



  
**FRIENDS**  
WITHOUT A BORDER

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## We believe every child has the right to a healthy and loving life.

That is the cornerstone of our mission. Friends Without A Border strives to accomplish its mission by providing free, compassionate medical care to the children of Southeast Asia, by creating community health education programs and by training local healthcare professionals.

## Message from Founder

Though nearly 2 years of closed border of Lao PDR, in early 2022, Nicole and I managed to visited Laos to have a meeting with the Ministry of Health about our contract. The meeting began with the presentation of 6 years operation of LFHC was quite different from the previous years. Instead of previous presenters of foreign expats leaders, the three Lao national staff, each from Medical, Nursing and Administration, confidently presented their activities of the department.

The evening after the official meeting, we hosted a dinner with the officials together with the LFHC staff, which we celebrated 16 Lao staff members who had received promotions to the manager position at the end of 2021. One of them, Maly Chittapai, has been promoted to Nursing Director replacing Matt Evans. She is the first person to be a member of the executive team and to run a major department. This is the beginning of a transition to a Lao run hospital and we congratulate those who got promoted and those who taught them well.

I like to thank you all, who tirelessly worked to improve the LFHC, and supported our activities throughout the years, include the most difficult time of Covid-19 which limited our activities of any kind.

Your trust on our vision made us reach to here today.

**Kenro Izu, Founder**



## Message from Our Chair



Dear Friends,

As 2020 drew to a close and we hoped the worst of the Covid-19 pandemic was behind us, we were cautiously optimistic operations at Lao Friends Hospital for Children during 2021 could begin to return to a pre-pandemic normality and our training and outreach programs could be re-invigorated. As we all now know, 2021 proved to be another challenging year navigating pandemic protocols and closed borders. I am happy to report, however, that our dedicated staff continued to provide compassionate, high quality care at LFHC and as the year progressed we were able to make progress in recruiting senior staff, including our new hospital director, Dr. Thomas Brune. The caseloads at LFHC have steadily grown over the course of the year.

Unfortunately, we were again required to cancel all of our in-person fundraising and other benefit events during 2021 due to continued social distancing and lockdown mandates globally. We were able to stage a virtual Gala last May, with compelling guests, and another virtual Run for the Children in the Fall, which helped us maintain some fundraising levels. As always, of course, it was only through the continued generosity of our donors that we managed to maintain the operations at LFHC during what was another challenging year.

While we are looking forward to improving global conditions in 2022, we expect the pandemic effects will continue for some time, and we continue to rely on the support of all of our friends dedicated to Friends Without A Border's mission to improve the lives of children in Southeast Asia. Thank you for your continued support of our mission.

**Steven Williamson**

## Message from Our Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Covid-19 loudly knocked on the hospital door in 2021 and it affected both our staff and our case load with many people afraid to venture out and negotiate quarantine restrictions. Despite this, the hospital had an excellent year in many ways including the following:

1. Increased responsibility and promotions among the Lao staff.
2. A new hospital director, Dr. Thomas Brune, pulling the team together and planning an exciting slate of projects for 2022.
3. These projects include construction on the former neonatal unit to convert it to a High-Acuity unit with pediatric ventilators and Cpap equipment allowing us to both save more lives and to teach how to perform intubation.
4. The completion of a new storage warehouse as well as plans to build a new breastfeeding room and educational center and patient family housing.

We are excited about all of these things as well as our increased emphasis on education and prevention which will be a big focus in 2022. The generosity of our donors allows all this to be possible. Our patients truly owe their health and, in some cases, their lives to you. Heartfelt thanks.

Best,

**Nicole Pagourgis**



## Message from the Hospital Director of LFHC

My name is Dr. Thomas Brune, Director of Hospital Services at LFHC since November 2021! I made my medical training in Germany, but have been working as a Pediatrician and Neonatologist in both Sweden and in Germany. For the last 25 years I have been working in Stockholm, for several years at Karolinska Hospital, but for the last 8 years at Sachss Children and Youths Hospital, where I have been the head of the neonatal department.

My global work experience started in a Pediatric Hospital in Sierra Leone in West Africa. I have worked as a Pediatrician in Ethiopia and Malawi and have also been involved in Kangaroo Mother Care, both in Sweden and in several African countries. As a neonatologist I believe very much in developmental care: Always keep in mind how you can support the healthy development of the vulnerable newborn child!

As a manager, my priorities are to create teamwork in the Exec Team, based on open discussions. One of my major priorities as the Hospital Director will be to promote Lao Leadership. The work as a manager reminds a little bit of the work of a neonatologist: You have to believe in Team work and trust the capacity of the team around you! And I must say, I have huge confidence in the ability and commitment of the Laotian staff, when we all work together as a team, we will be able to achieve great things.

**Dr. Thomas Brune**





# Overview 2021 Highlights

In 2021, Covid-19 hit Luang Prabang hard for the first time. In spite of all the measures taken within the hospital, many of our staff caught it and which resulted in much bigger workloads for their colleagues. Despite this and lower overall patient numbers due to strict quarantines, FWAB met its budget goals for the year and set the stage for the hospital's future by filling key management roles, promoting Lao staff, completing, and initiating some important construction projects and by preparing for a review of our accomplishments with the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Department to discuss the future of LFHC.

Specifically: FWAB had two major virtual fundraisers, our annual gala, and our virtual race (replacing our annual half-marathon in Luang Prabang) which netted us over \$500k. FWAB also increased their foundation income.

Importantly, FWAB hired an excellent new Director of Hospital Operations, Dr. Thomas Brune. Dr. Brune oversaw the neonatal department at a prestigious hospital in Stockholm but has important global health experience as well. He is a strong leader who emphasizes the importance of teamwork. We filled our nurse educator position by hiring Roderick Labicane, who has extensive experience working in this position in Sierra Leone. There are also searches underway for a new medical director, a new medical education director and a first-time Director of Prevention.

There was one construction project completed, one started and two more planned for in 2021. Construction of an external storage building that includes a workshop for the equipment maintenance and facilities management team was completed. The benefits are multiple: it has freed up a 20 square meter room in the neonatal

building to be used for clinical purposes.; it allows medical supplies to be stored in a more secure location and at an appropriate temperature. This project was undertaken because the provincial hospital is in the process of constructing a new clinical building funded by the Chinese in the space that was occupied by our shed, parking area and vegetable garden. Our new vegetable garden is amazing!

- The LFHC has received generous support from the HASTINGS FOUNDATION (Charles and Sally Stone) to remodel our former neonatal unit into a highly anticipated High-Acuity Unit to be named in memory of our long-term donor and friend Edward Eldredge Stone, who sadly passed away in 2021. The HAU will be the section of the hospital that provides the highest level of medical care to sick children (like an ICU). Importantly, it also will expand our training program to include intubation, close monitoring, and decision making regarding seriously ill children. These skills are taught in all pediatric residency programs and will make our program more thorough and competitive.
- We have received approval and funding from FWAB Japan to build a new breastfeeding room. This room will provide privacy to mothers in our Inpatient and Outpatient departments and will allow our nutritionists and nurses to give educational training to mothers. This is in alignment with our malnutrition prevention goals. FWAB Japan also received another grant to build a structure to house patients' families who come from far distances and currently sleep outside or in tents around the hospital.
- In collaboration with UNICEF, LFHC has developed audio-visual material on the management of malnourished children for training and advocacy purposes in Lao PDR



**12,204**  
outpatient treatments



**9,634**  
emergency room treatments



**2,270**  
hospitalized children



**955**  
surgeries performed



**589**  
neonatal admissions

and the Southeast Asian region. The videos and photographs produced by this project will be used to provide real-time training to staff dealing with malnourished children. This is another effort to increase our prevention services in the specific areas of nutrition and stunted growth.

- In partnership with the Swiss Red Cross, LFHC's staff conducted a pilot program for district hospital staff. The primary program aims to enable secondary health care providers in district clinics to care for newborns and children safely and competently and to refer patients to the LFHC (the only tertiary service in Luang Prabang province) in a timely and appropriate manner. The secondary objective of this program is to enable the pilot training sites (Chomphet and Phonexay district hospitals) to serve as training centers for their staff in these districts.
- Team leaders began conducting interviews, rosters, budgets and annual appraisals for the first time, with positive feedback, which led to even more exciting news: a significant number of Lao medical staff were promoted to managerial positions in early 2022.

## CARE

Apart from the number of OPD visits which was close to that of 2017, 2021 was a busy year for Lao Friends Hospital for Children. Despite the reduction in the number of clinical expatriates and the absence of foreign volunteers, the team treated over 24,000 cases.



### Skin to Skin

Our hospital puts compassionate care at the heart of everything that we do. Helping parents understand the benefits of skin-to-skin contact and putting them into practice is the very essence of our mission.

Skin-to-skin has many benefits! When the baby is inside the uterus the amniotic fluid tastes and smells like mom. The newborn recognizes the smell of the mom's skin as it is the same as the amniotic fluid, this makes the baby feel like they are home. The baby can hear the beating of the parent's heart. Incredibly, the mom's body will adjust its temperature to warm or cool the baby as necessary. It will also reduce maternal stress, reduce blood pressure in mothers with preeclampsia and hypertension. This close contact releases oxytocin and helps mom produce milk. The benefits are innumerable! Our new neonatal nurse educator and our shift leaders are now actively promoting skin-to-skin contact in our neonatal unit. Helping care for newborn babies and build families.

The number of patients admitted to the Neonatal Unit in 2021 has decreased slightly compared to 2020, with a total of 589 admissions.

Due to the spread of the virus, we have had to radically change the way we segregate patients in the **neonatal unit** - as all families and patients needed to be tested for Covid, we had one area for patients awaiting test results (results take 2 days), one area for those who have tested negative, and one for those who have had close contact with a positive case. As we had to place nurses in all different areas during this time, this caused staffing problems.

Here is one of many examples where one of our senior nurses showed great skill and compassion during this difficult period, which led to her being promoted to be the first Lao Neonatal Nurse Manager. She now takes the lead in all management and education for nurses in the unit.

The capacity and quality of care provided at LFHC are receiving increasing recognition at a national level, Xayabouli provincial hospital has requested our support and expertise to increase its neonatal care capacity. A senior nurse and doctor from the LFHC have been identified and will be visiting soon.

The LFHC **In-Patient Department** with is 34 beds, is the busiest area of the hospital as patient ages can range from 28 days to 15 years, encompassing a huge range of diseases, congenital health problems, and injuries. Before COVID, expatriate doctors led all clinical shifts and led the ward



rounds in IPD. As there have been far fewer expatriates, Lao doctors had taken more initiative, and it is they who now lead ward rounds. This has also had a beneficial impact on families, as more discussions take place in Lao, Hmong, or Khmu, which is in line with the Friends Without A Border principles, to provide compassionate care.

To follow infection control guidelines during COVID, the IPD team had to use personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, masks, face shields, etc., which can be scary for children and families. With the help of our Child Life Therapist, the team has worked to provide more comfort and support to families. A total of 2,270 children were hospitalized in 2021, a similar number as 2018 a busy year for our hospital.

The team in the **Outpatient Department** was on the front line of the COVID crisis, receiving most of the patients entering our hospital. They quickly

took steps to set up COVID triage in our waiting area. During the year, they received several trainings, organized by the Ministry of Health with the support of WHO, on improved practices (Diagnosis and Tracing) for Influenza Like Illness (ILI) and Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI). The number of patients in our outpatient department was most affected by the closures and travel restrictions, where we recorded a total of 12,204 visits for the whole year, a decrease of 35% compared to 2020. Looking ahead to 2022, we are seeing a gradual return to normal attendance.

Despite the challenges due to Covid, our team in the **Operation Theatre (OT)** performed more than 1,000 procedures.

A dedicated operating room shared by the provincial hospital and LFHC was used to perform surgery on patients who were also Covid positive. Some types of surgery and anesthetics put staff



at greater risk of contracting Covid and our staff met those challenges head-on.

In response to the closure of borders, virtual courses run by volunteers abroad have enabled further training of operating theatre staff.

Plans have been prepared for some remodelling in and around the Operating Theatre, opening the space and allowing better care for a greater number of patients. Also, a procedure room is being prepared for minor procedures such as dressing changes and removing stitches which would otherwise take up time and space in the OT.

The LFHC pediatric **Emergency Department (ED)**, is the only emergency department in northern Laos uniquely prepared for pediatric emergencies. Separate from the adult emergency department, we provide comprehensive emergency care with direct access to pediatric emergency specialists. On-call 24/7 to protect life or limb, ED is staffed by our more experienced nurses and doctors. Our service did a record 9,364 visits for 2021, the numbers of visits were significantly impacted by

the provincial lockdowns. What stands out in 2021 is the team spirit and solidarity.

In June Ai Noy arrived in the ED and in critical condition, a chest X-ray revealed a large amount of fluid in the right side of the chest. Ultrasound imaging confirmed the presence of fluid. He was quickly diagnosed with a pleural effusion. Our team had to act fast!

The team had to perform a chest drain. A chest drain is a tube inserted through the chest wall between the ribs and into the pleural cavity to allow air, blood, fluid, or pus out of the chest. A junior doctor outdid himself by successfully performing this complicated procedure for the first time with the support of senior doctors who guided him through the procedure. Teaching juniors, sharing knowledge and creating a better team, the LFHC is built on these values and this is one of many examples.

In 2021, the **Development Clinic** was able to provide assessment and treatment strategies for children with a wide range of difficulties including

prematurity, developmental delay, autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, post encephalitis, and traumatic brain injury. We were still able to see 93 new patients and had an additional 95 visits for follow-up sessions with children. Given the many challenges with COVID restrictions, these numbers are truly remarkable. Additionally, we remain the only program of this kind in Laos where they do not have words for autism and Down syndrome. We have seen some of our patients make remarkable progress during this time and with an increased recording of specific goals we are beginning to be able to gauge this progress more. We have also supported families whose children have long-term severe disabilities to help improve the quality of life for them and their children. In addition, we have endeavored to provide education to all families to help them understand their child's diagnosis and treatment strategies. We were delighted to welcome a second physio to our team in September 2021, this addition expanded the 2021 therapy team to include 2 physiotherapists, a long-term occupational therapy volunteer, and our child life therapist who also supports children with communication difficulties through previous training from an SLT volunteer.

The team has continued to work closely with the outreach and nutrition teams and to join the outreach team for home visits. The children that access the Development clinic and their families are often marginalized in their communities and the relationship and support they receive from this team are vitally important. As we look towards

2022, we hope to continue to build on our existing service to welcome more children and to be able to support these children and their families even more without the COVID restrictions of 2021.

**Radiology / Imaging Department:** *"Why can't this new-born baby feed? Is there a hole in the esophagus? How about a blockage in the intestines?"* For the first time, LFHC can quickly supply these life-saving answers due to the addition of a C-arm machine. This piece of radiology equipment is shaped like the letter "C" and takes multiple images that can be shown as a video. The video can allow the doctors to directly watch the baby drink liquid and to see the dye pass into the esophagus and then into the intestines. This can identify the exact cause of the problem and then treatment can be offered. Thanks to our biomedical team and IT department, these images can now be sent to our digital image storage system (supplied by RAD-AID) where they can be reviewed by the Lao doctors in teaching conferences, as well as with surgeons, and even allow remote consultation for the more difficult cases.

In 2021, our **laboratory** service performed more than 11,000 tests, which is an increase compared to 2019 before COVID, as our team is now able to perform more specific tests with, for example, the acquisition of a Urine Analyzer, this allows paediatricians and doctors to make a much more accurate diagnosis.

In search of improvement, the laboratory team has successfully completed 5 modules of the

### Report on ED cases in 2021

- Patients diagnosed with beriberi over 10 cases per week, including beriberi shock and the deceased case.
- Unusual numbers of patients with osteomyelitis and prolonged bone fractures caused by delayed access to care due to travel restrictions (COVID-19).
- Highest number of rickettsial patients since the hospital opened.
- Many cases of pleural effusion with positive rickettsia and typhoid fever, the new doctors learned and practiced more insertion of chest drains.
- Children had a higher risk of encephalitis when positive for COVID-19, and those arriving with abnormal neurological signs had a higher percentage chance of being positive for COVID-19.
- The number of patients suffering from malnutrition has been higher than normal, a lack of follow-up caused by multiple quarantines and lack of transport is one of the reasons, with some cases becoming very serious, arriving in a state of shock and dehydration.
- Patients with pneumonia and bronchiolitis are always numerous in our emergency department.
- We recorded more than 15 cases per week of open and closed fractures requiring surgery.
- Scalds & burns with more than 5% body surface area remain a significant number each year.

External Quality Assessment Control for Blood Count / Blood SMEAR / Biochemistry / Gram Stain / Urine and Cytology and will receive the certificate approval from Mahibol University in Thailand.

The **Pharmacy Department** did recruit one new staff by end of 2021 and provide patients with a count of 35,829 medications a number similar to 2020. In order to offer the best quality of care and with the limitations encountered in Laos, our teams are in need of researching abroad the most adapted medicines to the practices. Our last order on our list is Surfactant, for the treatment of respiratory distress syndrome in new-born babies. It contributes to the elastic properties of pulmonary tissue. This prevents the alveoli from collapsing when the baby exhales.

## EDUCATION

### Pediatric Doctor Education

The program aims to deliver structured training in clinical pediatrics to Lao doctors. The training comprises an induction for new doctors to the hospital, a Foundation course, and a three-year Certificate of Pediatrics course.

#### • Clinical training

Clinical or point-of-care training is the central and fundamental element of any medical education program. In many countries, including most developed countries, up to 90% of clinical education is obtained through structured work experience. In LFHC, we have expanded the lecture component to complement the trainees' clinical experience, strengthen their basic sciences knowledge so that they can more easily understand the pathophysiology behind the conditions affecting their patients, and develop active learning skills and critical thinking, as opposed to the rote learning tradition of their undergraduate medical degree courses.

#### • Teaching ward rounds

LFHC hosts daily multidisciplinary, child and family-centred teaching ward rounds. The doctors learn from and support their multidisciplinary colleagues. Doctors learn how to present their patients, elicit physical signs, interpret x-rays and

blood results, make diagnoses and management plans and counsel parents. The ward rounds may be led by a Lao or expatriate doctor.

#### • Classroom teaching

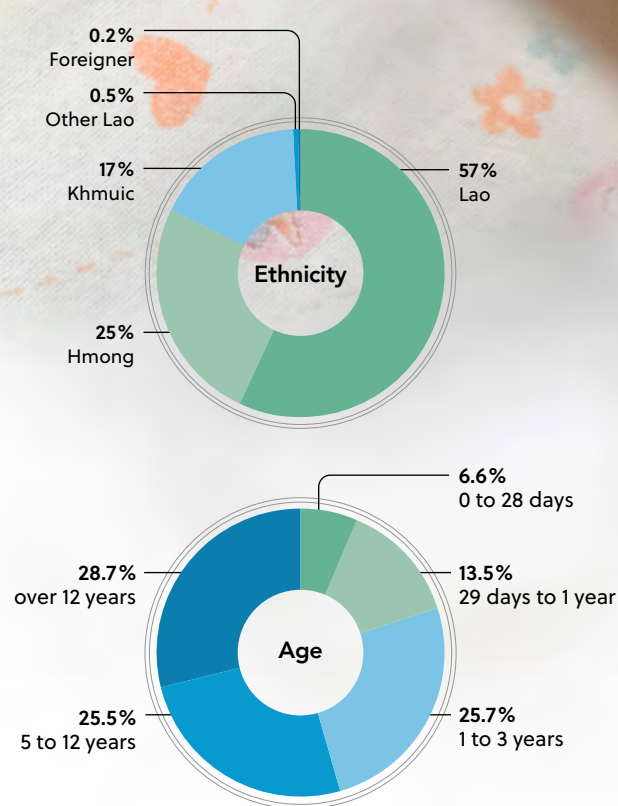
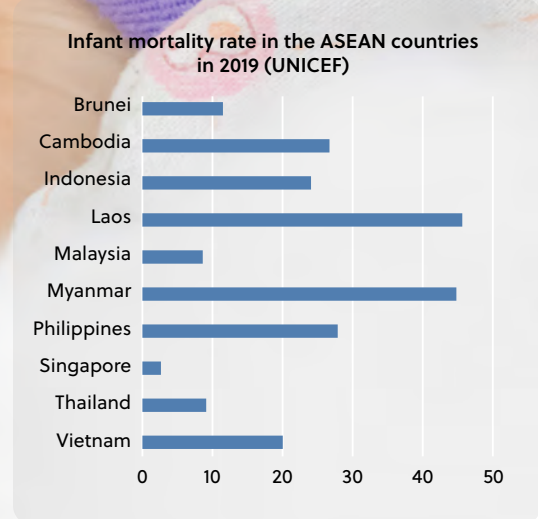
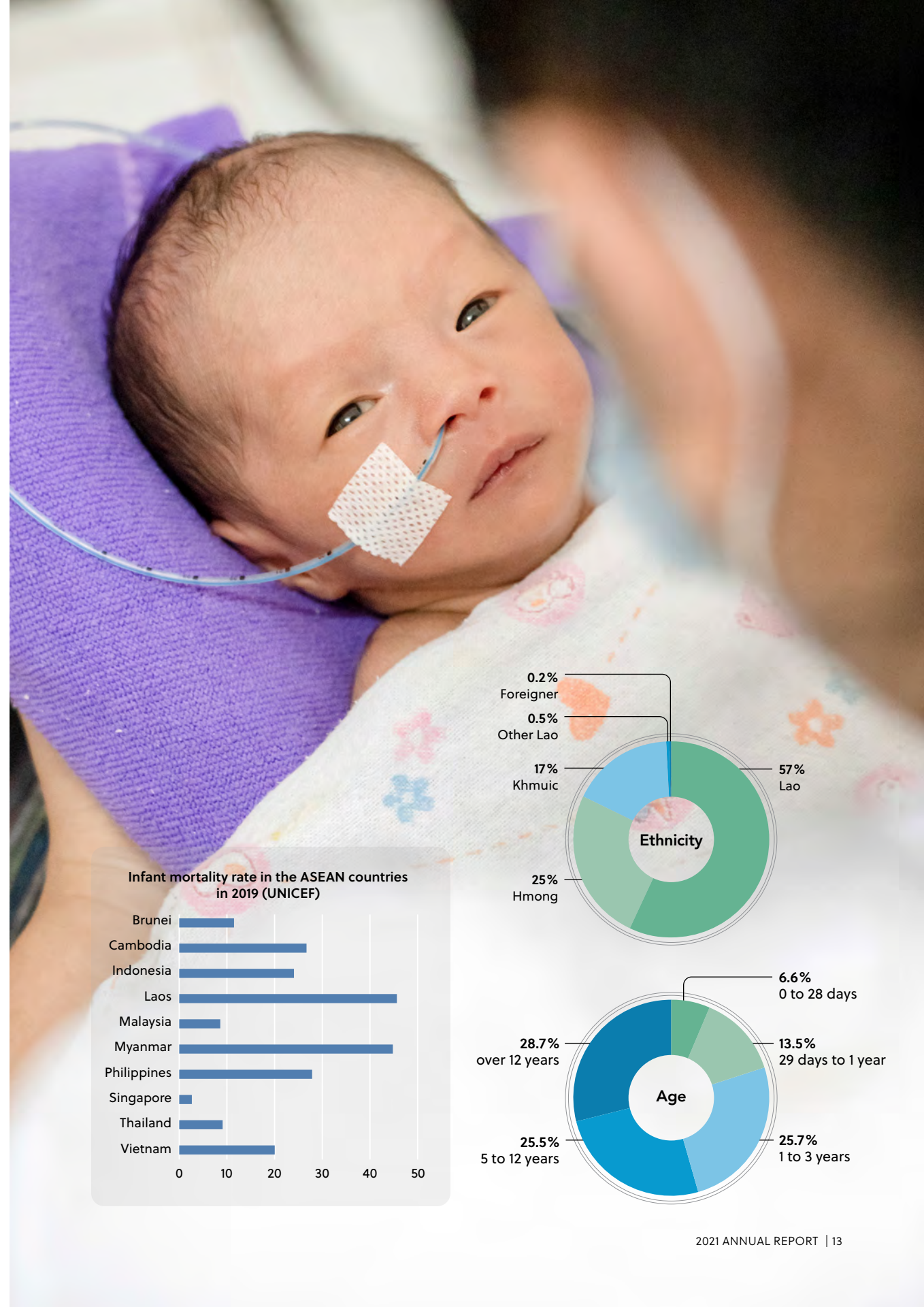
The aim is for doctors to receive 16 hours of protected classroom-based teaching per month, to support a program of continuous clinical training, supervision, guidance, and mentorship. Core topics were complemented by multidisciplinary morning classes (three times per week), weekly mortality reviews and other stand-alone teaching activities. During lockdowns, doctors could not attend teaching at the hospital. We had to adjust the program to allow them to receive teaching by zoom. Complex topics are best taught in a face-to-face environment, to explain difficult concepts. Therefore some topics have to be postponed during the lockdown, which can lengthen the course.

An important component of the medical training program involves training senior Lao doctors as teachers. This year, they took a larger role in testing and passing probationary doctors, and took on a larger classroom-based teaching role, including teaching on the Foundation course for the first time.

#### • Near future

With the generosity of our donors, we will be able to open our new High Acuity Unit in 2022. As the medical training of clinicians in Laos is a pillar of the FWAB vision, this will give us the opportunity to expand and complete our training programme at the HAU, which includes intubation, which is normally part of all residency programmes, close monitoring and decision making.

The overall aim is to produce doctors who can care for children and neonates safely, ethically, and competently and continue to develop their practice along evidence-based lines through continuous lifelong learning. The program will help LFHC achieve its ultimate aim of Lao intellectual sustainability in pediatric care, meaning that they will no longer be dependent on foreign staff to support day to day running of the hospital.





### Nurse Education Department

The Nurse Education Department faced lots of changes and challenges through 2021. The Nursing Department had 6 new nurses and continued the training program activities as scheduled. The training program continued despite the challenges imposed by COVID during the second half of the year. Training sessions had to be organized virtually via zoom, and strategically to ensure clinical care (including care in the COVID-19 ward) is not compromised.

The year 2021 also welcomed an expat Nurse Educator to work alongside the Lao Nurse Educator to create a more structured nurse education program within LFHC, with integration into QI initiatives in the hospital, while ensuring that the training activities are Lao led and aligned with the national guidelines of the Ministry of Health and the University of Health Sciences. Integration of training activities with QI initiatives ensures that the skills and knowledge that nurses learn will impact the improvement of the quality of care in the hospital which can be shown through mea-

asurable progress data. The Neonatal Unit, being a special area for the care of the neonates, also welcomed an expat Neonatal Nurse Educator to help create training activities mainly focused on neonatal care.

In the late 2021, the hospital also introduced and initiated the Moodle Project, which will be a virtual learning platform for the hospital staff to learn at their own pace and time. This will also be a space where all educational materials will be stored, and learners progress will be tracked. It is, however, in its initial phase of development and will be one of the major projects of 2022.

Looking at the great progress of 2021 despite the challenges, the nurse education department looks forward to a more productive 2022, with new initiatives and projects in place. This includes, continuous collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the University of Health Sciences to align all programs in LFHC, and at the same time ensure all training programs are accredited or recognized by the national governing authorities. Training program will also be linked to the promo-

tion scheme of the hospital and will use a credit unit system depending on the number of hours of the training. As the collaboration work with the University of Health Sciences, we are aiming to support in the creation of the Specialist Paediatric Nursing Curriculum, which will train nurses to specialize in Paediatric Nursing – aiming to start having this nationally rolled out in 2024, and LFHC being one of the training centers for this program. In 2022 we will also be welcoming more nurses to join LFHC, as we promote our current nurse leaders into being our new nursing director and nurse managers in the various departments. As we also open the High Acuity Unit in July 2022, we will be needing more nurses and build their skills in critical care.

### English at LFHC

*“The only constant thing in life is change”*

This adage has been very applicable to the English Program. Prior to the pandemic, many changes and improvements were made to this program. The key additional features included the provision of extra lessons, 2 hours of instruction weekly instead of only one, together with an emphasis on a problem solving and metacognitive approach to learning, and a weekly review for each of the 5 levels that could be done independently, using Whatsapp. The intentions were to increase access to a more contemporary and transferable method of learning. This necessitated appointing a part-time teacher and extending the timetable to one additional day, Saturday.

Major changes occurred during the numerous lockdowns which saw the end of face-to-face teaching. Zoom classes were offered in their stead. While lack of access to functional internet connections caused a variety of problems, many constructive ... both unusual and humorous ... lessons occurred.

Once again, the program will evolve in line with strategic plans and the implementation of Moodle (an online learning environment). Many staff wish to improve their English language skills in order to participate in the day-to-day activities of the hospital and to continue their lifelong learning and professional development.



## PREVENTION

Nutrition: “One in every three children in Lao remains chronically malnourished,” said Ellen Goldstein, former World Bank Director for Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia.

The LFHC nutrition team is composed of 3 trained nutritionists, who rotate to provide coverage in OPD, IPD, neonatal unit, and Outreach.

The nutritionist will screen all patients attending our services by measuring their Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC), weight, height to calculate their z-score and they calculate the body’s mass index (BMI). When a child with malnutrition is identified, our nutritionists will start their prevention work by providing counselling, and educating parents about healthy diets/ cooking practices/ appropriate breastfeeding practices. Khmu, Hmong, and other ethnic cultures often follow ‘taboo diets’ which often have negative consequences on babies’ health.

### Prevention Plan for the Near Future

In 2022 Lao Friends Hospital for Children will start a Malnutrition Prevention Program in Luang Prabang province. This has been planned since several years, but it has been postponed due to the Covid Pandemic. The program will be inspired by the “1000 first days” initiatives, a new, evidence-based concept of prevention work, which includes 270 days of pregnancy and the first two years of life. The program will be conducted in close collaboration with the national guidelines and provincial authorities.





# Lao Friends Hospital for Children's Background

In 2013, after handing over the keys of the Angkor Hospital for Children to local management, in line with FWAB's vision of a hospital for the people by the people, FWAB was set up to look into the region for places in greatest need.

After conducting research, FWAB decided to open its second pediatric hospital in Laos, a landlocked and mountainous country in South East Asia, where more than a third of the population is under the age of 15, and about two-thirds live in rural areas. Many rural areas do not have paved roads and are difficult to access.

Laos, while making progress, still has the highest child mortality rate in Southeast Asia (45.5 out of every 1,000 die before the age of 5). Mortality is much higher among the poor, less educated, and rural population (approximately 63% of the population). Reaching high-risk populations will be essential for continuing mortality declines into the future. (WHO "Success Factors for Women's and Children Health")

Laos PDR is the most ethnically diverse country in Southeast Asia, which is officially divided into 49 ethnic groups that can be further broken down into more than 200 ethnic subgroups. Laos's ethnic groups other than the Lao ethnic peoples generally live in more remote and rural areas.

**The Khmu** is the second ethnic group in Laos with **11%** of the Lao population, belonging to



Mon-Khmer Ethno-Linguistic Group. Khmu means "real people" or "human beings". The Khmu have continued to live in relative isolation, practicing animist religion and cultivating rice and foraging in the forest, much as they have for centuries. Khmu culture is traditionally passed down by the recital of stories around evening fires.

At LFHC they represent **17% of the patients** and 25 staff member

**The Hmong** represent **8%** of the Lao population and is one of the larger ethnic group in Laos.



Hmong began migrating from the central and southern part of China into Laos in the 19th century and inhabit the northern and central parts of Laos. They have their own spoken and written language, and are a proud ethnic group, maintaining their culture and traditions. Hmong women are well known for their embroidery skills and batik cloth textiles. In Hmong batik, hemp cloth is painted with beeswax, then dyed with indigo. The beeswax is then boiled off revealing a pattern in white. Traditional clothing is worn on special occasions like wedding ceremonies and New Year.

At LFHC they represent **25% of the patients** and 52 staff member

Effective Breast Feeding is sometimes a challenge as we see many mothers feeding their babies with rice, condensed milk, or an inappropriate mix of formula and water. LFHC heavily supports the initiation of breastfeeding, the nutrition team will ensure that all mothers are educated on how to breastfeed their babies properly and what should be a good diet for the mother. Our new breast-feeding room will play a vital role in this education.

After assessing the family's resources, our nutritionists also provide adapted cooking classes to ensure that the children receive a healthy diet.

The nutrition team, in collaboration with our outreach department, participated in several prevention and awareness-raising activities in the villages and with health professionals in the district during the past year.

At the end of 2021, DR. Brune and FWAB worked closely together to decide next steps for our prevention expansion. We are currently looking for someone to head up this effort and are looking

at current 1000 Day programs that try to prevent malnutrition and stunted growth in this critical time in a child's formation as a guideline.

**Outreach:** The LFHC Outreach Team did visit 273 children over the year to provide treatment and consult families in isolated rural areas.

- In order to prevent malnutrition and to support the follow-up of discharged patients, nurses and nutritionists visited three district hospitals (Viengkham, Chomphet and Phoukun) to provide training on nasogastric feeding. Pak Ou and Xiengern staff received this training as well but at LFHC. These trainings will help reduce health disparities in remote communities.
- In the Buddhist country of Lao PDR, monks play a central part in local communities. In remote areas, monastic schools are perceived as the only option for accessing education for boys from poor families. To protect children in monastic schools from cluster infections, the outreach team organized visits to provide hygiene and health education support.

# The Lake Clinic



Life, for all of us, has been challenging throughout 2021. Remarkably Cambodia had been spared the worst of the COVID pandemic in 2020 in terms of illness and its burden on health resources, but the economic impact on tourism has been felt throughout the country. However, beginning in February of 2021, Cambodia had its first "surge" of infections and community spread and The Lake Clinic had to suspend services from 31 May

through 25 June because of a nationwide ban on travel. We also had to stop working from 5-16 July as some of our clinical staff had "close contact" with a COVID-patient that required all staff to self-isolate at our homes for 10 days.

Even with these challenges our Clinical Teams were able to provide the following services: JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2021

## TOTAL CLINICAL SERVICES 38,904

14,435 Clinical Cases      307 Mental Health contacts

8,125 Oral Health Education      7,893 Health Education

332 Eye Care      1,565 Vaccinations

305 ANC (Antenatal care)      254 Visual acuity checks at schools

212 Birth Spacing (Condoms, IUD, The Pill, implants)



## TOTAL OUTREACH SERVICES 7,353

5,798 Home by Home      207 New Gardens

34 Mothers' Clubs      75 Biosand Filters

1,239 Children at Risk Monitoring

Oy...Outreach is really, really busy!



## Angkor Hospital for Children

Angkor Hospital for Children (AHC), located in Siem Reap, Cambodia, is the first pediatric hospital built and operated by Friends Without A Border. Since opening in 1999, AHC has provided over 2.5 million treatments to Cambodian children from all over the country, based on Founder Kenro Izu's vision for all Cambodian children to have access to high quality, compassionate care.

2021 brought many challenges. COVID-19 severely impacted the families AHC works with, causing fear and financial hardship, thus creating further barriers to accessing health care. AHC responded with compassion and expertise, working incredibly hard to provide 65,694 treatments to children across the country.

AHC continued to strengthen Cambodia's overall health system – including training health professionals and working with communities. Five doctors completed the first year of their three-year fellowship training program to become pediatric specialty doctors, and 49,419 attendances were recorded at AHC's educational sessions – which were successfully pivoted online. AHC also recorded 142,512 attendances at prevention and education sessions within villages, schools, and communes.

## Friends Events

FWAB had two major events in 2021 – our first **international virtual gala** and our second **international virtual race**.

Our first attempt at a virtual gala was successful, with FWAB grossing \$426,500. We honored actor and philanthropist Richard Gere and had Lea Salonga entertain singing four of her Broadway hits. A unique pre-event was a personal conversation between Richard Gere and founder Kenro Izu discussing their mutual love of photography.

In October, we replaced our Luang Prabang half marathon (canceled due to Covid) with our second annual virtual run for children. We had runners in Singapore, Australia, LA, Seattle, Tokyo, NY, Laos and several other locations across the globe. We grossed over \$99,000.



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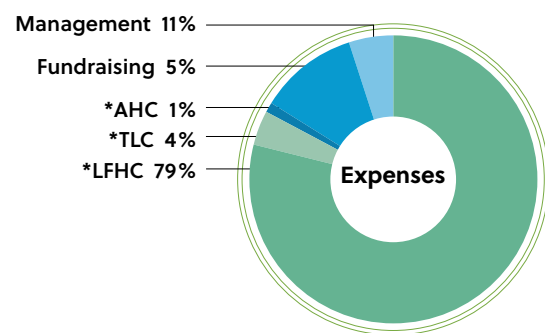
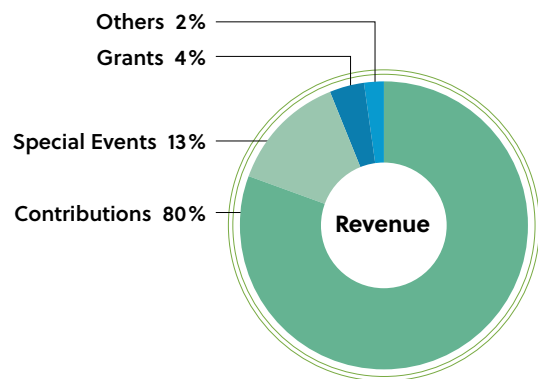
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# Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the Period Ended December 31, 2021 (With comparative totals for 2020)

	Unrestricted	Temporarily restricted	2021 Total	2020 Total
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Contributions	\$1,520,579	\$825,874	2,346,453	2,637,947
Government contract grants	124,747		124,747	6,000
Special events	542,787		542,787	262,892
Less: direct expenses	(159,849)		(159,849)	(68,445)
Patient income, fees etc.	7,743		7,743	9,018
Sales	(46,476)		(46,476)	939
Collection boxes	-		-	1,670
Investment income	884		884	1,190
Other income	105,696		105,696	35,322
Net assets released from restrictions	815,967	(815,967)	-	-
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>2,912,077</b>	<b>9,907</b>	<b>2,681,413</b>	<b>2,802,692</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>Program services</b>				
Hospital support	136,273		136,273	364,606
LFHC	2,236,748		2,236,748	2,214,263
Program development	11,967		11,967	7,504
Total program services	2,384,988	-	2,384,988	2,586,373
<b>Supporting services</b>				
Fundraising	150,449		150,499	293,593
Management and general	301,703		301,703	235,366
Total supporting services	452,152	-	452,152	528,959
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,837,140</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,837,140</b>	<b>3,115,332</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>74,937</b>	<b>9,907</b>	<b>84,844</b>	<b>284,362</b>
<b>Net assets at beginning of year</b>	<b>2,400,223</b>	<b>189,563</b>	<b>2,589,786</b>	<b>2,305,420</b>
<b>Net asset at end of year</b>	<b>2,475,160</b>	<b>199,470</b>	<b>2,674,630</b>	<b>2,589,786</b>



\*Program total 84%



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Kenro Izu

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## LAO FRIENDS HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN

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Photo credits: Adri Berger, Giselle Morean, LFHC, AHC and TLC

If you would like to help with our mission to provide compassionate healthcare, medical training and illness prevention for the children in Laos, please donate at [www.FWAB.org/donate](http://www.FWAB.org/donate).

  
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