



HAGAR

The whole journey

Cambodia
Annual Report 2023

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Word from the Country Director

Dear Hagar’s supporters, stakeholders, and partners,

I am delighted to rejoin the Hagar family after a period of profound growth and learning, and I'm grateful to God for guiding my journey.

Over nearly three decades, Hagar International in Cambodia has supported over 5,000 survivors of human trafficking, slavery, and abuse, empowering them to become resilient members of society. Our success lies in 'The Whole Journey' approach to survivor care, including trauma counseling, legal and protection services, education, economic empowerment, prevention, and capacity building. This achievement is the result of close collaboration with local government partners, non-governmental organizations, supporters, and stakeholders.

A heartwarming highlight occurred in November 2023 when we hosted the first survivor’s alumni event in Cambodia, bringing together 100 former survivors and caregivers. This gathering provided a meaningful opportunity for attendees to reconnect and reflect on their journeys. During panel discussions, survivors shared their best memories of their time at Hagar and the transformative elements that shaped their lives today. Their words of encouragement resonated with others, inspiring resilience and prompting us to integrate more alumni events into our 2024 plan, including a survivors' leadership empowerment program. This marks an exciting chapter in our journey.

None of this would be possible without our donors. We are especially grateful for those who have supported 'The Whole Journey.' Your generosity fuels our mission; we cannot restore lives alone. We extend heartfelt gratitude to the government and NGO partners in Cambodia; our collective impact is strongest when we work together. Lastly, I extend my deepest appreciation to our greatest asset—the incredible, dedicated, caring professionals who comprise the staff of Hagar Cambodia.

It has been a privilege to be a part of Hagar’s mission, alongside committed team members and partners, as we walk alongside survivors on their path to restoration and productivity.

Yours sincerely,



Sreyana Sam
Country Director
Hagar International Cambodia

HIGHLIGHTS



368

Survivors received comprehensive support services, with 69 reintegrating into their communities and 65 achieving closure following Hagar's services.



1,624

Individuals received prevention training. 53 community-based groups are active. Church leaders reached 11,879 community members with 87 community awareness and 25 education programs.



299

Individuals including Church Leaders, NGO partners, and government officers, received 5 Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Psychological First Aid training sessions. This knowledge increased for 80% of individuals.



116

Stakeholders participated in Hagar Cambodia's National Annual Reflection Workshop. Additionally, Hagar Cambodia led a National Consultation Workshop with 40 representatives from 16 INGOs and NGOs in attendance.



86.6%

Survivors reported an increase in household income, and 87.6% reported their small businesses and work placements helped them afford food, healthcare, and education.



156

Participants attended Hagar Cambodia's first Survivor Alumni Event, a significant initiative towards fostering survivor leadership.

Heal



368 survivors were supported. They include 277 survivors of human trafficking, slavery, and labor trafficking, 51 survivors of sexual abuse, 19 of domestic violence, 6 of online sexual abuse/exploitation, and 15 of other abuse. 42 survivors stay in the Home of Love, while 12 survivors are in foster care.



841 counseling sessions supported 135 survivors to reduce trauma and aid in their recovery. Overall, 76.9% improved psychosocially, demonstrating resilience and reducing anxiety. Counseling helped 82 survivors achieve closure and become more robust and resilient.



83 survivors and their families received small business support, while 22 survivors received on-the-job training with shop partners. Additionally, 88 survivors (80F) were employed. 78 survivors, including children, received education support, with 51 receiving support at different school levels, from primary to university.



186 survivors were assisted with legal support to ensure access to justice and rights, including 135 survivors who received support for court case processes. Additionally, 16 clients received the verdict, and 70 clients ended their cases after receiving legal and protection support.



Prevent

53 community-based groups (CBGs) are functioning effectively. These groups helped implement plans in their communities around child protection, human trafficking, safe migration, gender-based violence, environmental protection, and climate change awareness plans. *CBGs completed 85% of their proposed plans.*

71 training sessions on Child Protection, Human Trafficking, Safe migration, Gender-Based Violence, Positive Parenting, and Victim Identification were provided to 78 CBG leaders, 96 church leaders, 480 local duty bearers, and 970 youth group and children council members. In 21 reflection meetings, 368 good husband-wife groups discussed their roles, responsibilities, and capacity-building.

87 community awareness campaigns on Human Trafficking, Safe Migration, Gender-Based Violence, Child Protection, Safe Food, and Child Rights reached 6,030 adults and 354 children. Student council members conducted 25 Food Security and Child Rights Education Awareness Campaigns, reaching 5,849 children, teachers, and community members.



“I used to be afraid and didn't know about child rights or human trafficking's causes and effects. I studied these topics alongside other youth group members. It improved my knowledge of child rights, child protection, and human trafficking. Group activities like learning sessions and debates have helped me voice my opinions to peers. I'm dedicated to sharing what I've learned with youth in the community.”

**Lay San Chhay, 22-year-old youth leader in Kampong Thom Province.*

Increase Capacity



5 Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) and Psychological First Aid (PFA) training sessions benefited 299 participants, including Church leaders, NGO partners, and government authorities. Pre- and post-test evaluations showed that 80% of participants understood more about TIC and PFA.

22 NGO and CSO partners—Chabdai, APLE, ADHOC Cambodia, A21, Caritas, First Step, and AUscam—supported vulnerable children and survivors in 2023. These NGOs refer to 10% of cases, highlighting the significant role they play in assisting survivors.

18 private employers and store owners helped people seeking employment. Hagar Cambodia signed six new partnership agreements with private companies, institutions, and shop owners to support survivors.

Hagar Cambodia collaborated with 12 government ministries and departments to support survivors in 2023. The government forwarded 80% of cases to Hagar, demonstrating their close relationship in helping survivors.



Promote Awareness



Hagar Cambodia actively promoted awareness and change in policies at sub-national and national levels. Hagar successfully led a National Consultation Workshop with 40 representatives from 16 INGOs and NGOs. This workshop collected advice for advocacy and policy change at the National Committee for Counter Trafficking.



Hagar Cambodia led annual sub-national reflection workshops for 116 duty bearers, stakeholders, NGOs, and CBG members. Hagar also attended 10 provincial network meetings and 40 district and commune monthly reflection meetings to share experiences and discuss field challenges.



Hagar Cambodia donated 30 Operational Guide on Psychological First Aid books to the Garden of Hope and 400 books to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport. The organization also participated in the Royal University of Phnom Penh's World Mental Health Day, with 2,407 participants.



Hagar Cambodia attended 22 Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and Civil Society Organization (CSO) network meetings to discuss children's needs and suggest ways to improve support.



Empower and Equip



Hagar held 288 business coaching and follow-up sessions. 139 survivors were empowered with career coaching; 95 survivors received support to develop their small business plans; 83 survivors received extra support.



155 survivors received career advice to plan their career pathways. Business partners trained 22 survivors, with 16 survivors received stipends. 19 survivors received vocational training support and 9 completed TVET and on-the-job training.



86.6% of survivors reported a household income rise. 10 survivors received job placements after vocational training. 87.6% of survivor family members reported that small business and job placement income helped them access food, health, and education.



The first Survivor Alumni Event was organized with 156 participants. Hagar trained 45 former survivors in small business management and improvement to boost their business skills.



"I had no hope or motivation to live because of negative thoughts. I was lucky that Hagar and the teachers helped me learn and change my negative thoughts. I got food and income-generating skills from HAGAR. I'm glad because I can buy milk for my baby and improve living conditions."

*Kolap
Survivor of sex trafficking to china



Rachana's Story

“I will do my best not to leave our children behind again, and we will save money for their education in the hope that they will have a brighter future. We can't thank you enough for Hagar's support services. We live in hope of a better future.”

- *Rachana*

Rachana lives with her husband and two children. They faced economic hardship, leading them to work as illegal migrant workers in Thailand. Upon returning to Cambodia in 2021, life remained challenging due to debts and financial constraints.

In early 2022, Rachana's family was referred to Hagar Cambodia for assistance. Recognizing the need for sustainable income, Hagar Cambodia supported them in starting an agricultural business, providing resources and guidance. Their first harvest was successful, earning them \$500, prompting them to expand their business further.

Rachana expressed her gratitude, stating, "Our sweet potato crop has yielded good results for us. We made a profit of about \$650 in just over 2 months. **Now we have enough to eat, send our children to school and pay off our debts slowly. to school and pay off our debts slowly.** We will expand our business."

Her husband added, "My wife discussed with me expanding our business by renting other lands to grow crops and I agreed with her. We now lease 3 hectares of land and plant sweet potatoes, which we can harvest in April 2023. I hope we will triple our income."

MAKARA'S STORY

When Makara's family struggled to make ends meet, she sought opportunities for a better life. Unfortunately, this led her into the hands of a broker who promised her a job in China. Makara's story took a dark turn as she found herself sold into servitude for three years.

However, her nightmare ended when she was arrested for illegal residency and returned to Cambodia with the help of the Cambodian embassy in China and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation.

Upon her return, Makara was welcomed into the care of Hagar Cambodia, where she received food, shelter, clothing, medical check-ups, and counseling. After 14 days at the Home of Love, Hagar Cambodia facilitated Makara's successful reintegration with her family. Now back home, as part of Economic Empowerment Support, Hagar Cambodia helps Makara run a small business selling soft drinks, supporting her family and rebuilding her life.

Despite the hardships she endured, Makara remains resilient and determined to move forward. She has found strength in her family and community, and through her small business, she is able to contribute to her family's well-being. **Makara's story is a testament to the power of resilience and the impact of support and care in helping survivors rebuild their lives.**



“I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hagar team, who have been supporting me since my return to Cambodia. I never thought I would be able to come back to my home country again. Without the assistance of the Hagar team, I would not be the person I am today.

- Makara

Chanka's Story

Chanka lived with her mother after her father passed away from an illness when she was very young. **Her mother later remarried a man and he began sexually assaulting her when she was 8 years old, and this continued until she was 13.** She wanted to report the behaviour but hesitated because her stepfather was the main source of income for the family, and her mother was aware but chose not to intervene out of fear of him leaving.

Hagar Cambodia received information about Chanka's case from the Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC). Hagar Cambodia's case manager worked with local authorities to provide legal assistance, counseling, and food support to Chanka. Initially, it was challenging as Chanka's mother was often drunk and argued with her. Hagar Cambodia's counselors and case managers provided regular follow-up visits and in-person and phone counseling sessions to both Chanka and her mother

Chanka is currently living with her mother in Battambang Province. Her mother found a job in the village to support the family, and Chanka is attending 5th grade at a local primary school.

Through 'The Whole Journey' program, both Chanka and her mother have shown significant progress in emotional well-being, communication skills, and financial stability. Chanka's mother expressed a commitment to protecting her children and knowing how to report any incidents.

“Based on my past experiences, I am dedicated to caring for my children. I will not allow anything horrible to happen to them again. Now I know who to contact and how to report if an incident occurs.”

- *Chanka's mother*



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