

**EMPOWER WITH AN EDUCATION
TO PREVENT SEX TRAFFICKING**

2025



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

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Names have been changed and images are unmatched throughout this report to protect privacy.

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This report reflects Free To Shine's activities for the period between 1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025.



OUR IMPACT

TOTAL NUMBERS TO DATE

Free To Shine marks **15 years** of prevention-focused work to help girls in rural Cambodia stay safe, stay in school, and build stronger futures.

Across the life of the program, this work has reached hundreds of girls and their families through sustained educational, social work and community-based support.



878

Girls enrolled.



23

Houses built.



73

Emerging leaders.



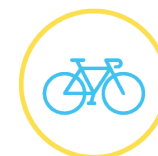
8,841

Social work interventions.



40,279

Safety visits conducted.



1,246

Bikes provided.



11

University graduates.



59

Village partnerships established.



See page 11

To find out more about our impact this year.

These cumulative figures reflect sustained investment in prevention: practical support, trusted relationships, and long-term engagement that reduce vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation before harm occurs.

ABOUT US

WHO WE ARE

Free To Shine is an independently funded, non-profit organisation founded in Australia, working to prevent sex trafficking in Cambodia.

Our work is child-protection-focused, human-rights-based, and designed to strengthen families and keep children safe and in education.

Free To Shine's Cambodian team works with local authorities and communities to reach the most at-risk girls living in rural areas, reducing their vulnerability to trafficking by improving their access to education and providing them with social work support.

We don't build new private schools; **we make it possible for children to access their local, public school.**

We don't rescue or save children from sex trafficking; **we work to prevent them from being trafficked in the first place.**



See page 03

To find out more about our program.

WHY PREVENTION?

In 2009, Free To Shine's Co-Founder and Managing Director, Nicky Mih, volunteered at an aftercare facility in Cambodia for survivors of sex trafficking. That experience shaped the organisation's prevention approach, grounded in what survivors themselves said was needed: identify girls not in school and protect them before exploitation occurs.

This approach aligns with evidence cited in reports, including the International Labour Organization's position that "Getting girls and boys into schools and keeping them there is a vital step to reducing their vulnerability to trafficking."¹

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OUR VISION

Educated girls, free from sex trafficking, shaping and leading their communities and country.



OUR MISSION

We prevent the trafficking and exploitation of girls by strengthening family and community systems to prioritise the safety and education of their children.



FREE TO SHINE OUR VALUES

Our values guide our decision making. When we have a decision to make, we refer to and are guided by our values, in order of priority.

Safety is our highest value.



SAFETY

We prioritise keeping girls safe from trafficking and all forms of exploitation; identifying, reporting and addressing safety concerns promptly.

We work with families and communities in a respectful manner to end family violence and minimise factors that endanger their children.

We create an environment of confidence and trust and take care of our physical and psychological well-being.

We work ethically and professionally adhering to laws, policies, procedures, high standards and best practice.

We educate and engage our supporters without compromising children's safety or privacy.

We care for our organisation and use our integrity to guide our choices and decisions.



STRENGTH

We identify and build on the strengths of each girl, family and community we work with and believe in them.

We help children stay safely within their families and communities.

We are problem solvers, using our abilities to handle complex and conflicting situations.

We are committed to excellence and we are honest, work hard and have fun.

We work with vulnerable people but choose to represent their strengths and maintain their dignity at all times.

We can articulate our practice approaches and evidence bases.



EDUCATION

We provide access to education through to Grade 12 but we focus on attitude, concepts learned, knowledge acquired and skills developed rather than scores attained.

We provide community trainings, leadership training to emerging leaders and scholarships for degrees that contribute to child protection.

We encourage curiosity, exploration, asking questions and the discovery that begins when we don't know the answer.

We participate in professional, collaborative networks to learn from each other's challenges, successes and failures.

We educate our supporters about human rights, human trafficking and child protection and our impact addressing these issues. As we learn from the girls, families and communities we work with we share this education with our supporters.

We are continuously learning and use this to develop and improve.



COMMUNITY

We work in partnership with girls, families, and communities contributing to the strengths, resources, and systems they already have.

We utilise relationships with community leaders and representatives, schools and government departments to advocate for and weave a web of support around vulnerable girls and children.

We celebrate each team member bringing different strengths, skills and abilities in contributing to a common goal.

We respect our donors as part of our team.

We work with other service providers and government to achieve major improvements in the child protection sector in Cambodia.



EQUITY

We follow a United Nations human-rights based framework, guided by the Declaration of Human Rights helping children and families to be free from slavery, access education, safe drinking water, enough food and adequate shelter.

We address gender inequity because more than 90% of victims of sex trafficking are women and girls, and Cambodia has not achieved gender parity.

We are fair.

We role model gender equity, and do not adhere to gender stereotypes within our team.

We create opportunities for people and businesses globally to engage in a strategic partnership that changes the world, using a system that works.

We do not contribute to any exploitation or inequity, ie fundraising chocolates are fairtrade and running singlets are from ethical clothing brands.

OUR THREE GOALS

PROGRAM STRATEGY

Each of our goal areas, and related activities contribute to us achieving our vision, mission and values. These approaches are informed by context analysis, evidence, research and the perspectives of primary stakeholders, and are designed to address root causes of poverty and inequity while contributing to longer-term systemic change. The following sections show how these goals translate into practical support, measurable outcomes and stronger protection for girls and families.

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GOAL 1 SAFE COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

Conduct **monthly safety visits** to address complex factors such as poverty, hunger, illness, unemployment, migration, addiction, violence, family breakdown and debt.

Provide **social work interventions** and crisis support to girls and their families facing exceptionally challenging circumstances.

Facilitate **community trainings** that build capacity within the community, increase knowledge of human rights and teach families how to protect themselves from exploitation and abuse.



GOAL 2 EDUCATED GIRLS

Improve **access to basic rights** such as safe drinking water, enough food, and adequate shelter so girls are able to stay safe and in school.

Provide essential **educational support and materials** necessary for each girl to access school including uniforms, books, pens, a backpack and a bike.

Provide financial support for **additional curriculum classes** to support girls to progress to the next grade.



GOAL 3 WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Conduct **leadership training**, providing mentorship and project management skills development to emerging leaders.

Invest in **university education** to develop the next generation of Cambodian women leaders.

Teach and model **gender equity**.

LETTER FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, Partners, and Supporters,

In the communities where we work, food insecurity, financial instability, and migration continue to disrupt girls' education – even for those most determined to stay in school. Free To Shine's regular safety visits and social work interventions help stabilise families, strengthen school retention, and reduce the risks of trafficking and unsafe migration. At the heart of our work is a simple but powerful truth: a girl in a classroom is a girl who is safe.

By addressing the root causes of vulnerability, we are helping ensure that traffickers find no foothold in the communities we serve.

This year Free To Shine celebrated 15 years of impact. What began in 2010 as a targeted approach to protect girls in a handful of villages has grown into a decade and a half of sustained, systemic change. Free To Shine has grown from a grassroots initiative into a respected and trusted organisation working at the forefront of child

protection and trafficking prevention. Our vision is clear: educated girls, free from sex trafficking, shaping and leading their communities and country. To achieve this, our mission remains focused on strengthening family and community systems to prioritise the safety and education of their children.

Over the past 15 years, Free To Shine has supported hundreds of girls and their families to live free from discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect, while realising their fundamental human rights. We have seen the first girls we enrolled grow into university graduates, professionals, and mothers raising a new generation free from the threat of trafficking. This milestone is more than a celebration of longevity—it is evidence that long-term, consistent investment creates lasting change. When a girl is safe and educated, it not only transforms her life; it shifts the trajectory of her entire community. This milestone reflects not only our endurance, but our ongoing commitment to prevention, dignity, and

practical action in communities facing entrenched disadvantage.

At the same time, we are operating in an increasingly complex environment. The global funding landscape is tightening, economic uncertainty is growing, and the risks facing vulnerable girls continue to evolve. Despite these challenges, our commitment remains steadfast.

To our team and our global community of supporters—thank you. You make this work possible. Because of you, girls are safe, free to learn, and free to shine.

Warmest regards,



NICKY MIH
CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR



LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

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Dear Supporters, Partners and Friends,

Over the past year, our team has continued to work alongside girls, their families, and communities in Siem Reap Province to prevent school-aged girls from being trafficked into the commercial sex industry. Together, we are strengthening family and community systems to prioritise children's safety and education.

Families continue to face significant economic pressure. With tourism still reduced and the cost of living rising, many households have unstable incomes. Climate change is compounding these challenges through droughts, floods and extreme heat, undermining livelihoods and increasing food insecurity. As a result, many families are carrying

debt and financial stress, increasing the likelihood that children contribute to household income. Our social work support remains critical in reducing these risks and promoting child safety.

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, we welcomed 86 new girls and their families into the program. Many were experiencing poverty, disrupted education and serious child protection concerns. Through targeted support, we have worked with families and schools to stabilise basic needs, improve school attendance and reduce vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation.

Our focus remains on keeping girls safe and in school. Monthly safety visits, education support and practical assistance help families meet basic needs and reduce pressures that can lead to unsafe work or migration.

This year, we launched a short-term case management program, funded by 100 Women and the SE Asia Foundation, for girls out of school and at risk. Through one-to-one support, girls learn about their rights, safe relationships and labour protections, strengthening their ability to recognise risk and make informed decisions.

This year has reinforced that lasting change requires consistent, long term engagement. Progress is built through trusted relationships

and collaboration with families, schools and local leaders to address drivers of vulnerability, including poverty, debt and migration. We are also strengthening our program model through strategic planning to support sustainability and impact.

I extend my sincere thanks to our Khmer program team, whose dedication and resilience make this work possible, often in challenging conditions.

Thank you to our donors and partners. Your support enables safety visits, education assistance and practical support for families at risk.

As this report reflects, the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 has been a year of both challenge and progress. With your continued partnership, we are well positioned to build on this momentum and support girls to be safe, educated and empowered.



SARAH ROGERS
PROGRAM MANAGER





TEAM PROFILES AND ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Free To Shine's highly skilled and driven Cambodia- and Australia-based team are dedicated to keeping girls safe and empowered through education. We strive for a gender balance within our team and model gender equity both in the office and in the field.

During this reporting period, Free To Shine's Board of Directors were: Nicky Mih, Managing Director & Co-founder; Kylie Anderson, Director & Co-founder; Sharon Allen, Director and Administrative Assistant to the Managing Director; Sherl Westlund, Director; and Dr Jacqueline Parisi, Director.

Supporting the organisation's mission on the ground, the in-country team consisted of 13 team members: Program Manager, Program Officer, Partnerships Officer, Finance Officer, Communications and Fundraising Officer, Communications and Fundraising Assistant, three Social Workers and four Education Officers.

TRAFFICKING IN CAMBODIA

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CAMBODIA: REMAINS AT TIER 3

The 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report found the Government of Cambodia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so. Cambodia remained on Tier 3 for the fourth consecutive year.

IDENTIFICATION AND PROTECTION OF CHILD VICTIMS IN CAMBODIA

During the reporting period, the government identified 32 child victims or potential victims of trafficking. Under Cambodian law, individuals cannot be formally recognised as trafficking victims until a criminal conviction is secured; however, they may be classified as “suspected victims” to access support services. Victim identification, referral, and repatriation processes remain inconsistent, time-consuming, and burdensome for both victims and service providers, limiting timely access to protection. These challenges, alongside barriers to disclosure and reliance on formal identification mechanisms, suggest that the number of identified child victims is likely lower than the actual prevalence.

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT COOPERATION ON CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING

The Cambodian National Police (CNP) cooperated with foreign governments, including Australia, Belgium, India, New Zealand, Poland, South Korea, the UK, and the United States. This reflects the transnational nature of child sex trafficking, particularly in online environments. Through a joint task force targeting online child sexual exploitation, authorities reported identifying 210 child victims of sex trafficking, demonstrating the value of cross-border collaboration in detecting hidden cases and disrupting trafficking networks.

CHILDREN AT GOVERNMENT VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES

The government continued to operate a victim support centre serving trafficking victims and other vulnerable populations; at least 30 Cambodian children received support as trafficking victims, suspected victims, or victims of sexual violence. MoSAVY provides longer-term care and reintegration support for some child victims.

However, the government does not operate dedicated shelters for trafficked children and instead relies on NGO partners for specialised, trauma-informed care. While this highlights the essential role of civil society, it may limit the consistency and scalability of support available to child victims.



[Click here for the full report](#)

Taken from the 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report, United States Department of State.²

Free To Shine utilises both primary research (consultations with stakeholders) and secondary research (such as the Trafficking in Persons Report), analysis and evidence to inform our initiatives and ensure the rights and needs of stakeholders are supported effectively.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS — OF DOING WHAT — MATTERS



59 VILLAGE
PARTNERSHIPS
ESTABLISHED



23 HOUSES
BUILT, AND
A LIBRARY



73 EMERGING
LEADERS
SUPPORTED



40,279
SAFETY VISITS

8,841
SOCIAL WORK
INTERVENTIONS



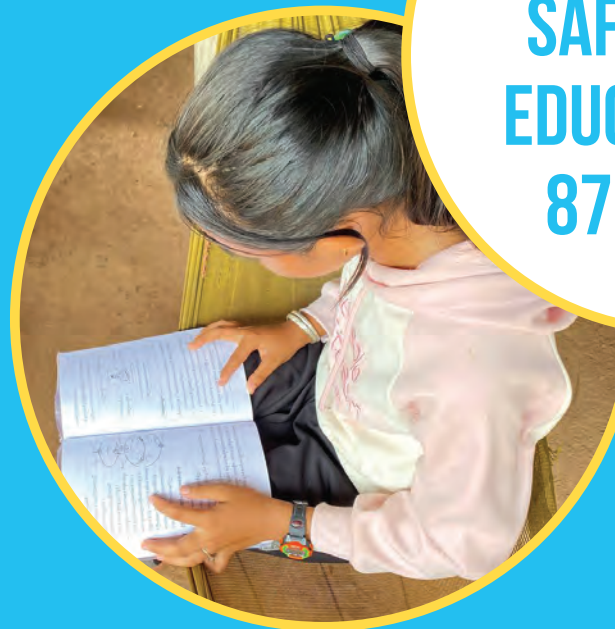


**1,246 BIKES
PROVIDED**



**\$4.5
MILLION
RAISED**

**SECURED THE
SAFETY AND
EDUCATION OF
878 GIRLS**



**11 UNIVERSITY
GRADUATES**



**PUBLISHED
1 BOOK**



OUR IMPACT

OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS 2024-2025

The following figures summarise the scale of our work and the direct support provided to girls, families and communities between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025.



1,197
Safety visits



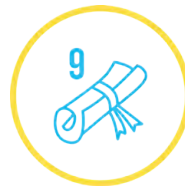
3
Students studying
at university



86
Number of new girls enrolled
onto the program



736
Social work interventions



10
Students who graduated
year 9

Together, these figures show a year of sustained prevention: regular safety visits and social work interventions that stabilise families, increase school retention and reduce the risks of trafficking and unsafe migration.



778
Adults who attended
community trainings



34
Students who graduated
year 12



PROGRAM STRATEGY GOAL 1

SAFE COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN



Free To Shine's activities under this goal build the knowledge, skills and capacities of girls, families and communities to advocate for and achieve children's rights to live in safety.

This impact is realised through safety visits, social work interventions and community trainings, that strengthen family and community systems to prioritise children's safety.

By meeting families where they live and identifying risks early, these activities help prevent problems from becoming crises that push girls toward unsafe work, migration or exploitation.

SAFETY VISITS

PURPOSE

Free To Shine conducts monthly safety visits to address complex factors such as poverty, hunger, illness, unemployment, migration, addiction, violence, family breakdown, and debt.

NUMBER OF SAFETY VISITS CONDUCTED

THIS YEAR: 1,197

1,197 safety visits were conducted, each one creating the opportunity to identify barriers, respond early and strengthen girls' connection to trusted adults.

OUTCOMES

Safety – When family violence, drug or alcohol misuse within the family, food insecurity or other child protection concerns are identified in safety visits, the girl and family are referred for more intensive social work, or to other services if available.

Meeting basic needs – As families continue to face rising costs of living, unstable seasonal work and climate-affected livelihoods, safety visits help us identify those who cannot meet basic needs so we can provide emergency food, support home food production and link them to local services.

Improved physical health – During safety visits girls and family members are encouraged to access treatment for health conditions when they arise, and we support them in doing so.

Improved mental health – Many caregivers are under significant stress due to debt, income loss and uncertainty, and girls themselves are often carrying concerns about their families, school performance and their futures. Safety visits provide a consistent, trusted person to listen, validate their experiences and offer emotional support to both caregivers and school-aged girls, helping to reduce isolation, normalise help-seeking and strengthen coping.

Increased wellbeing – Our team act as positive role models and trusted adults outside the family, which is a key protective factor. They create a safe space for girls to talk about challenges, build problem solving skills, explore healthy ways to cope with stress and receive encouragement and positive feedback.

Increased school retention – More girls remain in school because our team encourage them, monitor attendance, follow up on absences and work with families to address the financial, health and caregiving pressures that can cause girls to discontinue, particularly in rural and remote areas.

Increased pass rate – Girls have a higher chance of passing exams because our team provide ongoing encouragement, share simple time-management and study strategies, and advocate with schools when learning difficulties are overlooked. Some students receive additional help with literacy and are given reassurance that they can succeed. Passing exams in Cambodia is important as children cannot progress to the next grade until they pass their current grade.



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WORDS FROM OUR TEAM

“I am happy because even though I do not have many resources to offer my community, this job gives me the chance to share what I have and support them. I am very grateful to our donors for their ongoing support.”

– CHANDA

“I support students and help shift community attitudes so girls can finish high school. As a former Free To Shine beneficiary, I share my experience to inspire others and feel deep empathy during every visit.”

– VANTINE

“I am motivated to support girls at risk of leaving school or entering unsafe work so they can continue their education and secure good jobs. I enjoy sharing knowledge and resources, and feel proud seeing them overcome challenges to pass Grade 12 and graduate.”

– DA

WHAT IMPACT HAVE THESE SAFETY VISITS HAD ON GIRLS THIS YEAR?

CHHINH*, GRADE 6 STUDENT

Chhinh lives with her parents and three younger sisters in a rural community, where her father's seasonal construction work provides the family's primary income and her mother cares for the children. Because there are not enough regular jobs available, the family's income is not sufficient to cover daily expenses and they experience periods of food insecurity. Despite these challenges, Chhinh is a dedicated student. Chhinh receives support, encouragement and counselling, while her parents are supported to prioritise all their daughters' education. Free To Shine provides a bike, school supplies and uniforms for Chhinh, plus clothing for the baby and resources for a home garden, improving nutrition, stability and helping her to thrive academically with reduced family stress and stronger support for her future.

SONY*, GRADE 10 STUDENT

Sony is a Grade 10 student in a rural school who dreams of becoming a teacher and lives with her two younger sisters. She is passionate about learning, seeks guidance from her Education Officer, and attends Free To Shine-supported additional curriculum classes. With her parents working near the Cambodian-Thai border and often away, Sony manages the household with limited support from



her grandmother, making it difficult to keep up with additional English and computer classes. Regular safety visits provide encouragement and a trusted space for Sony to share her concerns, while a bike, school supplies, and uniforms reduce financial strain. With continued support, Sony is building the resilience and skills needed to achieve her goal of becoming a teacher.

NIN*, HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

Nin lives with her younger siblings while her parents work in another district and rarely return home.

For two years Free To Shine helped Nin build on her skills while studying at school.

Nin studied Chinese and completed a teacher training through a local NGO and now teaches classes in her community, earning a small income.

When her family encouraged her to migrate for work despite known trafficking risks, Nin received information on those risks and support to explore safer options, including scholarships and vocational training.

Nin applied to several programs, and gained acceptance into a vocational training course.

Nin has passed her Grade 12 national exams. Her achievements reflect her effort and decision-making, strengthened by guidance that has enabled her to pursue safe education and employment.



SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS

PURPOSE

Social work interventions provide targeted support and crisis response to girls and families experiencing acute or complex challenges. When a serious concern is identified the case is escalated to the Program Manager and referred to our social workers for assessment and, where needed, case management, direct intervention or referral to specialised services.

NUMBER OF SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS CONDUCTED THIS YEAR: 736

OUTCOMES

Increased safety – Social Workers provide tailored support to girls and families facing violence, neglect, exploitation, unsafe migration, family breakdown or other child protection concerns.

Crisis response and practical problem-solving – Social Workers respond when families face urgent pressures such as illness, debt, food insecurity, family conflict or loss of income. In rural Cambodia, these stressors are increasingly shaped by high living costs, limited livelihood options, climate impacts and the financial strain that can push families toward harmful coping strategies.

Stronger family functioning – Through counselling, psychoeducation, advocacy and ongoing guidance, Social Workers help caregivers and girls strengthen communication, planning and decision-making.

Greater accountability from local systems – Social Workers work closely with village leaders, commune authorities, schools and other service providers so that concerns about children at risk are acted on promptly and appropriately. This aligns with Cambodia's broader child protection framework, which recognises that child safety depends on coordination between families, communities, local authorities and formal services.

Reduced risk of trafficking and exploitation – Social Workers help families to understand trafficking risks, identify warning signs and strengthen protective factors around girls, particularly in the context of poverty, debt, family separation and climate-related migration.

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WORDS FROM OUR SOCIAL WORKERS

“I’ve especially valued developing my counselling skills and improving how I assess family situations. Working with complex cases and learning from our Program Manager has strengthened my practice as a social worker.”

– BONA

“Recently, I’ve strengthened my financial literacy around debt and loans, helping families make more informed decisions under financial pressure. Our role is to stand alongside families to create safer environments for girls.”

– DARON

“I’m proud to work alongside girls and their families to prevent abuse, build trust, and support access to education. This year I enrolled new students, coordinated support, led trainings, completed assessments, and finished my master’s degree with Free To Shine’s support.”

– KONGKEA

CASE STUDY: SOVANNA*

Sovanna lives with her parents and younger brother and has a disability that makes walking long distances difficult. Her parents run small home-based businesses but carry significant debt and previously hosted illegal gambling events, creating safety concerns. With support from her Social Worker and local authorities, this activity stopped, improving safety in the home.

After failing her Grade 12 exam and experiencing stigma, Sovanna received counselling and encouragement, regained confidence, explored alternative pathways and was accepted into a non-profit vocational training program in food and beverage. She plans to retake her Grade 12 exam while continuing her training, and has exited the program with greater confidence and a clear path forward.





COMMUNITY TRAININGS

PURPOSE

Free To Shine facilitates Community Trainings that builds local capacity, increases knowledge of human rights and supports families to protect themselves and their children from exploitation and abuse.

NUMBER OF TRAINING SESSIONS	15
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NUMBER OF ADULTS PARTICIPATED	778
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NUMBER OF CHILDREN PARTICIPATED	162
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SUBJECTS TAUGHT

Safe Migration (5), Gender-Based Violence (5), Gender Equity (5)

OUTCOMES

Increased protection – Community members gain practical information about safe migration, gender-based violence and gender equity, helping them better recognise risks and protect children.

Stronger connection – Community Trainings create space for participants to share experiences, learn from one another and strengthen local support networks.

Stronger local partnerships – Community Trainings help to build trust and collaboration between Free To Shine and local authorities.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE THESE COMMUNITY TRAININGS HAD THIS YEAR?

In February 2025, Free To Shine evaluated the Community Trainings program, which found it was reaching rural communities effectively, strengthening local relationships and increasing understanding of gender and child protection issues, while also identifying areas for improvement in monitoring and evaluation, inclusive participation and resourcing. These insights are now shaping an improved training model, which is currently on hold as we secure the funding needed to launch its next phase.

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PROGRAM STRATEGY GOAL 2

EDUCATED GIRLS



Free To Shine supports girls to access and remain in school by providing the practical resources and relational support they need to continue their education. This includes school uniforms, books, stationery, bikes, support for additional curriculum classes, and assistance to address barriers such as food insecurity, lack of safe drinking water and unsafe housing.

WHAT THIS SUPPORT MAKES POSSIBLE

For many girls in rural Cambodia, staying in school depends on more than motivation alone. Distance, poverty, family debt and the cost of uniforms, transport and learning materials can all disrupt education, even for highly committed students. By reducing these barriers, Free To Shine helps girls attend school more regularly, participate more fully in learning and stay on track to complete key stages of their education.

WHAT IMPACT HAS EDUCATED GIRLS HAD THIS YEAR?

The Educated Girls program continues to show that practical support can have a significant impact when it is delivered consistently and alongside trusted relationships. School supplies, bikes, additional curriculum classes and follow-up from our team help girls stay engaged in learning, increase attendance and move toward graduation with greater confidence. The stories below show how relatively low-cost support can unlock substantial educational gains when combined with ongoing encouragement from the team.

SONY'S* NEW START

Sony, a Grade 4 student, lives with her parents and two younger sisters. Despite both parents working as construction labourers when possible, low income and loan repayments made it difficult to meet basic needs. Before joining Free To Shine, she lacked essential school materials, wore a worn uniform, and relied on occasional support from relatives, affecting her comfort and engagement at school.

Through the program, Sony received uniforms, a bike and school supplies, enabling safer travel and regular attendance. These supports have improved her confidence and school experience. She is now performing well and rarely misses school, showing how practical assistance can strengthen learning and future opportunities.

SALIN*, GRADE 9 – A JOURNEY TOWARD HER DREAMS

Salin, a dedicated Grade 9 student, lives with her parents and four siblings. Despite financial constraints—her mother earns a small income making baskets and her father works as a tuk-tuk driver—she remains committed to her education, attending additional curriculum classes and studying Chinese on weekends. She cycles 40 minutes each way to school and often returns for afternoon classes, with her commute set to increase further when she progresses to high school. Previously, her unreliable bike frequently broke, sometimes forcing her to rely on others to attend school. Through Free To Shine, Salin received a new bike, providing a safe and dependable way to continue her studies. This support has reduced barriers, strengthened her confidence, and enabled her to stay focused on her education and future goals.

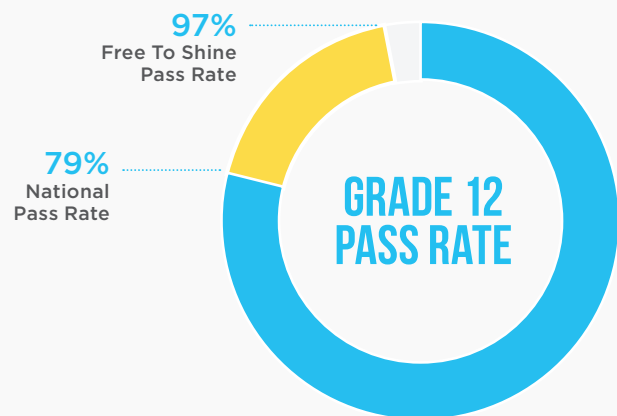
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97% pass rate for Free To Shine students who sat the national Grade 12 exams compared to a 79% national pass rate.

WHAT GIRLS AND FAMILIES SAY

Families report that education support reduces financial pressure and helps girls attend school consistently. Girls also emphasise that bikes, uniforms and supplies make school safer and more accessible, especially over long distances.

“I received school supplies including uniforms, books, bags, and money for bike repairs and additional curriculum classes. This reduced costs for my family, helped me attend school every day, and gave us more time together”.

- A GIRL

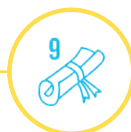
“Before receiving a bike from Free To Shine, I walked 9-10 kilometres to school each day with friends, often taking over an hour. The bike helped me travel faster, save time and money, and feel safer”.

- A GIRL

“With Free To Shine’s support, I was able to spend less money on school supplies and uniforms which enabled my child to go to school everyday”.

- A CAREGIVER.

COMPLETING GRADE 9



At the end of Grade 9, students sit national exams that help determine their next pathway, including high school, vocational training or employment.

Number of Grade 9 students who took the exam: **12**

Number that passed: **10**

Pass rate: **83%**

National pass rate: Numbers were not available at the time of publication.

An 83% pass rate reflects strong progress for girls balancing study with household responsibilities and financial pressure, noting that national Grade 9 data remains pending.

COMPLETING GRADE 12



Completing Grade 12 is a major milestone that can expand girls’ access to university, vocational training and safer employment pathways.

Number of Grade 12 students who took the exam: **35**

Number that passed: **34**

Pass rate: **97%**

National pass rate: **79%³**

Free To Shine students passed the Grade 12 exam at a higher rate than the national average, despite living in rural communities facing poverty and educational disadvantage.



PROGRAM STRATEGY GOAL 3

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



Teach and model **gender equity**.

Conduct **leadership training**, providing mentorship and project management skills development to emerging leaders.

Invest in **university education** to develop the next generation of Cambodian women leaders.

PURPOSE

Free To Shine models gender equity and invests in the next generation of Cambodian women leaders by providing leadership training, and funding university places.

GENDER EQUITY

Women are underrepresented in leadership positions and in politics worldwide. If global progress were to continue to advance at this current rate, gender parity would take an estimated 123 years to attain.⁴

Currently in Cambodia, women hold just 14% of seats on Commune/Sangkat Councils, and only 10.5% of Commune Chiefs are women⁵, whilst at the national level female members make up 14.4% of the National Assembly, and in the Senate, women's representation is 17.7%.⁶

Free To Shine's initiatives seek to build the capacities of women and girls to determine their own priorities. We model gender equity and invest in the next generation of women leaders through leadership training and funded university places.

Following the 2023 decision to pause leadership training in order to protect core prevention work, no new Emerging Leaders were enrolled during this reporting period; however, support for university pathways continued.

Two students completed degrees in Law and Khmer Literature, and the organisation continued supporting a second-year accounting student. These young women are not only transforming their own lives; they are also building legal, professional and community leadership capacity that benefits children, families and communities over the long term.

Students supported by Free To Shine at university are deeply invested in their own success. While donors fund their tuition, these young women work to cover rent, food and living expenses. As part of their studies, each student contributes 100 hours of community service per year, linking higher education support to direct community benefit.

WORDS FROM BOPHA

BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ACCOUNTANCY

"This semester, I learned a lot in management, marketing, and accounting, and enjoyed group work, presentations, and language classes. Despite challenges with large classes, limited textbooks, and English, I aim to keep improving my knowledge and language skills next year"



On the current trajectory, it will take

123 YEARS

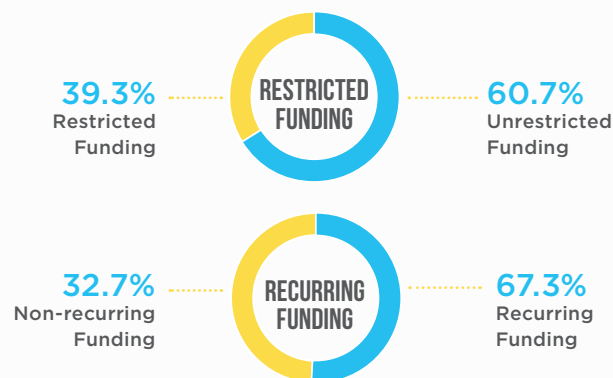
to close the gender gap⁴

– Global Gender Gap Report 2025

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR FINANCIALS

Overall revenue shifted from \$471,633 AUD in 2024 to \$390,410 AUD in 2025. Grant income decreased from \$63,981 AUD to \$52,591 AUD, and sponsorship income decreased from \$57,285 AUD to \$44,224 AUD. Over the same period, overall expenses increased, reflecting a continued commitment to delivering core services and investing in organisational capacity.

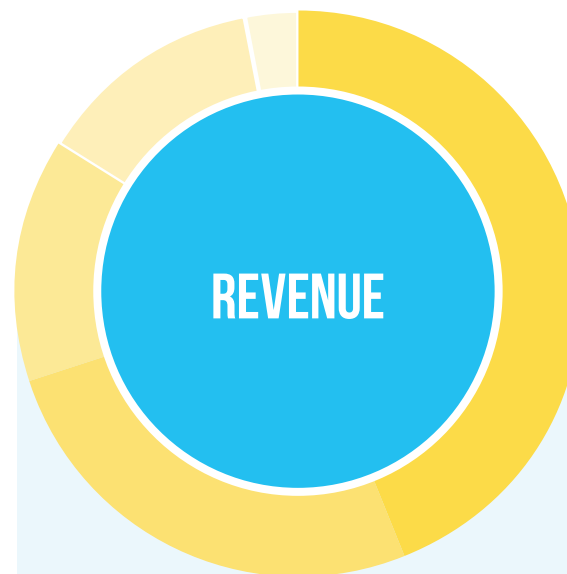
Although total revenue decreased, there was growth in recurring funding, strengthening financial resilience and supporting continuity in core prevention work. This financial position highlights both the pressures facing the organisation and the importance of stable, diversified funding to maintain long-term impact.



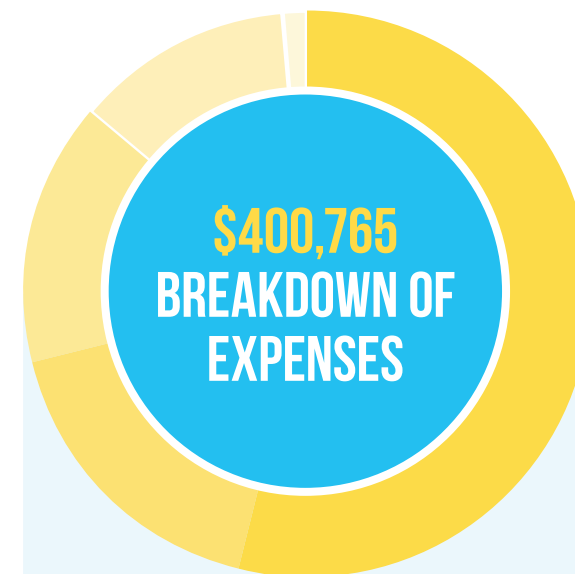
FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

This financial report pertains to both the Australian and Cambodian offices of Free To Shine. All financial figures are in Australian Dollars.

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44%	BUSINESSES
26%	EVENTS & DONATIONS
14%	INDIVIDUALS
13%	FOUNDATIONS
3%	INTEREST



\$216,584	SAFE COMMUNITIES
\$69,087	FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
\$60,248	FUNDRAISING
\$49,354	EDUCATED GIRLS
\$5,492	WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the years ended 30 June 2025 and 2024

REVENUE

	2025 \$ AUD	2024 \$ AUD
Events & Donations	101,004	192,072
Sponsors	44,224	57,285
Grants	52,591	63,981
Interest	10,910	7,155
AMISS	10,566	4,372
Other Income		
Businesses	171,114	146,768
Total revenue	390,410	471,633

EXPENSES

Safe Communités

Safety Visits	98,192	92,699
Social Work Interventions	94,361	84,218
Community Training	24,031	45,856
	216,584	222,773

Educated Girls

Education Materials	30,361	24,092
Curriculum Classes	9,512	12,261
Water, Food & Houses	9,481	6,865
	49,354	43,218



EXPENSES (continued)

	2025 \$ AUD	2024 \$ AUD
Women in Leadership		
Emerging Leaders	0	182
University Degrees	5,492	17,766
	5,492	17,948
Fiscal Responsibility & Accountability	69,087	50,250
Fundraising	60,248	41,461
Total Expenses	400,765	375,650
Revenue less expenses	(10,355)	95,983
Net Assets at End of the Year	429,663	440,019

COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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Free To Shine upholds rigorous standards of transparency, accountability and governance through compliance with key regulatory frameworks in both Australia and Cambodia.

During 2024–2025, Free To Shine's accountability, transparency and compliance was reflected in program delivery, organisational governance, financial management and team support. Clear systems, fair processes and up-to-date policies remain central to maintaining the trust of girls and families, the team, communities, donors and partners.

The Board oversees organisational performance, strategy, major policy decisions, and financial and legal compliance. During the year, it supported the development of new policies and an organisational structure review, whilst reviewing and approving financial statements.



The Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) oversees the registration, governance, reporting and conduct of charities in Australia, and Free To Shine is an ACNC-registered charity.



The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) recognises Free To Shine with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, which means eligible donations to Free To Shine are tax-deductible under Australian tax law.



The Cambodian General Department of Taxation (GDT) administers tax laws and regulations in Cambodia. Free To Shine is registered with the relevant Cambodian tax authorities and complies with applicable tax requirements.



The Accounting and Auditing Regulator (ACAR) regulates the accounting and auditing profession in Cambodia and supports the quality and reliability of financial information. Free To Shine complies with relevant ACAR requirements in Cambodia.

PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

Free To Shine is entering a period of intentional consolidation and growth, building on the learning and progress of the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. In the coming years, we will focus on deepening the quality of our programs, strengthening our internal systems and planning for sustainable impact.

A key priority is the development of a new 2025–2030 strategic plan. This process will involve listening to girls, families, the team members, partners and supporters to clarify our shared vision, define clear goals and outcomes, and ensure our programs remain grounded in the realities faced by the communities we work in. The strategic plan will guide decisions about where we focus our efforts, how we allocate resources and how we measure change over time.

The new plan will place strong emphasis on building organisational capacity, strengthening evidence-informed practice, and improving our monitoring and evaluation systems so we can better understand, communicate and demonstrate impact. It will also focus on long

term funding sustainability and on maintaining ethical, accredited and evidence driven ways of working.

Alongside this, we will review our organisational structure to ensure it supports effective leadership, clear lines of responsibility and strong collaboration across teams. This will be supported by ongoing work to update and embed key policies and procedures that streamline workflows, address system gaps and enable accountable, safe and efficient ways of working.

We will also continue implementing the outcomes of the salary and benefits review to strengthen team retention, fairness and morale, while remaining mindful of financial sustainability. Across all of this work, Free To Shine will remain focused on its core purpose: keeping girls safe, in school and empowered to shape their own futures.

Your continued partnership will be essential in resourcing this next phase and ensuring that more girls can learn, grow and lead in safety.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Free To Shine is deeply appreciative of its partners, without whom it would not be possible to provide critical wraparound services to the girls, families and communities the organisation supports.

We collaborate with other organisations on intersecting issues, at national and international levels and are committed to working with others in mutually respectful ways and investing in the sustainability and effectiveness of our collaborations and partnerships.

By working with government, community organisations and funders, Free To Shine extends its reach, connects girls and families to specialised services, and contributes to systems-level change beyond individual households.

Government partners

During this reporting period, we had formal Memoranda of Understanding with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC), the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) and the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY). At the provincial level, Free To Shine works with provincial subcommittees working on counter trafficking, Commune Councils for Women and Children, and gender-based violence working groups.



Kingdom of Cambodia
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
& International Cooperation



Community partners

Community partnerships sit at the heart of Free To Shine's work. The organisation could not protect and support girls and their families without the collaboration, expertise and generosity of local authorities, schools, NGOs, community groups and grassroots leaders who walk alongside it every day.

Free To Shine sincerely thanks all community partners for sharing knowledge, referring girls and families, co-facilitating activities, and helping to create safer, more supportive environments. Together, these partnerships strengthen local systems, extend the organisation's reach and ensure that girls can stay in school, stay safe and build brighter futures.



Financial partners

We work in close collaboration with our financial partners and during the reporting period, received funding from GoPhilanthropic Foundation, Natures Organics, Haydon Kirkwood Charitable Trust, Matt Rogers Books PTY Ltd, B1G1 - Business for Good, SE Asia Foundation, Network for Good - Property Events, Servus Foundation, Albert and Barbara Tucker Foundation, 100 Women, Pillow May Ltd and RJS Accounting Services. Free To Shine also received Pro Bono support from PIER Marketing Group.



WAYS TO SUPPORT FREE TO SHINE

DONATE

freetoshine.org/donate

REGULAR GIVING

[www.freetoshine.org/
regular-giving](https://www.freetoshine.org/regular-giving)

FUNDRAISE

freetoshine.org/fundraise

JOIN BUSINESS MATTERS

freetoshine.org/business

WORKPLACE GIVING

freetoshine.org/workplace-giving

AMISS WORKSHOPS

freetoshine.org/amiss

HOW TO SUPPORT US AS AN INDIVIDUAL DONATE

MAKE A REAL IMPACT WITH REGULAR GIVING

www.freetoshine.org/donate

Help create a safe community for a child

Join us in working towards a Cambodia where educated girls, free from sex trafficking, are shaping and leading their communities and country. For just \$15 a week, you can provide ongoing safety visits to address complex factors such as poverty, hunger, illness, migration, addiction, violence and more.

Visit our donate page and find out more about how you can contribute to one of these three goals: safe communities for children, educated girls, or women in leadership.



HOW TO LEAVE BEHIND A SAFER, MORE EQUITABLE WORLD

LEAVE A LEGACY

Making a will safeguards the people and causes you care about. After providing for your loved ones, a gift in your will to Free To Shine helps prevent trafficking and supports girls' education and leadership.

Most gifts in wills are made by ordinary, hardworking people who want to create a positive difference. Every gift helps meet girls' immediate needs and generates ongoing income so your legacy continues to protect and educate them.

HOW TO LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Speak with your solicitor (or use an online will service) and let them know you'd like to include a gift to Free To Shine. Many supporters choose a residual or percentage gift so their family is looked after first and the impact of their gift is not eroded by inflation.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

If you choose to include Free To Shine in your will, we will:

- ✓ Use your gift wisely and cost-effectively to ensure long-lasting impact.
- ✓ Respect your privacy and your right to change your mind at any time.
- ✓ Treat your gift, and your family, with sensitivity and respect.

If you would like to talk about leaving a gift in your will, or to let us know you have already done so, please contact us at: info@freetoshine.org.

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www.freetoshine.org/leave-a-legacy

“

My mind is at peace knowing that my passion for educating girls will continue after my passing. My loved ones are getting their share first, but Free To Shine will receive the rest of my estate to continue their essential work.

Robyn

”

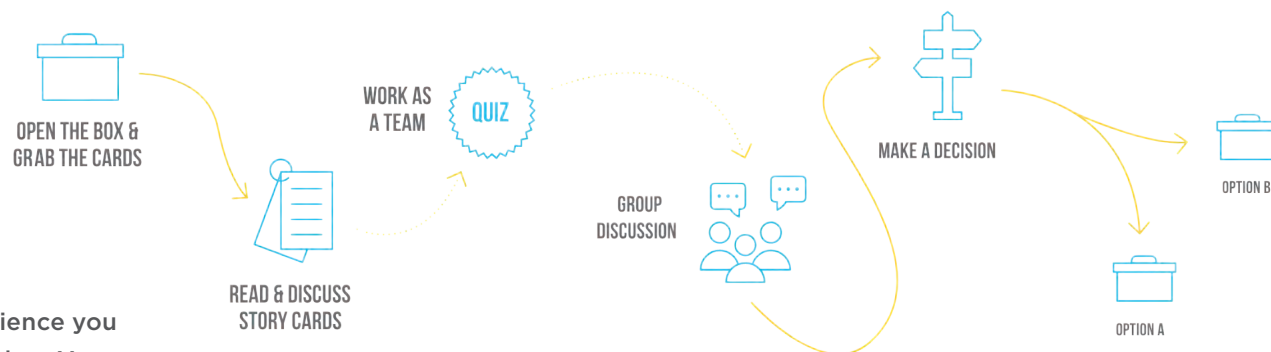
A MILE IN SEREY'S SHOES

A CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE STYLE INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP

Walk a mile in Serey's shoes. During this interactive experience you will be dropped into the shoes of Serey, a Cambodian mother. Your mission, should you choose to accept, is to keep your children safe no matter what life throws at you. The challenges come in thick and fast. The stakes are high, and the pressure is on.

You will learn about life in rural Cambodia, the challenges families face daily, and Free To Shine's approach to preventing the exploitation of school-aged girls.

Email amiss@freetoshine.org for more information.



THE DETAILS



Duration: The experience runs for four hours



Location: Shine Central, Free To Shine Office in Siem Reap



Suggested donation: \$55 USD per person



WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

You'll learn about common challenges faced by rural Cambodian families and be asked to make difficult decisions on topics including traditional vs. modern medicine, microfinance loans and debt, child labour, orphanages, migration, food scarcity and more. The Free To Shine team will provide information and facilitate critical discussion about life in rural Cambodia and Free To Shine's approach to preventing the exploitation of school-aged girls.



SOURCES

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2. U.S. Department of State (2025) 2025 Trafficking in Persons Report: Cambodia. Available at: state.gov (Accessed: 12.05.2026).
3. Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, quoted in 'Exam Results Highlight Student Performance and Ongoing Education Reforms', Kiripost, 2 November 2024, Exam Results Highlight Student Performance and Ongoing Education Reforms | Kiripost (Accessed 21.05.2026).
4. Global Gender Gap Report 2025, World Economic Forum, WEF_GGGR_2025.pdf.
5. Sak Sreynoch and Khath Bunthorn, 'From Grassroots to Governance: Navigating the Pathways to Women's Leadership in Rural Cambodia', Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), 6 March 2026, <https://cdri.org.kh/news/from-grassroots-to-governance-navigating-the-pathways-to-women-s-leadership-in-rural-cambodia> (Accessed 19 May 2026).
6. Ministry of Women's Affairs of Cambodia and UN Women, Situation Analysis Report on Women, Peace and Security in Cambodia: For Development of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in Cambodia, October 2025, https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2025-11/kh-20250438381-situation-analysis-report-on-wps-in-cambodia_en-s.pdf (Accessed 19 May 2026).

THANK YOU

អរគុណច្រើន

The progress described in this report has been made possible by girls and families who place their trust in Free To Shine, by the dedicated team, and by donors and partners who choose to invest in prevention.

Together, these relationships make it possible to reduce risk, expand educational opportunity and support girls to build safer futures.



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