



2015 Annual Report





[LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT]

Everyday love is extraordinary!

That has been a working theme for us for the last two years. It permeates our headquarter offices here in Oregon, our homes overseas, our interactions with government, and, we hope, our relationship with you, our donors. It sustains us day over day and we continue to feel very privileged to do this work. At that, we want to do our work well and mature in health and strength in every aspect.

We are very encouraged to provide this report for 2015 representing another year of modest and steady growth on all fronts. Our aftercare efforts in North Sulawesi are thriving and the newer work among the cemetery population in Surabaya is now running ahead of us. Locally, we see incredible opportunities in the days ahead as we enthusiastically continue to serve alongside our friends and partners.

While this report provides a tangible recap of our year and attempts to tell some of our story, it falls short on one front - a front for which we are most proud: The faithfulness of our donor base. It is the untold story of our growth. Year after year we have experienced very little recidivism. Most of you have stuck with us through the early years, many even increased their giving as time has gone on. We recognize that our base of support truly is extraordinary and we are grateful for it.

Everyday Love,

Mike Mercer
President, Compassion First



[INTERNATIONAL SURVIVOR CARE]

For 2015, we continued to expand every aspect of Sarah's House. Throughout the year, we developed the whole of the property of our new, larger facility. We are now able to accommodate more residents and utilize more space than we ever have. With much assistance from stateside work teams we have finished the on-site water well, added landscaping details, a spice and vegetable garden, additional office space, updated our security guard post, and bought additional furniture for the Refreshing Room, including an ever-popular karaoke machine!

Thanks to generous donations, we were able to purchase a bigger van for transporting residents and faculty off-site, a much needed addition. Our programming also grew this year with the final implementation of the wrap-around system of care. This system involves a network of staff working together to ensure a continuum of care from the moment of intake to her graduation of our residential program.

We also integrated our career training and skills assessment, and formalized the teaching of various life skills into every department of residents' care.





Sarah's House: A Timeline of Care

A representation of a resident's journey at Sarah's House

Rescue

Stabilization

2 months: Initial assessment of trauma, family situation, education, medical needs. Family visits begin at this stage.

Phase 1

3-6 months: Academic catch-up through our in-house education center. 1-on-1 trauma therapy. Trauma informed instruction courses for friends and family.

Phase 2

1 yr: Finish high-school level education. Engage in regular social activities/groups outside the shelter. Legal process typically occurs at this stage, including testifying in court.



[SARAH'S HOUSE]

Her graduation cap is offset by a jeweled garland. Her makeup is tastefully done and her long, dark hair assembled with the effortless intricacy of a trained stylist. Her smile is no longer timid but sure and genuine; the high-heeled gait now confident and controlled. It is then that you realize she is not a child anymore. She's grown and accomplished. She has weathered adversity and become stronger, become a woman. And you realize that she has never been more beautiful and that you have never been more proud.

This is how we feel to announce that "Marsya" (pronounced like Marsha), one of our young residents at Sarah's House, graduated from our program last year. This is a massive accomplishment and the culmination of so much hard work and heartache. She is doing exceptionally well, living outside the shelter with family and working full-time as a stylist.

We first met Marsya in 2012 at the police station after a group rescue in partnership with two other local organizations. Her initial therapy included medical care and an assessment of her trauma and her family situation.

Marsya and our residential program grew and matured together. She was there when we introduced Lifespan Integration therapy and the successful wrap-around care system at the home. She completed high school through our in-house education center and benefitted from our expanding legal presence in North Sulawesi. She was with us during the move to the new shelter and watched as the number of her fellow residents increased over the years.

As she progressed through our aftercare program, Marsya began to take steps towards young adulthood by enrolling in cosmetology school with a focus on the bridal industry and working part-time at a local salon. With the encouragement of the faculty and house moms, Marsya engaged in social activities outside the shelter such as tennis and a local church youth group. She also completed a large number of life skill classes at Sarah's House including Nutrition and Personal Finance.

At this point in her development, Marsya started interning at our shelter. She is seen as a role model and a big sister to the newer residents, encouraging them to persevere through the difficult times of their recovery and to think long-term. Marsya was also eager to learn some business basics from our office staff in hopes of one day opening her own bridal shop.

A major step was taken in 2015 when she started living with her older siblings who have become her support structure outside the shelter. She is described by friends as responsible, hard-working, devoted to family, and sweet-spirited with just a touch of sass to keep you on your toes. A beautiful and emotional ceremony celebrating her momentous accomplishment was held at the shelter in January 2016.

We are extremely proud of Marsya and look forward to celebrating her ongoing successes with you. And of course, we are very grateful to you for helping make all this possible.

Graduation!

Phase 3

1 yr: Begin full-time work or higher education outside the shelter.
Part-time living outside the shelter, usually with friend or family member.
Mentoring younger residents at the shelter.

Reintegration

1-3 yrs: Move back into the community with a trusted family or community partner. Living independently but maintaining a continued relationship with CF through events and regular check-ups.

[RUTH'S HOUSE]

Looking at it, you'd probably say that the orange doors were the most striking feature of the little house, surrounded as they were by faded yellow paint and a rusting tin roof. But for those who lived near it, the most striking features were the demeaning things that happened there. The kind of place you don't think about much or look at for too long. The kind of place that received nighttime customers on the backs of motorized scooters.

But then, on May 1, 2015, something new happened. The little house got a new name - Ruth's House - and a new beginning too. And now lots of striking things happen there. Cleaned up, repaired, and painted a bright and cheery yellow, Ruth's House has become a noisy, bustling community center often hosting upwards of fifty children. Tutoring, games, crafts, skits, dance parties, a late night safe place for children whose mothers work the cemetery at night; Ruth's House never seems to be lacking in life and laughter. Flourishing in the capable hands of our Surabaya Outreach Director, Johana, and assisted by stateside work teams, the house did not become the office/multi-purpose building we planned for, but it became something even better, a haven for children and symbol of hope for the whole Yellow Flower community.

[MINAR'S STORY]

We recently hired Minar, one of the women living in Yellow Flower to work part-time at Ruth's House. Minar not only cleans the center and helps care for children, but she is growing in her own reading skills and competency as she assists elementary students with their daily homework. She is looked on as a loving mother to every child in the center. Our goal is to continually equip Minar with work experience and marketable skills that will benefit her even after she moves on from Ruth's House one day. It's been a privilege to witness her journey from a cemetery worker to a community leader. Her daughter, a recipient of our education scholarship, is excelling in school, and our relationship with this family has become very precious and meaningful to us.



[CEMETERY OUTREACH]



Over the course of the last year, we have reached into the lives of more than 50 children and their families since the opening of Ruth's House in May, 2015. Admiration and interest for our work continues to grow among our community and new families are regularly being added to our care. So much news has spread about the life stirring at Ruth's House, that families, living outside of Yellow Flower cemetery, are approaching the home in search of care and support services.

We have hired two additional staff members to help with the influx of activity and numbers. We now have three full-time employees. Johana is our Surabaya Outreach Director and oversees the overall development of our program in Surabaya; everything from volunteer recruitment to community networking. Johanna has continued to invest in the women, wanting to encourage and cultivate marketable skills and entrepreneurship. Siangganyi functions as our Center Coordinator, specifically focused on developing programs and activities happening in and around Ruth's House. And Irma has taken on the role of directly supporting the children and their families as Case Coordinator. All three serve with joy and determination to see our Yellow Flower friends thrive. We are looking to hire additional case managers and security soon.



In addition to providing a safe and loving space for Yellow Flower women and their children, we are working on intentionally creating a culture that empowers youth, helping them cultivate a strong sense of confidence and to care for others. Programs for the children include capoeira classes—a Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, acrobatics, and music. Enrollment in this program has jumped from a mere handful of kids to now over 20. It is clearly a community favorite.

Other after school & weekend programs have included crafts, experiential/educational play, tutoring, and educational outings.

A handful of women have successfully launched small businesses within the cemetery community such as food carts and laundry services. Others are working toward mastering sewing skills with hopes of opening their own tailoring endeavors in the neighborhood.



It has been encouraging to see a shifting in the women's mindsets toward independence. For our friends to envision a different future than the reality they currently live in is a huge leap. Their confidence is still building, but we are inspired by their willingness to risk stepping back into their communities, with our commitment to walk beside them every step of the way.

While empowering programs are underway for the adults, the youth of Yellow Flower have fully embraced possibility and enthusiasm for their futures. A handful of teens meet regularly with staff members for leadership and personal development.

God has been very gracious every step of this journey. He has entrusted us with more people to care for and has, through your generous gifts and sacrifices, also provided the resources we need to do it well.



[U.S. SURVIVOR CARE]

In 2015, while continuing our needs assessment phase, we discovered an avenue of service by partnering with other local organizations to provide a base of volunteers and a steady stream of basic necessities for women who are currently working to exit a life of exploitation. One critical partnership we have cultivated is with The Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army operates a Female Emergency Shelter (SAFES) located in downtown Portland. This shelter functions as a drop-in center for homeless women during the day, a safe place to stay overnight, and provides transitional living quarters/short-term housing for women proactively engaged in programs toward independence.

We have learned that most of the women accessing the shelter are being or have been sexually exploited or trafficked at some point in their lives. One SAFES participant stated that she is solicited for sex at least three to five times a day in exchange for money or drugs.

We started with the basics—building relationship, trust, and familiarity with those at SAFES. We have built a large network of volunteers who are helping to facilitate ongoing relationship building events, toiletry drives, and supporting SAFES facility needs. In addition, our partnerships with like-minded organizations are growing and we are committed to contributing what we can, when we can to the existing network of care. This has been a great source of hope as we know this work will take all of us.

Lastly, our greatest hope is knowing that God goes before us and is revealing not just the needs of a broken system of care, but the very needs of each precious heart. We are beginning to see something beautiful take shape in the darkest part of our city and in the lives of those involved and are looking forward to the growth of this program in 2016.

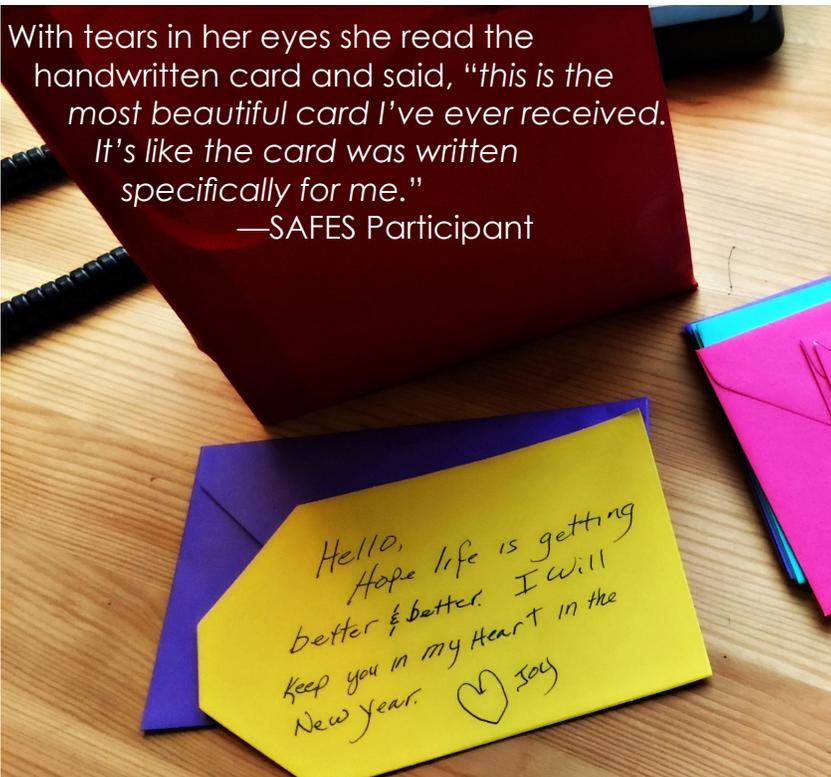




[LOVE IS GREATER]

We coordinated our first relationship building event at The Salvation Army Female Emergency Shelter (SAFES)—a simple Christmas dinner, put together by a handful of Compassion First staff. It had been some time since the women in the shelter had received a homemade meal, exchanged holiday stories, and shared about their lives.

We distributed toiletry care packs and the handwritten notes of encouragement to approximately 100 women. Each received a personalized Christmas card addressed to “Beloved”, “Beautiful One”, “Daughter of the King”. These notes made the most impact, proving above all, that the women in the shelter care most about whether or not we care about them.



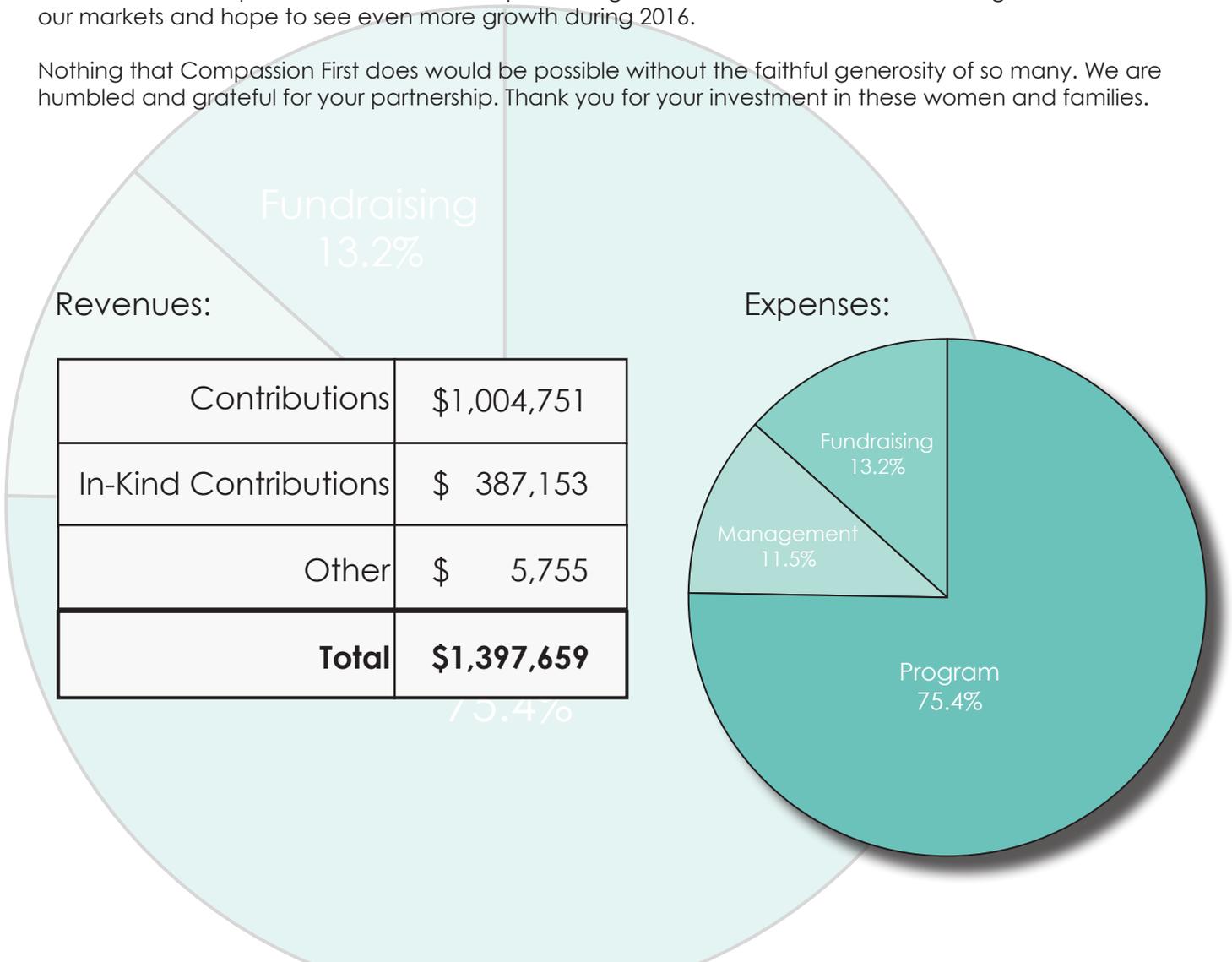




[FINANCIALS, FY 2015]

This year continued a trend of steady and reliable financial growth that has come to define the last few years. With exceptional expansion in field operations, this steady incline in resources has allowed us to grow at a natural and healthy pace. With a tweaking of the development strategy at our US office and the beginnings of Indonesian development activities, we are positioning our assets to take better advantage of our influence in our markets and hope to see even more growth during 2016.

Nothing that Compassion First does would be possible without the faithful generosity of so many. We are humbled and grateful for your partnership. Thank you for your investment in these women and families.



Marsya's story is one among many, and there are more to come. We continue to grow both in capacity and in all areas of our mission. We're hopeful about 2016, believing that we will have the opportunity and ability to serve more women, children, and families than we have in any previous year.

You are an important part of our growth. There are multiple opportunities for monthly investment including child sponsorship and funding missionary work. For those already giving monthly, please continue with us as we realize the new growth that God is inviting us into. You can give online at CompassionFirst.org or mail a check made out to "Compassion First" to the address on the back of this report. And thank you for making this mission a reality!



COMPASSION FIRST
16055 SW Walker Rd., PMB 239
Beaverton, OR 97006-4529

T: 503.207.1320
E: inquire@compassionfirst.org
W: CompassionFirst.org