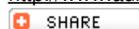


Fighting violence against women and discrimination against victims in Cambodia

Cambodia

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Website:

<http://www.adhoc-chra.org>

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Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Most of NGOs provide assistance and awareness-raising to prevent violence, but few of them focus on reintegration and discrimination. ADHOC, with this new strategy, shows once again its innovative strength. Its unique coverage, with 23 provincial offices and 350 activists reaching out all districts, provides a precious local threshold.

About You

Organization:

The Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association

Section 1: About You

First Name

Aurelie

Last Name

Colladon

Email

colladon.aurelie@adhoc-chra.org

Website

Organization

ADHOC

Country

Section 2: About Your Organization

Is this initiative/innovation linked to any established organization?

Yes

Organization Name

The Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association

Organization Phone

0085523218653

Organization Address

3 street 158 Oukghna Toreung Kang, Beng Raing, Daun Penh, PHNOM PENH

Organization Country

Is your organization a

CSO/NGO

How long has this organization been operating?

More than 5 years

What stage is your project in?

Operating for 1-5 years

When was the project initiated? or When are you planning to begin?

The issue of violence against women in Cambodia is extraordinarily wide, due to a general acceptance of domestic violence as a family matter, to a culture of tolerance towards violent masculinity, and to poor enforcement of existing laws. These are the underlying causes of increasing trend of violence against women. ADHOC has been involved with women's rights issues since 1995. In 2009, ADHOC conducted 188 sensitization sessions in 13 provinces to sensitize grassroots people to women's rights, gender, causes of domestic violence, rape and trafficking and means to curb them. Through these activities, people became more aware of their rights and local authorities start to understand gender equality issues.

But after the violence, women are once again victims, victims of discrimination in their own communities. That's why ADHOC has just decided to initiate a new strategy, not only based on monitoring, investigation and assistance but also on victims' reintegration and fight against the discrimination they suffer.

What kind of beneficiaries is your initiative addressed to?

Women, Girls.

Describe the profile of the beneficiaries of this project

Direct beneficiaries of the project are women, children (and men) victim of sexual exploitation and other forms of violence, such as domestic violence, rape and trafficking. About 220 victims will be assisted by ADHOC in 2010 in 10 provinces. The project will particularly focus on fighting discrimination against victims and their reintegration in the society. Therefore, 9000 people in 6 provinces will benefit from training about the prevention of discrimination. 100-150 people will benefit from specific measures of reintegration, to be able to start a new life.

Indirect beneficiaries are victims' families and communities who will be empowered and will gain a deep understanding of women's rights, gender equity, the various forms of violence and means to curb violations. Total, almost 20,000 people will indirectly benefit from the project in 2010.

What is your initiative's implementation strategy?

A baseline survey (MoWA, et. at, 2005) reveals that 22.5% of married women experience violence in Cambodia. For victims, the feelings of shame and guilt can be extreme. According to a Cambodian proverb, "man is a gold coin, and woman a piece of cloth". A gold coin can fall in the mud, it remains a gold coin, whereas a stained cloth remains stained forever. A prostitute, a raped woman, a widow is not this virgin cloth anymore. But a man, either he is a criminal or he is cheating on his wife, remains a gold coin. For women victims of violence, returning home brings not only the fear about their relationship with their husbands or other family members, but the prospect of gossip from neighbors and others in the community. They may be accused of provoking or causing their own misfortune, they may even believe that themselves.

The overall objective of our idea is to combat violence against women and children and to protect them against all forms of discrimination in 10 Cambodian provinces.

Specific objectives are:

- To fight the culture of impunity benefiting to perpetrators of domestic violence, rape and trafficking,
- To increase awareness at community level and among local authorities about women's human rights and a greater enforcement of national legislation related to the international Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women,
- To facilitate greater access for victims and women-at-risk of gender-based violence to adequate protection services and to both legal and emergency assistance
- To ensure victims' reintegration in society and prevent any discrimination against them

The project focuses on monitoring, investigation and intervention in case of gender-based violence by providing victims with legal aid, emergency assistance, counseling and legal representation, and by defending victims at court. It is also seeking close cooperation with other Human Rights NGOs, stakeholders, interested groups and local authorities in order to bring offenders to face justice, to follow up the victims' reintegration, to render justice to victims and to reduce the culture of the impunity that will continue to prevail throughout the country if no strict measure is taken.

1. Monitoring, investigation and intervention:

These activities include:

- Collecting information and receiving complaints related to domestic violence, rape and trafficking;
- Providing information to victims about legal defense, investigation and action to take;
- Assisting victims to write complaints, petitions or letters of intervention to government agencies involved for adequate action;
- Cooperating with the police and court officials to rescue and release victims, and mainly to arrest and prosecute perpetrators;
- Following up action taken by authorities in terms of intervention and victims' reintegration (linkage with existing structures in the community, such as schools, community associations, local NGOs and local authorities);
- Providing victims with legal and emergency assistance, helping them to return to their village, or offering them the opportunity to go to a shelter or a vocational training center;
- Promoting and maintaining close relationships with NGOs, local authorities and other stakeholders for rescuing victims and prosecuting of perpetrators.

2. Training on "Prevention of discrimination against victims of gender-based violence"

The training aims at raising awareness of people, both men and women on all forms of discrimination against victims of gender-based violence, their root causes and negative impacts on women's rights. The training courses provide deep knowledge and understanding of gender, women's human rights and CEDAW convention. The most important is to encourage victims to voice their concerns and to draw the government's attention on the need to take appropriate measures. A participatory approach will be adopted to bring together community members, especially women, and local government officials.

In your opinion, what are the main barriers or obstacles in connection with this theme?

Main barriers to fight violence against women and discrimination against victims in Cambodia are of social, economical and political nature:

- First, in Cambodian society, traditional values and practices can be contrary to ADHOC's activities of violations investigations and training. Violence against women is usually seen as a family matter and there is a culture of tolerance towards violent masculinity
- Second, poverty gap could be a risk to overcome in the fight against gender-based violence. Some of the victims lack of cooperation.
- Third, political stability and authorities cooperation is a pre-requisite to the success of ADHOC's activities in this field: indeed, the government plans to adopt a new NGO Law which could be used to control source of external fund flowing into human rights organizations critical of government policies. Human rights defenders are regularly victims of threats and intimidation from government officials.

What type of partnerships you have or intend to generate strategic alliances with for the development of this initiative? Choose all that

apply

State departments or areas, Non-Government organizations, Social organizations.

Describe with whom you have generated these alliances and how

For the proposed project, ADHOC will work with complementary partners and networks for a full implementation:

- To provide shelter and vocational trainings to female victims, before enable them to reintegrate the communities - collaboration with Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC), HealthCare Center for Children (HCC), Hagar, Nyemo, World Vision
- To provide legal assistance to female victims of abuse - collaboration with Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC), Protect Juvenile Justice (PJJ), Cambodian Defender Project (CDP) and Legal Support for Children and Women (LSCW), Cambodia Bar Association
- To cooperate with and advocate authorities - provincial authorities, police, courts, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice

What are the main results generated and/or expected to generate by means of this initiative?

Short-term results:

- Victims of domestic violence, rape and trafficking are successfully rescued from brothels, and sent to their village of origin or to a vocational training center.
- Victims are provided with legal assistance (to write and file complaints and to follow up courts' activities), emergency assistance, counseling, healthcare and material assistance
- Victims benefit from temporary shelters and a specific follow-up for their reintegration
- Perpetrators are brought to court to face justice.

Medium-term results:

- Awareness of ordinary citizens, especially women, will be increased on human rights, root causes and negative impacts of domestic violence, rape and trafficking.
- Victims of gender-based violence will be less subject to discrimination when they reintegrate their communities

What is the main impact that your initiative might generate?

Our initiative will generate a reduction of gender-based violence against women and children in 10 provinces/cities, of out-of-court system mediation, and most of perpetrators will be prosecuted. Therefore, the culture of impunity will be reduced. Ordinary citizens, aware of their rights, of gender equity and of all related laws and conventions, will form an effective tool to react against all forms of discrimination against women, especially female victims of gender-based violence.

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