

TAHADDI  
LEBANON

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



## Forward

2020 will be remembered as the year of crisis for Lebanon. For us at Tahaddi, it will also be remembered as the year of incredible adaptability, creativity, and dedication in the face of seemingly impossible adversity. This year stretched us - almost to the limit - yet we came together as a team across disciplines and centers, to respond to the complex realities we faced as Lebanon's economy crumbled around us. We stood shoulder to shoulder in the wake of the Beirut blast; an event that not only shook us physically but left us emotionally scarred at the loss of so many and at the sheer scale of destruction. Entire neighborhoods of our beloved city were left in rubble and countless lives were shattered. All this as the risk of COVID-19 moved back and forth from the forefront of our minds as cases waned and surged with each wave and subsequent lockdown.

We worked tirelessly to expand the number of families receiving food and financial aid, knowing that for many this was the sole source of support, and it had become a matter of basic survival. However, our eyes were always on larger goals - keeping families healthy and children learning.

Our medical team bravely persevered despite the risks of COVID-19, and as patients struggled with the combined burden of ill health and crippling economic hardship as the price of treatment soared.

We quickly realized that, for Tahaddi students, dropping out of education at this point would likely mean a life of illiteracy. They would probably join the labor force doing the most menial of jobs in an effort to support their families. The odds were against them but we were unwavering. We are proud to share that the team managed not only to keep most students in education (our current drop-out rate is less than 1%) but also to increase the number of children enrolled at the Tahaddi Education Center by nearly 40%. This was made possible by the opportunity provided by the remote and hybrid learning models.

Your kindness and generosity enabled us to continue. We will never forget the encouraging words and acts of solidarity we received from so many of you during this exceptional year. As we step in 2021, we remain grateful and determined!

**Nadia Khouri Accad**  
*Director*

# WATCH TAHADDI'S YEAR IN REVIEW HERE





# TAHADDI AMIDST LEBANON'S MULTIPLE CRISES

***TAHADDI RESPONDS:***

**DETERMINATION**

**ADAPTABILITY**

**CREATIVITY**



# LEBANON'S COLLAPSING ECONOMY



## The Economic Crisis

Since late 2019, Lebanon has been facing the country's worst financial crisis in recent history. It has caused rapid devaluation of the currency by an estimated 90%, leading to hyperinflation. The cost of even basic food items has skyrocketed and has increased by up to 400%. An estimated 55% of the population are now living in poverty, with extreme poverty registering a threefold increase, from 8% in 2019 to 23% in 2020. The situation for the poorest families is dire, especially as public social safety nets are meager at best.

Tahaddi responded by:

- Expanding relief assistance to families, increasing from approximately 500 families in 2019 to 850 in 2020. Specific attention was given to those who would be excluded from other types of public and UN aid, particularly those who lacked official identification papers.
- Expanding income opportunities within our sewing atelier by increasing from 12 seamstresses to over 25 in 2020.
- Actively referring beneficiaries to public or private assistance programs. Over 200 were successfully referred in 2020.
- Introducing a new 'cash for education' program, through which students' families receive monthly food vouchers and cash for Wi-Fi, in order to keep children learning and out of the workforce.
- Expanding medical financial aid for patients at the Tahaddi Health Center to provide subsidies for needed medical treatment.





**THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC**





# The COVID-19 Pandemic



The health crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the economic crisis. Sadly, a number of families in Hay el Gharbeh directly faced this double burden, losing loved ones to COVID-19 while also struggling under the crippling weight of severe financial hardship. The economic implications of the lockdown are very challenging for Tahaddi's beneficiaries who largely rely on daily earnings for survival. Without work or a public social safety net to compensate for lost wages, families are sinking deeper into poverty and debt.



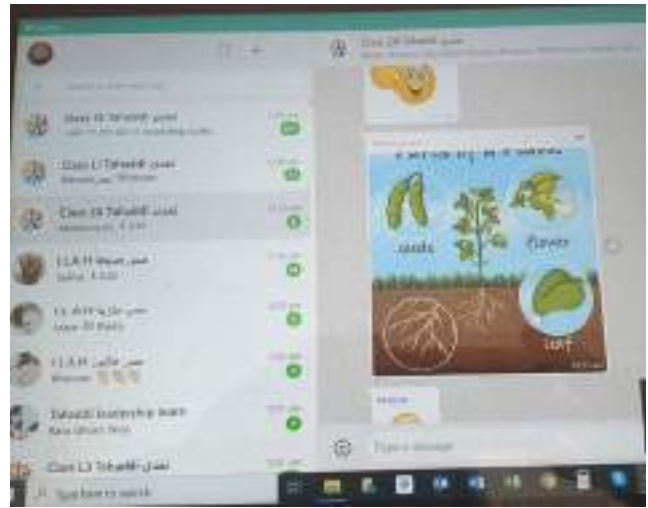
- Tahaddi developed a multi-dimensional response to the pandemic along five main focus areas:
- Implementing COVID-19 prevention measures within our centers to protect staff and beneficiaries.
  - Ensuring continuity of essential health, education, and social services, either onsite or remotely, while expanding access to emergency relief and developing holistic models that address both the health and economic implications of the crisis.
  - Conducting multiple community surveys to understand beliefs and behaviors around COVID-19 in order to target prevention messages and activities.
  - Spreading awareness messages: ~ 2,480 people from the community received regular, bi-weekly awareness alerts and messages through WhatsApp, including voice notes, videos, and infographics. In addition, prevention measures were discussed in small groups with 150 adults and over 400 students.
  - Supporting families medically, economically, and psychologically who are COVID-19 positive or in-home quarantine.

# EDUCATION IN CRISIS





## Remote Learning



Remote education is new and difficult for students around the world. However, for impoverished children like those in Hay el Gharbeh, it is nearly impossible. Students lack laptops, tablets, or mobile phones to work from. Homes are noisy, crowded, and uncomfortable. Families do not have access to stable electricity, let alone internet. However, the biggest threat was that the absence of a traditional school structure would leave them at an increased risk of dropping out, especially at this time of great economic need when idle children might be looked upon to help support their family by working.

The Tahaddi team realized that we needed to act quickly to address the multitude of challenges that families were facing. Failing to do so would mean that children would likely not return to school even after the pandemic had ended.

In response to this challenge, Tahaddi developed a multi-pronged approach:

- Remote learning via WhatsApp was developed for all grades and classes, including Ilearn@home students and our Best Step special education stream. The students' weekly schedule at home included maths, Arabic, English, sciences, arts, drama, music, and physical education. Students also received speech and psychomotor therapy workshops, as well as interactive sessions on protection and internet safety.
- Children who lacked a device were provided with a smartphone or a tablet with a functional WhatsApp account.
- Monthly food vouchers were distributed to families to help offset growing food insecurity within the home.
- Monthly cash assistance was offered to help pay for internet fees. This was conditionally renewed, based on active attendance in the program.
- Overall enrollment in the TEC programs was expanded by 40% to accommodate more children.
- 80 public school students from the area were helped with their homework or received supplemental educational assignments to support their learning.





# THE BEIRUT BLAST



## The Beirut Blast



On August 4th, 2020, Beirut was rocked by one of the biggest non-nuclear explosions in history. It led to over 200 deaths and approximately 7,500 injuries. Although the Tahaddi centers and neighborhood were not directly affected by the blast, everyone was both physically and emotionally shaken. The extensive destruction brought back painful memories of war and loss.

In the aftermath of this tragic event, Tahaddi responded both in the affected neighborhoods and in the Hay El Gharbeh region by:

- Providing immediate psychological support: Tahaddi's psychosocial team offered mental health counseling to children and adults. Our counselors used art and drama to help the community assimilate what had happened and cope with the tremendous fear and instability experienced during and after the blast.
- Participating in clean-up efforts: Tahaddi's staff and education center youth helped in clean-up efforts. In addition, the team distributed nutritious food to those who had lost their homes.
- Tahaddi's youth used their carpentry training to build cabinets and closets for those whose houses had been damaged.



# TAHADDI'S EDUCATION PROGRAMS



## *About the Education Center*

The Tahaddi Education Center's (TEC) non-formal education program accommodates different levels of educational achievement and aims to support children who have difficulty accessing public schools due to a range of socio-economic factors. The TEC's student body is made up of Lebanese, mainly from a Dom ethnic origin, and Syrian children who have been displaced by war. The TEC offers seven levels of primary education. In addition, it provides early childhood education for children aged 3-5. This is aimed at preparing young students to enter public school at the required age, being socially and educationally prepared. The TEC also runs a daily homework support program for students in public schools. A multi-disciplinary team works together to holistically support the learning needs of children.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TEC has adapted and transitioned to remote learning via Whatsapp. When lockdown measures are lifted, limited on-site learning is possible. With this hybrid model, 364 students are now taking part in the TEC's various learning courses (2020-2021), resulting in a 40% increase in students, compared to last academic year (261 children in 2019-2020). The TEC also includes a special education stream, known as Best Step, and the "Ilearn@home" initiative. All these programs have transitioned online this year.

# 234

students completed the 2019-20 academic school year, including 62 children in the early childhood education program

# 383

children participated in Tahaddi's online summer camp that included science, art, music, drama, and physical education activities

# 64

students took part in the "Ilearn@home" program

# 80

public school students participated in the homework support program

# 63

adults participated in personal development programs

# 1,207

therapeutic sessions were provided for the TEC students and the community

# Holistically Supporting Tahaddi Students



## Food insecurity:

Monthly food vouchers are being given to the families. When students are onsite, Tahaddi is also providing them with a nutritious snack



## Lack of internet and electricity:

Cash assistance is being offered to help pay internet fees



## Lack of proper devices:

Phones or tablets are being provided for students who do not own one



## Family Stress:

Parents were not forgotten in these difficult times and are receiving online or onsite mental health or positive parenting workshops to help them cope with the stressful situation



## Out of school children:

The hybrid model allows Tahaddi to accommodate additional students



## Digital Divide:

Remote and hybrid learning through WhatsApp, which is a common application used by families



# Kassem's journey: Escaping Child Labor



Fatima brought her 11-year-old son Kassem to the Tahaddi Health Center because he was complaining of leg pain. Fatima shared that Kassem was working at a nearby coffee shop. He worked for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, and was asked to stand for most of this time. He earned about 20,000 LL a week, which now barely amounts to \$2.

Kassem was referred to the medical social worker. Like many of Tahaddi's patients, Kassem's health concerns were related to the social and economic struggles facing the family. Our social worker encouraged Fatima to enroll Kassem in Tahaddi's "Ilearn@home" program.

Kassem was thrilled to be learning and became an active and engaged student. As part of Tahaddi's commitment to keep at-risk kids in learning and out of child labor, families receive holistic support which includes cash for wifi/electricity and a food voucher. "We were often hungry and did not eat well," says Fatima. "Now, I can get nutritious food and feed my family. I feel our health is improving just because we are eating better."

Kassem's nine-year-old sister, Sara, who is also supported by the Tahaddi Health Center, has a rare but extremely painful liver disorder that affects her skin and nervous system. As a result, Sara is forced to live sheltered from direct sunlight. His parents also have a number of medical concerns making it hard for them to work. Given the family's numerous struggles, we hope that Kassem will be able to remain in learning.

Kassem's circumstances are not unique, but Tahaddi is committed to children like him. By supporting the family as a whole, we can reach the most at-risk children. We seek an approach that is both multi-disciplinary and multi-generational.



## About "Ilearn @home"

The Tahaddi Education Center also expanded its "Ilearn@home" program. This initiative, which was launched in 2019, trains mothers from the community to teach basic numeracy and literacy to children in their homes. These children, aged 10 and above, were not able to register in a school or education center, and are among the most at-risk children. Last year, the program ran three groups, each made up of nine children. This year, an additional tutor was added, enabling us to run eight groups, each with eight children (64 children in total).



# TAHADDI'S HEALTH PROGRAMS



## *About the Health Center*

The Tahaddi Health Center (THC) is a community-based primary care clinic that provides services to over 2,000 patients. It has been active in the neighborhood for over 15 years. The team is multi-disciplinary and provides a range of services, including medical care, mental health support, and social services. Tahaddi partners with the Department of Family Medicine at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Primary care doctors from AUB spend 1-2 years at the THC as part of their graduate training in family medicine.

The Tahaddi health team is active in the COVID-19 response. It provides referrals and subsidies for testing and treatment, as well as remote medical and social follow-up to COVID-19 patients at home. It also has an important role to play in supporting prevention efforts by sharing health messages with the community, both via social media and virtual small group discussions.

During this time of crisis, Tahaddi has focused on ensuring that access to primary care is not interrupted for those medically and socially at-risk. To this end, the health center conducted a phone survey of patients designated as high-risk, to ask about their access to medical care. 98% of the patients reached indicated that they were still able to access health services, either at the THC or elsewhere.



**2,131**

individuals accessed  
community based primary  
care at the Tahaddi  
Health Center

**3,788**

doctor's consultations  
provided by the Tahaddi  
Health Center

**1,195**

individuals received  
mental health counseling

**713**

vaccinations provided

**1,048**

medical referrals outside  
the THC, whether to  
emergency departments,  
specialists, or para-  
specialists

**2,297**

times that medical  
financial aid was  
provided to individuals  
from the community

# TAHADDI'S PSYCHOSOCIAL PROGRAMS

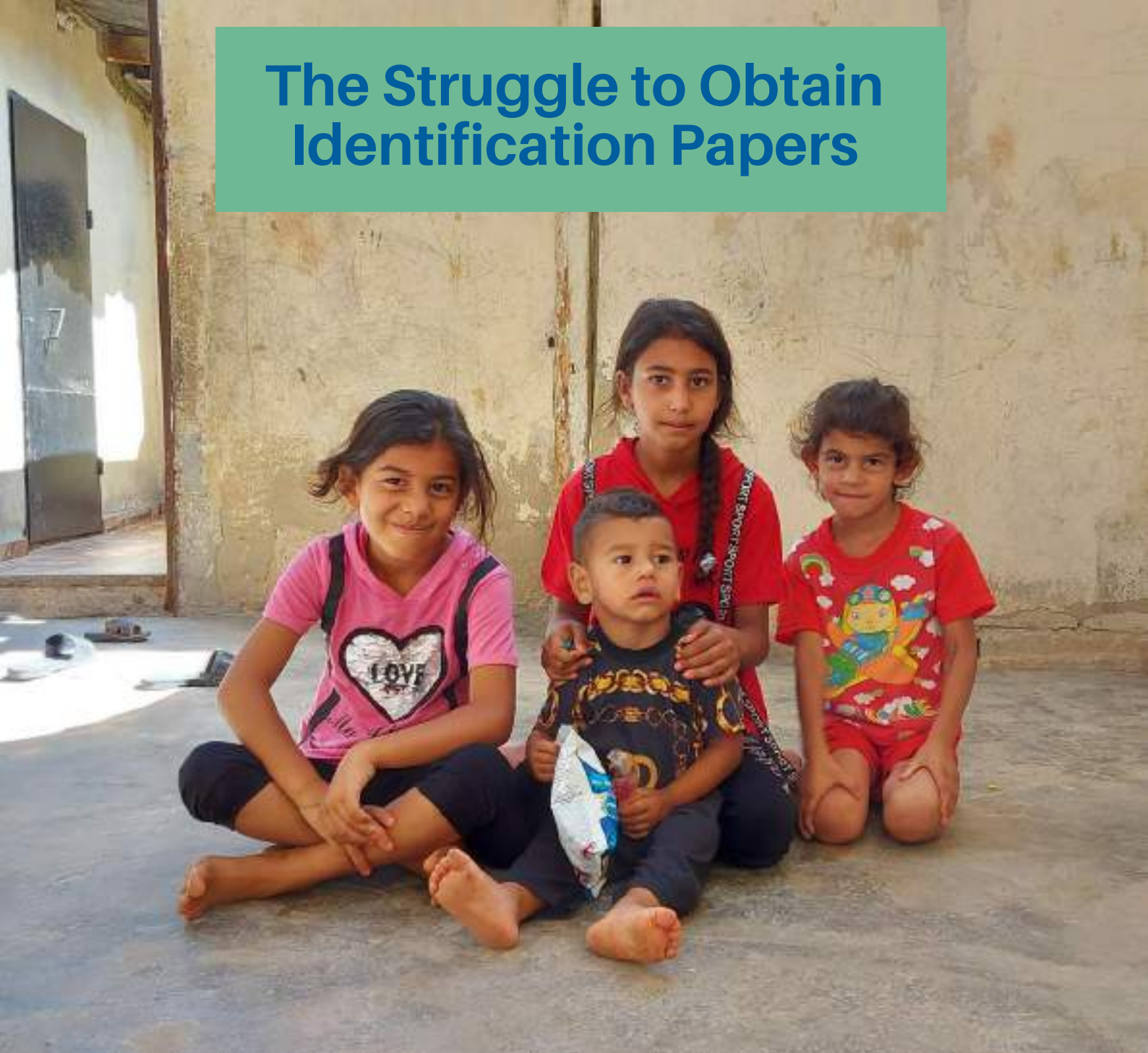


## *About the Psychosocial Center*

Tahaddi's psychosocial department (PSS) was launched in 2019 as a specialized social service center. It is a space where community members can receive emotional and physical support. A team of social workers and psychologists provides holistic case management for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and child survivors of abuse, exploitation, and neglect.

Also essential to the work of the PSS department is the provision of legal and financial aid to individuals who lack official identification documents (birth certificates, national IDs, etc.) and who are therefore at-risk of multigenerational statelessness. To date, more than 800 individuals have been enrolled in this program. In 2020 alone, Tahaddi facilitated the acquisition of 627 official forms of documentation by members of the community. The PSS relief team also supported over 850 displaced and vulnerable families through monthly food vouchers, rent assistance, and household items.

# The Struggle to Obtain Identification Papers



Yousef, a 30-year-old father, shares his story:

“ For the past seven years, I have been working day and night in order to save enough money to obtain IDs for my children. I was constantly afraid that my children would grow up without Identification papers, and live in humiliation because they would struggle to find a decent job or access services like healthcare. For me, food, water, and identification documents are the three essential items in life.

I lost hope when I was laid off from my job because of the economic crisis. This is when I learned that Tahaddi had begun a program to help families obtain IDs. I am thankful for Tahaddi and for their support; the day we received my children's IDs, we all cried tears of joy. ”

# Supporting Parents Under Stress



Given all of the added stresses experienced by Tahaddi families over the past year, tension within the homes is on the rise. “The amount of violence has become even more alarming,” says one of Tahaddi’s psychologists, “and it was an issue we needed to tackle quickly.” The “Parenting Under Stress” program was launched, with sessions offered to nearly 40 mothers and fathers. The active participation of fathers in these workshops was a new and important achievement this year.

The sessions aimed at helping parents reflect on their own parenting styles and on some of the underlying causes of the challenges they faced with their children. They then discussed specific techniques to reduce their own stresses in a non-violent way and to promote positive parent-child relationships.



Hady, a father who joined the parenting classes, is a Lebanese man who lacks an official ID. He recently lost his job due to the economic downturn. As a result, he spends most of his time at home with his wife and kids. “I was so stressed, I used to feel that my heart was going to burst from my chest, and I used to lash out at my children, often yelling and hitting them,” he says. “In these sessions, we were introduced to many new ideas to help us relax and control ourselves, and communicate positively with our children. We are trying our best to apply these ideas. The sessions made us much calmer, so much so that even our children noticed!”



**77**

child protection cases supported by the PSS team

**341**

mental health consultations

**850**

families receive relief assistance, including house appliances, cash assistance, and food vouchers

**627**

legal documents of various kinds were obtained

**112**

relief home visits and 27 child protection home visits

**70**

individuals participated in emotional support groups



# Tahaddi Sewing Atelier

Despite the very challenging year economically, the Tahaddi Sewing Atelier has expanded! It has doubled in size and now provides a modest income to over 25 women, both Lebanese and Syrian. In August 2020, Tahaddi partnered with UNICEF to produce 50,000 masks, a huge task! The team was proud to play a role in COVID-19 prevention efforts. In addition, masks were commissioned by other organizations for distribution throughout Lebanon. 2,000 of these masks were distributed to the Tahaddi community or sold at a subsidized price.

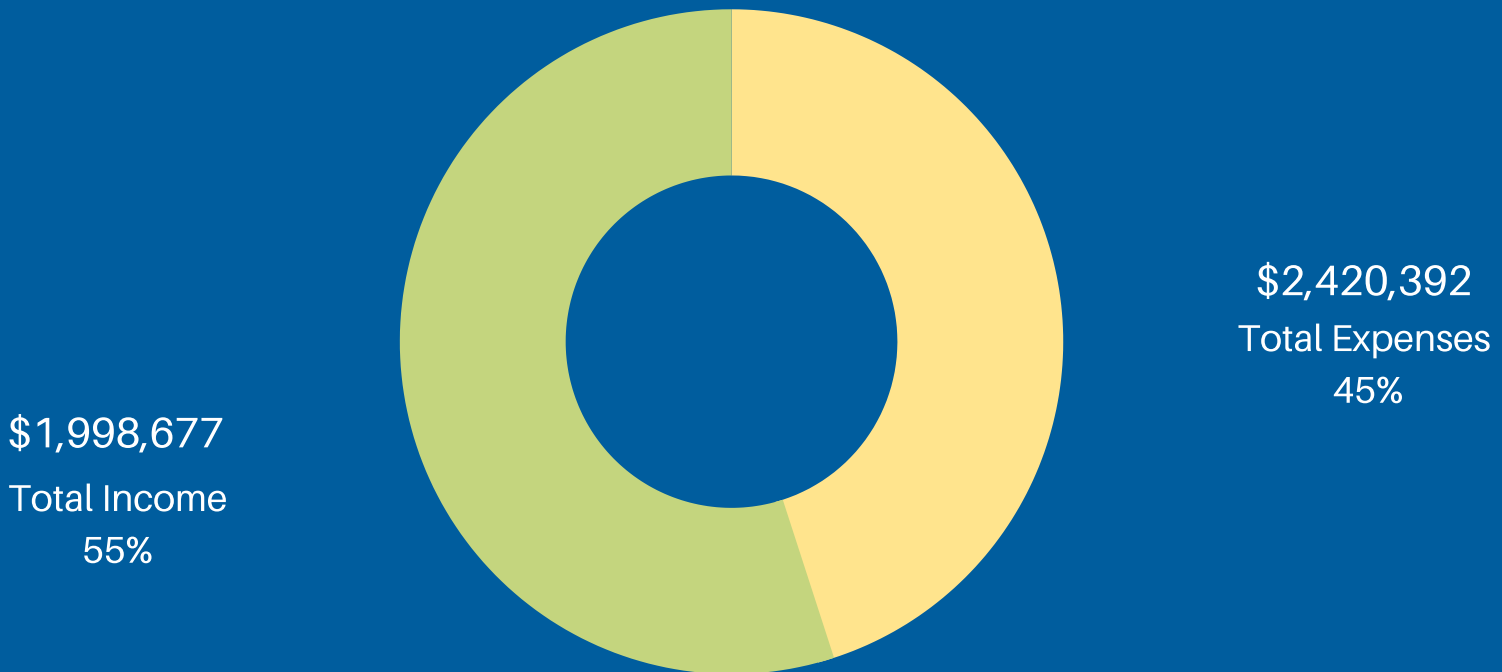
Not only did the team increase in size, but the atelier is constantly working on expanding its range of products. The team is now producing carpets from recycled materials, baby products, backpacks, and home accessories.



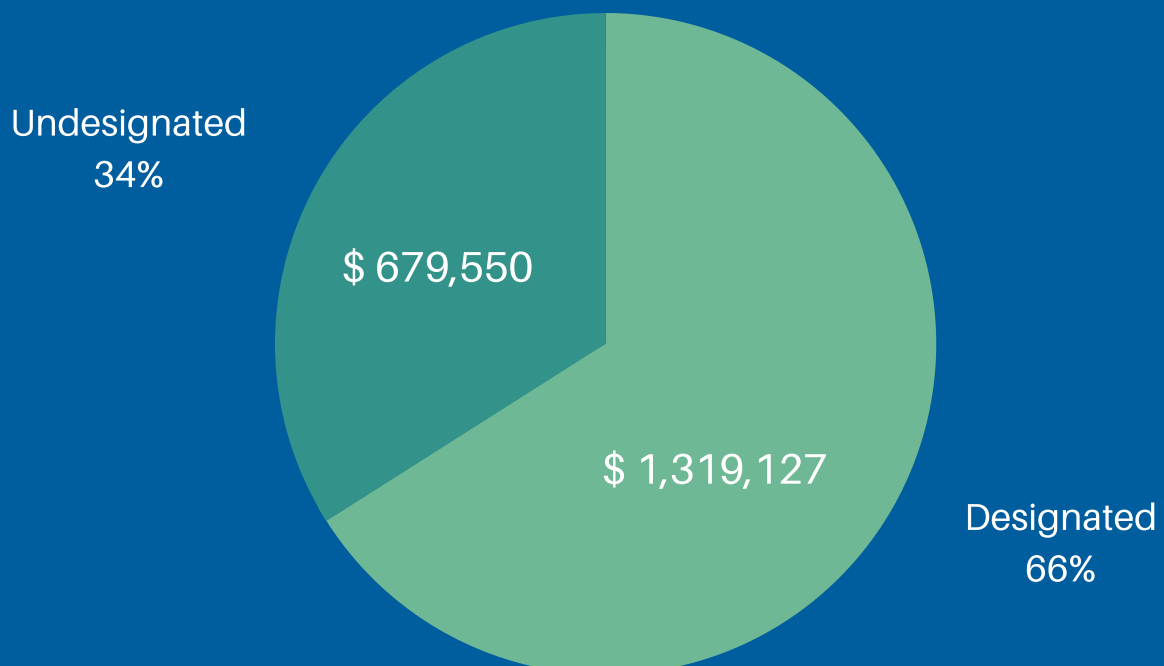
**“**  
*I am grateful to be part of this team. Not only is it helping me financially, but it is also boosting my self-esteem and confidence. I am no longer dependent on others. We are also proud to do our part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by sewing masks.*  
*A member of the Sewing Atelier*  
**”**

# 2020 FINANCIALS

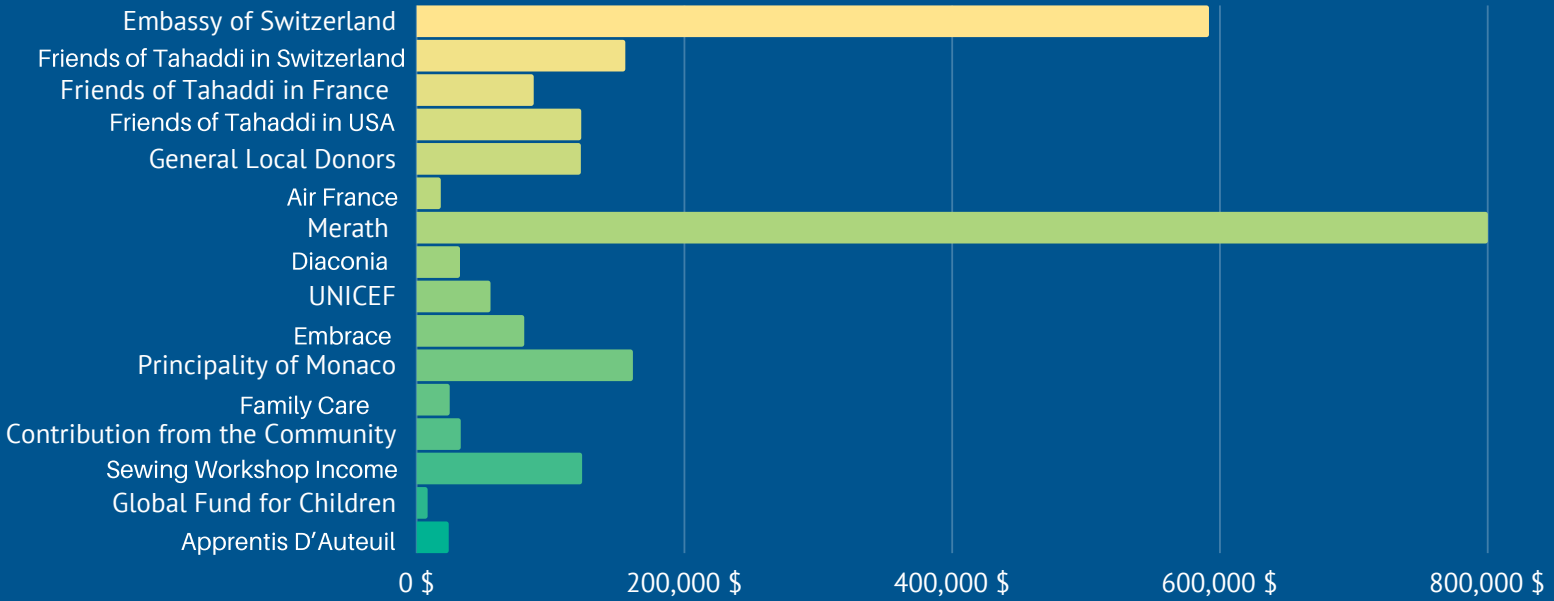
## Total Income VS Expenditure



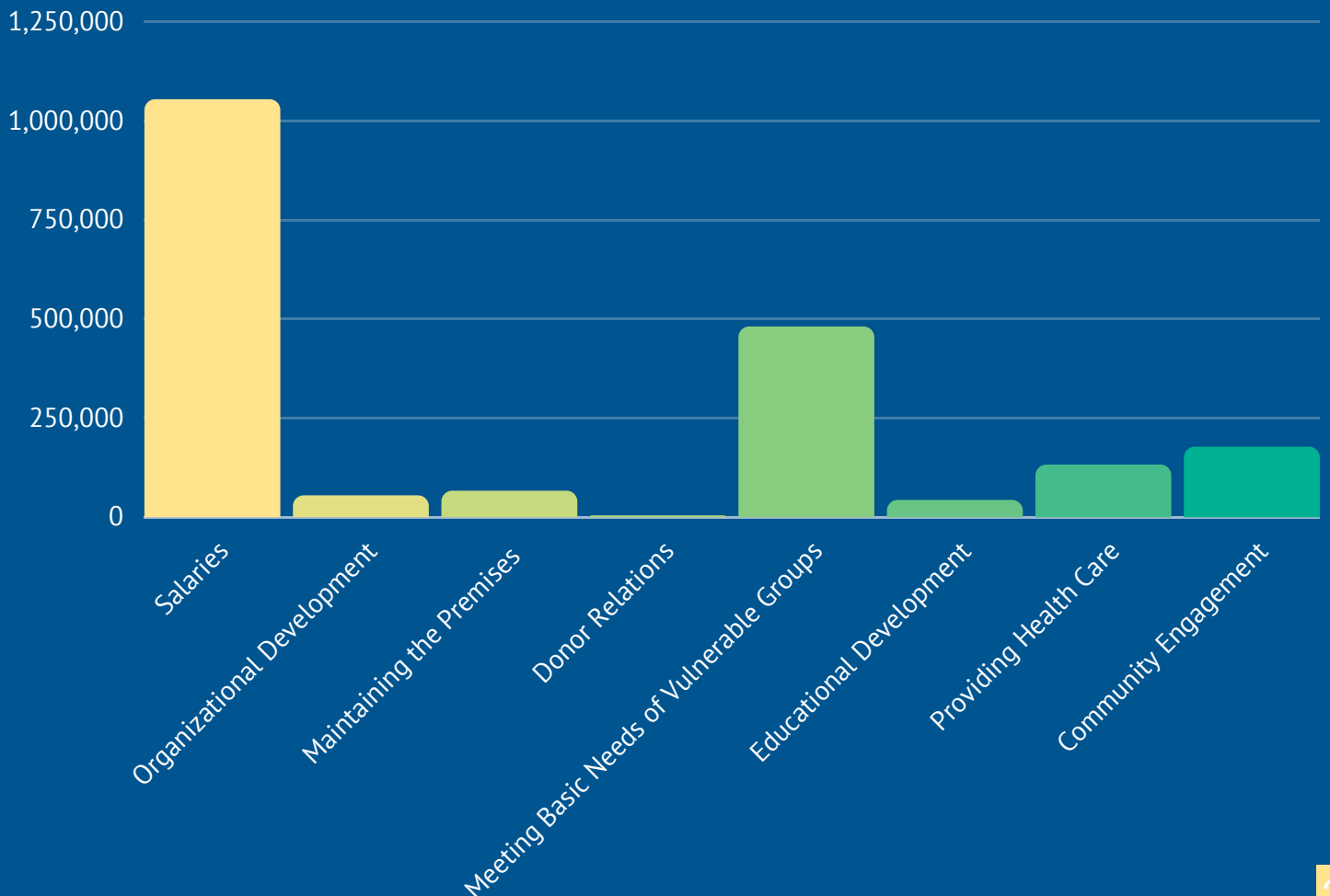
## Designated VS Undesignated Income



## Income Composition



## Expense Composition

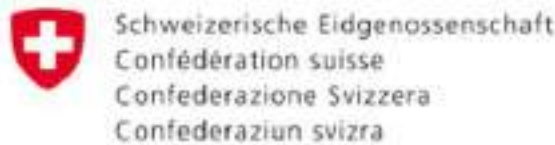
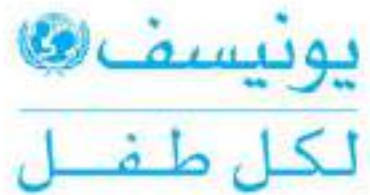


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