



# THIS LIFE BEYOND BARS

## 3 Year Program Evaluation

### 2014



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This report is based on the work of the Community Research and Consultancy and This Life Beyond Bars Programs of TLC. This report was written and prepared by Shelley Walker and Rachel Watkins. This report draws on information, opinions and advice provided by a range of sources.

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- Rin Vibol (TLBB Program Coordinator)
- Kimchhean Chenchhouet (Vocational Training Officer - Siem Reap prison)
- Sam Ven (Vocational Training Officer - Banteay Meanchey prison)
- Prathna Vath (Family Support Officer - Siem Reap & Oddar Meanchey)
- So Kundoen (Local Governance Officer - Banteay Meanchey)
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## RESEARCH TEAM

The Community Research and Consultancy Program (CRCP) of This Life Cambodia (TLC) were responsible for undertaking this evaluation. TLC is a not-for-profit, non-government community development organisation, focused on providing opportunities for communities to develop the essential infrastructure, skills and knowledge to make positive change in their lives and break free from poverty. CRCP is financed by philanthropic foundations, private donations, aid organisations and research / evaluation consultancies. The work of CRCP provides a mechanism for the voices of marginalized communities to be heard. In line with TLC's mission to listen to, engage with and advocate alongside communities, CRCP translates voices into new knowledge, which can then be used as a tool to advocate for positive social change.

The CRCP research team included:

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## ACRONYMS

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CCJAP	Cambodian Criminal Justice Assistance Program
CD & LG	Community Development & Local Governance
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
FS	Family Support
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
LICADHO	Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights
TLBB	This Life Beyond Bars
TLC	This Life Cambodia
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VT	Vocational Training

For the purpose of this evaluation report, the two programs of This Life Beyond Bars are referred to as the Siem Reap Project and the Banteay Meanchey Project, although they have been referred to in practice and for funding purposes as, This Life Beyond Bars [TLBB] (Siem Reap) and Challenges of Juvenile Justice [CJJ] (Banteay Meanchey).

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# 1

## Introduction

This is an evaluation of This Life Beyond Bars (TLBB), a juvenile justice program of This Life Cambodia, which has been implemented in Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey Provinces. The evaluation highlights the overall success of TLBB in providing an alternative model of support for juveniles in prison, and for families with a parent in prison. The evidence presented by this evaluation positions the TLBB program as a good practice model for implementation in Cambodia.

This evaluation has revealed a number of important findings for TLBB. Although the evaluation has exposed some challenges and areas for improvement, these are far outweighed by the many significant positive outcomes for juveniles in prisons and for children with parents in prison. This evaluation has important implications for the future of This Life Beyond Bars.

### ABOUT THIS REPORT

The report begins with an outline of the purpose of this evaluation, followed by background information, including a section about juvenile justice in Cambodia and the rationale for the TLBB program. The evaluation approach and methods used to conduct the evaluation are described in section two, along with the evaluation plan, ethical considerations, research evaluation samples, recruitment methods, data collection tools and methods and systems used for data analysis.

Key findings are presented in five sections. Section three deals with the evolution of the program model over the course of its implementation, and about program management and strategic direction. The fourth, fifth and sixth sections of the report relate to outcomes for beneficiaries of the Vocational Training project, the Family Support project and the Community Development and Local Governance project. Positive outcomes and strengths are discussed alongside program gaps and challenges within each section. Furthermore, for the most part, findings are presented together for Banteay Meanchey and Siem Reap Projects, as results were found to be similar. Each project section concludes with a brief summary of findings and recommendations, with the seventh and final section concluding on future direction of the This Life Beyond Bars Program as a whole.

## PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

For TLC, evaluation is an important part of the program planning and development cycle, serving many purposes. Rigorous evaluation of our programs helps us work out what difference we want to make in the communities we are working with, what we need to do in order to make a difference, and how we will know this has happened.

This report is an evaluation of the first three years of implementation of the TLBB program, which is based in two prisons and spans three different provinces. The purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Ensure TLC is being transparent and accountable to TLBB donor organisations and individuals, and program beneficiaries
- Determine whether the TLBB Program has achieved its intended aims and objectives
- Determine strengths and weaknesses of the TLBB Program model
- Assess the outcomes (expected and unintended) of the TLBB Program
- Inform future TLBB Program implementation
- Build an evidence base for future funding

Our evaluation process starts at the beginning of a project, rather than being tacked on at the end. It is guided by the aim, objectives and activities of our programs, and adapts and adjusts to the needs of programs as they emerge and change. This evaluation report therefore, is influenced by 6-monthly and annual evaluations that have been conducted throughout the implementation phase of the project.

## JUVENILE JUSTICE IN CAMBODIA

Children as young as 14 who come into conflict with the law in Cambodia, have limited access to legal assistance, face trial in absentia, are incarcerated with adults and are often exposed to torture. A lack of juvenile facilities, juvenile courts and specialists in juvenile law means that children are not adequately protected by the justice system (Egger 2005). While children's rights are enshrined in Cambodia's legal system, their implementation in practice leaves a lot to be desired (Travers 2011). Although a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child since 1992, Cambodian law does not yet conform, and the implementation in practice of a number of important UN standards for protecting the rights of children

and young people who come into conflict with the law are not yet being met (UNICEF 2009); as such, children's rights are highly compromised and remain unprotected.

Cambodian children are often held in pre-trial detention where they wait months to have their cases heard; are tried without legal counsel in ordinary criminal courts; are given long and inappropriate sentences for petty crimes such as theft; and are placed in adult prisons, where they often experience physical abuse from adult prisoners and prison staff. Added to these issues, 'some detainees suffer other rights abuses prior to imprisonment, including arrest without a warrant and torture by the police' (LICADHO 2013). Issues for minors are compounded by the fact that due to their level of maturity and life experience, they are not always able to comprehend the consequences of their behaviour - even when that behaviour is potentially illegal (CCJAP 2009). Furthermore, as highlighted by the Cambodian Criminal Justice Assistance Program (2009), juveniles are less likely to have an understanding of the judicial process, are unlikely to know their legal rights or have the ability to demand them, and are less likely to have legal support prior to trial. As highlighted by the UNICEF Chief of Child Protection Unit, 'the vast majority of children who are imprisoned have been accused of minor or non-violent crimes and do not belong there (Souad Al-Hebshi 2009). Furthermore, with few legal aid lawyers in Cambodia, many detainees do not have legal representation and are often held beyond the legal time limits prescribed by law. For detainees who cannot pay for transport to their trial or appeal, they may even be tried in absentia. Finally, corruption impacts on the ability of family visitation, with bribery costs sometimes equalling the average Cambodian monthly wage (LICADHO 2013). Corruption in Cambodian prisons is rife, with those who do not have money being forced to endure less recreation time and more squalid living conditions. Furthermore, those who break prison rules can be beaten and abused, which is often carried out 'by groups of inmates designated and directed by guards' (LICADHO 2012).

According to LICADHO, the Cambodian government allots only 2,800 riel (about \$0.70 USD) to each prisoner for food, water is often unsafe to drink and scarce, and to exacerbate these issues, Cambodian prisons are over-crowded, which is considered a serious humanitarian concern by the ICRC (2013). Overcrowding creates substandard and inhumane conditions of detention, as

people are forced to live for extended periods with insufficient space to move, sit

or sleep. Overcrowding leads to insufficient cell ventilation, increased tension and violence, poor sanitation and hygiene, and an increase in the transmission of communicable diseases. Overcrowding also stretches resources, so that basic needs in terms of food, water and medical care become even more limited. Accurate recent figures of the number of juveniles incarcerated in Cambodian prisons is difficult to access, however according to figures obtained from the Ministry of Interior's Prison Department, there was a 92% increase in the number of under-18s in prison – from 403 in 2005 to 772 in 2010, with almost 30% of those comprising children being held in pre-trial detention (Effectius 2011).

LICADHO, a Cambodian National Human Rights Organisation, who is responsible for monitoring 18 of Cambodia's 28 prisons, and providing a variety of services to inmates within these prisons has documented research about the experience of young people in prison; information gathered during prison visits is used to advocate for better prison conditions and for action in specific cases. According to LICADHO, time spent in prison has serious implications for psychosocial wellbeing, ability to reintegrate back to their communities, and personal and educational development. In addition, research shows that young people who experience detention are more likely to reoffend than those who have not been detained (Travers, 2011; Teeuwen et al., 2006; Eggar, 2005).

TLC recently conducted a study, 'Boys Behind Bars', that involved documenting the experiences of nine boys who participated in the TLBB Program, but whom have been released from prison. The study mirrors findings of research by LICADHO, supporting the fact that Cambodia's justice system lacks the resources and capacity to respond in accordance with international standards that ensure the best interests of the child are protected. The 'Boys Behind Bars' report is a supplement to this report.

The Cambodian Government has developed a Draft Law on Juvenile Justice that addresses children in conflict with the law and provides the rules for designating specialists to work in this area. The Draft Law prioritizes rehabilitation over punishment, includes a mandate for the role of social workers in the criminal justice system as well as alternatives to detention and imprisonment, including diversion at various stages. The Draft Law was planned to be implemented in 2010

(UNICEF), however is still being discussed, leaving a system in place unable to protect the rights of children.

## CHILDREN WITH A PARENT IN PRISON

There are approximately 2,300 adults confined in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey Prisons leaving an untold number of children deprived of a primary attachment figure and facing an uncertain future. As a result, already vulnerable families suffer economically, physically and/or educationally and are subject to shame, stigma and discrimination. Financial hardship and instability leads to children being at risk of dropping out of school, which is compounded by the impact of shame, social stigma and discrimination. Care arrangements for the children of prisoners vary depending on circumstances; however, some may end up in institutional care as a last resort. With international research supporting the fact that institutional care is not conducive to the care and developmental needs of children, it is paramount that these children are supported to remain in home based care, within their kith and kin networks.

## ABOUT THIS LIFE BEYOND BARS (TLBB) PROGRAM

This Life Beyond Bars involves three project areas. First, a Vocational Training program in moto-mechanics and electronic repairs in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey Prisons aims to increase the skills, knowledge and family connections of children in prison, to aid integration into their communities upon release.

Second, the Family Support project aims to increase the resilience and connectedness of families with a parent in prison through the provision of income generation activities, student scholarships and health and basic need allowances.

Finally the Community Development and Local Governance project aims to build the capacity of communities identified as having high populations of prisoners, to support them to address their own human rights issues.

Most of the funding for TLBB has been received from AusAID (65%). The remainder of funding has come from private donors and philanthropic trusts.

## TLBB FUNDING

.....

Private donors &  
philanthropies

35%

AusAID

65%

In 2008, community members in Siem Reap Province, where This Life Cambodia was already working, began talking to TLC about their concerns related to children who were coming into conflict with the law; these children were generally the poorest and most vulnerable and were being detained for petty offences. Villagers in the community were concerned about the conditions inside prison, including the lack of educational opportunity. They were also concerned about the impact on families and communities when a parent was held in prison. Families were facing financial hardship and instability leading to children being at risk of dropping out of school. They reported this was impacted by shame, social stigma and discrimination.

In February 2010, a self-funded Australian volunteer began working with This Life Cambodia to start developing a program that would respond to the needs identified. This role involved undertaking some basic initial research to help develop a program model, and sourcing funding to get the program up and running. In June 2010, funding was sourced from private donors to employ two staff members (a full time and a part time) to work alongside the volunteer. Two months later, in August 2010, funding was also received from AusAID, via the Australian Youth Ambassador Program, to recruit this volunteer for 12 months, which enabled even more time to be dedicated to program development. TLC consulted with prison authorities, the Cambodian General Department of Prisons and other organisations working in the area of law and justice, to help determine the best model for a vocational training program for juveniles in Siem Reap Prison. This, combined with research gathered from human rights organisations including LICADHO, Human Rights Watch, Legal Aid Cambodia and the United Nations, led to TLC receiving a number of private donations and being awarded AusAID funding for a 3-year project, 'This Life Beyond Bars', which commenced activities in December 2010.

The structure and staffing of the TLBB program has evolved over time, responding to changes being implemented since it began in 2010. Once program activities commenced, one TLBB Program Officer became responsible for the VT Project, and the other Program Officer role involved establishing the family visitation component of this project, and designing and setting up the new Family Support and Community Development Projects of TLBB.

By February 2011, the TLBB program had grown to a team of three full-time positions

including; a Program Coordinator, also responsible for the VT Project; a Project Officer managing legal services and the Community Development (CD) Project; and a Project Officer managing the Family Support Project. A year later in February 2012, after an evaluation revealed the huge successes of the program in Siem Reap, funding was received to duplicate the program in Banteay Meanchey Prison. This Project was named The Challenges of Juvenile Justice in Cambodia (CJJC).

In its first year of operation, the Vocational Training Project provided moto-mechanic and electronic repair training for eleven students in Siem Reap Prison. Since then, a further 54 students have participated in the project in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey Prisons.

The Family Support (FS) Project in Siem Reap began working with six families who had a parent in prison, in April-May of 2011. Since then, the program has taken on five more families, including one case that has been closed; of these families two parents have been released from prison. For the Banteay Meanchey Program, the FS Project began working with four families in August 2012, taking on another nine families in February-March of 2013, one of these cases has now been closed; one parent has been released from prison.

With AusAID funding received in late 2010, the Community Development Project (CD) was established in Siem Reap and Oddar Meanchey Provinces. This project aimed to work with local communities to help address human rights and legal justice issues. When funding was received to expand the TLBB program into Banteay Meanchey in 2012, the CD component of the project was expanded to include a Local Governance (LG) capacity building role. Funding covered the development of the LG role into the Siem Reap Project, in Siem Reap and Oddar Meanchey Provinces.

# 2

## Evaluation Methods

Prior to undertaking the evaluation, a program mapping exercise and document review was undertaken, which led to the development of evaluation work plans, which were established in consultation with the TLBB program team. The work plans provided a map of the TLBB program areas and beneficiaries, areas of inquiry for the evaluation, potential data samples, impact and outcome indicators and finally evaluation methods and tools for gathering data.

The evaluation involved a combination of methods of data collection and analyses.

### DESK REVIEW

Secondary methods comprised a comprehensive desk review of key documents including monthly project progress reports, program beneficiary case notes, AusAID funding proposals and guidelines, strategic planning documents and organisational donor reports. The evaluation team also reviewed previous 6-monthly evaluation reports. The desk review helped guide the evaluation planning process, and has provided important evidence of impact and outcome for the program, all of which are presented in this report.

### INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS

Primary methods included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key informants and program beneficiaries, and unstructured interviews with TLBB staff.

Unstructured interviews were held with TLBB staff, including the TLBB Program Coordinator, the AusAID funded Project Development Officer, Family Support Project Officers, Vocational Training Project Officers and Vocational Trainers, and Community Development and Local Governance Project Officers. Excluding interviews with Vocational Trainers, which were held in the field, all TLBB staff interviews were conducted in the office of This Life Cambodia.

For interviews and focus groups with program beneficiaries and key informants, field visits were conducted in targeted provinces, prisons and communities.

The Vocational Training Project beneficiary sample included 24 vocational training students (Siem Reap Prison n=15; Banteay Meanchey Prison n=9) who are currently attending moto-mechanics and electronic repair training. A focus group was held at each prison and data has been sourced from

interviews with post release students who participated in a research project with CRCP. Interviews and focus groups that were held in prisons were conducted in the TLBB training centres within the walls of the prison; they involved careful planning with prison authorities in each Prison. Unfortunately we were not granted permission by the prison authorities to conduct individual interviews with boys in prison. Interviews with post release students and families were held in the villages where they live, in or near their homes, at a location that felt safe and appropriate for the interviewees.

- Broad Evaluation Questions**
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program?
  - What are the program outcomes for Beneficiaries?
  - Do program outcomes match program goals and objectives?
  - Have there been unexpected outcomes? What are they?
  - What are the key learning's for transferring to future programs?
  - What environmental and political factors have impacted on the program?
  - Are the resources available being used effectively?
  - Do program workers have sufficient resources, skills and support to deliver the program?
  - What is the capacity to expand the TLBB program to other prisons?

The Family Support Project beneficiary sample included scholarship students and their families. Individual interviews were conducted with a sample of five families, and a sample of six scholarship students. These interviews were also conducted in the field, in locations that were chosen by the families and children.

For the Community Development and Local Governance project, the project beneficiary evaluation sample included Commune Chiefs, Commune Council members and Villagers. Individual interviews were held with a small sample of prison authorities, which occurred in the prisons.

Field visits also provided an opportunity for the evaluation team to observe program activities in the field, and to validate key informant and TLBB program staff perceptions and views.

As previously noted, some data is sourced from previous annual and 6-monthly TLBB

evaluations conducted by CRCP.

All program beneficiary data has been de-identified. All program beneficiaries and key stakeholders were happy and enthusiastic to be interviewed.

Final data collection for this evaluation was completed in March and April 2014. The TLBB program team helped the evaluation team source appropriate documents and information and an appropriate sample of key stakeholders and program beneficiaries.

## ETHICAL ISSUES

The conduct of this evaluation was based on a number of guiding principles that placed the rights and respect of program beneficiaries at the forefront of the evaluation. We were particularly committed to ensuring the process was transparent and took account of the cultural context and literacy levels of participants. We are also committed to ensuring findings will be translated into actions for positive change.

For participants who were involved in individual interviews and focus groups, a number of strategies were used to prevent exposure to potential risk. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, evaluation data has been de-identified. To ensure individuals did not feel obliged or coerced to participate in interviews or focus groups, 'Free Prior Informed Consent' (The NGO Forum on Cambodia 2012) was obtained, which is an international concept to acknowledge people's legitimate decision-making authority. This meant that participants were free to withdraw consent at any time, without coercion; that the decision to consent was given prior to the conduct of interviews and focus groups; and that participants were informed with accurate clear information about what it would mean to be involved in the evaluation before being required to consent to participate. Many individuals of the participant sample were illiterate or had low literacy skills; therefore voice signature consent was obtained.

## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Measures of success are different for each project within the This Life Beyond Bars Program.

For the Vocational Training Project, measures of success consider outcomes for students whilst in prison, such as increased knowledge and skills in moto-mechanics and electronic repairs, and increased knowledge about morals and ethics. Other measures of success

for this project consider outcomes for students after their release, such as rates of connectedness to families and communities, and rates of re-offending.

For the Family Support project, measures of success consider outcomes for scholarship students relating to educational performance, such as school attendance and drop out rates. Other measures of success for this project relate to family connectedness and outcomes relating to income generation activities.

Finally, for the Community Development and Local Governance project, measures of success relate to rates of community attendance at trainings and workshops delivered and levels of capacity of local governance mechanisms and structures to respond to human and legal rights issues.

More detail about expected project outcomes are presented in the evaluation findings of each project.

## INSTRUMENT DESIGN

All evaluation tools used were developed following consultation with TLBB program staff. A range of culturally sensitive and appropriate research tools (taking account of low literacy levels), were designed to gather meaningful data from a range of key stakeholders and beneficiaries; a range of different techniques were used, involving qualitative and quantitative methods. All research tools were designed in English, however most interviews and focus groups were conducted in Khmer. Focus group and individual interview schedules for program beneficiaries were simple, and involved both open and closed questions, to capture a breadth of information. Individual interview schedules for TLBB staff and key stakeholders served more as guides to prompt discussion with open-ended questions.

## DATA ANALYSIS

All interviews and focus groups with project beneficiaries and key stakeholders were conducted in Khmer, and translated into English, however some interviews with TLBB staff were conducted in English. Simple field reporting forms were used to manage data collection. Once all data was gathered, it was translated into useable formats for analysis, via spreadsheets, tables and transcripts. Individual and focus group interview data were compiled and thematically coded. Evaluators discussed findings before this report was completed.

## EVALUATION LIMITATIONS

A limitation of this evaluation is that some baseline data was not collected at the beginning of the TLBB program, in particular: Vocational Training students levels of skills, knowledge and confidence before commencing the program; Family Support project scholarship students education performance and aspirations; and Family Support project families level of financial sustainability. Therefore, some data is unable to be compared across the entire duration of the program. For all new beneficiaries of the TLBB program, this data is however now being collected, which will support future assessments of intended outcomes for program beneficiaries.

Although every effort was made to ensure participants felt safe in interviews and focus groups, another limitation of this research is the potential that vocational training students and prison authorities who were interviewed and involved in focus groups in the prison setting, may not have felt comfortable to share some information honestly and openly. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, we were denied the opportunity by prison authorities to conduct individual interviews with students in prison.

# 3

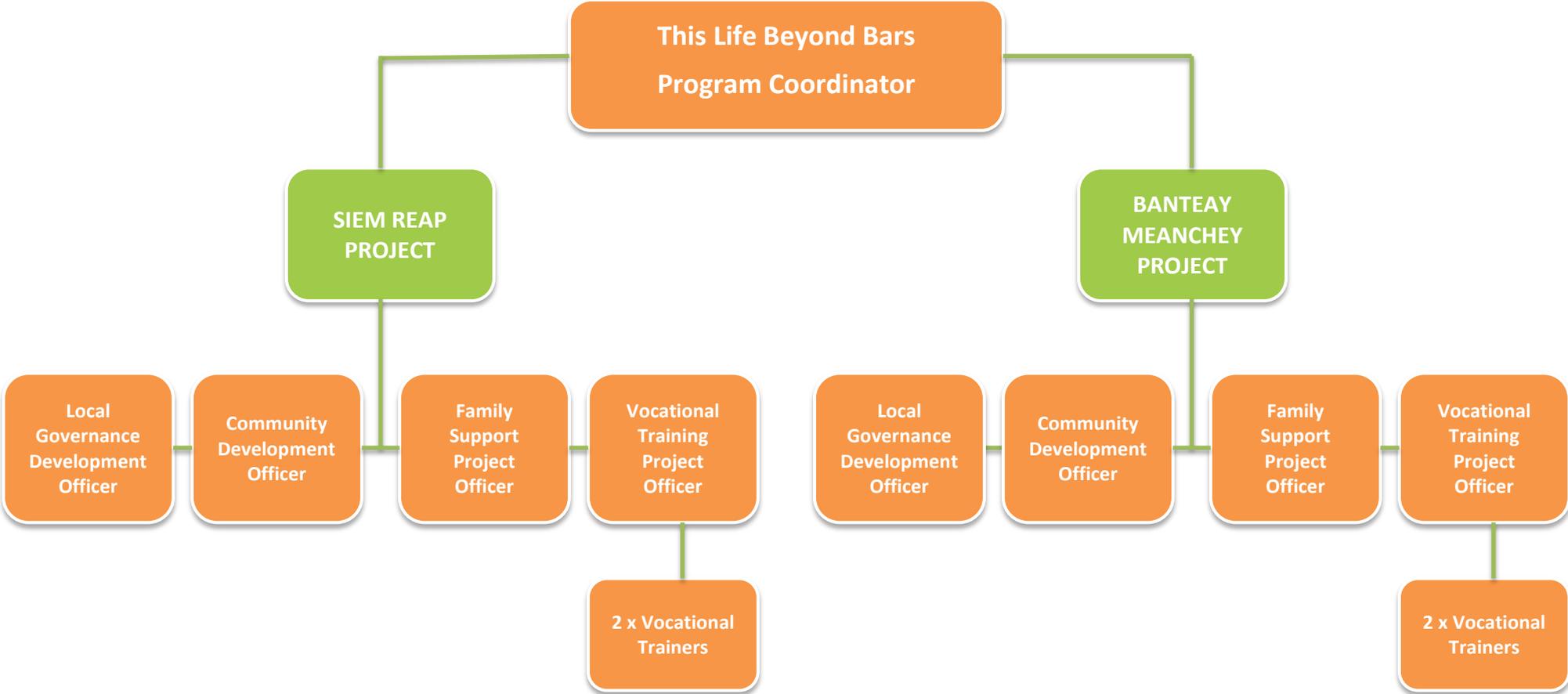
## Program Management & Strategic Direction

The TLBB program has grown from being a small team of 3 workers in 2010 (including a 12-month AusAID funded volunteer) to being a large team of 14 staff by the end of 2013 (including another 18-month AusAID volunteer). Currently a Program Coordinator oversees and manages the program, with teams of five staff for each of the Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey Projects. The staffing structure of the TLBB program has changed a number of times to accommodate changes in program activities. Rotational Team Leader Roles were introduced to the program in 2012, however these roles were ineffective, thus no longer exist. Additionally the Local Governance Project has ceased operations, which has reduced staff numbers from six to five per program.

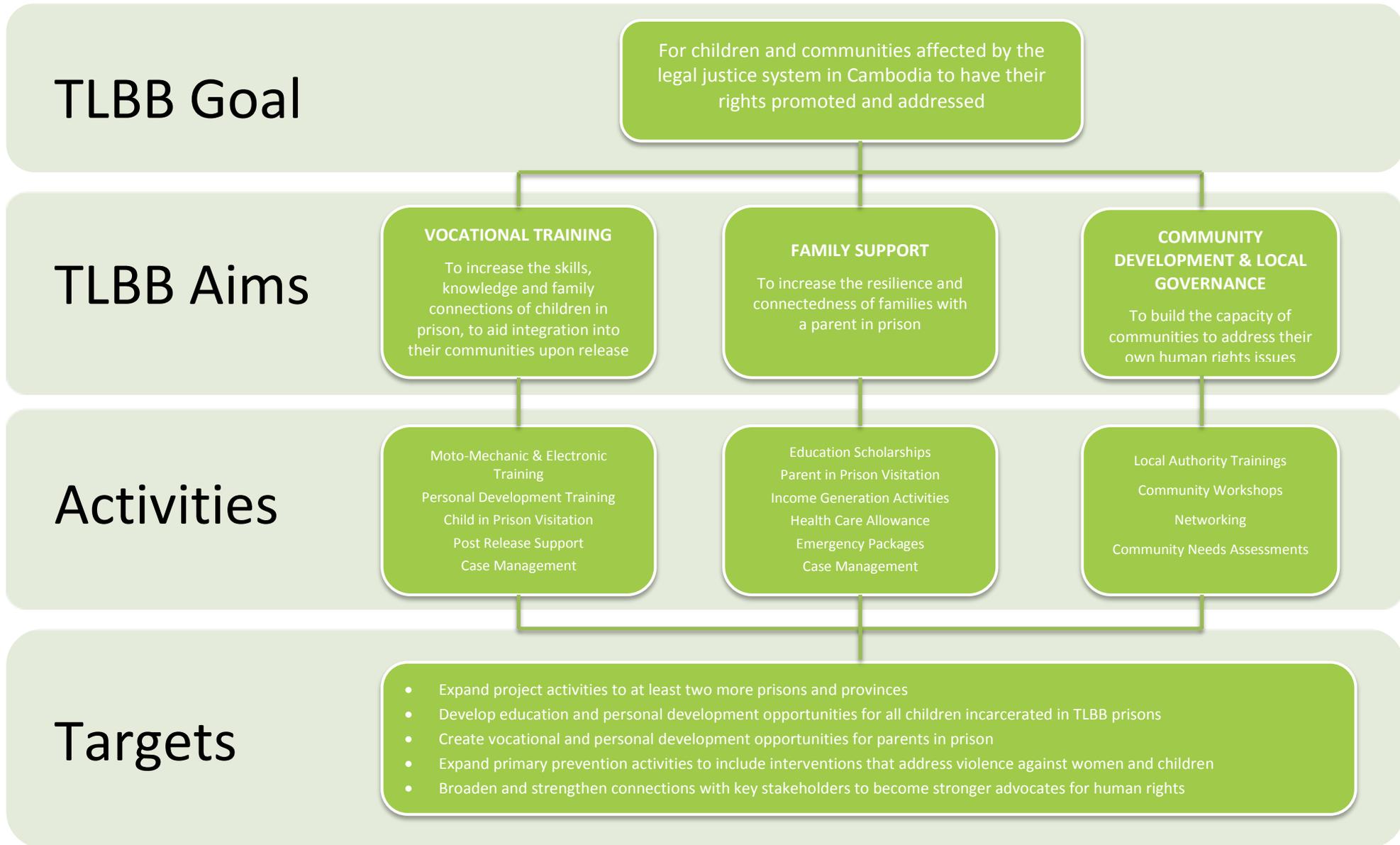
### PROGRAM PLANNING & EVALUATION

A new program planning and evaluation system was developed for the TLBB program in 2013. The process was developed with the support of the Community Research and Consultancy Program (CRCP) of TLC, and involved revisiting the TLBB program goal, expected outcomes, aims and activities of the program. CRCP worked together with each project team to determine more effective and efficient methods for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the program. New monitoring systems have been developed that are streamlined to capture the most important data about outcomes for program beneficiaries.

# TLBB ORGANISATIONAL PROGRAM STRUCTURE



## TLBB PROGRAM GOAL, AIMS, ACTIVITIES & TARGETS



# 4

## Vocational Training Project

### PROJECT AIM

To increase the skills, knowledge and family connections of children in prison, to aid integration into their communities upon release

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Moto-Mechanic & Electronic Training
  - Personal Development Training
    - Child in Prison Visitation
    - Post Release Support
    - Case Management

According to LICADHO (2013), as of September 2013, only four Cambodian prisons were providing children with basic on-site educational and recreational opportunities, with all of the programs being run by NGOs; the Vocational Training (VT) Project of This Life Cambodia, is one of these programs.

The VT Project addresses the rights of children in prison to ensure their personal and educational development is supported and maintained throughout the duration of their incarceration. It is administered through four main project activities namely; moto-mechanic and electronic repair training; personal development training; child in prison visitation; and post release support, and has an overarching case management element.

The aim of the project is to increase the skills, knowledge and family connections of children in prison to aid integration into their communities upon release and it is run in both Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey Prisons.

The VT Project was the first component of the TLBB Program, which started activities in Siem Reap Prison at the end of 2010. Program development began at least one year prior to the commencement of activities, and involved establishing and building relationships with the General Department of Prisons and Local Siem Reap Prison Authorities; this was a core component of getting this project off the ground.

Once AusAID and private donor funding was received for the project, one of the first initiatives was the development of the training building for the moto-mechanic and electronic repair course in Siem Reap Prison at the end of 2010. The training building is about 4x7 meters and has 2 classrooms to accommodate each course. Just over a year later in early 2012, after TLC received additional AusAID funding, a similar vocational training center was established in Banteay Meanchey Prison. The center in Banteay Meanchey however is located inside the prison walls, within the prisoner recreation area close to prisoner cells, whereas the training center in Siem Reap is located outside the prison walls. Both centers are of a similar size.

### PROJECT DEMOGRAPHICS

Siem Reap Prison is based on the outskirts of Siem Reap township. The total prison population is 1101 (female n=67); 55

prisoners are juveniles. 150 staff are employed in the prison, including 8 females. Banteay Meanchey Prison is based on the outskirts of Sisaphon township in Banteay Meanchey Province, 110kms from Siem Reap. The total prison population is 847 (female n=115); however, only 8 current prisoners are juveniles, all of which are presently awaiting trial. 80 staff are employed in the prison, 14 of these are women.

## HOW THE PROJECT WORKS

### Project management

Current staffing for VT Project activities are as follows.

- One Program Coordinator oversees and coordinates project activities and supervises and supports project staff
- Two Vocational Training Project Officers (VTPOs) oversee and manage the Vocational Trainers, facilitate the personal development course, provide case management support to the program beneficiaries in prison and after their release, and work with the families of the beneficiaries to aid and assist family visitation.
- Four Vocational Trainers (VTs) provide motor mechanic and electronic repair training to students in prison, and monitor their welfare and attendance.

### Expected project outcomes

Current expected outcomes for juveniles in prison are to:

- Have increased knowledge and skills about motor mechanics and electronic repair through Vocational Training
- Have increased knowledge about morals and ethics through Personal Development Training
- Have access to a space in prison that is happy and caring
- Have something positive to focus on throughout the duration of their incarceration
- Be exposed to advocates and good role models within prison
- Support them to respect their families and others in prison and in their communities
- Have increased connectedness with their families through the provision of monthly visitation

- Have increased levels of acceptance by their families and communities, whilst in prison and post release
- Have increased opportunities to develop supportive peer relationships
- Feel they have a choice over what they want to do upon release (e.g. go back to school, get a job, start a business, further study)
- Prevent reoffending after they are released from prison

### Participant recruitment

The selection process for the VT Project has changed since the program began. When TLBB began in Siem Reap Prison, the Prison Director was assigned to select participants. In the second and concurrent years of the program, the recruitment process for the VT Project has changed, so that now VTPOs have more involvement in selecting participants. Selection criteria was adapted and revised to ensure the best possible outcomes for students. Now there is an extensive process for recruiting participants, which is conducted by both the VTPOs together with the Prison Directors.

Currently, to become a beneficiary of the Vocational Training Project, students must:

- Be 14 - 18 years old
- Have a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 24 months remaining of their sentence
- Value education and have a strong commitment to learn

Preference is also given to children who have no access to learning or education and are not participating in other vocational training within the prison.

Previously eligibility did not include that students have a minimum or maximum period on their sentence, which meant a small number of participants were recruited with only 3 months of their sentence remaining. Attending the course for 3 months although beneficial meant these students were only able to learn limited skills in moto-mechanics and electronic repairs, reducing the chance of positive outcomes on their release.

On the other hand, some young people were initially recruited into the program with up to five years remaining on their sentence; these students are still involved in the program after three years. An additional issue to address is the fact that participants are only selected annually, by which point those who entered prison as juveniles may have exceeded the age of 18, or, those who

entered as juveniles and are serving longer sentences (5-10 years in some instances) miss out on the opportunity to partake in the project. It is for these reasons that a more robust eligibility criteria needs to be created, through which the scope for selection is broadened to encompass all those who were detained as juveniles, but potentially include an upper age limit.

A final point to note regarding the recruitment of participants relates to those young people who are detained in prison, pre-sentence - awaiting trial. Although it is illegal to detain minors, pre-trial, beyond a four-month duration, we know from experience, as well as our Boys Behind Bars research, that many lay in wait for six months plus. This obviously gives way to multiple scenarios as to whether the project allows them the opportunity to partake in training, knowing the ambiguity of their circumstances. On the other hand, it could also open up a whole new area of service provision for the project, as assigned Case Managers could potentially be working at the initial pre-trial stages to ensure justice prevails in the plights of these young people.

### Participant selection process

Currently, the process of selecting students begins with the Prison Directors, who identify children who meet the Vocational Training Project eligibility criteria and create a list of potential students. The VTPOs then arranges a group interview with these students. Next, a number of students are selected to participate in individual assessments to determine their suitability for the project, based on the selection criteria. These assessments consider age, length of sentence, previous education, literacy skills and family circumstances.

The student selection process in Siem Reap Prison is mostly running smoothly. However, in Banteay Meanchey Prison the process for individual assessments has recently changed, with prison officers making themselves present at these assessments. While prison officers are present at these individual assessments, it is difficult for boys to share important information about their sentence, experience in prison and about family circumstances. This makes it difficult for the VTPOs to make an accurate assessment of the boys before recruiting them into the project. The BMC Project Officer is working toward changing this, however there is resistance from prison authorities.

## STUDENTS RECRUITED

**11** SR Prison Jan 2011

SR Prison Feb 2012 **16**

**18** BMC Prison Sept 2012

**14** SR Prison Feb 2013

BMC Prison Mar 2013 **7**

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28 boys have attended electronic repair training (17 SR, 11 BMC)



38 boys have attended moto-mechanic training (24 SR, 14 BMC)

## MOTO-MECHANIC & ELECTRONIC REPAIR TRAINING

The Vocational Training Project addresses the educational rights of boys in prison by providing training in either motor mechanics or electronic repairs. The courses run parallel for three days per week, Monday – Wednesday, and are offered to young people who are looking to grow and develop their skills in these areas. The training curriculum takes both a theoretical and practical approach to learning and includes a variety of teaching and examination methods.

Four Vocational Trainers deliver the training. One trainer administers each moto-mechanic and electronic-repair training course in each prison.

### Training Curriculum

Vocational Trainers and Vocational Training Project Officers developed the moto-mechanic, electronic repairs and personal development course curriculum. Although training curriculum manuals existed in the first year of operation, these were destroyed in flooding, and VTs and VTPOs have had limited time to reproduce this material. A training curriculum manual helps address staff changes and handover, and measure project outcomes more effectively. Given these benefits and the potential for the program to be expanded into other prisons, time and energy is currently being given to support the re-development of the curriculum manual.

Originally it was intended that the program would have a 12-month curriculum, however, it was discovered that the program needs to be more flexible than this, given the nature of boys sentences and the fact that some boys are involved in the program for more than one year, and that boys will exit the program at different points within the year due to their release dates. Therefore, the current training curriculum rotates to respond to the needs of the participants at the time.

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

Personal development education is also provided to students, which assists in developing the skills needed for successful reintegration back into their communities upon release. The curriculum is designed to encourage and build the students sense of purpose, social competence and autonomy;

topics include gender, child rights, relationships, health, life skills, morals and ethics. The VTPOs facilitate this component of the program, which aims to build life skills and strengthen boys self esteem and confidence. Both vocational training groups join together for this learning activity and the training is delivered two days per month on a Thursday.

## CHILD IN PRISON VISITATION

As the International Committee of the Red Cross states, 'adequate communication with the outside world is an integral part of the right to fair and humane treatment', and it is essential for preparing juveniles for their return to their communities and society. All prisoners have the right to receive regular and frequent visits from their family, the recommendation being that visits take place 'in principle once a week and not less than once a month, in circumstances that respect the need of the juvenile for privacy, contact and unrestricted communication' (ICRC 2012, p66).

Cutting prisoners off from their families also severs their links to the community, making them more likely to re-offend and less likely to reintegrate after being released. The isolation of imprisonment, impacted by shame, stigma and discrimination, develops instability within family structures, leading to increased difficulties reintegrating with family and communities upon release and potential re-offending. Along with the immediate benefits of emotional and material support, regular visitation of prisoners by their loved ones maintains their sense of connectedness to their families and friends and aids their reintegration back into their communities upon release. For children and parents, simply knowing where each other are and that they are safe and being cared for goes a long way to alleviating the emotional and psychological impacts of separation.

As highlighted previously, prisoners – especially poor ones – rely heavily on family and friends for their survival in prison. Given the standard prison rations of food, medicine, money and other material resources are grossly inadequate; boys need support from their families to provide these resources.

Supporting families with visitation assists them to manage the associated costs of travelling from their homes, often situated in rural and remote locations, to the prisons. It further builds and maintains good

relationships with prison authorities to enable advocacy and promotion of the Prison Procedure Act, which forbids collection of goods or money from visitors by prison officials.

The VT Project provides support for one visit per family per month, which involves financial or practical support for transportation, and financial support for breakfast, lunch or dinner, depending on the time of visit. Additionally, the VTPOs support and facilitate visitation by advocating for the family not to be charged fees or bribes and accompanying the family during the visitation.

Prison Policy allows for 2 or 3 family members per visit and a maximum visitation time of 15 minutes. VTPOs work with the prison authorities to advocate for increased visitation time where they can and although the project supports the family to visit once a month, VTPOs also encourage the student's family to visit the prison by themselves.

## POST RELEASE SUPPORT

An objective of the United Nations in the area of prison reform is to advise about the successful reintegration of prisoners into society after their release (UNDOC, 2014). Although social integration initiatives should start with diversion processes that prevent children ending up in prison in the first place, interventions are also needed to support prisoner's re-entry into society following their release from prison. As LICADHO highlights, the chances of successful reintegration are higher if prisoners are supported to prepare for their release while they are still in prison; skills-based training and maintaining connections with families and community are considered important strategies for helping the successful reintegration of juvenile prisoners (LICADHO, 2013).

This Life Beyond Bars is one of only a handful of programs in Cambodia that is aiding in the successful reintegration of juvenile prisoners into communities upon release. This component of the project provides support to meet the individual needs of the students and assist them in becoming self-sufficient and self-sustaining post release. Some students wish to return to school or continue with their vocational training studies. Some choose a new field of study to pursue or seek meaningful employment opportunities. For those who are confident and competent in their newly

attained skills and abilities the project provides material goods and resources or small financial allowances to act as start up capital for an income generating activity.

## CASE MANAGEMENT

Adolescence is a transitional and formative stage of a child's life in relation to their physical and psychological development. Institutionalising young people has profound impacts upon their physical, intellectual, social and emotional development. It also has serious implications for their long-term health and wellbeing and hinders their ability to develop. Furthermore, young people in prison lack access to the family and community context, which is needed to develop skills for normal socialisation. The absence of support networks and limited job prospects can further accentuate their difficulties. To help understand and conciliate the impact of this trauma, the VT Project provides case management support and targeted interventions that are reflective of individual needs and circumstances.

This component of the project, although identified as a core element early on in the history of the project, was a difficult part of the project to develop. As a construct of Social Work, local staff lacked relevant skills and expertise in the area of case management - given 'Social Work' itself is a relatively new concept in Cambodia, with just a handful of current graduates in the field. TLC thus identified the need for capacity building in this area and an 18-month, Australian Volunteer for International Development (AVID) position was funded through AusAID, commencing June 2013. To coincide with this, in May 2013, the Vocational Training Project Officers (VTPO's) embarked upon First Step's, "Boys First Training" - a course committed to the professional development of staff in relation to social work concepts and sexual abuse against boys. VTPOs participated in 35 days of training over six months, and have recently graduated from the course, having been vastly up-skilled in the areas of social work interventions and case management systems. A number of positive outcomes have been observed for VT students as a result of VTPOs having gained new skills and expertise in counseling, support and case management.

After developing skills in counselling & support the Vocational Training Project Officer helped reunite a boy in prison with his estranged father...

*Sokey was charged with theft when he was 18 years old. He received a 3-year sentence. He has served 15 months of his sentence. He is from a poor family. His father is an alcoholic. Before Sokey went to prison he did not have a good relationship with his father. When Sokey was sent to prison his father rejected him, and did not visit him in prison. 'He did not want to talk about his child and never mentioned the one in prison'.*

*Sokey was very sad that his father did not visit. The mother only visited rarely because the family is very poor and the mother did not feel comfortable being in the prison on her own. The VT Project Officer tried to talk to the father to encourage him to visit his son in prison, but the father always said the mother should go instead. He did not want to talk with his son.*

*After the VTPO completed the First Step Training he used his newly acquired skills to talk to Sokey about his father, and to talk to the father about his son. Initially, the father said he would never accept his son when he came home because he had dishonoured the family. The VTPO however communicated with the father through the use of 'problem cards' to prioritise the issues and painting activities to give the father something else to focus on while they were talking - as the father did not feel comfortable talking freely. Eventually, after 5 sessions, father and son have been reunited. The father visited the son in prison and they both had a very emotional reunion, having not had a relationship for at least 2 years. The father has since visited the son a second time and they both feel very happy to be reunited.*

## PARTICIPANTS

66 boys in total have participated in the TLBB Vocational Training Project since 2011. Of these participants, 32 are currently involved in the project, and 34 have been released from prison (post-release students). Of the post release students, 15 attended training in BMC Prison and 19 attended training in SR Prison. Of current students, 10 are undertaking Vocational Training in BMC Prison and 22 in Siem Reap Prison.

## EXPERIENCES OF DETAINMENT

While prison should be a measure of last resort for children who are convicted, particularly for petty crimes, in Cambodia there are limited community-based alternatives to custodial sentences (UNICEF 2009). This is despite recommendations by LICADHO that courts should make greater use of alternatives to imprisonment, such as community service, bail and suspended sentences. Thus, many juveniles participating in the VT project have been sentenced to long prison sentences of up to three years for petty crimes as trivial as stealing a musical instrument or electrical wire or buying \$50 worth of methamphetamine. Almost all the boys are from very poor families, and prison is most commonly not a proportionate punishment for the crime.

Furthermore, there are many hardships the boys face in prison that are not able to be addressed by the TLBB program. Many students face health problems, and suffer from extreme heat because of overcrowding, and access to clean safe water and nutritious food is also limited. All of these factors increase the levels of stress for students and impact on their ability to perform and learn during the VT course. For more information about these issues see the TLC report, 'Boys Behind Bars'.

## CRIMES & SENTENCES

The most institutionalised use of torture in Cambodia is by the police, to extract confessions from criminal suspects, and to punish them or bribe money from them for their release (LICADHO 2007). Children are often arrested and detained to extract bribes from their families, even when no crime has been committed (Travers 2011). This evaluation has revealed similar findings, with some boys reporting having been forced to say things for the police report that were not true, and of being arrested for crimes that were more serious than the crimes they had committed or having not been involved in the crime at all. Of the boys involved in the VT Project most were imprisoned for crimes of theft (n=33), many were imprisoned for alleged rape crimes (n=20), 8 were imprisoned for drug related crimes, including drug trafficking and drug use, two were imprisoned for crimes of murder and one was imprisoned for a crime of violence.

During the collection of evaluation data, it was discovered that one VT student was only 13 years old at age of detention. He'd been detained 3 months prior to his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, which is illegal, but the fact that there was no institutional/agency intervention to advocate for the release of this boy highlights the lack of service provision for those young people who come into contact with the law.

Excluding the aforementioned participant, all other students were between the ages of fourteen and eighteen when they were arrested and sent to prison, even though the Code of Criminal Procedure of the Kingdom of Cambodia, which was first published in September 2008, states in Article 38, that 'the age of criminal responsibility shall be eighteen and over'. Such definition is subsequently contradicted by Article 39 stating, 'a court may impose a criminal penalty on a minor of fourteen years and over if warranted by the circumstances of the offence or the character of the minor' – which is where the legal loophole occurs. The length of sentences being served by students of the VT Project range from six months to ten years, however most boys are serving between two and five years (n=50).

## BOYS LENGTH OF PRISON SENTENCE

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### Siem Reap Prison

**15 boys UP TO 2 YEARS**

**20 boys 3-6 YEARS**

**4 boys 7-10 YEARS**

**2 boys MISSING DATA**

### BANTEAY MEANCHEY PRISON

**10 boys UP TO 2 YEARS**

**15 boys 3-5 YEARS**

## CRIMES COMMITTED



## VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT OUTCOMES

The outcomes of the Vocational Training Project are very far reaching for boys who participate in the program. There are many positive outcomes for boys while they are in prison, but there are also many positive outcomes for boys once they are released from prison. Students are happy and learning new knowledge and skills, and have something positive to focus on and look forward to in their future. Furthermore, reconnecting students with their families is having benefits for both boys and their families; by bringing them closer together to reduce discrimination and isolation.

A range of data about student participation in the project continues to be collected by Vocational Trainers and Vocational Training Project Officers on an ongoing basis. There have however been recent changes to the process and nature of data collection based on recent changes to the monitoring and evaluation system, as previously mentioned. The ways in which regular data is collected include:

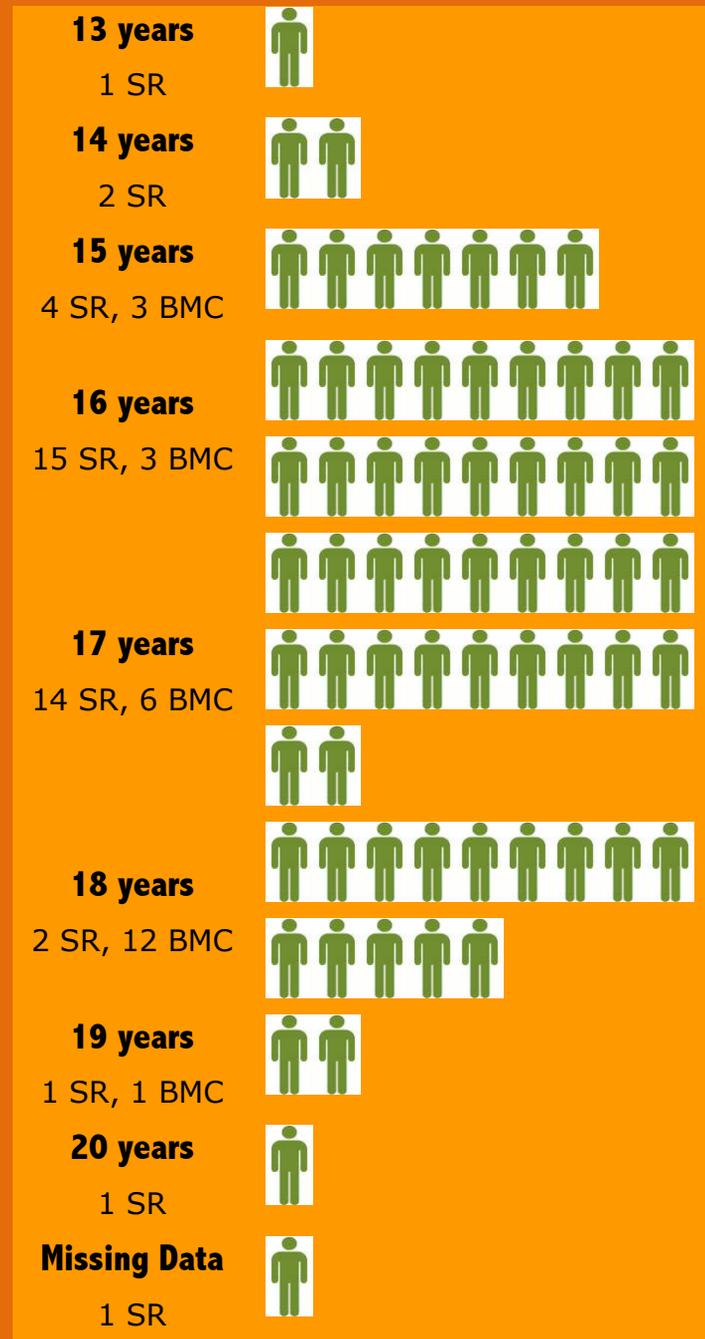
- Daily moto-mechanic and electronic repair course attendance data
- 3-monthly moto-mechanic, electronic repair and personal development examinations
- 3-monthly student self-satisfaction assessments
- Annual interviews and focus groups with a sample of VT students (in prison and post release)
- Annual interviews with a sample of families of VT students
- Weekly case management notes

Overwhelmingly, all students who have participated in the VT Project have reported positive outcomes for themselves as a result of being involved in the course; despite the many challenges they face while being in prison.

Most of the boys have expressed how much they appreciate the skills they are gaining through being involved in the program. Some boys talked about feeling very proud to be learning skills that they can use when they are released from prison. One boy talked about appreciating the skills he had gained through the program, and how proud he was that his skills were so highly regarded.

*When everyone asked me when they saw I had good electronic skills and I did my repairs, they*

## AGE OF STUDENTS AT TIME OF DETENTION



*asked me where did I learn these skills – I told them I learned from This life Cambodia, and I would show them my certificate. I told my parents that I am very proud because I got the right skills with my certificate and I am not like the other electronic workers who learn from others without a certificate. (Bourey)*

### Course attendance and scores

The average rate of attendance for participants of the training course has been 95%, and the average examination scores are 70% for the electronic-repair students, and 80% for the moto-mechanics students.

For the first two years of the Vocational Training Project, Training Officers collected daily observation data of students about perceived levels of engagement, determination, confidence and satisfaction with the course. It was decided that this information was difficult and time consuming to collect however, and that when analysed, was actually quite meaningless. Thus this process was ceased and replaced by the 3-monthly self-satisfaction assessments (as mentioned above).

## IMPROVED SOCIO-EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Evaluation evidence suggests that the Vocational Training Project produces many positive outcomes for young peoples social and emotional health.

### Out of the cell 3 times a week

Given the cramped and overcrowded conditions of the prison cells, and the fact that recreation time is often irregular and a privilege for those with money or connections, sometimes boys are only allowed out of the cell once a week for half an hour. Thus, one of the important and yet basic outcomes of the VT Project for boys while they are in prison, is that they are able to come out of the prison cell at least three days a week for four hours. For the boys in the Siem Reap program, the location of the training building outside of the prison walls also creates an added sense of freedom for the boys involved in the course, on both a physical and emotional level.

*The only positive thing [in prison] was that I was able to come out to see TLC staff and do the TLBB training. (Misa)*

### Something to focus on in cells

Many boys have indicated how important the VT Project has been for giving them something worthwhile and meaningful to focus on whilst in prison. Boys shared how they spend many hours reciting lessons learnt while in their cells.

*I only studied. I studied every day... And besides study I would stay in the cell... I would try to memorise the lessons, reciting softly many times over and over to learn. (Chann)*

And for those who were incarcerated for periods of time before entering the program, they talked about the difference of having something positive to think about in the cell.

*It changed things a lot for me. If I had not attended the program ... I used to just sit drinking tea and I was not able to sleep at night. But when I attended the program I stopped drinking tea, and when I came back to the cell I read the lessons... it made me feel happy. (Misa)*

*I was in prison for 2 years before starting the course ... then, I used to think a lot and I felt very lonely and I didn't know when I would next get to come out of the cell. I am so happy now - I have new skills and something good to think about and I always study hard. (Darany)*

*[I was] one year and a half in prison before I started TLBB... It was completely different after I started the program. To study the course I got to get out of the cell, it was better than spending time uselessly in the cell, where I would think too much. I would only focus on my study and I didn't think about other things and it was not so stressful. (Mina)*

Makara shared how different the experience of prison was for him, after he started the vocational training course...

*Life was very different for me in prison after I started the course. Life before was hard, for example there was not enough food, which made prisoners jealous and envious of each other - if one prisoner got more rice than another prisoner. When I started the course life became better, because I could come out of the cell and we got food in the course.*

*Also, before the course I didn't have any skills, but after the course I became committed and determined with one specific skill for my life... Some students thought the course was good while they were in the class, but then when they were out of the class it became different - they didn't want to study - they just wanted to be happy - but for me, I always wanted to focus on my study, not just when I attended the class, but when I was in the cell too. I thought to myself I had wasted my first two years in prison, so I just wanted to spend the time studying now - I always listened to the trainer's when they were teaching us - I followed what they asked us to practice and the trainer admired me. (Makara)*

## Nurturing relationships with trainers

One of the important outcomes of the VT Project is the positive relationship boys are able to develop with Vocational Trainers and Vocational Training Program Officers, who become significant positive role models for them while in prison. Most boys speak very highly of the trainers; they are described as 'kind' and particularly important in terms of providing emotional support and encouragement.

*[VTOs] are the ones who see us regularly and notice when we are sad or depressed, or if families have not visited, and they always follow up with us. (Sopheap)*

*The trainers always watched what was going on for students, and took notes and told the VT's to follow it up with students. For example, some students' families didn't come to visit often, and these students became very sad and depressed, and the trainers would follow up with these students ... my family didn't come to visit me just before I was released, so I didn't have enough clothes for my release day, so I told the trainer and he told the VTPO, and they asked my family to visit me, and then my parents came and I was very happy. They bought me clothes and waited for me on my exit day. The trainers encouraged and treated the students very well. (Makara)*

*The trainers are very friendly and like to make the students laugh. They tell us jokes. (Sovann)*

*If I had problems, I could talk to the trainer. Sometimes I was upset because my sister told me my parents were sick at home, so I couldn't concentrate on my studies, so I asked my trainer to help me feel better about this. He encouraged me to study by saying that I had my family members to take care of - he told me to just focus on my study. (Ousphea)*

*The trainer always asks us if we needed anything, and he gets us what we need. He is very good, and teaches us very well... we can talk to him about anything. (Rithi)*

*The trainer was kind - he liked explaining, and he never hit us. (Kanha)*

## Student peer relationships

An important outcome of the TLBB program for the boys is the supportive relationships they develop with each other; many boys have talked about how important these have been to helping their time in prison. Friends share food and sometimes money with each

other, and they support each other emotionally and socially when they can.

*We were very close. We were a long time friends – we asked each other when we had any doubts. (Kakada)*

*We have a close relationship with each other. We help each other. We ask each other to explain the lessons to each other secretly during the course, without the trainers knowing. (Sopheap)*

One boy shared with us about the role the course had in helping to build relationships with other boys that he had not had good relationships with previously.

*Before I started the course I had quarrels with some of my friends who ended up studying the same course with me, but after I started the course we became closer and closer, and if we had any doubts we would ask each other for help. When we had any questions we would ask each other. When we are in the cell we would work together as a team, especially before the exam... (Mina)*

### Positive future outlook

The VT Project is also very important in terms of helping give students something positive to look forward to in their future. Many students talked about the course having changed their future outlook; some moved from feeling they had 'no future' to feeling they had something very positive to look forward to.

*Before doing the course ... I was worried I would have nothing to do when I came out of the prison if I didn't have a specific skill ... even though we are illiterate, I think if we have moto-repair skills with some tools and equipment, then I think we can get a job (Kumpheak)*

*The community will value me when I am released because I have a new skill. (Veata)*

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT & KNOWLEDGE

Many said having a new skill made them feel proud of themselves. Most talked about having a skill being good for their future and being important for helping them to get a job when they are released from prison. For some boys this meant they could then help to support their families, to repay the debt they felt they owed them for the money spent trying to get them out of being sent to prison, and also supporting them financially whilst in prison.

Average rate of course attendance for students

95%

Average examination score for moto-mechanics & electronic repairs

75%

*It has helped me a lot ... TLC provided me with money and skills and helped me to have a better life ... Before I started the course I did not feel I had enough skills, but now I have many skills and I feel very pleased with myself. (Kakada)*

## Personal development skills

All young people enjoyed the personal development aspect of the training and found it useful, both in prison and for after their release. All could recall information they had learned. Topics remembered included morality, sanitation, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, gender, communication, relationships with friends, child's rights and personal hygiene. The most important lessons they spoke about were learning about equal rights between men and women and learning to respect others.

*I was better after I studied - I changed a lot. For example, I was like a blind man – before when I just talked to someone else I did not care if I was rude or not, but after the course, I get appreciation from the older people – they say that I am a good boy – more polite, they also said I am an educated boy. (Mithona)*

*I liked learning about personal development, because it helped me to feel less stressed, and more happy ... I used to get angry when I was asked to go somewhere, but now I will do anything that I am asked to do by my parents. I respect them. I learned this through the morality education of TLBB, about how people should respect each other. I have learnt that if I treat my parents well, they will treat me well too, and my future children will treat me well, like I treat my parents. (Kakada)*

One boy talked about appreciating the skills he had gained through the program, and how proud he was that his skills were so highly regarded.

*When everyone asked me when they saw I had good electronic skills and I did my repairs, they asked me where did I learn these skills – I told them I learned from This life Cambodia, and I would show them my certificate. I told my parents that I am very proud because I got the right skills with my certificate and I am not like the other electronic workers who learn from others without a certificate. (Mithona)*

## FAMILY VISITATION

Many participants of the VT Project would not have regular family visitation if it were

not for the support of TLBB. Although it is difficult for the families of some of the boys to visit, because they live too far away from the prison, most families are able to visit boys in prison at least once a month. Some families are however able to visit their child in prison more than once a month, especially if they live close to the prison. Mothers are the most common family members who visit boys in prison, with only a couple receiving visits from their fathers.

*My mother did not have enough money to visit me, but the program supported her to visit me once a month. I felt very happy to see my mother visit with me... (Kanha)*

*[My family] visits me once a month with the support of TLC. Before that they had no money to visit. So they only visited me every 2 or 3 months... (Phirun)*

## Positive outcomes for boys

All boys talked about how happy they were when their family visited, but also how happy it made their parents and families too. Most students agree that when the family brings good news or was generally happy during visitations, the students too would be happy. Moreover, students agreed that seeing their families gave them hope to continue studying for a brighter future. Teachers also noticed happier students after family visitation. Vocational Trainers reported that when students had not seen their families, they were often more stressed and unable to focus or concentrate on their study. Alternatively, when students had seen their families, Trainers typically heard the students talking to each other about the visitation, which created a more positive atmosphere in the training center.

*They were always happy when they saw me... The best thing was that I could see my mothers face and I could ask her how well she was. (Misa)*

*When I saw them come to visit me I always felt very happy. Life in prison was so lonely and isolated and I always thought about my family. Every night before I went to sleep I thought about my family. Sometimes I dreamt about my family and then the next day they would come to visit me.... (Makara)*

*They laughed and smiled and I often asked them 'how are you', and they would say 'fine'. They were very happy because they said that I had changed a lot... (Kumpheak)*

*It was always good to see my mother ... I was*

*happy because I was able to concentrate on my study very well after family visitations, because I could talk to them and know they were well. If they didn't come to visit me, I would not know how my family was, and I would miss them a lot. (Ousphea)*

Vocational Trainers noticed that when students had not seen their parents or families for visitation, that their levels of stress increased, which then impacted on their study performance. As one student stated,

*I miss my family, and so I cannot focus. (Sopheap)*

The yearning for children to be connected to their families is apparent and the positive benefits are noticeable when visitation and connection increases.

### Positive outcomes for families

Likewise, families also experienced a feeling of happiness because of the visitations. Most parents, siblings and grandparents expressed similar feelings to the boys.

*I haven't visited my son for a long time because my business is not so good and the trip is too far, so I have to spend a lot of money and time to visit him. But I am very happy to see my son at the Siem Reap Prison through TLC's support. Visiting him without buying ticket—it's good. (Mother)*

*I used to come to visit my son very rarely because I am poor and lack the money to visit him. I'm so happy to see my son through TLC support. (Mother)*

*I'm so glad that TLC supports me to visit my grandchild. I have no transportation so if I want to visit my grandchild I have to borrow a motorbike from a cousin or ride a motor taxi. I usually have to spend 3000 Reil to see him. (Grandmother)*

### Positive behavior change

An important outcome for students receiving family visitation has been the attitudinal changes of family members towards the boy in prison. Family members noticed similar changes to those observed by Vocational Trainers, often times comparing the changed attitudes to previous times, and beginning to see a bright future for the boys after prison.

*I'm happy to see my brother change his attitude to be a good person. Before my brother was a bad boy. He used to use drugs and act bad, which made my mother sad and unhappy. But now he has changed a lot. I hope that he will have a good*

*future when he is released. (Sister)*

*My son changed and is now different than before. He was mean but now he is more understanding about social actions and he is more polite than before. (Mother)*

*Before he went into prison, my brother was a very bad boy. He stole material at home and money from my mother and sometimes from me. He never made my family happy. But now I notice that he has changed into a good boy. Next month I will go to see him again. (Sister)*

*I think he is cleverer than before, since he joined with TLC training at prison. (Grandmother)*

### Families keep boys positive

One of the most important aspects of family visits for the boys is the encouragement they receive from their parents to continue to focus on their study. This helps to keep boys positive, amongst the many negative experiences of being incarcerated.

*[My family] provided me with encouragement to keep positive and strong... They encouraged me not to be hopeless and to focus on my study. Even when we talked on the phone, my father said 'I am very proud of you – I count on you – you need to be a good boy when you come back home'. His words made me awaken from my past and I became more motivated to study... Now I feel that my future is okay because they encouraged me. (Seiha)*

*I felt very happy [when my family visited]. They felt proud of me and encouraged me to study more and more. They told me not to think too much about anything else but to focus on study, and because they encouraged me, I tried to study harder and harder to make them happy. (Kumpheak)*

*They tell me to study hard to be a good boy – 'don't be hopeless – just focus on your study'. They said 'After, you can go back to school to grade 10 and complete the lower secondary school certificate exam and we will support you'. They encourage me all the time. (Rangsey)*

## ISSUES OF DETAINMENT

Expected outcomes for students of the Vocational Training Project are influenced by their experience of detainment in prison.

Limited access to clean water, nutritious food and overcrowding are serious humanitarian concerns for juveniles in prison in Cambodia.

Added to these issues, the conditions of being detained in prison in Cambodia mean that boys may experience being tortured or punished for not obeying simple rules. Furthermore, corruption in Cambodian prisons is rife, with those who do not have money being forced to endure less recreation time and more squalid living conditions. Furthermore, those who break prison rules can be beaten and abused, which is often carried out by groups of inmates designated and directed by guards' (LICADHO 2012).

Health issues are a particular concern for boys in prison. All students raised concerns about limited access to clean water, with diarrhea a common ailment. Access to good medical care is limited, with Paracetamol being handed out for most health issues. As previously mentioned, both teachers and students linked health issues to stress, arguing that the more stress a student experiences because of health and environmental factors the less likely the student is able to adequately perform during the vocational training courses.

Another particular challenge is the fact that sometimes VT students are sent to a prison in Phnom Penh to await their Appeal Court Hearing and often remain there until their release, as the mechanisms for return are extremely limited and largely corrupt. This makes it difficult for VT Project Officers to stay in touch with students and obtain information about their health, wellbeing and current legal status. Project Officers, where they can, work with other organisations, including Protection of Juvenile Justice and LICADHO, to find ways to support and stay connected to students when they are sent to other prisons for their Appeal Court Hearings.

## POST RELEASE FROM PRISON

Of the boys who have participated in the VT Project, 34 have been released from prison (Siem Reap n=19, Banteay Meanchey n=15). Almost all of these boys have reconnected with their families, and most are continuing to live in the community where their families live (n=23). 9 boys migrated to Thailand (SR n=3, BMC n=6) and 2 (SR) moved to Phnom Penh to source employment. Just under two thirds (n=20) of the boys who have been released have also sourced employment.

## Family visitation helps reintegration

For all of the boys we interviewed, support provided by TLC for families to visit whilst they were in prison, was an important factor in helping the successful social reintegration with families and communities. All spoke very positively about how they were treated by their families once they went back to their communities.

*After I was released I did not want to go far away from my house - I wanted to stay close to my family. I went for walks, but always wanted to keep coming back to my family and my home. (Makara)*

*I was very happy when I was released. I saw some adults when they were released - no one came to pick them up - but for me I was luckier because the NGO came to take me to my home. My community looked nicer... They loved me more than before. They didn't discriminate against me. (Mithona)*

## Treatment by community

Unfortunately some boys had not told neighbors and some others in the village that they had been in prison, mostly for fear of discrimination and isolation in the community, for themselves and their families. One boy had not even told his new wife to be. For those whose neighbors did not know they had been in prison, the assumption was usually that they had been working in Thailand.

*Still there are some people in my community who do not like me. Sometimes I visited the villagers in my community and I realised some are not happy with seeing me. That's why I plan to have my own shop and work so that people can see how hard I work and they will treat me better. (Ousphea)*

*I was happy to be out of the prison but I spent most of my time at home because I did not feel okay about going out into the community, because I was worried about how they would view me knowing that I had been to prison. (Ousphea)*

One boy talked about the disappointment of having shared his prison experience with friends, who stopped visiting once they knew.

*[After prison] when I met some friends I did not feel good because I was asked about my experience in prison and they did not visit me again. (Kakada)*

For those whom neighbors and friends knew they had been to prison, they however shared very positive experiences about how they were treated and welcomed home by their communities upon release from prison.

*I was treated well by my neighbours and family - they saw me as a good boy - everyone loved me ... so I feel connected to family and community. My neighbours say good things about me, and they tell my parents this too. I was not called a 'prisoner' - the one who is in prison but does not get education is called a 'prisoner' - but for me I got an education. (Mithona)*

Two boys shared how they told their story to friends, to help prevent them from going to prison too.

*I have told some of my stories to friends since I was released, not everything, but just some parts. I explained to those who are still doing some bad things, about my experience in prison - I told them it is not easy to live in prison, and if you stay in prison for 2 years your future will be ruined - destroyed. (Mina)*

*Yes, I have shared my story with friends and young children in my community. I advise them not to follow me. I tell them, 'living in prison is not easy' ... I told the young children to try to study hard or they will lose their chance. I told them to have good friends too. (Kakada)*

### Employment opportunities

Of the boys who have participated in the VT Project, many have sourced employment since they have been released from prison. 13 post release boys from the Siem Reap Project and seven from Banteay Meanchey have sourced employment; one boy is studying. Although only 5 boys are working in the area of moto-mechanic or electronic repair, the fact that 59% of participants have sourced some kind of employment is a success of the project. Combined with the personal development skills, the vocational skills developed have been able to be transferred to other areas of employment. Most boys talked about being grateful for the skills they have gained through being involved in the project.

*I get a regular income of between \$2-\$20. At least \$2 and sometimes I can get \$20 per day - and now*

## POST RELEASE VT STUDENTS

23 living with families

9 migrated to Thailand

2 moved to Phnom Penh



## SIEM REAP PRISON

13 boys found employment

## BANTEAY MEANCHEY PRISON

7 boys found employment

## POST RELEASE STATUS

Post Release Status	Siem Reap	Banteay Mean-chey
Motor mechanic business	2	
Electronic repair business	1	1
MM or ER training	1	
Working as motor mechanic	1	1
Working on family farm	1	2
Cultural dancing	2	
Illegal logger	1	
Stone Carver	1	
Welder	1	
Security guard	2	
Unemployed	3	3
Transient/unsure about employment status	3	5
Employed in Thailand		3
<b>Total Exited Program</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>

*they became worse and worse - they are jobless and they commit bad things. But I am proud of myself. I compare some of my friends to me and they aren't able to have their own business like me. (Mithona)*

*I was confident to come back home ... I used the skills [learnt in prison] to open a moto-mechanic shop, and now I fix motorbikes. (Misa)*

*I don't study but I work for an NGO ... fixing all kinds of machines and tools and I enjoy the work so much. (Kumpheak)*

Of the unemployed boys who were interviewed, most however were still optimistic about their futures, given the skills they had developed in electronic or moto-mechanic repairs.

*I hope that with the skills I have that I will be able to get a good job, and raise money for my family. I plan to go to Thailand to get a small budget to start a business to support [my mother]. (Kanha)*

*I plan to have an electronic repair shop and I also want to study more and teach young children. I hope to get support from TLBB so that I can generate an income to support my family, and myself. (Kakada)*

## PRISON FLOODING

In 2011, the year of the 'great flood' in Cambodia, over 300 people died and thousands were displaced from flooding. Parts of the outer wall of the Siem Reap Prison collapsed and roads to the prison became completely submerged by water so that the only way to enter the prison was by boat. The prison authority shut down the vocational training course for one month, which meant students were unable to see the trainers. Furthermore, students were unable to see their families, because access to the prison was limited and flooding had inundated some family homes. In 2013 severe flooding in Cambodia resulted in over 1.5 million people affected and 104 deaths. Banteay Meanchey Prison was even more inundated than Siem Reap Prison had been, due to the collapse of an inner wall of the prison. All prisoners were evacuated from the prison in the middle of the night, whilst standing in waist high floodwaters; VT students were evacuated to Battambang and Siem Reap Prisons for up to 2 months. Already difficult conditions for the boys became exacerbated by the evacuation. Battambang and Siem Reap Prisons became even more overcrowded and boys in Battambang Prison were unable to have

visits from the Vocational Trainers or Project Officers. Being evacuated to prisons in different provinces also meant visitation was much more difficult with many families not being able to afford the cost of transportation or not being able to access the roads due to flooding. The VT program was stopped in BMC Prison for 2 months, however there were on-going issues for the program for a further 4 months, as flooding had destroyed all of the vocational training resources and materials, including electronic and moto-mechanic equipment. This created an enormous strain on Vocational Trainers to administer the program effectively.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROJECT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The project to date has undoubtedly produced overwhelmingly positive outcomes for all those who have been or are currently engaged in its activities, from the student participants themselves through to their family members and their communities at large. The students spoke proudly and appreciatively of the new skills they have developed and the opportunities this affords them for their futures. The strong bonds and nurturing relationships they forge between themselves and with the Trainers and Project Officers go a long way to supporting their emotional needs as well as providing positive role models and mentors. Reconnecting the boys with their families via the supported visitation element also produces significant outcomes relating to the ability of the boys to reintegrate to their families and communities post release.

It is recognised however that the boys continue to face substantial challenges and barriers throughout the duration of their incarceration and post release; from having their basic needs met, receiving adequate health care provisions, facing consistent threats of violence and accessing justice via the appeal court process; through to securing employment opportunities when returning to live in rural areas and facing the lure of migration. Although there appears to be some recent movements relating to the completion of Cambodia's Juvenile Justice Laws, until then, it continues to remain the role of those surrounding these young people to ensure their rights are endorsed and upheld - through such programs as the Vocational Training Project.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to forge and strengthen relationships between TLBB, the Prisons Authorities and the General Department of Prisons to create strong avenues for advocacy and project development.
- Revise and strengthen the VT Project eligibility criteria - for example, broadened the scope for selection to encompass all those who were detained as juveniles, but potentially include an upper age limit.
- Explore and develop collaborative relationships/partnerships with other businesses/agencies/NGO's to enhance the level of service provision and boost outcomes for project participant - for example, engaging a health related service to monitor the boys throughout their incarceration or explore the potential of apprenticeships/on the job training for post release students.
- Consider the provision of additional resources to the post release element of the project to bolster service delivery in this area and ensure ongoing sustainability for beneficiaries - for example, dedicated project officers to pursue employment opportunities to decrease the likelihood of illegal migration.
- Consider ways in which the program could diversify into augmenting and affecting the outcomes of pre-sentence juvenile detainees and diversionary approaches as a whole - in recognition of the advancing Juvenile Justice Laws.
- Explore mechanisms for developing education and personal development opportunities for all children incarcerated in TLBB prisons.
- Develop strategies to offset the impact of environmental adversities on project activities - for example, the implementation of contingency plans or emergency provisions.

# 5

## Family Support Project

### PROJECT AIM

To increase the resilience and connectedness of families with a parent in prison

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Education Scholarships
- Income Generation Activities
- Parent in Prison Visitation
  - Health Care Allowance
  - Emergency Packages
  - Case Management

Care arrangements for the children of prisoners vary depending on circumstances, however, with research supporting the fact that institutional care is not conducive to the care and developmental needs of children, it is paramount that these children are supported to remain in home based care, within their kith and kin networks.

TLBB's Family Support Project enables children to remain in the care of immediate family members by assisting caregivers to provide for their fundamental needs and wellbeing throughout the duration of their parents' incarceration.

The aim of the project is to increase the resilience and connectedness of these families to support themselves, so that their children can have an education. The project involves initiatives targeted at families and their children, including education scholarships for children and income generation support for families. Additionally the project provides families with visitation and case management support, health care allowances and basic need/emergency packages.

The Family Support Project was developed in response to needs identified by TLC that showed a gap in services and support for children who had a parent in prison. A number of issues were identified for this group of children, including difficulties being able to visit their parent in prison, given the costs of travelling from their homes (often situated in rural and remote locations) and the associated bribes or fees expected at visitation. Furthermore, TLC identified how difficult it is for families with a parent in prison to have an income to meet the fundamental needs of the family, with many being unable to send their children to school.

Given those in prison are often from the poorest families, additionally it is more common for men to be incarcerated, many mothers are left alone with children to raise without an income to support the family. By supporting families with income generation activities and student scholarships, the Family Support Project ensures children can remain in the care of immediate family members and can continue accessing their fundamental education, which ensures their ongoing safety, stability and development throughout the duration of their parents' incarceration.

The Family Support Project began to identify families to work with at the end of 2010, however, recruitment did not happen until February 2011, whereby six families were

recruited from three communes in Siem Reap.

The choice to work in these communes came from data provided by Siem Reap Prison. TLBB created a database of the locations of all the prisoners in Siem Reap Prison to determine which geographical areas had a high density of incarcerated people. Krabei Riel, Chi Kraeng and Trapeang Prasat Communes were identified. Once these communes were selected TLC started working with commune councils to identify families with a parent in prison. It was the original aim of the Family Support Project to target 10 families with a mother in prison. Although there were over 60 women in Siem Reap Prison, none came from the communes that had been identified as having the highest concentrations of incarcerated community members. Despite this, the project continued to work in the identified communes, and selected families and children with a father in prison instead. Since the first recruitment of families however, there are now a number of families TLBB is working with who have a mother in prison.

In addition to the original six families, in March/April 2013 the project took on another five families. The project in Banteay Meanchey took on five families in February 2012, and another nine in March/April 2013.

## PROJECT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Family Support Project is administered in Siem Reap (SR), Oddar Meanchey (OMC) and Banteay Meanchey (BMC) Provinces. Beneficiaries are recruited from the same communities in which the Community Development & Local Governance Project operates. For the Siem Reap arm of the TLBB program, these projects are located in Chi Kraeng and Krabei Riel Communes of Siem Reap Province, and Trapeang Prasat Commune in Oddar Meanchey Province. For the Banteay Meanchey program arm, the projects are based in Boeng Beng, Malai, Kampong Svay and Ou Ambel Communes in BMC Province.

## HOW THE PROJECT WORKS

### Project management

Current staffing for Family Support Project activities are as follows.

- One Program Coordinator oversees and coordinates project activities and supervises and supports project staff

- Two Family Support Project Officers (FSPOs) implement project activities and provide case management support to program beneficiaries.

### Expected project outcomes

Current expected outcomes for the project are to:

- Support children to regularly attend school, achieve academically and prevent school drop out
- Increase connectedness for children and families to their parent in prison, through the provision of monthly family visitation
- Increase levels of acceptance in their communities for children with a parent in prison
- Increase financial sustainability of families with a parent in prison, to ensure their basic needs are met
- Create opportunities for families to develop or extend an income generation activity
- Provide financial support to families for basic need/emergency relief
- Increase access to basics health and medical care
- Advocate for families to have better relationships with prison authorities
- Create peace of mind for parents in prison, knowing their family are receiving support

Support is provided to families for a maximum of three years or until they have reached their goals in becoming self-sustaining.

### Participant recruitment

To become a beneficiary of the program, families need to meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Mother or father is a prisoner (priority for mothers)
- Release date from prison is within 1-3 years
- Family lives within a target commune
- Family is considered poor
- Child is studying or has dropped out of school (up to grade 12)
- Family members (parent, caregiver & child) is committed to participating in the program
- The parents, caregivers and children are committed to the child attending school regularly for them to be eligible for a student scholarship

It is to be noted however, that over time, FSPOs have found it increasingly difficult to

recruit families who meet the eligibility criteria from within the target Communes, as the majority of the families who meet the criteria have already been selected to partake in the project. Thus, in more recent times, families have been selected from additional Communes such as Angkor Thom and Dom Dek, and it is envisaged that this extension of the criteria will continue as the project grows and expands.

Moreover, in the essence of flexibility, exceptions to support families who fall outside the selection criteria can be made in certain circumstances. For example, the project may consider providing support in cases where a child who has been living with their parent in prison is returned to live with a caregiver in the community.

### Selection process

The selection process involves working with information provided by the prison authorities to determine families who may be eligible for support. Family Support Project Officers then carry out a detailed family assessment and select those who meet the eligibility criteria. If families meet the specified criteria but there are no vacancies in the project, families are asked if they would like their information to be stored on file for when a vacancy arises in the future.

## EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

For families facing financial instability and material hardship, maintaining the educational rights of children is extremely challenging. Children are often forced to drop out of school to work as a means of contribution towards the family's income or to be a carer for aged caregivers or siblings. They may also truant from school for fear of being taunted, stigmatised or discriminated against by their peers and teachers - ultimately diminishing their confidence, self-esteem and self-worth. Through the provision of practical assistance the project aims to relieve the financial burden of education for caregivers, to ensure children's educational rights are upheld and they have hope and opportunity for their futures.

### Scholarship eligibility

Scholarships are provided to all children within the families who are attending school from Grade one to Grade 12. The following materials and resources are provided to students:

## Family Support Project SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS

# 51

**42** Primary school students

**7** Lower secondary school  
students

**2** High school student

- Bicycle and bicycle repair fees
- School & sports uniforms (x2 per year)
- Bag, shoes & belt
- Tutoring Fees
- Text & writing books
- Pens, pencils, rulers, calculators etc.

### Scholarship case management

In order to support the children with their educational development, FSPOs work collaboratively with school teachers and private tutors to ensure children are attending classes regularly and achieving academically. This process also helps to identify problems and issues that need to be addressed; this process occurs every three months and at the end of the school year. If children have already dropped out of school, FSPOs work with the parents and family to encourage and support the child to re-enrol in the following school term.

Scholarships are provided until the case is closed or the child has completed their schooling. It is then the expected responsibility of the parent and family, to continue supporting the child's education.

### INCOME GENERATION ACTIVITIES

Landlessness, debt and residing in remote, inaccessible areas with high rates of unemployment are all factors that contribute to children and families of a parent in prison being vulnerable and open to exploitation and/or abuse. In addition, financial instability can often force the separation of siblings between family members, or worse, result in the children being placed in institutional care.

Through the Income Generating Activities, the FSPOs work with families to identify their existing strengths and knowledge base in order to devise an activity from which they are able to generate a stable income. Through the additional provision of resources, assets, small-sum cash transfer and technical advice and guidance, the project supports the families to create or maintain a financially viable business.

In relation to the financial assistance component, the project may provide families with cash amounts approximating \$150 to aid the set up of an income generation activity. Originally, it was the intention of TLBB to provide a small loan or credit to families, with the expectation they would repay TLBB the amount borrowed, excluding interest. Previous evaluation of this

## SIEM REAP & ODDAR MEANCHEY

11 families supported

24 scholarship students

## BANTEAY MEANCHEY

14 families supported

27 scholarship students

### INCOME GENERATION ACTIVITIES

Silk Weaving (1 family)

GROCERY SHOP (5 families)

Chicken Raising (5 families)

Food Cart (1 family)

PIG RAISING (2 families)

Phone Accessory Shop (1 family)

BASKET MAKING (1 family)

Watermelon Farming (1 family)

Duck Raising (1 family)

FRUIT SHOP (1 families)

General employment (4 families)

component of the program has revealed that this expectation is unrealistic for families.

Families are now given cash transfers and are not expected to pay the money back.

### Income generation activity assessment

Through the case management process FSPO's carry out an assessment of the family's occupation, skills, abilities and capacity and together they discuss and determine what activity will best suit their needs and circumstances. Throughout the duration of this process the FSPO undertakes the following activities:

- Identifies resources, materials, assets, capital or training to support the family to start up their business
- Sources technical advice, guidance and skills for maintaining the business
- Engages with other organisations and NGO's to assist in providing advice, guidance or training

### PARENT IN PRISON VISITATION

As previously stated, the isolation of imprisonment, impacted by shame, stigma and discrimination, develops instability within family structures. Children with a parent in prison face particular issues if they are unable to maintain connections with their parent.

This element of the project assists visitation for families in the same way the Vocational Training Project does. In summary, the Family Support Project provides:

- Support for one visit per family, per month
- Financial or practical support for transportation
- Financial support for either breakfast, lunch or dinner - depending on the time of visit
- Advocacy so the family are not charged fees or bribes
- Support during the visitation

Also mentioned previously, prison policy allows for a maximum visitation time of 15 minutes only. Where possible, FSPOs advocate for increased visitation time for the families.

### HEALTH CARE ALLOWANCE

The financial strain of caring for a sick family member can often prevent families gaining access to adequate health and medical care. Coupled with the fact that Government

Health Centres are only found in each commune, not in every village, their need to travel extensive distances, often through adverse terrain, can further hinder their ability to access appropriate facilities. Families may also choose to apply alternative traditional remedies as opposed to visiting a health professional.

This component of the project is flexible and adaptable in responding to the needs and desires of the family. Originally TLC provided a health insurance scheme for families, however, upon evaluation, this initiative has not been a financially viable option as most families preferred visiting local clinics in their communities, which are not covered by the insurance. In addition, purchasing the health insurance was a costly investment and not one claim was made against the cover, hence TLBB decided to change the administration of this intervention.

Now, if the family requires health or medical attention, the project supports them to access care facilities in the following ways:

- Payment of a cash allowance to facilitate access to a chosen health clinic or hospital.
- If the family is willing and able to attend designated health centres, the project will cover the cost of Health Insurance Premiums.
- Assisting with transportation to and from health clinics and hospitals.
- Referring family members to alternative services and NGO's.
- Assisting with access to reputable NGO's that provide free health care services to children.

Families are not expected to pay back the money TLBB has provided to them.

### BASIC NEED / EMERGENCY PACKAGES

Access to the basic needs of life, including food, water, shelter and clothing, is a necessity for long-term physical and psychological wellbeing, an essential precursor to individual and familial self-sufficiency and intrinsic to the development of strong and sustainable communities.

As a result of previous evaluations, it was identified that in advance of our family's benefiting from any service or intervention, and in order to ensure that they can attain and maintain self-sufficiency, it was essential to provide them with support packages to ensure their basic needs are met. It is from

this understanding that this additional project element has been implemented, and is further intended to address our family's needs in immediate crisis situations, such as drought or flooding, vulnerabilities to which many Cambodian's are prone. The project therefore provides basic provisions by way of;

- Food & water
- Clothing and shoes
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, soap)
- Bedding (mats, blankets)
- Mosquito nets

## CASE MANAGEMENT

Understanding the long-term psychological impact of trauma and abuse, it is essential for children with a parent in prison to be provided with good role models and a means of having their physical, social, emotional and developmental needs met, to prevent harmful influences filling the void.

Through case management and support strategies that are reflective of individual needs and circumstances, the project aims to ensure that the rights and best interests of children are upheld and adhered to, so that they themselves don't become the innocent victims of a corrupt and arbitrary justice system. The case management process helps to conciliate the impact of parent/child separation, by enhancing family connections between the child and their parent in prison, through the supported visitation element of the project.

Similarly to the Vocational Training Project, the case management component of the Family Support Project has been a difficult aspect of the project to develop. However, the development of this process is now underway, and being supported by the current AusAID funded TLBB Program Development Officer.

### New case management process

Once families have been selected, the Family Support Project Officer and Program Coordinator inform the successful beneficiaries by carrying out a project orientation with each family and their Village/Commune Chief. Through the orientation, families and chiefs are given details about the project and what it means for the families to be involved, including:

- Aims and activities of the project
- Support provided (health, education, income generation etc.)

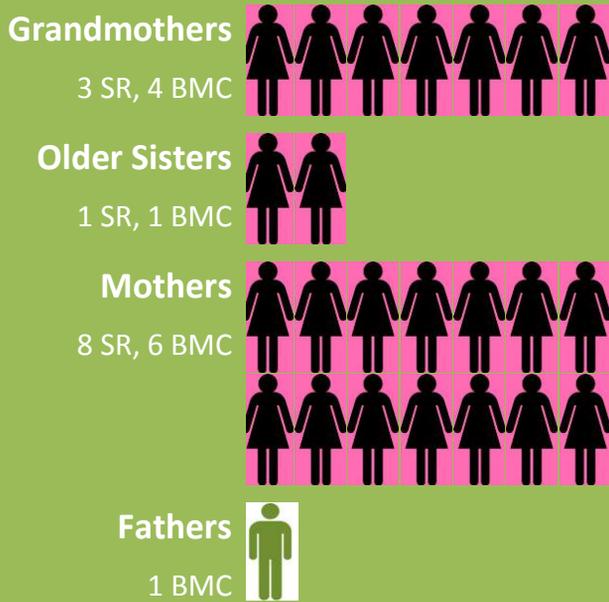
Sokey is 16 years old. She is in Year 9 and receives an education scholarship to go to school...

*I live with my grandmother and two sisters. I used to drop out of school, but because of the project and the study materials and private tutoring I receive, I am now back at school. If I did not have those things, I would not be back at school. The support from the private tutoring has given me the courage to talk with the teachers now and I feel I am more confident to ask questions ... I am much braver than before - I can ask them about any doubts I have about my study, which I couldn't do before. I am doing much better at school now. For example previously my score for Khmer was only 30% now I get 60%... I have many friends at school and I don't feel discrimination because my mother is in prison. I like visiting my mother in prison, but my aunty had a moto accident so we haven't been able to go for a long time.*

Veata's husband was accused of murdering a witchdoctor with 5 other men. He is now serving 10 years in prison...

*I used to take our children to visit their father in prison only once every 3 months. I had to borrow money to do this. Now we can visit every month. I am so much happier than before... When we meet we always talk about good things with each other. I have been able to buy medicine for my husband ... and even convince him not to try to escape because we are getting support from TLC. My husband always tells our children to study hard and this is encouraging for them. They love to see their father too ... the people in our community know that my husband is in prison but there is no discrimination towards us.*

## Family Support Project PRIMARY CARE GIVERS



## SIEM REAP & ODDAR MEANCHEY PROJECT

Families with a parent in prison **11**

Families with a mother in prison **2**

## BANTEAY MEANCHEY PROJECT

Families with a parent in prison **14**

Families with a mother in prison **6**

- Expectations of the family

After the orientation is complete, the FSPO opens the family's case. Within two months of opening the case the FSPO carries out an initial home visit and a 'Family Assessment' to identify needs and circumstances. Next, a 'Case Plan' is developed involving actions, timelines and responsibilities. The Case Plan is reviewed with the family each month during home visits. Every six months the Case Plan is revised. Referrals to additional services/NGO are made when the need is identified.

FSPOs maintain contact with families to provide ongoing support and guidance to help them achieve their Case Plan goals. Home Visits (or a telephone call if the family cannot be visited) to all families happens monthly. It is also envisaged that FSPOs will communicate with the parents in prison on a regular basis so they are also able to have an input into the Case Plan.

### Case closure

Cases are now closed when the family:

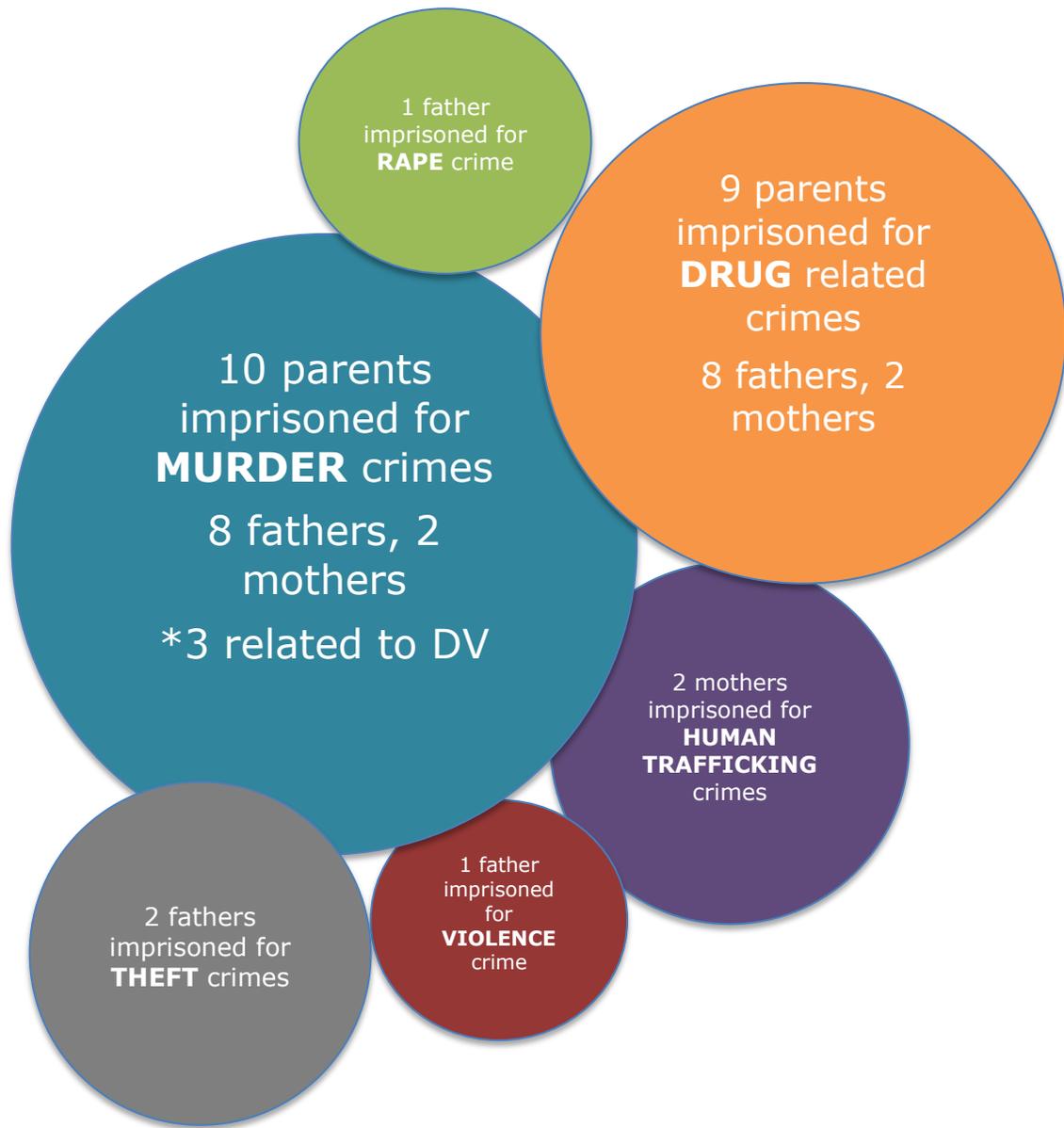
- Has achieved their Case Plan goals & become sustainable
- Has been involved in the project for the maximum period of 3 years
- Is not engaged or committed to the project activities provided
- No longer fits the eligibility criteria
- Moves beyond the target provincial areas

Cases are also closed once the parent is released from prison. However, if the parent is released from prison in year one or two, the family continues to receive support for up to six months after their release.

### FAMILY & STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Since the Family Support Project began, TLBB has been working with 25 families with a parent in prison. Of these families, 8 parents in prison are mothers.

Of the crimes committed by parents who are in prison, 10 were imprisoned for murder, including 3 cases that were related to domestic violence and 6 cases that were related to the murder of a village witch doctor who was accused of causing the death of a child in the village. 9 parents (fathers n=8, mothers n=2) were imprisoned for drug dealing crimes, two mothers for human trafficking crimes, two fathers for theft crimes, one father for a rape crime and one father for a crime of violence.



To date, five parents have been released from prison and the project has closed two of these cases, as the families are now able to support themselves.

Of those who are caring for children while their parent is in prison, 14 are mothers, 8 are grandmothers, two are older sisters and one is a father.

Of the 51 students who are receiving scholarship support, 42 are in primary school, 7 are in lower secondary school and 2 are in high school.

## OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES

Of the 25 families supported via the FS Project, 19 have been supported to start up or build on an existing income generation activity of their own choice. Eleven different types of income generating activities have been supported, including silk and basket weaving, chicken, pig and duck raising, food carts, fruit and grocery shops and watermelon farming.

## Hena shared how being involved in the Family Support Project has made a difference for herself and her children...

*Hena and her husband have two primary school aged children. In 2006 Hena's husband was arrested and imprisoned for 7 years for stealing a motorbike.*

*With no way to make an income, Hena could not send their children to school, or pay for their health care when they were sick. In addition, she felt she didn't belong in her community, due to prejudiced attitudes because her husband was in prison. She spoke of feeling 'stressed, disconnected, and dispirited'. Her circumstances looked bleak and she often cried whenever she thought about her family's future.*

*Fortunately for Hena and her family, they were assessed and selected for the Family Support Project. Hena's son and daughter, currently in grade 3 and 6, are now supported with educational scholarships; they have received a bicycle each, school uniforms, tutoring fees and school books and materials. This has enabled them to attend school 'regularly and happily'.*

*To enhance Hena's ability to generate an income, she was also provided with a bicycle to enable her to transport fish and groceries from a distant market 7km away. Furthermore, she was granted start-up finances for a small grocery shop, from which she is able to earn on average, 25000 riel (roughly US\$6.5) per day. The project also provides assistance for her and her children to visit their father in prison once a month.*

*As a result of support provided by TLC, Hena feels 'less depressed, warmly connected to family members, and valuably recognised' within her community. She is extremely happy and proud of her children graduating through each of their educational milestones and her business has grown to become strong and sustainable.*

*Hena's husband is due for release in the coming months. She is hopeful for the future of her family.*

## Success factors for income generating activities

This evaluation has highlighted that the families that have tended to be more successful in terms of their income generation activities, have been those who have belonged to more supportive communities and neighbourhoods, and/or have had the support of extended family. For most families, this support has been critical in helping them to be successful in their income generating activity, which has had a flow on effect for children in terms of keeping them motivated and supported to go to school.

For some families, success has also been related to having some previous knowledge or expertise in the area of the income generating activity.

*Two families in Krabei Riel have a chicken raising business, and both have been very successful because the families have received a lot of community support and they both knew about chicken raising before they started the new business. (FS Project Officer)*

TLC has been able to provide some financial support and labour for a small number of families to meet their housing needs. TLC built a house for a grandmother who was looking after her three grandchildren; previously they were homeless as the mother has died and the father is in prison. Additionally a toilet was built for a grandmother who is looking after her two grandchildren.

## Barriers to success for income generating activities

This evaluation has highlighted that most income generating activities have not been successful until the second and third years of establishment. Furthermore, it has been shown that for caregivers who are grandparents (most of whom are grandmothers), it has also been difficult to sustain an income generating activity. Grandmothers are often older and more vulnerable, and thus find it more difficult to sustain a business.

*One grandmother is looking after her grandchildren from two families, because both her son and daughter are both in prison. She sells rice, and fruit. She encourages the children to go to school but her own health is poor, and they don't have a house - they stay in a lean-to at the end of a building on the train tracks in Sisapon. So it is*

*very difficult for her to make money and look after the children. (FS Project Officer)*

*One grandmother sells eggs in the village, but sometimes she is sick and is unable to work, so it becomes very difficult for her to support the children. (FS Project Officer)*

*One boy whose mother is in prison, is being looked after by his grandfather and grandmother. The father is a fortune-teller and he is struggling to encourage the boy to stay in school. (FS Project Officer)*

Where new businesses have been established for families with little or no knowledge in the new venture, it has also been more difficult to generate a regular income.

Furthermore, the effects of the floods in 2011 and 2013 had far reaching consequences for many of the Family Support Project beneficiaries, as many families, schools and communities were seriously affected. Many families were evacuated from their homes, and forced to live with other families in crowded Pagodas and schools, which were used as evacuation points. Many families lost their rice crops, which resulted in loss of food rations or a form of income. Furthermore, as many schools were flooded, many children were unable to go to school. To exacerbate these issues, many roads were closed due to flooding, meaning FSPO's were unable to access the families for more than two months, in order to offer much needed support.

## OUTCOMES FOR SCHOLARSHIP STUDENTS

Most of the children who receive educational scholarships would otherwise not have been able to attend school, because the families did not have sufficient income to support this.

Most of the children receiving educational scholarships are attending school classes regularly, and have graduated to their next year levels. Most children are also very grateful for the support they are receiving to go to school.

*I always try to study hard because I am committed to getting a higher education. Because I live too far away to get to school, I have moved to live close to the school. (Leesa, girl aged 15 years, father in prison)*

Choum is 50 years old and is looking after her three grandchildren aged between 5 and 12 years...

*The support from TLBB helps me to raise chickens - I have been able to thatch the shelter. I can earn enough money from the chickens to buy school books, clothes and medicine. With TLC support I am no longer worried about my grandchildren's education. My grand-daughter is doing well at school and is very motivated - she likes studying English. Sometimes we even have enough money for the children to take as pocket money for school. We are also happy that we can visit my daughter-in-law in prison - we don't have to spend money on visitation anymore and now we can take things into the prison for her. Their mother is very happy to see her children.*

Thy is 65 years old and she is caring for her 3 grandchildren who are aged 6, 7 and 12 years...

*My son-in-law is in prison and TLBB have supported me to start a business selling cooked food from my bicycle. Sometimes the money I earn is enough, but sometimes it is not, especially when I am sick. The children love to see their father - they miss him a lot - but we have not been able to visit for 2 months because of restrictions. I am so happy that the children can go to school - my granddaughter now has private tutoring which has helped her study - now she can read and her writing has become very good. We feel very happy to have this support*

*I am so happy for the support from TLBB - without the scholarship I could not go to school. I am grateful that I can get an education so that I can get a job to support my family in the future. (Sochea, girl aged 14)*

Some children ride up to 10km just to get to school.

*I ride about 10km to get to school every day. I love studying and I am very committed to studying hard ... I always get good results too. (Panha, boy, year 10, high school)*

Given the nature of the issues most of these families face, it has unfortunately been difficult for a small number of families to keep their children in school. Reasons for student dropout have included family businesses being unsuccessful, by way of generating a regular income, and discrimination that prevents children feeling happy to go to school.

*It is difficult for my family even though my husband has been out of prison for one year. He has HIV and I am very sick too, and so it is very difficult for us to have a business. I used to sell cakes, but now no one will buy them. It is difficult for my boys to go to school because we do not even have our own house, and my family do not want to help us. (Mother of 2 scholarship students)*

FSPOs spoke about a small number of children whose families are struggling to survive - and how this has impacted on the child's ability to stay in school.

*One boy whose father started up a fish selling business because his mother is in prison, has dropped out of school because his father is always drunk and smoking and the business has not been successful ... the father is not able to encourage his son to go to school and the boy is depressed... (FS Project Officer)*

## OUTCOMES OF FAMILY VISITATION SUPPORT

Family visitation support produces many positive outcomes for families of a parent in prison; in the same way this support produces positive outcomes for Vocational Training Project students.

For many of the families supported by the project, poverty is a barrier that prevents them visiting their mother or father in prison. Many families cannot afford the transport costs and associated bribes visitors are expected to pay to visit their family

member in prison. Some families also live in rural and remote areas - long distances from the prisons, making it even more difficult to visit due to the increased cost of transport.

The support provided by the FS Project has meant that most children are now able to visit their parent in prison at least once a month. For a few families, the support from TLBB means they can visit more than once a month.

This evaluation has highlighted that for both the parent in prison and the families who visit them, visitation helps to relieve some of the emotional difficulties they all face. For the parent in prison, families reported that they feel relieved and comforted knowing the family is receiving support while they are in prison. Just knowing there is money for food and that their children are able to go to school has been reported to lift the spirits of many of the prisoners. Some carers also felt that for children, staying connected to their parent will help make it easier when they are released.

As previously mentioned, in Banteay Meanchey Prison, family visitation is conducted behind bars, and sometimes FSPOs have been able to advocate for families to undertake visitation in more open spaces, which has created a much more positive experience for the prisoner, and particularly for the children.

Furthermore, the material support provided by the project means that families now have money for transport, and for taking items such as food and clothing to the parent in prison.

*If not for TLBB we could not visit their father in prison. They love seeing their father every month, and now we can afford to buy food and clothes to take to him in prison. Their father is always very happy to see his children too. (Grandmother caring for 2 children whose father is in prison)*

Many carers report that for the parent in prison, knowing that their children are able to attend school is a very significant factor in helping them stay positive while in prison.

*I used to have to borrow money to visit my husband in prison. Now I can visit every month - it makes us all feel so happy to see each other. He always tells our children to study hard to get good results - which motivates them to study even harder. (Mother of 3 children, father in prison)*

The FSPOs always try to accompany families to visitation, and because they have good relationships with the prison authorities, they have been able to advocate for authorities

adhere to the Prison Procedure Act, which forbids collection of goods or money from visitors by prison officials. Throughout the interviews conducted, families shared how important the support provided by TLBB has been in improving their relationships with prison officials and enhancing their overall experience of visiting their loved ones in prison.

## SUSTAINABILITY OF FAMILIES

Currently, the project does not have the structure, resourcing or capacity to provide vocational training to the parents who are detained in prison. Although Project Officers work hard to identify potential employment opportunities for the parents upon release, based on their experiences to date, they have identified the need to broaden interventions in this area to enhance the capacity of the parents to generate an income post release and ensure the ongoing sustainability of the family unit as a whole. As is the case with post release VT students, migration by post release parents in search of an income is prevalent.

## FAMILY SUPPORT PROJECT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Once again, findings of this evaluation have highlighted that the Family Support Project has been highly successful in meeting its intended objectives for children and families with a loved one in prison. Educational Scholarships continue to be a flagship element of the project as far as upholding educational rights and safeguarding opportunities for the children's futures are concerned. Visitation support provides much needed assistance in ensuring relationships aren't severed and connections are maintained throughout the duration of the parents' incarceration. Meanwhile, enhancing the capacity of the caregiver to generate an income ensures increased security and stability. This evaluation has highlighted however, the importance of being creative and flexible about the kinds of support provided to families to generate a sustainable income. Lastly, the introduction of basic need/emergency packages and the increased flexibility of health care allowances has provided reassurance to caregivers in meeting the fundamental needs of their families.

Unfortunately however, the challenges of poverty persist within the context of a barely

existent social welfare system and limited access to additional service provision through existing agencies/NGO's. Such circumstances thus continue to act as a barrier in securing definitive sustainability for a number of families within the project. To illustrate this point, it was initially intended that support would be withdrawn from the families much sooner than has been able to be achieved successfully. Most families have required more intensive support than was initially expected, due to the many factors previously mentioned. For these reasons, it is recommended that TLBB alters the expected outcomes of the FS Project and acknowledges that more time and potentially more resources are required to work with these families to develop more sustainable outcomes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to exercise diligence in the selection of families in order to maintain a practical balance between those in extreme need with limited capacity and those who are more likely to produce strong project outcomes.
- Reduce expected outcomes from income generation activities in the first year of operation, given families require this initial period to build their expertise and get activities off the ground.
- Develop support mechanisms to provide families with opportunities to share their commonalities and experiences in maintaining income generation activities – for example, create self-help groups, monthly meetings or educational workshops.
- Consider the provision of additional resources to enhance the capacity of parents, post release, to generate an income – for example, the extension of project activities to include a vocational training element.
- Explore the potential of the TLC Student Assistance Project (SAP) to provide ongoing Educational Scholarships to project beneficiaries, when the level of family support intervention has reached a point of saturation.
- Explore and develop collaborative relationships/partnerships with other businesses/agencies/NGO's to enhance the level of service provision and boost outcomes for project participants – for example, creating more links with

potential employers for post release parents.

- Develop strategies to offset the impact of environmental adversities on project activities – for example, the implementation of contingency plans or emergency provisions.

# 6

## Community Development & Local Governance Project

### PROJECT AIM

To strengthen the capacity of communities to respond to their own juvenile justice & human rights issues

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

- Participatory Rural Appraisals
- Human & legal rights workshops & training
  - Building local government & community networks
- Responding to individual human & legal rights cases & issues

TLBB Program in Siem Reap, the Community Development Project was created. It was initially intended that this Project would help to build and strengthen the capacity of communities to address their own human rights and justice based issues.

The first stage of the project involved working with Siem Reap Prison to identify communities with high ratios of adults in prison. The same strategy was used for the Family Support Project and thus involved the same target communities. Three target communes were identified as having high populations of adult prisoners - Chi Kraeng and Krabei Riel Communes in Siem Reap Province and Trapeang Prasat Commune in Oddar Meanchey Province. Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) were conducted with villagers in each of these communes to identify community issues and needs. Workshops and trainings were then developed for villagers, to start to raise awareness and provide information about how to respond to these issues.

Initially, workshops and training conducted were all about conflict with the law and legal rights. As the project has evolved however, PRAs have been conducted which have uncovered a range of additional issues including domestic violence, migration, land rights issues and alcohol and drug abuse. In response to these identified concerns, workshops have now been conducted on marriage laws, migration, alternative dispute resolution, alcohol and substance abuse issues and domestic violence.

In the first year of the Community Development Project, a gap was identified in the skills and knowledge of local authorities to deal effectively with cases of human and legal rights breaches. Therefore, when AusAID funded the TLBB Banteay Meanchey Program (Challenges of Juvenile Justice in Cambodia) in 2012, TLC received additional funding to expand the Community Development Project to include a Local Governance arm. The aim of this addition to the program was to work to strengthen and enhance the capacity of local government mechanisms to deal with human and legal rights issues in the community, and for villagers to have a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local government structures.

### PROJECT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Community Development & Local Governance Project is administered in Siem Reap (SR), Oddar Meanchey (OMC) and

Banteay Meachey (BMC) Provinces. As previously mentioned, beneficiaries are recruited from the same communities in which the Family Support Project operates. For the Siem Reap arm of the TLBB program, these projects are located in Chi Kraeng and Krabei Riel Communes of Siem Reap Province, and Trapeang Prasat Commune in Oddar Meanchey Province. For the Banteay Meanchey program arm, the projects are based in Boeng Beng, Malai, Kampong Svay and Ou Ambel Communes in BMC Province.

## HOW THE PROJECT WORKS

Designing and delivering awareness raising workshops for villagers, facilitating training sessions for local governance representatives, enhancing and building networks with local government authorities and the community, and responding to individual cases and issues relating to human and legal rights issues in the community are among the primary roles of the Community Development & Local Governance project.

### Project management

Current staffing for Community Development and Local Governance Project activities are as follows.

- One Program Coordinator oversees and coordinates project activities and supervises and supports project staff
- Two Community Development Officers (1x SR Project Officer, 1x BMC Project Officer)
- Two Local Governance Officers (1x SR Project Officer, 1x BMC Project Officer)

### Expected project outcomes

Current expected outcomes for the project are:

- Raised awareness for community members of their human and legal rights
- Raised awareness in the community of domestic violence laws & how to respond to the issue
- Increased skills and knowledge of local authorities to deal with human and legal rights issues
- Better systems in place to deal with human and legal rights issues in the community

# CD & LG Project

## WORKSHOPS

Human Rights Issues & Laws  
Domestic Violence Issues & Laws  
Alcohol & Substance Abuse Issues  
Marriage Laws, Divorce & Gambling  
Criminal Laws, Civil Actions & Procedures

## TRAININGS

Human Rights & Domestic Violence  
Cambodian Law  
Alternative Dispute Resolution  
Criminal Procedures & Criminal Codes  
Judicial Police Roles

## PROJECT OUTCOMES

This evaluation has highlighted a number of outcomes of the Community Development and Local Governance Projects including; raised awareness amongst community members, of their human and legal rights and how to have these met; increased skills and knowledge of local authorities to respond to these issues; and individual human and legal rights cases being addressed.

Awareness raising workshops and local governance training sessions have been held with some 3,124 participants attending from 2011 to date; 56% of these participants were women. It is important to note however, that many participants attended multiple workshops and training sessions.

### CD awareness raising workshops

In total, 15 workshops have been held in communes and villages across Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey Provinces. The aim of these workshops has been to increase villagers understanding of their human and legal rights, and the roles of local authorities and government bodies in responding to these issues. Three to four workshops were conducted for each year of each project, involving a range of different topics, which were determined by the community via PRAs. Collectively, workshop attendance totalled 2,647 for all provinces. Most topics related to legal and human rights issues, including marriage and divorce, domestic violence, migration, and criminal justice issues. Slightly more participants who attended workshops were women.

### LG training sessions

17 training sessions in total have been held in communes and villages across Siem Reap, Oddar Meanchey and Banteay Meanchey Provinces. These training sessions aimed to help build and strengthen the capacity of government bodies to effectively deal with human legal rights issues in the community. In total, attendance at these training sessions was 477 since the project began. Two to three training sessions were held every year for each project. Training sessions were conducted with members of local authority within the community. Participants included village, police and commune council chiefs, members of the Commune Council and the Commune Council for Women and Children (CCWC), and police officers.

Pre and post knowledge testing of participants before and after attending training sessions revealed high levels of new knowledge. On average, 85% of attendees revealed poor levels of knowledge prior to attending training sessions, whereas after training sessions, 52% reported good levels of knowledge and 38% revealed very good levels of knowledge.

### Building/supporting networks

A primary role of the Local Governance Project has been to support and enhance existing networks and sub national frameworks in the community, in particular those at the local governance level. An intended initial key role was to build the capacity of the Safety Committees in each Commune. Once the project began however, this proved to be a particularly challenging task, as it became evident that these committees did not actually exist. Setting up new committees was too difficult to achieve, thus project officers instead worked with general Commune Councils.

Project officers have developed a number of important partnerships with other NGO's and government bodies working in the provinces. These partnerships have helped enhance the outcomes of the CD and LG Projects.

Training sessions and awareness raising workshops are often held in collaboration with other NGOs, including in particular:

- Legal Aid Cambodia (LAC)
- Cambodian Human Rights & Development Association (ADHOC)
- Banteay Srei
- Protection of Juvenile Justice (PJJ)
- Cambodia Defender Project (CDP)
- Department of Women's Affairs

Local Governance Project Officers also attend monthly Commune Council of Women and Children (CCWC) meetings.

### Responding to individual cases

Community Development Officers and Local Governance Officers also deal with individual cases and issues in the communities themselves. This role has increased since the project began, as project officers have become more known in the community, and networks and partnerships have evolved and grown.

Examples of the kinds of cases project officers have dealt with include:

- Rape cases - making referrals and follow up for legal, health and emotional advice and support

- Responding to changes in laws that had not been updated - in two Communes, Local Authorities were unaware of new marriage laws - the CD Project Officer disseminated information about the new laws, via Commune Council meetings and other community events.
- Assisting in dispute resolution - particularly regarding domestic violence and divorce.
- Child protection issues regarding violence, abuse and child trafficking issues.

## CD & LG PROJECT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Community Development Project has proved far-reaching in its endeavour to augment the knowledge and understanding of community members in accessing their human and legal rights. With this, their ability to hold local authorities accountable in their actions has been significantly increased.

Although most awareness raising workshops held in the community have had high rates of attendance, it is usually the same groups of villagers that attend. Project Officers thus feel that there is potential for more targeted training and workshops aimed at hard to reach groups, i.e. those who are more difficult to access and engage with. For example, Project Officers are keen to explore ways to engage more effectively with men, particularly those whom are involved in domestic violence.

In relation to the Local Government aspect of the project, although having produced a number of positive outcomes, it has been a difficult component to get established and, as such, proved difficult to sustain. Thus, at the time of writing this report, it had recently been decided to cease operations of this element of the project.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Explore the potential for more targeted trainings and awareness raising workshops to engage with marginalised and hard to groups.
- Develop mechanisms for increased project sustainability by ensuring knowledge is retained and stays within the communities - for example, exploring the potential of 'volunteer

## Human & Legal Rights Workshops & Trainings

**3,124** Attendance at workshops & trainings

**32** Number of trainings & workshops conducted

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## Banteay Meanchey Project

**6** WORKSHOPS

**8** TRAINING SESSIONS

## Siem Reap Project

**6** WORKSHOPS

**8** TRAINING SESSIONS

facilitator' roles to increase levels of knowledge dissemination.

- Encourage and strengthen interactions between all TLC/TLBB projects to support and complement each other in overall program delivery – for example, explore a more preventative approach of working with young people by connecting with the Lower Secondary School Development Program (LSSDP).
- Continue to work collaboratively and build partnerships with other agencies/NGO's to share knowledge, skills and resources to enhance project outcomes.

## CD & LG WORKSHOPS & TRAININGS CONDUCTED

	Year	Workshop Topic	No. participants
<b>Siem Reap &amp; Oddar Meanchey Provinces</b>	2011	Domestic violence laws & responses (2 w/shops)	102, 188
		Human rights & Cambodian law	155
	2012	Responding to human rights issues	113, 291
		Divorce & marriage laws & certificates	359
	2013	Responses to human rights issues	217
		Marriage law & police intervention in criminal cases	217
Marriage law, divorce & gambling		157	
<b>Banteay Meanchey Province</b>	2012	Responding to human rights & domestic violence issues x 4 workshops	149, 136, 150, 82
	2013	Code of criminal & civil actions & procedures (2 w/shops)	223, 108

	Year	Training Topic	No. participants
<b>Siem Reap &amp; Oddar Meanchey Provinces</b>	2011	Preventing domestic violence (2 w/shops)	34, 39
		Human rights, domestic violence & Cambodian law	32
	2012	Responding to human rights issues (3 w/shops)	29, 28, 30
	2013	Criminal codes & procedures & child protection issues (3 w/shops)	31, 39, 37
<b>Banteay Meanchey Province</b>	2012	Code of criminal & civil actions & procedures (4 w/shops)	25, 20, 20, 20
	2013	Roles & responsibilities of judicial police & writing criminal & civil actions	20, 28, 20, 25

# 7

## Future Program Direction

Given the proven success of the This Life Beyond Bars Program, exhibited throughout this evaluation, This Life Cambodia (TLC) intends to expand the Vocational Training Project to at least two more prisons and provinces over the next three years.

Additionally, TLC will consider mechanisms to developing educational and personal development opportunities for all children incarcerated in TLBB prisons, affording more children opportunities for their futures.

TLC also hopes to explore more vocational and development opportunities for parents in prison to ensure the long-term sustainability of their families post release.

Furthermore, The Community Research and Consultancy Program of TLC aims to conduct further research on juvenile justice issues, with a particular focus on diversionary, pre-sentencing and reintegration responses for juveniles.

Finally, TLBB aims to broaden and strengthen connections with key stakeholders, to become stronger advocates for individuals and communities so that they are empowered to access their rights.

# 8

## Appendices



TLC PROGRAM \_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE & TIME \_\_\_\_\_  
 FACILITATOR \_\_\_\_\_  
 NOTE TAKER \_\_\_\_\_  
 OBSERVER \_\_\_\_\_  
 LOCATION \_\_\_\_\_

PARTICIPANTS	GENDER	ROLE	AGE
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			
J			

## VT Student Focus Group

Introduce ourselves & why we are here

Talk about confidentiality

Ask participants to introduce themselves - age, what they are studying

### Vocational training

- What do you like about the MM or ER training?
- Tell us about your relationship with the trainers?
- Are there challenging aspects of the training?
- What else would be useful to make the course better? (materials, etc.)
- Has been in the program changed things for you since before you started the program?

### Personal development

- Tell us about the personal development training?

### Family Visitation

- How often do you see your family?
- When you see your family how do you feel?
- How is your connection with your family because of the visitation?

### Difficulties in prison

- What things make it difficult for you while you are in prison?
- Food, health care, living conditions, cell quarters

### Suggestions for change

- What things would help to make the program better?
- What are you looking forward to upon release? (What you will do and where you will go)

TLC PROGRAM AREA

DATE & TIME

INTERVIEWER

NOTE TAKER

INTERVIEWEE  
(GENDER, AGE, ROLE)

LOCATION



### **Collect:**

- Information about parent in prison - father or mother, crime committed, length of sentence, remaining time on sentence
- Information about family - how many children, ages, school levels

## **Family scholarship family interview**

### **About TLC**

- Tell us about your relationship with This Life Cambodia?
- Tell us what you know about TLC and what we do?

### **About income generation activity**

- Tell us about your income generating activity?
- Does the activity provide enough finances for you to support your family? (food, clothing, school, etc.)
- What other things would help you to make your income generation activity better? (money, training, etc.)
- How much money do you earn through your income generation activity? Be sensitive with this question.

### **About scholarship students (addressed at children)**

- Tell us about school.
- What do you like doing at school?
- What is your favorite spot to play?
- What is your favorite subject?
- Do you use the bicycle to get to school? Do you use it for other things?

### **Family visitation**

- What is the best thing about seeing your father/husband in prison?
- Do other people in the community know that your husband/mother is in prison?
- Do people discriminate because your mother/father is in prison?
- Does your father/mother know about the support you receive from TLC?
- Does this make a difference for them?

TLC PROGRAM AREA

DATE & TIME

INTERVIEWER

NOTE TAKER

INTERVIEWEE  
(GENDER, AGE, ROLE)

LOCATION



## VT Project Officers - Interviews

### About your role

- Tell us about your role?
- What do you like most about your role?
- Tell us about the challenges involved in your role?
- Tell us about the First Step Training (usefulness, benefits, challenges)
- Tell us about the resources available/needed to perform your role (for students, for trainers, for project officers) & if and where there are gaps?
- For BMC only - about being out in the field away from TLC office - issues, challenges, ideas for improvement
- Are there any other issues, gaps or areas for improvement? If so what are they?

### About the VT students

- Tell us about outcomes of VT for students
- Tell us about Family visitation
- Relationships with students/VTs & VT Project Officers
- Skills/knowledge gained (Electronics/Moto-mechanics/Personal Development/Confidence)
- Issues of detainment affecting student participation in program - based on findings of Boys Behind Bars - petty corruption, access to food & water, living quarters, health care, treatment by prison authorities
- Are there issues, gaps or areas for improvement? If so what are they?

### Environmental/Political factors

- Tell us about the flooding & its impact on the program
- Tell us about your relationships with Prison Authorities

### Interviews & FG's with beneficiaries & Key stakeholders

- Review evaluation tools & arrangements for FGs & interviews with VT students
- Review evaluation tools - prison authorities and Vocational Trainers

TLC PROGRAM AREA

DATE & TIME

INTERVIEWER

NOTE TAKER

INTERVIEWEE  
(GENDER, AGE, ROLE)

LOCATION



## FS Project Officers - Interviews

### About your role

- Tell us about your role?
- What do you like most about your role?
- Tell us about the challenges involved in your role?
- Tell us about the resources available/needed to perform your role (for scholarship students, for families, for project officers) & if and where there are gaps?
- For BMC only - about being out in the field away from TLC office - issues, challenges, ideas for improvement
- Are there any other issues, gaps or areas for improvement? If so what are they?

### About the scholarship students & families

- Tell us about outcomes for scholarship students - education & social/emotional outcomes
- Tell us about outcomes for income generation families - skills/knowledge gained, financial independence
- Tell us about family visitation
- Issues of detainment of parent in prison affecting program outcomes
- Are there issues, gaps or areas for improvement? If so what are they?

### Environmental/Political factors

- Tell us about the flooding & its impact on the program
- Are there any other issues that impact on the program

### Interviews & FG's with beneficiaries & Key stakeholders

- Review evaluation tools & arrangements for interviews with families

TLC PROGRAM AREA

DATE & TIME

INTERVIEWER

NOTE TAKER

INTERVIEWEE  
(GENDER, AGE, ROLE)

LOCATION



## CD & LG Project Officers - Interviews

### About your role

- Tell us about your role?
- What do you like most about your role?
- Tell us about the challenges involved in your role?
- Tell us about the resources available/needed to perform your role (for scholarship students, for families, for project officers) & if and where there are gaps?
- For BMC only - about being out in the field away from TLC office - issues, challenges, ideas for improvement
- Are there any other issues, gaps or areas for improvement? If so what are they?

### About the project

- Tell us about outcomes for people in the community
- Tell us about outcomes for people in local governance roles
- Tell us about the workshops and trainings
- Tell us about challenges for achieving program goals

### Environmental/Political factors

- Tell us about the flooding & its impact on the program
- Are there any other issues that impact on the program