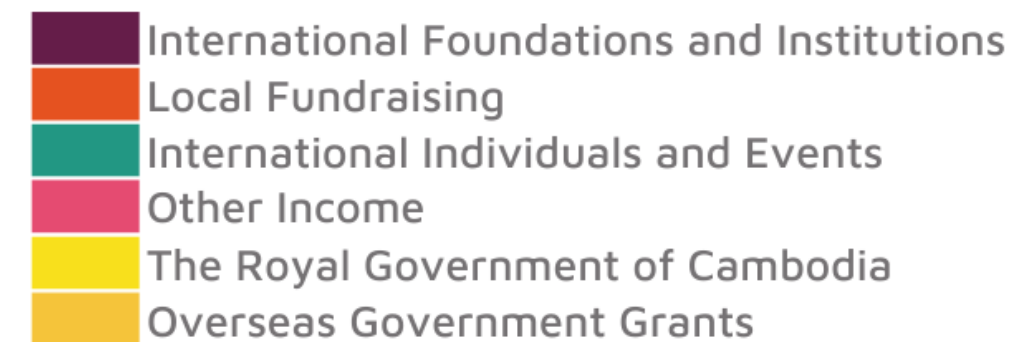
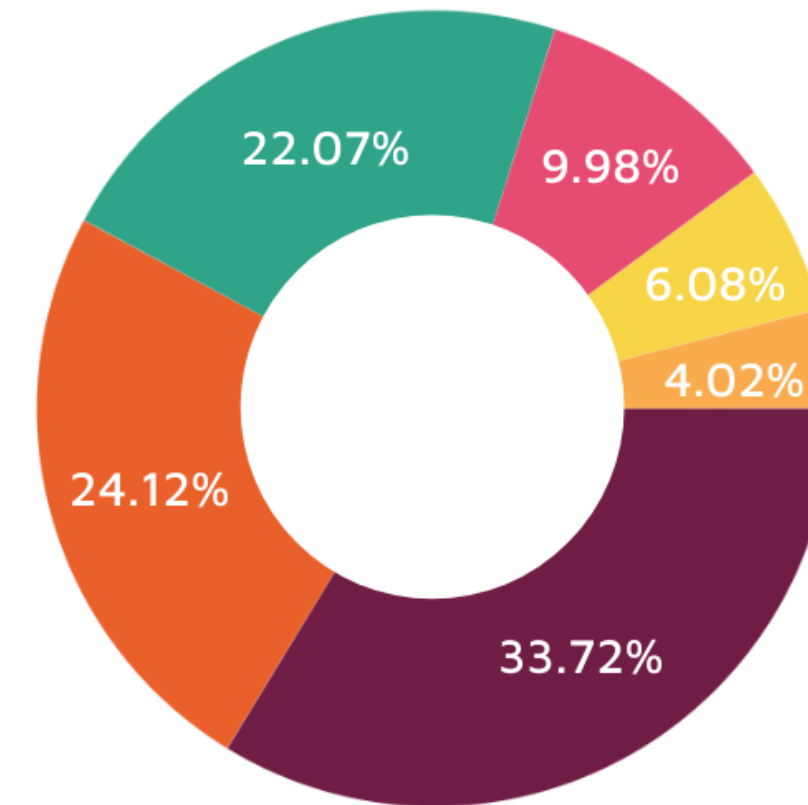
January to June 2021: \$2,496,139



## Source of Funds

Total funds raised

January to June 2021: \$1,954,104





# AHC'S IMPACT THIS SEMESTER

