







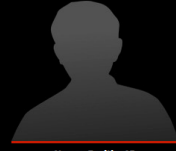








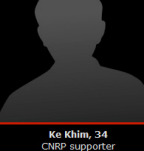

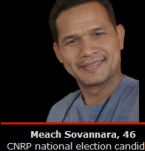









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LICADHO

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE
PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF
HUMAN RIGHTS

 Tep Vanny, 35 Boeung Kak land activist Detained for 15 days (since Aug. 15, 2016) See details...	 Lim Mony, 60 ADHOC senior investigator, women and children's rights section Detained for 124 days (since Apr. 28, 2016) See details...	 Nay Vanda, 42 ADHOC deputy head of human rights section Detained for 124 days (since Apr. 28, 2016) See details...	 Ny Chariya, 54 National Election Committee deputy secretary-general Detained for 124 days (since Apr. 28, 2016) See details...
 Ny Sokha, 51 ADHOC head of human rights section Detained for 124 days (since Apr. 28, 2016) See details...	 Yi Soksan, 53 ADHOC senior investigator Detained for 124 days (since Apr. 28, 2016) See details...	 Seang Chet, 43 SRP Srok commune council chief (elected) Detained for 128 days (since Apr. 24, 2016) See details...	 Um Sam An, 43 CNRP member of parliament (elected) Detained for 141 days (since Apr. 11, 2016) See details...
 Nong Sarith, 42 SRP Bavet commune council member (elected) Detained for 285 days (since Nov. 19, 2015) See details...	 Sok Sam Ean, 38 CNRP supporter Detained for 285 days (since Nov. 19, 2015) See details...	 Kong Raya, 25 Cambodia Student Network president Sentenced to 18 months in prison Detained for 376 days (since Aug. 20, 2015) See details...	 Hong Sok Hour, 59 SRP senator (elected) Detained for 381 days (since Aug. 15, 2015) See details...
 Yea Thong, 26 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 391 days (since Aug. 5, 2015) See details...	 Rooun Chetra, 33 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 392 days (since Aug. 4, 2015) See details...	 Yun Kimhour, 28 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 392 days (since Aug. 4, 2015) See details...	 Dav Tep, 28 Monk Sentenced to 2 years in prison Detained for 395 days (since Aug. 1, 2015) See details...
 An Batham, 36 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Ke Khim, 34 CNRP supporter Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Khin Chamreun, 33 CNRP Phnom Penh youth chief Sentenced to 20 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Meach Sovannara, 46 CNRP national election candidate Sentenced to 20 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...
 N. S. Chhun, 28 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Oeun, 47 public defender Sentenced to 20 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Sannavy, 53 CNRP supporter Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 San Kim, 30 CNRP Tuol Sleng youth leader Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...
 San Seihak, 28 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Sum Puthy, 49 CNRP Chhbar Ampov district council member (elected) Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	 Tep Narin, 30 CNRP youth member Sentenced to 7 years in prison Detained for 406 days (since Jul. 21, 2015) See details...	

HUMAN RIGHTS 2016: SIX MONTHS IN REVIEW

A report issued in
August 2016



HUMAN RIGHTS 2016:

Six Months in Review

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LICADHO

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION
AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS (LICADHO)

LICADHO is a national Cambodian human rights organization. Since its establishment in 1992, LICADHO has been at the forefront of efforts to protect civil, political, economic and social rights in Cambodia and to promote respect for them by the Cambodian government and institutions. Building on its past achievements, LICADHO continues to be an advocate for the Cambodian people and a monitor of the government through wide ranging human rights programs from its main office in Phnom Penh and 13 provincial offices.

MONITORING & PROTECTION



Monitoring of State Violations & Women's and Children's Rights:

Monitors investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the State and violations made against women and children. Victims are provided assistance through interventions with local authorities and court officials.

Medical Assistance & Social Work:

A medical team provides assistance to prisoners and prison officials in 14 prisons, victims of human rights violations and families in resettlement sites. Social workers conduct needs assessments of victims and their families and provide short-term material and food.

Prison Monitoring:

Researchers monitor 18 prisons to assess prison conditions and ensure that pre-trial detainees have access to legal representation.

Paralegal & Legal Representation:

Victims are provided legal advice by a paralegal team and, in key cases, legal representation by human rights lawyers.

PROMOTION & ADVOCACY

Supporting Unions & Grassroots Groups and Networks:

Assistance to unions, grassroots groups and affected communities to provide protection and legal services, and to enhance their capacity to campaign and advocate for human rights.

Training & Information:

Advocates raise awareness to specific target groups, support protection networks at the grassroots level and advocate for social and legal changes with women, youths and children.

Public Advocacy & Outreach:

Human rights cases are compiled into a central electronic database, so that accurate information can be easily accessed and analyzed, and produced into periodic public reports (written, audio and visual) or used for other advocacy.

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Cover: LICADHO's Political Prisoners webpage

HUMAN RIGHTS SIX MONTHS IN REVIEW



INTRODUCTION

Under the shadow of approaching commune and national elections set for 2017 and 2018, the first six months of 2016 saw the Cambodian government engage with a campaign to systematically shut down processes of democratic expression and ways to express dissent.

Attacks on human rights defenders, the political opposition and civil society grew in number and stepped up in intensity. Civil society space – already a commodity in short supply – was at the forefront of government attacks, from both repressive legislation and misuse of the judicial system. Scores of peaceful protesters were arrested as peaceful gatherings were shut down under the pretext of halting a ‘revolution’. By the end of June, at least 29 political prisoners documented by LICADHO were behind bars.

Less than a year before commune elections, political tensions were being ramped up. After the opposition leader was once again forced into self-imposed exile in 2015, this year has seen the deputy leader holed up in the opposition headquarters following a far-reaching smear campaign and an attempted arrest; at least 19 opposition supporters and officials in jail; and much-needed electoral reform grind to a halt.

However, despite ongoing and non-stop threats and intimidation, human rights defenders and other civil society members refused to be silenced in their calls for justice.

“These mounting attacks represent an alarming tightening of the noose around civil society and those who work to uphold human rights, and clearly show that the government’s ultimate aim is total control ahead of the upcoming elections.”

LICADHO statement, May 2016.

ATTACKS ON CIVIL SOCIETY

Back in 2015, Cambodia’s National Assembly – amid repeated condemnation and an opposition boycott – passed targeted repressive legislation seeking to shackle and silence NGOs, grassroots groups and networks. This year, this legislative vice was complemented not just by the targeting of NGO staff through a deeply politicized judicial system, but by an all-out assault against civil society groups attempting to speak out.

In May, five human rights defenders – including four from human rights NGO Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) and a National Election Committee (NEC) deputy secretary-general – were jailed under spurious bribery charges after an ‘investigation’ by Cambodia’s Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU). The five remain in prison, awaiting trial under charges widely condemned by local and international groups, diplomats and the UN. This outrageous misuse of the ACU highlighted the political links between Cambodia’s state institutions and its ruling party, and the wide range of such institutions as tools of civil society intimidation.

The arrest of the five human rights defenders was swiftly followed by accusations of breaching “political neutrality” requirements and threats of closure leveled against LICADHO, after the organisation published a web page profiling 29 of Cambodia’s political prisoners.



“They went crazy with freedom of expression. They did not think they are under the law that controls them.”
– General Khieu Sopheak, Ministry of Interior spokesman, after four human rights workers and four land activists were arrested during a peaceful gathering, May 2016.

Pressure against the local environmental group Mother Nature, already impacted by the deportation of one of its foreign founders in 2015, continued throughout the first half of the year. Three of its activists were over-detained and convicted before a show-trial in June – simply for protesting and challenging the legality of environmentally harmful sand dredging by politically-connected commercial companies in Koh Kong Province.

These acts represent an escalation in a slow-burning war currently being waged by the Cambodian government against civil society.

CURTAILING FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY BY DEEMING IT REVOLUTION

Nowhere was this shrinking space for civil society and fundamental freedoms more evident than in the government's response to the Black Monday campaign, launched by civil society groups following the imprisonment of the latest five human rights defenders in May.

The government met the peaceful movement – in which supporters wear black to mark the ongoing detention of the five and call for their release – with ludicrously disproportionate suppression. On the first Black Monday, held on 9 May, supporters were prevented from gathering outside “Prey Sar” prison where four of the five are being held. Eight people, including four human rights workers and four land activists, were arbitrarily detained and subject to hours of questioning before being released in the evening. Further Black Monday gatherings proved no less eventful: over subsequent weeks, there were at least 25 arbitrary arrests – mostly of women from land communities – simply for wearing black clothing. Peaceful candlelight vigils have not only been monitored closely by authorities, but often violently broken up by para-police. In Preah Vihear province in May, authorities told NGO workers they are not permitted to wear black within the private property of the organization. Civil society groups have even been told that they need permission to post Black Monday photos on Facebook. By the end of May, the Minister of Defence himself threatened to use military force to arrest those participating in what he deemed “illegal” Black Monday protests.

Using more and more bombastic rhetoric, authorities argued that those wearing black were attempting to launch a “colour revolution”, an internationally-recognised term it selectively uses to misrepresent peaceful social movements as violent insurrection and to defend the violence it employs to clamp down on peaceful expression.

The way the government handled the Black Monday campaign was a reflection of a nationwide trend: throughout the six months, legitimate and peaceful demonstrations and even celebrations were consistently met with repression. The deployment of para-police, riot police, military police and even soldiers to disrupt peaceful gatherings has been a near-everyday occurrence, breaking up legitimate free expression, association and peaceful assembly at events from such as International Women's Day, trade union demonstrations and even community-level forums on land disputes. As well as using a raft of new legislation passed to curtail legitimate freedoms of assembly and expression, authorities consistently misused existing laws

– the Traffic Law and the Law on Peaceful Demonstration proving particularly popular – to shut down gatherings, demonstrations and strike actions.

Land rights activists, who are among the most outspoken and active human rights defenders in the country, have been subject to specific targeting. Over the last months, arrests of land activists have increased, and numerous workshops and activities to promote land rights have been shut down by authorities all over the country.

And against a backdrop of sustained national and international campaigns for a fair living wage for Cambodia's workers, attacks against trade unions continued. In February 2016, a dispute between recently unionized, and subsequently fired, employees and their employer Capitol Bus took a violent turn when a peaceful strike in front of the company was brutally dispersed by members of the government-organized Cambodia for Confederation Development Association (CCDA). No CCDA members were arrested following the assault – in which some assailants wielded metal bars and hammers – but two protester victims of the beating were charged and spent nearly two months in jail before being released on bail. Attacks such as these reflected a worrying recent trend of organized groups loyal to the ruling party willing and able to commit violence against political or civil groups with near-total impunity.

On the same day, four prominent trade union leaders – Cambodian Labour Confederation (CLC) President Ath Thorn, CLC General-Secretary Kong Athit, Cambodian Informal Economy Workers Association President Sok Chhun Oeung, and Cambodian Transport Workers Federation Secretary Ean Kim Hong – were also charged with the same three offences, although not detained. The charges still hang over their heads. And under the Law on Unions of Enterprises (TUL), enacted in May 2016, convictions for these charges could be used to prevent the four holding any trade union office in future. This continued a recent trend to use the judicial system to silence the labour

movement by groundlessly charging its key leadership.

As civil society groups, as well as dissenting individuals, continued to be subject to intimidation and judicial harassment, it became increasingly clear that there is space permitted for a single social and political narrative in Cambodia – that of the government. All other

opinion, association or assembly was considered a threat, to be punished accordingly.



MISUSE OF THE JUDICIARY: CAMBODIA'S POLITICAL PRISONERS

The crackdown on dissent reached Cambodia's jails as the government continued to attack its critics through the judiciary, targeting dissenters with spurious charges and farcical trials. The Cambodian judiciary's lack of independence is well-publicised and, in fact, executive interference in the judiciary is institutionalized by law.

Such judicial shenanigans have seen an unprecedented surge in the number of political prisoners, and the variety of their 'offences' in the past year: among others, human rights defenders, environmental activists, a Buddhist monk, and a student activist were languishing behind bars by the end of June. All are being held for a variety of offences, but together they illustrate Cambodia's increasingly restricted political environment in which dissent is not tolerated and debate stifled.

The six months remained a dangerous time to be aligned with the political opposition. Two opposition members - including a commune council chief and a National Assembly member - were jailed, joining 17 other opposition party supporters, activists and officials imprisoned under various charges last year.

ATTACKS ON THE OPPOSITION

With the next round of elections just around the corner, the imprisonment of opposition supporters was just one facet of a concerted attack by the government on the main opposition party and its leadership.

With Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) leader Sam Rainsy back in self-imposed exile since late 2015, under threat of prison on his return, the ruling party turned its attention to the deputy opposition leader. Kem Sokha was - and still is - subject to a far-reaching legal and political attack, ostensibly over an alleged affair central to the spurious charges against the five human rights defenders jailed for bribery. Mr Sokha has refused to comply with politically-motivated summonses both as a witness and as a suspect, which together amount to judicial entrapment, and is currently under de facto house arrest inside the CNRP headquarters in Phnom Penh. Two other CNRP MPs have been implicated in the case against him. One commune council chief is in pre-trial detention facing bribery charges.

The relentless judicial attacks against the opposition have also led to an erosion of the constitutionally-guaranteed parliamentary immunity.

On the eve of Khmer New Year 2016, elected member of parliament Um Sam An was arrested while his parliamentary immunity was still standing, and sent to pre-trial detention in relation to comments he had previously made on the sensitive Khmer-Vietnamese border issue.

Opposition senator Hong Sok Hour also remains detained in CC1 prison, with the past six months seeing no resumption of his indefinitely-suspended trial on spurious forgery charges relating to a video posted on Facebook discussing the border issue. Sam Rainsy has since been charged in relation to this case, simply because the post was made on his Facebook page.

Meanwhile, the ongoing appeal hearings of 11 CNRP members and supporters, who were convicted last year on insurrection charges, have thus far proved no less farcical than their origi-

"In a social democracy...there [are] no political prisoners. There are only politicians and NGOs who commit criminal offences... Political prisoners are for communist regimes."

– Chin Malin, Ministry of Interior spokesman, May 2016.



nal trial since hearings began in March. In June, three more CNRP youth members were convicted on insurrection charges relating to the same protest. Their trial showed much of the same patterns as that of the original 11 – defence lawyers were blocked from questioning key witnesses, and the prosecution produced limited evidence to substantiate their claims.

The seven to twenty years' imprisonment imposed on these 14 opposition supporters and officials stood in bleak contrast to the sentence handed out to three members of the Prime Minister's Bodyguard Unit charged with the brutal beating of two CNRP MPs, Nhay Chamroeun and Kong Sophea, outside the gates of the National Assembly during an anti-Kem Sokha protest on October 26 last year. During their trial in April, relevant questions asked relating to the Bodyguard Unit, its commander and orders to attack the MPs, were closed down by the aligned efforts of the prosecutor, trial judge and defence counsel. They were sentenced to four years for beating the MPs bloody, and, as three quarters of their sentence was suspended, will be out of jail after just one.

An opposition party petition to the King calling for his intervention to alleviate the growing political crisis, which gathered over 170,000 thumbprints, has been subject to a criminal investigation. At least 18 activists gathering thumbprints were briefly detained over May and June, and when opposition politicians attempted to deliver the petition to the Royal Palace on 30 May, hundreds of police and troops armed with tear gas guns barricaded the main streets into central Phnom Penh in a show of intimidation.

A REPRESSIVE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2016 saw authorities begin to implement the raft of new legislation aimed at curtailing the rights and fundamental freedoms passed last year. The Law on Associations and Non-governmental Organisations (LANGO) is now being used as a politically-motivated weapon against specific civil society groups, used by the government as a pretext for infringing on freedom of speech and assembly. So far, implementation of LANGO has proved vague and arbitrary.

Following the charges against ADHOC staff, pro-government NGOs directly asked for the NGO to be punished using LANGO. The Cambodian National Human Rights Committee – a government body formerly led by the current head of the ACU – has called for “strict legal action” against ADHOC, potentially resulting in the de-registration of the organisation. On 18 May, the government directly threatened LICADHO with possible closure under LANGO for breaching vague “political neutrality” requirements following the publication of a thoroughly investigated list of political prisoners.

The new Law on Telecommunications, enacted at the end of last year, poses a severe threat to Cambodia's newly-found online freedoms and could mean an end to private expression through telecommunications. While the government claims the law to be industrial regulation of the telecommunications sector, it also legalises universal covert surveillance of all communications with the undefined “approval of legitimate authorities” and contains numerous offences punishing free expression. Under the new law, individuals can now be sentenced to up to 15 years' imprisonment for private expression the government deems to be a threat under vague national security provisions.

The TUL, passed in April 2016 and promulgated by the King just



Police block opposition supporters near CNRP HQ in Phnom Penh, 30 May 2016

one month later, contains serious restrictions on strike action and establishes government control over the existence and autonomy of unions. Laws relating to ballot procedures make it practically impossible for many unions to carry out their internal democratic procedures and to decide on strike action. The law creates responsibilities for a Labour Court which, without accountability and sufficient independence from the existing court system, threatens to become just another method of government control over unions. With unions representing the bulk of organized civil society, this law, along with LANGO, severely threatens the very existence of formal civil society groups.

UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Heightened repression through the courts, new legislation and excessive law enforcement out on the streets comes as both the government and opposition are focused on the prize of the commune and national elections in 2017 and 2018, respectively. In 2013, strong social movements calling for change very nearly unseated the ruling party amidst evidence of electoral fraud. Now, as the next round of elections approaches, the government is willing to use all methods within its means to crack down on all forms of dissent and opposition.

After 2013's contested results, electoral reform is crucial to build the necessary foundations from which the upcoming elections could be considered free and fair. But such reform has stalled. Approximately 10 million voters still require urgent re-registration in advance of the commune elections, now just months away.

Democratic reform has been placed in further jeopardy by attacks against the revamped and nominally independent NEC, which was overhauled after 2013's elections. In addition to the pre-trial detention of NEC deputy secretary-general Ny Chakriya, jailed in May, the courts have also begun proceedings against a second CNRP NEC representative, Rong Choeun, after the revival of an old criminal case. The ACU has carried out investigations into four further NEC members.

Authorities – including security and armed forces commanders – continued to ramp up their use of fiery rhetoric against the opposition party. In January, one General in Kampong Speu province encouraged hundreds of soldiers to “eliminate” any attempts by the opposition to stage a colour revolution or foment “instability in society.” In July, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces commander-in-chief Pol Saroeun said, during a

meeting with the highest ranking members of the army, that the RCAF needed to “eliminate” people of a certain character which affects social peace and stability.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Cambodia is now at a critical point in its progression. And all of the hard-won gains in the fields of human rights and democracy since the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement are under genuine and imminent threat from a ruling party determined to close Cambodia's democratic space and restrict the mobilization of citizens.

It is little wonder that in the last six months, both the European Union Parliament and the United States Congress and the Senate Appropriation Committee have called for millions of dollars of aid to be dependent on improvements in the human rights situation. Prime Minister Hun Sen responded defiantly, saying Chinese money is readily available to fill any gaps in development assistance. He can afford to call their bluff – after all, similar threats have been made by donor countries many times before. Earlier this year, the World Bank resumed its funding to Cambodia after a five-year lending freeze to protest forced evictions by the government, despite forced evictions showing no sign of slowing.

However, even as the government grows increasingly demonstrative in its willingness to punish any peaceful exercise of rights and freedoms it deems threatening, Cambodian citizens and civil society maintain strength and courage to call for change.

On July 10, prominent political analyst Kem Ley was shot dead, in broad daylight, in the middle of Phnom Penh. The response to his murder was astonishing: over two weeks, thousands of Cambodians visited Wat Chas Pagoda where his body lay to pay their respects. On July 23, hundreds of thousands took to the streets for his funeral procession to express their grief and call for justice for him and his family.

This mass outpouring, which took place against a backdrop of weeks of government intimidation as military vehicles and tanks rolled in and around Phnom Penh from all over the country throughout the preceding month, shows that despite intimidation, imprisonment and even threat of murder, Cambodian civil society has not been silenced and will continue to demand justice.



People pay respect to assassinated political analyst Kem Ley at Wat Chas Pagoda, Phnom Penh, 11 July 2016

MONITORING & PROTECTION



Communities affected by land grabbing are blocked by police, Sre Ambel district, Koh Kong, 25 March 2015

In Cambodia, rights abuses are widespread. The lack of a functioning judiciary means that access to justice is virtually impossible, and human rights violations are perpetrated by both the state and private interests with near complete impunity. Attacks on fundamental freedoms abound – public gatherings are often shut down on little to no grounds – and as the political situation becomes increasingly tense, arbitrary arrests of political opponents and grassroots activists are an ever more common occurrence.

In this context, LICADHO's Monitoring and Protection Programme works holistically, encompassing projects dedicated to documenting and investigating rights violations, as well as offering support and recourse to justice to those subject to rights abuse – whether at the hands of the government, in their homes, on the streets, or in prisons.

From giving protesters confidence to continue with their struggle, to helping those subject to grave human rights violations achieve the justice they deserve, to collecting accurate and impartial information with which to share to partners and feed advocacy efforts to effect real change, the impact of the Monitoring Programme is hard to overstate.

Human Rights Monitoring Project - Civil and Political Rights



5,908

Families affected in land grabbing cases newly investigated by LICADHO in 2015.

32

Cases closed that were investigated in the first six months of 2016.

80

Victims of human trafficking (7 female; 73 male) repatriated from China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia with assistance from LICADHO.

LICADHO's Human Rights Monitoring Project (HRMP) serves as the organization's eyes and ears, investigating reports of civil and political rights violations perpetrated by state and private interest. In Phnom Penh and throughout 13 provinces, monitors collect evidence, document cases, and develop custom response strategies to allow victims of human rights abuses to achieve justice.

Monitors are often the first port of call for people suffering from human rights abuse, whether at the hands of authorities, businesses, or other individuals. Through referral to other offices, LICADHO's monitors assist victims to seek remedies, including medical and psycho-social care, material support, and legal counsel. Cases often come to the HRMP through referrals by partners working in community-based groups, people's networks, unions, the media and other NGOs, as well as through clients or their families directly.

CASES AND INTERVENTION

During the first six months of 2016, LICADHO investigated 201 new cases of human rights violations. Each investigation involved collecting evidence through interviewing victims, community members and local authorities.

Continuing a bleak record, rights abuses connected to land conflicts – primarily land-grabs – represented the most common source of human rights violations investigated by LICADHO monitors. 42 newly investigated cases involved multiple families, together affecting a total of 5,908 families. This level is similar to that of last year, and further continued the surge in land conflicts following the 2013 national election.

Throughout the six months, LICADHO monitors also investigated 28 cases involving illegal arrests or detentions, compared to 16 in the first six months of 2015. Monitors documented 31 physical assaults (compared to 19 in the first six months of 2015), eight cases involving killings and four attempted killings.

LICADHO monitors provide para-legal advice to victims of investigated cases, and in 114 of the 201 investigated cases conducted direct interventions, including meetings with the police, courts and other authorities; or assisting the victims to submit cases and petitions. Cambodia has a deeply dysfunctional court system, which means that it can take an excessively long time for authorities to address cases. Often, LICADHO's intervention makes all the difference in whether cases are addressed at all. Despite such challenges, 32 of the newly-opened cases in the first half of 2016 have already been resolved.

As the Cambodian government shows increasing intolerance to freedoms of assembly and expression, LICADHO's monitors continue to record cases of community forums being shut down and peaceful gatherings suppressed. There were at least 42 such cases of groups prevented from gathering in peaceful assemblies, or of citizens prevented from speaking out – which, in these six months alone, represented double the number of such obstructions compared to the entire of 2015. This increase was due to the growing political

tensions – 30 of these cases targeted opposition members or supporters. Throughout the six months, gatherings were not just shut down but actively prevented from happening to begin with – high-level authorities, from the military to the Prime Minister himself, threatened groups with arrest and imprisonment should they dare to gather.

Monitors were deployed for over 160 observations throughout the six months, encompassing community protests, court hearings and union strikes. As well as mediating between authorities and protesters, LICADHO's monitors have a difficult and important role in documenting human rights abuses during such gatherings, including protests and strikes. In a country where authorities have very little respect for freedom of assembly, public gatherings can often turn dangerous – and when this happens, it is even more vital for LICADHO's frontline monitors to bear witness.

Among the spate of human rights abuses in the context of such gatherings during this period were physical violence against union assemblies and arrests of elected politicians and rights workers. For example, on 4 April, at least two trade unionists were injured as a peaceful gathering near Cambodia's National Assembly to protest the draft Trade Union Law (TUL), due to be passed that day, was violently broken up by authorities. Police standing nearby did nothing to stop the violence inflicted on unionists by para-police wielding weapons.

BEARING WITNESS

Another such time was on February 6, when what started as a continuation of a months-long strike in the middle of Phnom Penh ended in bloodshed and arrest when strikers were brutally attacked by members of the Cambodia for Confederation Development Association (CCDA).

Bus drivers working for bus company Capitol Tours, supported by Cambodian Transport Workers Federation and their supporters from Cambodia Informal Worker Association, had been striking on-and-off for two months, after a number of drivers were fired for trying to form a union. On this particular morning some of the 50 protesters attempted to block a bus from leaving the station. Shortly after, some members of CCDA, wielding hammers, metal bars and sticks, charged into the crowd of protesters, savagely beating and kicking the demonstrating bus drivers and their supporters. A number of anti-demonstration police joined in the beatings, while other police and CCDA members tried unsuccessfully to stop the violence. The incident left at least 14 people injured, including protesting bus drivers

and their supporters, one human rights monitor and one police officer. One protesting bus driver and one supporter were arrested.

LICADHO monitors who witnessed the violence were able to provide accurate accounts of the violence, including footage and photos. LICADHO monitors also caught on camera one CCDA thug attacking a bus driver with a hammer. The video was published, and watched over 130,000 times on Facebook alone.

This incident reflected an increasing use of organized groups from the ruling party to commit violence against political or civil groups in the recent past.

On another occasion, on March 29, about 25 families in Kampong Thom province planned to protest against land clearance perpetrated by the local Forestry Administration Official, who was leading excavators – backed by military forces – to clear 78 hectares of land, falsely claiming that the land was reserved. Prior to the clearance, the Forestry Administration had issued threats to imprison community members if they protested or prevented them from clearing the land. LICADHO's monitors observed and documented the event, intervening on behalf of the community with relevant officials to prevent possible violence and to make it more difficult for authorities to follow-up on their threats of arrest.

In another bleakly similar land conflict, the deputy governor of Sihanoukville province led about 100 police and security guards to destroy small businesses along a beach without compensation or even prior notice of the clearance. LICADHO monitors observing and documenting the clearing provided legal consultations with families who had lost their businesses, as well as intervening with the provincial governor's office to request compensation. Monitors also had interviews with media, raising awareness of the case.

In the six months, monitors also deployed to monitor events relating to international days, notably, International Labour Day and International Women's Day. On the latter occasion, police and para-police in Phnom Penh were mobilized to prevent a bicycle rally celebrating the day, which is a national holiday in Cambodia. LICADHO monitors present negotiated for hours with police, documenting the obstruction with photos. Participants were surrounded by police and forced to remain outside the Ministry of Women's Affairs for over three hours before they were finally allowed to leave.

Monitoring the Black Monday Campaign

On May 2, five human rights defenders – four from fellow human rights NGO Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) and one National Elections Committee secretary-general – were charged and jailed after spending three days detained in Cambodia’s Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) in Phnom Penh. The case represented a clear escalation in a far-reaching government assault on civil society, and was a clear reprisal for support provided by rights workers in a politically sensitive case.

While the five were detained inside the ACU, LICADHO monitors maintained a presence outside, along with families and colleagues of the five, as well as other supporters such as local land communities who also wanted to offer solidarity.

One week after the five were sent to prison, civil society launched the ‘Black Monday’ campaign. Wearing black to mourn the loss of human rights in Cambodia, and gathering on Mondays, the day the five were sent to prison, participants intended to hold peaceful demonstrations to call for their release. Disproportionate response and disruption of peaceful gatherings by authorities were to prove a consistent feature throughout the campaign.

On May 9, the campaign’s first day, eight participants in the campaign were detained, including three LICADHO staff members, the director of partner NGO STT, and four land activists. LICADHO monitors were on the spot and documented the arrests, allowing information to be quickly and efficiently shared. One monitor was able to accompany two detained LICADHO staff for questioning at the immigration police office in Phnom Penh.

Subsequent Black Monday campaign events were to prove no less dramatic. The government made it clear it considers wearing black clothes participation in a “colour revolution”, a term it selectively uses to misrepresent social movements as violent insurrection. From 9 May to the end of June, there were at least 25 completely arbitrary arrests of those participating in Black Monday, most of whom were detained in police stations for some hours before being released.

LICADHO’s monitors, present at every Black Monday event, were able to quickly share news of each arrest, and in many cases accompany those detained to police stations to offer paralegal advice.



Black Monday participants gather for the first Black Monday campaign event, Phnom Penh, 9 May 2016

The trafficking of people overseas for labour purposes or purposes of sexual exploitation remains a serious concern in Cambodia, and combatting human trafficking is a core part of LICADHO's HRMP. The number of trafficking cases investigated by LICADHO – 34 in the six months – remained approximately level to those investigated in 2015. Cases investigated by LICADHO included 24 cases of labour trafficking and 10 cases of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

One major source of labour trafficking cases comes from women trafficked overseas to work as domestic workers.

In December 2015, the government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Malaysia to once again to send domestic workers to Malaysia. With similar MoUs signed with Saudi Arabia and Qatar in February and May, respectively, the trend is set to continue.

Following a similar trend to previous years, many of the sexual exploitation cases involved women trafficked to China for forced or arranged marriages. LICADHO's monitoring team assisted with the repatriation of 80 Cambodians who had been trafficked to four different countries – China, Indonesia, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

Bringing Them Home: Women Trafficked to China

34-year-old Phanny was among the three women repatriated home by LICADHO after being trafficked to China in the first six months of 2016. Nearly three years ago, Phanny met a woman, Nat, in her home province of Tbong Khmum, who convinced Phanny to travel to China with promises of job opportunities and a better life. On October 24, 2013, she left for China's Nan Jing province accompanied by another trafficking broker.

Phanny's first sign that something was wrong was when she arrived in China to see a man giving 78,000Y (about USD\$11,600) to the broker she travelled with. Just days later, Phanny and the man who had paid for her were married.

Phanny soon realized that her new life in China was not the one she had been promised. Her new husband's family mistreated her; she had no financial independence and often not enough food.

She tried to escape twice, but was unsuccessful. The third time, her passport was confiscated by her husband, who promised to buy a flight home for her. On 22 March, 2016, realizing that the promised flight would never materialise, Phanny fled to the Cambodian embassy in China. After staying there for a month, Phanny contacted LICADHO to ask for help to bring her home. LICADHO immediately contacted Chinese police and consular staff, lobbying them to help Phanny to find shelter and obtain necessary documentation. LICADHO also coordinated with other NGOs to pay for Phanny's ticket home.

On April 24, eight months after her first escape attempt, Phanny finally arrived back in Cambodia. LICADHO continues to support Phanny both materially, to help her re-integration back into her old life, and with legal advice and support to take action against her traffickers through the criminal justice system.

LICADHO's support, both in China and in Cambodia, helps victims of trafficking like Phanny return to their homes. Perhaps even more importantly, such support also lends them the strength they need to strive for justice against those who trafficked them in the first place.

Women's Rights Monitoring Project



As well as monitoring attacks on civil and political rights, LICADHO has a specific focus on investigating rights abuses perpetrated against women. Sexual and domestic violence is widespread in Cambodia, and through investigation, legal support and referrals, LICADHO's women's rights team supports women victims of such abuse through the murky judicial system.

As in the HRMP, cases come to LICADHO from a variety of sources including direct requests from victims or victims' relatives, referrals by other NGOs, and media reports. As part of their investigations, LICADHO's women's rights monitors interview victims and witnesses, contact the police and prosecutors to ensure investigations are carried out, provide legal services to clients or refer them to other organisations that provide such services, provide first aid and basic material support, refer clients to shelters where necessary and follow up cases with authorities with the aim of ensuring that all steps are taken to investigate and prosecute the perpetrator.



A LICADHO monitor and client visit the police station

CASES AND INTERVENTION

From January to June 2016 LICADHO investigated 98 cases involving women. 62 were cases of domestic violence, and 33 were cases of rape. There was one case of indecent assault and one acid attack.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Of the domestic violence cases investigated by LICADHO, around half closed with an agreement between the husband and wife to continue living together. It is common practice amongst local authority figures and the police to mediate between couples, even in cases of physical violence, and to close cases by merely requiring husbands to sign a contract saying they will not use violence in future. This outcome is highly unsatisfactory: it makes it difficult to ensure the future safety of the victims, and also means that many perpetrators of domestic violence go unpunished. However, in around half of the cases investigated by LICADHO, the couples separate, and in around half of those, the husband is convicted for domestic violence.

RAPE

Rape cases continue to make up a disturbingly high proportion of the work of LICADHO monitors and securing a conviction remains challenging. In many cases such as these, legal representation during the court process is essential to ensure that the correct procedure is followed and to try and prevent the release of the suspect as a result of corruption.

In one case that began in 2015, a 23-year-old woman with a learning disability was raped while she worked collecting plastic bottles not far from her home. The victim's mother reported the case to the police who arrested the suspect. LICADHO's monitors supported the victim by gathering evidence, providing legal advice and giving material support. As the case progressed, LICADHO's monitor worked with a lawyer from partner NGO ADHOC who represented the victim in court. In January 2016, the perpetrator was convicted of rape, sentenced to five years in prison and ordered to pay \$1,750 compensation.

Seeking Justice for Victims of Domestic Violence

In one case, a woman was beaten regularly by her husband over many years, particularly when he drank. In the past the police had been called but the victim said that she didn't want to take any action against her husband because her children needed their father. She had asked the police just to educate her husband not to use violence. In May 2015, after she refused to give him money for gambling, her husband beat her and threw a coconut at her head, knocking her unconscious and breaking her teeth. The violence took place in front of the couple's daughter.

The victim's parents took her to hospital and contacted the police who arrested the husband. After reading about the case in the newspaper, a LICADHO monitor contacted the victim. The monitor provided the victim with legal advice and helped her file a divorce complaint at court. LICADHO's Social Work Office also provided some material support. In April 2016, the woman's husband was sentenced to two years in prison with one year suspended.

Children's Rights Monitoring Project



LICADHO's children's rights monitoring project investigates a range of abuses of children including rape, physical assault and child labour. As with women's rights cases, LICADHO's monitors provide legal services and support the victims' families through the legal process. Working with LICADHO's Social Work Project, they also provide basic material support and medical services to victims.

Between January and June 2016, LICADHO investigated 131 cases involving children. In line with past trends, rape remained by far the most common form of child rights violation investigated by LICADHO and of the 131 cases 116 were rape cases, four of them gang rape. Because of under-resourced policing and corruption throughout the judicial system it can often be difficult to secure prosecutions. However, in some cases it is possible to achieve some justice for victims.

Supporting Victims of Child Rape

In one case investigated by LICADHO monitors, a thirteen-year-old girl was raped three times by her father. The girl tried to tell her mother but her mother said it was her fault that she had been raped and so the girl ran away from home. Eventually she found work on a farm, and told the farm owner why she had run away. The farm owner contacted LICADHO and asked for help.

The LICADHO monitor interviewed the girl and took her to the police station, where she told the story of what had happened to her. The police contacted the police near the girl's home who arrested her father. The LICADHO monitor also took the girl to hospital for a medical examination, provided material support and helped her to file a complaint to court. In order to ensure she was supported during the court process, LICADHO arranged for another NGO to provide her with a lawyer. In April 2016, the girl's father was convicted of rape and sentenced to seven years in prison.



A young rape victim interviewed by a LICADHO monitor



Human rights abuses have a myriad detrimental effect on the wellbeing of those subject to them. Communities who face land grabbing, and victims who suffer human rights abuses, are often stressed, disoriented and left in shock by such traumatic events, which risks health and livelihoods. Peaceful protesters are injured by para-police and security forces deployed to crack down on them; imprisoned human rights defenders suffer from terrible living conditions and knowledge that their families are forced to find additional money to support them in jail. Healthcare and social services in Cambodia are often primitive or woefully lacking, leaving those subject to rights abuse, with no access or support.

LICADHO's Medical and Social Work Offices seek to bridge the gap in vital services, providing human rights defenders and those subject to human rights abuses with necessary medical and social care. By ensuring the long-term health and well-being of these groups, the two offices assist in their empowerment, allowing them to regain their strength and continue their pursuit of justice and human rights.

MEDICAL PROJECT

LICADHO's Medical Office provides free medical care to victims of human rights abuses, frontline activists and human rights defenders. It has a particular focus on vulnerable communities, including people living in eviction or resettlement sites, as well as prisoners. LICADHO remains the only human rights organization in Cambodia with a medical team that provides free medical care to victims of human rights abuses, and its work is crucial in preserving and promoting the health of activists, human rights defenders and vulnerable communities.

From January to June, the medical team assisted in over 70 protests, demonstrations and public gatherings observed by LICADHO's human rights monitors, and on such occasions provided urgent medical care to 82 injured front line activists and victims of human rights violations (27 men and 55 women). LICADHO's Medical Office also provided medical treatment to 306 human rights defenders for various health problems (201 men and 105 women). In the short-term, these activities conducted by the Medical Office allow such activists to return to their jobs and daily livelihoods as soon as possible. Consequently, the services offered by the Medical Office not only have positive health implications, but financial ones as well.

One such case of LICADHO doctors providing urgent medical care on the streets came following the violent attack on striking Capitol bus drivers and their supporters by pro-government union CCDA on 6 February. LICADHO medical staff treated 12 of 14 injured individuals on site for trauma injuries, providing immediate medical assistance and first aid. Seven patients were later transferred to Bayon clinic for x-rays, CT scans and sutures. One man, aged 45, was injured

Treating Trade Unionists

On 4 April, about 50 unionists attempted to rally in front of the National Assembly, where the Trade Union Law was set to be voted on later that day. They were met with roadblocks and about 100 mixed police forces preventing them from gathering. Undeterred, the group staged a peaceful rally in front of the roadblocks instead. Barely two hours later, about 30 para-police suddenly and violently shut down the gathering. Sot Chet, a 36-year-old unionist, was beaten by para-police and suffered a facial injury. Doctors from the Medical Office brought him to LICADHO to stitch up his wound, and continued to provide him with medical treatment until he fully recovered from his injuries.

As a result of the treatment he received from LICADHO's medical team, Chet regained his health and was able to continue his work and support his family as usual. By receiving treatment from LICADHO, Chet and his family didn't have to pay prohibitively expensive medical care. This is true of all victims of human rights abuses treated by LICADHO's doctors – by providing their services to vulnerable communities free of charge, the Medical Office allows patients to avoid paying exorbitant costs to receive essential health services.



A LICADHO doctor treats an injured bus driver by the side of the road after a gathering was violently broken up, in Phnom Penh, 4 April 2016

to the head and was sent to a private hospital to take an x-ray and to clean and stitch his injuries. The Medical Office continued following up with him and gave him treatment until he recovered from his injuries and was able to return to work.

Doctors, nurses and pharmacists also coordinate with the Prison Project to visit and hold consultations with detainees in prisons. In the six months, the Medical Office visited five prisons a total of 65 times, providing treatment to 1,942 patients (1,645 men and 297 women; 1,889 detainees and 53 prison guards).

Compared to past years, the focus of the project shifted in terms of the activities it conducted owing to limitations placed on the Medical Team's access to prisons by the General Department of Prisons (GDP), which falls under the Ministry of Interior, following the passage of the Law on Associations and NGOs last year.*

As a result, for much of the reporting period the Medical Office was prevented from visiting detainees in almost all prisons, and was unable to provide them with medical

treatment or check up on their health conditions except for in emergency situations. As a result, the Medical Office shifted some of its time, focus and energy towards providing additional treatments to victims of land grabbing and displaced communities living in relocation sites.

The Medical team visited fourteen relocation sites, treating 2,475 patients (855 men and 1620 women). In these sites, thousands of families have lived in dire conditions for years following forced evictions from their homes in Phnom Penh. Additionally, LICADHO's Medical Office worked to raise awareness and educate communities on how to prevent and avoid communicable diseases.

From January to June, our doctors, nurses and pharmacists provided medical treatment in-office for 542 patients with minor health issues, including political activists, victims of human rights violations and their families (271 men and 271 women).

* As of July 2016, the newly-appointed GDP has signed new permission letters allowing LICADHO's medical team to resume their prison work.

Treating Human Rights Defenders Overseas

From 27 March to April 3, seven key human rights defenders travelled to Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok, Thailand to undertake comprehensive medical check-ups and specialized medical treatments. They were accompanied by a team of two LICADHO doctors and LICADHO's Director for necessary logistics, development of health plans and follow-up care prior to, during and after the medical trip. As well as providing much-needed healthcare for the injured or ill human rights defenders, the trip also served as capacity-building for LICADHO's medical team: training for medical staff in Cambodia is not easily available, so from such trips, LICADHO's doctors have benefited from valuable interactions and information from Thai medical specialists which have vastly improved their skills, knowledge and abilities in their work. Treating human rights defenders has always been a key component of LICADHO's medical team to ensure that these individuals can continue to influence, mobilise and lead their constituent networks, and moving forward, the Medical Project will also focus on pre-emptive medical care of human rights defenders.



LICADHO doctors treat victims of land grabbing in Koh Kong, January 2016

SOCIAL WORK PROJECT

Given the lack of public social welfare services offered by the state, many families come to LICADHO to receive short-term assistance from the Social Work Project (SWP). Consequently, the goal of the project is to provide essential material support, including food, water and shelter, as well as counseling services, to victims of human rights abuses and their families. The Social Work Project assesses the needs of victims in each case to determine the nature and extent of the support that LICADHO can offer. In doing so, the SWP aims to alleviate the burdens faced by thousands of impoverished Cambodians, as well as victims of human rights violations.

During the first half of 2016, the social work team provided food assistance and material supplies across 15 provinces in Cambodia, in 322 cases, reaching 2,250 victims of human rights abuses (1,027 men and 1,223 women) and 533 families of victims. This included assistance to 308 families in communities affected by land development projects. With the basic assistance provided by LICADHO's SWP, victims and their families can focus their energy and attention on other pressing areas of concern, such as the defence of their rights.

The project was also very active in assisting community activists as they participated in advocacy efforts and protested against rights violations. The Social Work team provided assistance, including food, drinking water, and some material support, in 12 such cases, involving roughly 1,250 participants. Among those cases was a demonstration in Run Ta Ek (Siem Reap province) involving 229 participants protesting against land grabbing that displaced 38 families.

As the number of political prisoners in Cambodia edges higher, one key activity of the SWP is to provide assistance and material support to those jailed for political reasons, including activists, human rights defenders and protesters, as well as their families.

Specifically, over the six months the SWP supported 46 such individuals, including six land activists – one woman and five men – two members of the Independent Monk Network for Social Justice, four environmental activists, one Capitol bus driver and one supporting unionist injured and arrested following a violent crackdown on a strike, 11 labour rights activists from Bavet, four detained human rights staffers and the detained election official, one youth activist and 15 other political prisoners aligned with the opposition party activists.

LICADHO's SWP provided monthly support - encompassing food, material and money - to these 46 prisoners for as long as they remained incarcerated. The project also provided their families with money to visit them in jail, ensuring that such political prisoners had access to much-needed human contact.

When the SWP provides assistance to the families of prisoners, it can be crucial in alleviating some of the stress and financial gaps caused by the temporary loss of a fam-

ily's breadwinner.

In the long term, assistance from the Social Work Project, especially in the form of income generation grants and livelihood support schemes, can have a lasting impact and a sustained benefit for recipient families, allowing victims to turn their lives around and continue to fight for their rights.

The social work team works in close cooperation with other projects within LICADHO, including the Monitoring, Legal, Medical and Prison teams. Collaboration with other departments allows LICADHO to provide victims of human rights abuses with holistic services, which address a variety of their most pressing needs.

In the first six months of 2016, the Social Work Project provided food assistance and material support in collaboration with fellow projects in 270 cases (89 cases with the Monitoring Office, 75 cases with the Child Rights Office, 39 cases with the Women's Rights Offices and 67 cases with the Prison Project).

CONTINUING THE STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS

On 2 February, 25 families living in Boeng Ampil village, Sdao commune, Ratanak Mondul district, Battambang were violently evicted by a mixed group of authorities, including the police, Forestry Administration, commune chief, village chief, and the district deputy governor. Approximately 15 houses, including 47 hectares of land were affected by the eviction, leaving traumatised villagers with no resources with which they could continue their newly-necessary struggle for land rights. After conducting an assessment of the community's needs, LICADHO's social work team assisted the community with much-needed resources.

Shortly after the initial eviction, the Social Work team provided food and a mosquito net to 20 families (84 individuals, including 40 men and 44 women). Four months later, as the community's efforts to rebuild their lives were picking up steam, the Social Work Project again provided food, water and mosquito nets to 14 families.

By having some of their basic material needs taken care of by LICADHO, the communities were then able to concentrate their efforts on rebuilding their lives, constructing 14 new houses in the process and filing applications for land titles. 17 children who had suspended their education during the forced eviction have since returned to school.

This demonstrates how important the short-term assistance provided by the Social Work Project can be in helping victims of rights abuses get back on their feet.



Cambodia's justice system is endemically corrupt and deeply politicized. In the courtroom, respect for fair trial rights is vanishingly rare, and it is very difficult to secure justice. The judiciary, including prosecutors and lawyers, are often compromised, with courts regularly used as a repressive political tool or to advance private interests. Chronic misuse of the justice system has seen scores of political prisoners jailed in the last year, and activists are increasingly targeted under bogus legal charges. The legal rights of convicted inmates are also routinely violated, with some detained past the end of their sentence.

The Human Rights Legal Project lawyers provide legal services, including representation to victims in cases of land grabbing, rape, and domestic violence. From January to June 2016, LICADHO lawyers also represented human rights defenders, and victims of human trafficking, domestic violence and other cases at all court levels.

Working with the Monitoring Office to investigate, find evidence and talk to witnesses, LICADHO lawyers provide a full spectrum of high quality legal services free of charge to victims of human rights abuses, protecting clients' civil rights and increasing clients' understanding of legal procedures and making any required interventions. LICADHO lawyers act promptly to provide maximum assistance to their clients at each stage of the legal process: submitting evidence and witness statements when they are received; petitioning the prosecutor and investigating judge to dismiss cases when no inculpatory evidence exists; and arguing the merits of each case before the trial court, appellate court, and Supreme Court as necessary.

Through this broad range of legal services and advocacy, more people understand LICADHO's work and their own rights. As NGO and community partners gain a stronger understanding of LICADHO's legal services – and as activists are increasingly targeted under bogus legal charges – the need for LICADHO's legal services has dramatically increased.

LICADHO's lawyers maintain partnerships with other NGOs to work with as a legal team or co-defend in high-profile cases. This strategic approach allows lawyers from different organisations to provide strong cooperative legal representation and reduce pressure on individual lawyers and minimize direct confrontation with the opposing parties. LICADHO also seeks to form a consensus with partner NGOs, UN agencies, the international community and other stakeholders, in an effort to discourage the court officials from unnecessarily detaining clients or engaging in corrupt or abusive activities. Due to the increased abuse of the criminal justice system during the first six months of 2016, in some cases LICADHO's legal project has cooperated with and shared information with donor countries or foreign embassies.

CASES

During the first six months of 2016, LICADHO'S Human Rights Legal Project took on nine new cases including four land grabbing cases representing 10 male clients; four rape cases representing five female clients (all victims are minors); and one Special Case representing a single female client seeking redress following an acid attack.

In these cases, LICADHO lawyers have interviewed these clients, gathered evidence, submitted documents on their behalf and engaged the court to ensure they receive justice in a fair and timely manner.

During the six months, LICADHO lawyers also provided representation in a number of high profile cases, including representing three human rights defenders from the environmental NGO Mother Nature. These three clients were placed in pre-trial detention on spurious charges of “threatening to cause destruction followed by an order” in August 2015. LICADHO lawyers regularly visited these clients in Koh Kong prison, gave legal advice and supported the wellbeing of the human rights defenders and their families, working closely with the LICADHO social work team.

Some LICADHO clients during the six months have also secured their release from prison following the intervention of LICADHO lawyers. Strong courtroom representation by LICADHO lawyers has also defended the right to a fair trial for LICADHO clients. By publicly stating rights and making legal challenges against unfair judicial and law enforcement practices – for instance violation of the presumption of innocence – the state authorities are placed under greater scrutiny and are less able to violate the rights of individuals with impunity.

LAND GRABBING

LICADHO lawyers represented three land grabbing clients in Ratanakiri province who were accused of having committed offences under the land law in relation to an incident in 2013. The three – Chroek Chreun, Sout Soeurn and Em Chan – are all farmers who were involved in a land dispute. They were charged with committing violations on private property under Articles 243, 248 and 253 of the Land Law following a dispute over ownership.

LICADHO lawyers began accompanying the clients on 21 May 2015. Their trial took place on 2 December 2015, after which they were sentenced to two years’ imprisonment and fined three million Riel. LICADHO lawyers challenged this conviction at the Court of Appeal on 25 April 2016, with a verdict delivered on 25 May 2016. The Court of Appeal revised the sentencing, partially suspending the sentence and leaving the three LICADHO clients with only two months imprisonment remaining. However, due to bureaucratic delays at the Court of Appeal the order for release was not transmitted to the Ratanakiri authorities. LICADHO lawyers pursued this case with judges, clerks, prosecutors and prison officials in both Phnom Penh and Ratanakiri and secured the release of the three on 2 June 2016.

In the longer term, LICADHO legal advice increases the capacity of communities to claim their rights and conduct their own advocacy. This is particularly true for communities involved in land disputes with members being represented by LICADHO lawyers. With this knowledge, it is common for communities to travel to support LICADHO clients during their court hearings and they are increasingly confident to demand justice.

Representation for Political Prisoners

A major success resulting from LICADHO legal representation was the release of the three human rights defenders from environmental NGO Mother Nature. LICADHO lawyers represented three defendants in a politically-motivated case punishing the men for their strong activism in the face of state repression and unlawful and environmentally harmful business practices in Koh Kong. All three human rights defenders – Sim Samnang, 28; Try Sovikea, 24; and Sun Mala, 22 – had been detained since August 2015 after being charged with “threatening to cause damage, defacement or destruction followed by an order” after a peaceful protest boarded sand barges allegedly conducting unlawful sand dredging near the Andoung Teuk bridge, Botum Sakor district, Koh Kong.

The three were detained on 17 August 2015 and remained in detention prior to their trial. LICADHO lawyers made numerous attempts to secure their release on bail; however, due to the politically-motivated nature of the case, the courts denied each attempt. LICADHO lawyers visited their clients on a regular basis, providing advice and moral support to the three over the course of over ten months of detention. The three were unlawfully over-detained – resulting in a strong legal challenge by LICADHO lawyers to expedite their trial.

At trial on 27 June 2016, LICADHO lawyers, working with partner lawyers from other NGOs, gave strong representation, highlighting the lack of evidence against their clients and challenging the judge repeatedly where he was in violation of fair trial rights. While the three were eventually convicted, LICADHO lawyers secured a major positive result as the sentence passed was suspended, meaning the three avoided spending a significant additional amount of time imprisoned in poor conditions. LICADHO lawyers accompanied their clients at their release and to subsequent celebrations where the three were reunited with their families. As a consequence of this intervention, the three are confident to continue their activities as human rights defenders and their communities were encouraged to make strong displays of solidarity.

In Cambodia, prison populations are among the most marginalized and abused in the country, with squalid living conditions, pervasive corruption and regular abuse of legal rights among the many difficulties that prisoners have to deal with on a daily basis. The inhumane treatment suffered by Cambodian prisoners is a testament to the fact that this segment of the population is often neglected and forgotten by society.



By monitoring the experiences of prisoners as they navigate the choppy waters of the Cambodian justice system, and advocating for their rights with the relevant authorities and institutions, LICADHO's Prison Project seeks to better the lives of detainees and provide them with the respect and dignity that they deserve. The combination of social services, medical attention, legal representation and support received from Prison Project researchers can reduce social alienation, provide legal empowerment, ensure the respect of their rights and improve their living conditions enormously. The Prison Project's work is also expected to help reduce recidivism rates in the prison populations that it monitors and assists.

Following the increasing restrictions on prison access imposed on LICADHO in the second half of 2015, the Prison Project had to reevaluate its work to ensure that it can continue to actively serve prison populations. Such restrictions are characteristic of the shrinking space for civil society in Cambodia, as well as the government's increased exertion of control over actors deemed critical of the ruling regime.

LICADHO's Prison Project was able to maintain access to three prisons in the first six months of 2016 (Kampong Speu, Kampong Cham and Pursat – access to Pursat prison was revoked in late June), allowing it to interview

both convicted and pre-trial detainees. Prison project researchers guarantee that interviews are voluntary, conducted in a safe environment, and confidential when necessary. This monitoring is key to assessing risks of torture and mistreatment, as well as to assess the medical needs of detainees, so that they can receive any necessary treatment from the Medical Project. During the first half of 2016, the Prison Project conducted 67 interviews with detainees in these prisons.

For the remaining 15 prisons where access had been restricted, researchers conducted 146 voluntary interviews with the relatives of detainees. In some cases, researchers were able to meet periodically with prison directors to obtain statistics on the prison populations (including total population, male/female breakdown, inmates under 18 years old, etc). In addition, the Prison Project interviewed 107 detainees after they had been released from incarceration, which provided useful information about their time in prison.

With the information obtained in its interviews, LICADHO's Prison Project is able to perform interventions on behalf of prisoners, in particular in cases of excessive pretrial detention. During this time, LICADHO intervened in 20 cases of over-detention, on two occasions for appeals and in two special cases involving child detainees. Along

with the Legal Project, Prison Project researchers helped facilitate legal representation for 15 prisoners seeking a lawyer to defend their case. In addition, researchers may intervene to request relevant documents from the courts, concerning detainees that they have interviewed.

LICADHO's Prison Project often works in cooperation with the Social Work team, providing social services and food to 106 inmates and relatives of inmates. The Prison Project also occasionally assisted children whose parents were behind bars, either by placing them with partner organizations or by facilitating their visits with parents.

During the first half of 2016, the Prison Project continued to cooperate and coordinate its activities with other projects and teams in LICADHO and with partner NGOs. In particular, the Prison Project had close contact with the Social Work team, the Medical Project and the Legal Project, as well as with fellow organizations Il Nodo, Hagar, TPO Cambodia, Metta Karuna, Mith Samlanh and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Prison Project regularly engages in constructive dialogue with prison authorities and relevant governing and legal institutions. Through this dialogue the Prison Project hopes to raise awareness about the legal framework of prisoner rights, and gradually help to improve institutional practices, with special regard to the situations of vulnerable prisoners such as children and women.

The Prison Project helped celebrate two days in particular: International Women's Day (8 March) and International Children's Day (1 June). On 8 March LICADHO visited 338 female inmates in several prisons, organizing special activities and providing food and entertainment. On 1 June LICADHO visited 398 children across seven Cambodian

prisons, bringing gifts, food, entertainment and engaging in songs and dance for the children's amusement. Speeches were given on both days to mark the importance of the celebrations and the value of both women's and children's rights.

TRIAL MONITORING

During this period, LICADHO's Prison Project commenced a new activity: trial monitoring. Since March 2016, researchers in LICADHO's Phnom Penh and provincial offices have attended and monitored 143 trials relating to cases investigated by LICADHO, involving 219 defendants, in 15 courts across the country to verify that the legal rights of detainees are respected and that defendants receive a fair trial. Such monitoring allows LICADHO a unique insight into the experiences of prisoners as they go through the justice system, which was previously covered less extensively through in-prison interviews. It has already revealed some shocking statistics: of the 143 trials, monitors recorded 74 cases where defendants did not even have a lawyer present to represent them; there were 70 recorded instances of defendants confessing to their alleged crimes before the trial even started, and at least 13 cases where it was clear that the confession had been procured through threats, coercion or torture in police custody.

The presence of trial monitors can dissuade judges from using threats and means of intimidation against detainees, as they are aware that their actions will not go unnoticed. Consultations with Prison Project researchers can also help prisoners and their relatives receive important information about the legal process, including the steps that they must take to file appeals, lodge complaints or how they can participate in the court proceedings.

Helping to Free an Unlawfully Detained Child

On May 26, 2016 LICADHO's Kampong Thom office received a visit from a man whose son had been arrested a week prior on May 19, on charges of drug dealing, and ordered into pre-trial detention in Kampong Thom prison on May 20. The man confided to LICADHO prison researchers that his son was only 12 years old, and expressed his concern that he would be held in a cell with convicted adults.

Under Article 212 of the Cambodian Code of Criminal Procedure, minors under the age of 14 cannot be subject to pre-trial detention. The boy's father presented LICADHO with his son's birth certificate, issued by the chief of Kroya commune in Kampong Thom province, which proved that the child was under 14 years old. A Kampong Thom Prison Project researcher promptly wrote an intervention letter with a copy of the birth certificate attached, and sent it to the investigating judge, asking for the release of the underage child. The researcher subsequently met with the court clerk assigned to the case on June 8 and convinced him to write a letter to the case prosecutor, asking for a decision on the matter. With the researcher's help, the prosecutor met with the commune chief on June 10 and verified the legitimacy of the birth certificate. On June 21 the prison researcher followed up with the family and the court clerk and learned that the child had been released from pre-trial detention.

These kinds of direct interventions on behalf of LICADHO's Prison Project are integral to ensuring that defendants' rights are respected, that the rule of law is upheld, and especially in cases like these, that young minors are not detained in potentially dangerous environments with convicted adults.

ADVOCATING FOR FOR A BETTER CAMBODIA



Boeung Kak Lake community activists marching in Phnom Penh,
31 March 2016

Speaking Out for Justice



As Cambodia's human rights situation deteriorates, it is ever more important to engage in people-driven advocacy which has the power to effect real change. Targeting policy-makers with specialised reports complements campaigns which emerge from the grassroots, and ensuring accessible advocacy which can reach hundreds and thousands of Cambodians ensures that no voices are lost.

LICADHO's advocacy programme is at the core of the organisation's goal to promote social justice and human rights in Cambodia. Informed by our monitors, lawyers, medics and social workers on the ground, LICADHO's advocacy strives to effect policy change, build movements, and raise awareness from the grassroots to multilateral institutions. In the midst of Cambodia's social media boom, LICADHO's advocacy is also a key source of information for community representatives and members of other grassroots groups as our photos, news items and updates can be shared widely in seconds.

Throughout the past six months, LICADHO continued to

use strong advocacy to speak out in support of Cambodians who have suffered human rights abuses, working closely with networks of partners to hold the Cambodian government accountable at home and abroad for its human rights abuses. LICADHO's advocacy team has used a range of advocacy methods, drawn from accurate, on-the-spot information from colleagues on the ground – from the production of written and audio-visual materials to direct contact with those in positions of influence.

THE REPRESSION BEHIND THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAW

2015 and the first six months of 2016 have seen the en-

actment of a raft of authoritarian and widely-condemned laws which seek to control civil society and suppress dissent. Ongoing campaigns against the laws by civil society, including LICADHO, continue: in March, LICADHO published a briefing paper which analysed the Telecommunications Law's most egregious provisions which, among others, allow the government to secretly intrude into the private lives of individuals, destroy evidence before criminal trials, and seize control of the entire telecoms industry if arbitrarily deemed warranted.

The briefing paper served as a follow-up to LICADHO's 2015 report *Going Offline? The Threat to Cambodia's Newfound Internet Freedoms*, which warned that the then-draft Telecommunications Law would entrench state powers to control the very architecture of the internet as well as online expression.

The government hit back at LICADHO's analysis, pointing out that it was done "without discussion and understanding in advance with the ministry".

ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

In November 2015 LICADHO published a report on the treatment of rape in the Cambodian justice system. In 2016, LICADHO continued its advocacy work on the topic.

In January, LICADHO published a radio discussion programme originally recorded and broadcast on WMC radio during the 2015 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence. LICADHO also produced a Khmer-language factsheet with a short summary of the main findings and recommendations of the report.

On 8 March, International Women's Day, LICADHO planned a bicycle rally in Phnom Penh, starting at the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) and ending nine kilometres away at the National Assembly, to celebrate the day and to draw attention to violations of women's rights in Cambodia, including the issue of impunity for violence against women. As about 200 people – including



"With the Telecoms Law that allows for any online expression, whether public or private, to be overheard and punished, the government is signaling even more clearly their intention to throttle freedom of expression online."

– LICADHO statement, March 2016.

"The ministry would like to flatly dismiss the comments that the Law on Telecommunications badly affects freedom of expression and privacy in the Kingdom of Cambodia."

– The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications in a 'clarification' released in response to LICADHO's Telecommunications Law analysis, March 2016.



Participants distribute flowers and factsheets to police on International Women's Day celebrations in Phnom Penh, 8 March 2016



1,105,677

People reached with LICADHO's Facebook posts.

Increasing LICADHO's social media reach

Facebook 'likes': 17,459

Twitter followers: 9,447

Publications from January to June 2016

23 flash news items

8 media statements

3 briefing papers (opinion pieces)

1 article

2 videos

2 audio books

1 document

participants from land communities, youth groups and NGOs – gathered at MoWA for the rally, the group was joined by gatherings of women garment workers from local garment factories.

During the rally – which was curtailed by authorities under the ludicrous pretext of it 'blocking traffic' – LICADHO distributed its factsheet to participants, as well as bystanders. Participants subsequently delivered roses and factsheets to both bystanders as planned, and also the authorities blocking the bicycle ride from going ahead.

The factsheet was also recorded as a 15 minute audio clip which was made available on the LICADHO website and distributed on instant messaging app Telegram. The full report was recorded as a Khmer language audio book and published on LICADHO's website and on audio CD, together with the recording of the WMC radio programme.

In April 2016, LICADHO submitted an application to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, seeking an inquiry into the issues raised in the rape report. Cambodia is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Woman and its optional protocol, which allows individuals to take cases of discrimination to the committee and, in cases where violations of the convention are serious and systematic, to ask the committee to conduct an inquiry. Cambodia ratified the optional protocol in January 2011 and LICADHO's

application is the first to make use of its provisions. The CEDAW process can be long; however, LICADHO has heard that the Committee is considering our submission with a view to undertaking an inquiry. LICADHO will continue to follow up the application and seek further opportunities for advocacy on the issues covered by the report.

INNOVATIVE ADVOCACY

LICADHO's online presence is growing daily, and these six months saw the organisation continue to release innovative audio-visual material designed to capture national and international attention and lead to change. The volume of media publications and international NGOs using LICADHO's information is testament to LICADHO's credibility, interesting content and consistent accuracy.

As well as extensive coverage in local newspapers, both English and Khmer language, information garnered from LICADHO's provincial and Phnom Penh offices was used in publications across the world, including the Guardian, Al Jazeera, the Independent and Deutsche Welle. Groups such as the International Transport Workers' Federation and IFEX also used LICADHO footage and information.

SPREADING THE WORD

All LICADHO's publications are released in Khmer and English. As internet literacy and access throughout the country increases, LICADHO's Khmer language material continues to gain more traction, particularly through social media platforms such as Facebook. The specialist training of LICADHO monitors provides an almost unique first-hand insight into key events as they take place, which provides a vital link between the situation on the ground, the Phnom Penh-based advocacy team and our online audience.

As well as producing in-depth briefing papers on critical issues, LICADHO's publications include short Flash News items which highlight notable human rights events, such as trials or protests, particularly those which take place in the provinces and as such may be less covered by traditional media. LICADHO also publishes longer media statements released both singly and jointly with other civil society groups.

LICADHO also significantly improved and updated the accessibility and reach of its online advocacy materials throughout the six months. In 2015 (January – December) LICADHO's website had 94,452 unique visitors. In the first six months of 2016 it rose to 68,126 unique visitors over just the first six months. LICADHO also saw the highest number of average unique visitors in the website's lifespan: for the first time LICADHO has 11,000 unique visitors every month. Significantly, Khmer content shared online has had a significant boost in terms of reach, as evidenced by Facebook shares and page hits.

LICADHO increasingly uses and shares photos and footage taken by its staff in the provinces, which highlights the impact of training in photography and the increased and encouraged use of smartphones delivered to LICADHO staff as well as grassroots partners.

THE REVOLUTION WILL BE TELEVISED

A video taken by monitors at the scene of the violence against Capitol bus drivers in early February was cleaned and edited for clarity by LICADHO's video's team. The 50-second clip was shocking, clearly showed a helmeted man wielding a hammer, using it to smash a fallen protester on the back and head.

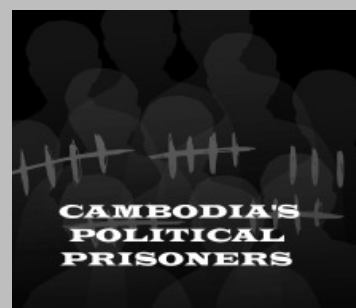
The video was shared on Facebook in both Khmer and English very soon after the event, and the footage went viral: it reached nearly 600,000 people and was viewed an astonishing 137,000 times. English-language newspaper the Cambodia Daily embedded the footage in an article about the violence. The International Transport Workers' Federation used the video in a statement joining the International Trade Union Confederation in writing to the Cambodian government to express outrage over the violent attacks, joining a wave of international condemnation.

The video helped to fuel a union and grassroots group-led boycott of both Capitol and Cambodia for Confederation Development Association (CCDA), the government-organised union responsible for the violence. The boycott was joined by countless civil society groups and gained significant coverage in national press.

Advocating for Political Prisoners

The past year has seen an unprecedented spike in the number of political prisoners in Cambodia. In response, LICADHO's advocacy team has drafted numerous joint statements and Flash News items, often released with a chorus of other local and international groups, focusing on such spurious imprisonment. LICADHO also focused efforts on lobbying to embassies, development partners and multilateral institutions, sharing information and raising awareness on political prisoners.

Shortly after four colleagues from fellow human rights NGO ADHOC and one election official were jailed in May, LICADHO launched a new webpage – 'Cambodia's Political Prisoners' – highlighting the alarming uptick in the number of political prisoners incarcerated inside Cambodia's jails. It was published to an unprecedented interest: over 10,000 people visited the political prisoners webpage in the first 48 hours. Not everyone met the webpage with the same enthusiasm, however. It swiftly drew the ire of the government who threatened LICADHO with closure, arguing that it appeared to violate provisions in the Law on Associations and Non-governmental Organisations (LANGO) that require political neutrality.



One week after the five were jailed, supporters from grassroots groups, unions, NGOs and other civil society launched the Black Monday campaign. This too was met with severe censure from the government. Various government spokespeople warned against groups of citizens gathering in black clothes, calling it tantamount to a 'colour revolution'.

The first Black Monday gathering, outside CC2 prison, resulted in eight detentions. Since then, gatherings have proved no more peaceful – the next seven gatherings, until the end of June, resulted in 25 detentions of 16 people. Groups were even warned by the government about posting Black Monday messages online, or wearing black in their own offices.

Despite these threats and intimidation, civil society has continued to steadfastly call for the release of the five political prisoners, and mourn the death of human rights.

A snapshot of Black Monday events held since the incarceration of the five include:

9 May: on the first week of Black Monday, LICADHO provided transportation for groups and communities to gather outside Prey Sar, where four of the five human rights defenders were being held. Authorities blocked groups from gathering outside the prison by roadblocks and a heavy deployment of police, the first time in a decade that supporters had been prevented from holding such events outside the prison.

27 June: Boeung Kak Lake, who had been holding consistent Black Monday events despite virtually weekly arrests, marked the 8th Black Monday by holding a peaceful gathering in their community, releasing balloons and distributing lotus flowers provided with support from LICADHO.

LICADHO ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

Cambodia remains a focus for the international community; much of LICADHO's advocacy is aimed at informing and influencing international policy on Cambodia human rights issues.

For example, in March LICADHO, with international human rights federation FIDH and Cambodian rights group ADHOC, released a statement and timeline ahead of a crucial human rights dialogue between the EU and Cambodia. After the dialogue, the EU delegation released a statement that was significantly stronger than previous statements, calling for "a halt to the judicial harassment of the acting leader of the opposition and representatives of civil society organisations".

In July, a US Senate Committee drafted legislation that would similarly block \$77.8 million in aid to Cambodia unless the government ceases its "violence and harassment" against the opposition party and human rights workers.

TAKING CAMPAIGNS OVERSEAS

LICADHO's overseas trips allow the organisation not only to raise awareness abroad and to forge new connections, but also to learn new strategies and tips to use in its work back in-country.

From April 3-9, four Cambodians participated in the annual Civil Rights Defenders conference, a gathering of over 160 human rights defenders from 35 countries in Stockholm, Sweden. Representatives from LICADHO and other civil society groups took part in an extensive capacity-building programme, which included interactive and practically-oriented trainings, workshops, and meetings, as well as seminars and panel discussions. A further two days were spent raising human rights issues and challenges – including attacks against HRDs, restrictions on fundamental freedoms, labour abuses, land grabbing and harmful legislation – with Cambodians living in Sweden, international NGO Diakonia, the Swedish media and the former human rights Ambassador to Cambodia.

Back in Scandinavia, LICADHO's Director participated in the annual Oslo Freedom Forum – a gathering of over 230 human rights defenders, heads of state, journalists, policymakers, authors, artists and students in Oslo, Norway – from May 23-25. Following the conference were two days of meetings with the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association, representatives from four technology companies, representatives from Norwegian People's Aid, Sanitet, Clean Clothes Campaign, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Amnesty Norway, and the Norwegian Human Rights Foundation to discuss Cambodia's woeful human rights situation.

LICADHO's Director then spent four days until June 3, 2016 in Stockholm, Sweden to continue advocating on key human rights issues, including Cambodian political prisoners, with heads of Diakonia, Civil Rights Defenders, Forum Syd, and a former UN Special Rapporteur on Cambodia. Further advocacy meetings also covered labour and union issues in Cambodia – notably, such meetings included representatives from brands such as H&M, as well as labour initiatives including Clean Clothes Campaign and Ethical Trade Initiative.

From June 18 – 25, seven Cambodians, including three senior LICADHO staff, travelled to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to learn from Malaysian civil society and key actors on strategies and methods used to build social movements and increase public engagement in human rights issues. The week-long exchange learning trip included meetings with lawyers, environmental activists, journalists, anti-corruption NGO staff, organizers of Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Bersih) gatherings and members of the opposition parties. During the trip, LICADHO staff were trained on how to respond to interrogations – a skill which looks set to become ever more necessary in the current repressive climate.

International Advocacy

"The EU must ensure the dialogue with the government is not limited to rhetoric but leads to meaningful action by the authorities. Anything short of the swift release of all 17 opposition MPs, members, and supporters will have a devastating impact on Cambodia's progress towards an inclusive democracy."

– International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) and LICADHO joint statement, April 2016.

"We urge the Cambodian authorities to resume as soon as possible a peaceful and constructive dialogue with the opposition, which we see as a prerequisite for legitimate forthcoming elections."

– European Union Delegation and EU Heads of Mission in Phnom Penh statement, May 2016.

Amplifying Grassroots Advocacy



One of the most effective roles a NGO can play in promoting and advancing rights and justice is to support communities' own advocacy efforts by assisting them to become more effective and visible, thus building their capacity to defend their own rights.

Of LICADHO's informal partnerships, nearly three quarters are with grassroots groups, membership-based groups and informal networks, which offer mutually complementary services and values. LICADHO's advocacy supports grassroots partners, building courage and amplifying their voices to a wider audience.

Previous events and experiences – the threat of repressive legislation, restrictions to freedom of assembly and the imprisonment of human rights defenders and labour activists – shows not only that Cambodia is becoming more repressive, but that cross-sectoral cooperation, the sharing of expertise and working in synergy is becoming more pertinent. As well as supporting networks in Cambodia, LICADHO's international advocacy support raises people's voices and links them with local, regional and international groups and networks, resulting in a far greater collective pressure.

In Cambodia's increasingly repressive environment, it is vital that civil society maintains its strength and courage to speak out against attacks on human rights and democracy. The services LICADHO provides – such as protection and legal aid to threatened human rights defenders and activists, medical support to victims of human rights and state abuse, and amplifying grassroots advocacy – to support such activism is ever more crucial.

SUPPORTING PEACEFUL PROTESTS

One of LICADHO's main roles is that of supporting peaceful protests, led by groups on the ground calling for their rights to be respected. Such protests cover a number of human rights concerns, from labour rights, to land issues, to repressive legislation and calls to free political prisoners. Sometimes, LICADHO's support during such protests and gatherings includes financial costs, covering transport and water for the communities or groups. Often, LICADHO will document the event, publicising it to a wider audience via its website and social media channels.

Secure Digital Communication

One way in which LICADHO provides grassroots groups and activists with the tools and skills to amplify their own voices is through training in digital advocacy. Training from LICADHO and LICADHO Canada over the last six months has enabled scores of human rights defenders, land and labour activists, youths and monks to use ICT effectively for human rights mobilisation and advocacy.

By distributing smartphones, facilitating access to professional video equipment and software, increasing information-sharing and video dissemination and enhancing sharing between different groups and activists, the project has had a significant impact on online advocacy in Cambodia. With better access to support for actions, campaigns and events, innovative ideas and creative solutions to highlight human rights abuses have emerged and grown across the country. This has proven invaluable both during large public gatherings and to advocate on social media. For example, during occasions where authorities tried to disrupt activists' legal right to gather and assemble, organisers were able to quickly inform human rights monitors and media.

Security training has proved particularly important in light of growing repression by the government, both online and offline.



Community members and supporters protest against imprisonment of Mother Nature activists, Koh Kong, 28 June 2016

SOME NOTABLE EVENTS IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS INCLUDE:

- On 11 January, land activists from Poipet’s railway community in Banteay Meanchey, continued a series of protests against a railway project which has affected almost 1,000 families in Poipet and Phasar Kandal commune. One of the activists, Chheng Bunhak, was arrested and charged with incitement following a similar such protest on 14 December.
- On March 25, about 300 people from Koh Kong province marched to submit petitions to their district governors protesting land grabbing by sugar producers. The communities delivered the petitions to the district governors demanding their support in an ongoing land conflict with Thai company KSL, majority owner of Koh Kong Plantation Co and Koh Kong Sugar Co. The conflict with KSL relates to the land grabbing of over 900 hectares of

land and the loss of livelihoods for local families after the company, at the time co-owned by CPP Senator Ly Yong Phat, were granted adjacent land concessions for the two subsidiary companies totaling almost 20,000 hectares. The communities have been actively protesting the land grabs by the sugar company since the dispute began in 2006.

- On May 1, International Labour Day, over 1,400 workers mobilized around Phnom Penh to celebrate. More than 600 people from unions, associations and other groups gathered at the Olympic Stadium to call for better respect of workers’ rights and freedom of association. At the National Assembly, another 800 people also gathered to celebrate. Some participants also protested the ongoing detention of five human rights defenders, at that time detained in the office of Cambodia’s Anti-Corruption Unit.



Unions, associations and youth celebrate International Labour Day celebrations in Phnom Penh, 1 May 2016

The People Speak: Demanding Justice for Kem Ley



Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians joined Kem Ley's funeral procession in Phnom Penh, 24 July 2016

"Once I do a political analysis, I think my life will be taken, because we know that we are surrounded by a flock of wolves, tigers, cobras, and crocodiles. However, I want everyone to show their braveness. If we live in fear we are going to be oppressed forever."

– Political analyst Kem Ley before his assassination on 10 July.

Residents of Phnom Penh have become increasingly used to traffic choking the capital's streets but on the morning of 24 July 2016, they were faced with a very different type of traffic jam.

Ten of thousands of Cambodians brought the city to a standstill as an 8km procession followed a casket on the start of its 78 kilometres journey to a small village south of the capital. Thousands more lined the route, holding lotus flowers, handing out water and baguettes and holding photos of a man's smiling face.

The face being depicted was that of Kem Ley. Two weeks after being gunned down in central Phnom Penh, Kem Ley's body was being taken to his home village for burial.

It was an extraordinary scene. Rarely outside the death

of royalty or pop stars does the loss of one life provoke so much grief from so many. Mr. Ley was a well-known grassroots organiser and political commentator recognised for his willingness to make honest assessments of his country's ills.

Just two weeks earlier on the day of his murder another extraordinary scene unfolded as a crowd of over five thousand escorted the body through the streets of Phnom Penh. It was a spontaneous act of defiance that became the largest public gathering since the government cracked down on an opposition movement that had grown in the wake of a hotly contested election in 2013.

Kem Ley was murdered just after 8.30 am on 10 July, by a man who fired two bullets at point blank range.

A crowd of over 1000 people formed as the news spread and refused to allow the authorities to take the body away. When an ambulance bearing the markings of the Cambodian Red Cross, an organisation headed by PM Hun Sen's wife arrived, sections of the crowd chanted, "It's the

car of the killer." Eventually after negotiating with police the body moved through the city, draped in a Cambodian flag to the temple, Wat Chas.

From the number of mourners who made their way to Wat Chas, over the two weeks Kem Ley's body rested there, it was clear that his funeral procession was going to be very large. Radio Free Asia estimates two million of his compatriots came to pay their respects, causing members of the funeral committee to delay the funeral procession to allow time for those traveling from the countryside.

For those who came to pay their respects to an overtly political man there was no doubt that Kem Ley's killing was a political act. So it was perhaps unsurprising that his funeral itself became a political issue.

In the weeks leading to the funeral, the funeral committee engaged in at times tense negotiations with Phnom Penh's local authorities about the route of the procession but agreed that participants should not use political banners or insulting language.

These negotiations took place against a backdrop of blatant government intimidation as it brought tanks from border areas to near Phnom Penh, ostensibly for 'repairs'. A sense of foreboding permeated the city as the day of the procession loomed, due to the authorities' deliberate attempts to intimidate their own citizenry.

Against this setting LICADHO mobilised 30 staff, including 7 monitors, to monitor the procession and bear witness to what, some felt, was going to be an inevitable confrontation with authorities. These monitors were strategically spread throughout the procession and fed into LICADHO's live streaming of the event, which provided both locals and the world, an invaluable real time window on both the procession and its wider context.

A heavy police presence was mobilized and as the procession left the city they blocked petrol stations to prevent cars and motorbikes accompanying the casket from refilling. Those lining the road, however, quickly countered this petty tactic by offering free petrol. Along stretches of the route onlookers encouraged the participants with chants of "Struggle, Struggle; We Need Justice."

Despite concerns about the potential confrontations with authorities the procession reached Kem Ley's home without major incident some 10 hours after setting out from Wat Chas. The lack of confrontation perhaps had more to do with the sheer number of individual Cambodians who refused to be intimidated than with their own government's good intentions.

Although Cambodia is rapidly changing, with a young population and ever greater percentage of smartphones and Facebook users, for many, especially outside the cities, Khmer language radio is the primary way to access news and information about Cambodia and the world.

As a regular guest on two of the most prominent non-governmental Khmer language outlets, Voice of America and Radio Free Asia, Kem Ley would offer long analysis of what was happening in the country and what needed to change.

These links with the Cambodian population were deepened by his attempt to create a grassroots political network across the country and later the founding of the Grassroots Democracy Party.

The assassin's veto also cut short his '100 nights project' that saw him visiting and spending one hundred nights with rural Cambodians across the country to better understand their problems and concerns.

His murder also came just days after the release of a Global Witness report that mapped out the private wealth and business interests of Hun Sen's family. When interviewed on the report for Voice of America he spoke with typical directness.

Political violence is hardly new to Cambodia, the country's recent history is punctuated by the killing of environmentalists, union organisers, protesters and dissidents who have challenged the status quo.

This latest killing came after a protracted and ongoing crackdown by the government on opposition politicians, and activists, still shaken and surprised by losses in the 2013 elections, and eyeing upcoming commune and national elections.

The widespread and continually repressed desire for change among Cambodia's long suffering population found a loud and dignified expression in gathering around Kem Ley's funeral, which is likely to be a watershed moment in Cambodia's journey to realise greater democracy and human rights.

In one voice, tens of thousands of individuals peacefully articulated, with a quiet dignity two simple messages: they would honour those who struggled for their rights and they would not be cowed by those who murdered them.

Even in death, Kem Ley's simple and direct advice lingers on, now splashed across thousands of Facebook profiles and t-shirts and repeated by tens of thousands wanting change, "Dry your tears and continue your journey."

APPENDICES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

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APPENDIX 1: PUBLICATIONS

JANUARY 2016

Audio Book: Unite against Impunity for Rape in Cambodia Radio Show, January 11, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/media/index.php?id=27&c=1>

Document: Joint Letter to US Secretary of State John F. Kerry, January 25, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=212>

FEBRUARY 2016

Video: Protesting Bus Drivers Beaten by Armed Thugs in Cambodia, February 6, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=63>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Civil Society Strongly Condemns Violence Against Demonstrating Bus Drivers, February 6, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=398>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): CSOs Declare Support for Mother Nature and Condemn Crackdown Against the Organization, February 15, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=399>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Boycott of Capitol Tours Following Brutal Suppression of Trade Union Activity Grows as 50 Civil Society Groups Declare Support, February 23

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=400>

MARCH 2016

Audio Book: Getting Away With It: The Treatment of Rape in Cambodia's Justice System, March 7, 2016

http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/collection/34/getting_away_with_rape_2016

Video: LICADHO's Medical Team Pays Tribute to Valued Partner

March 28, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/video.php?perm=64>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): New Law on Telecommunications: A Legislative Attack on Individuals' Rights and Freedoms, March 31, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=401>

Briefing Paper: Cambodia's Law on Telecommunications: A Legal Analysis, March 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=214>

Briefing Paper: Getting Away With It: The Treatment of Rape in Cambodia's Justice System, March 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=213>

APRIL 2016

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Cambodia: EU must demand an end to persecution of opposition during human rights dialogue, April 29, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=403>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): CSOs call upon authorities to immediately cease harassment of human rights defenders, April 29, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=402>

Briefing: Timeline of harassment of opposition MPs, members, and supporters, April, 2016

<https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=215>

MAY 2016

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Civil Society Condemns Charging of Human Rights Defenders, MAY 2, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=404>

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Civil Society Condemns Escalating Intimidation of Human Rights Defenders

May 10, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/pressrelease.php?perm=405>

JUNE 2016

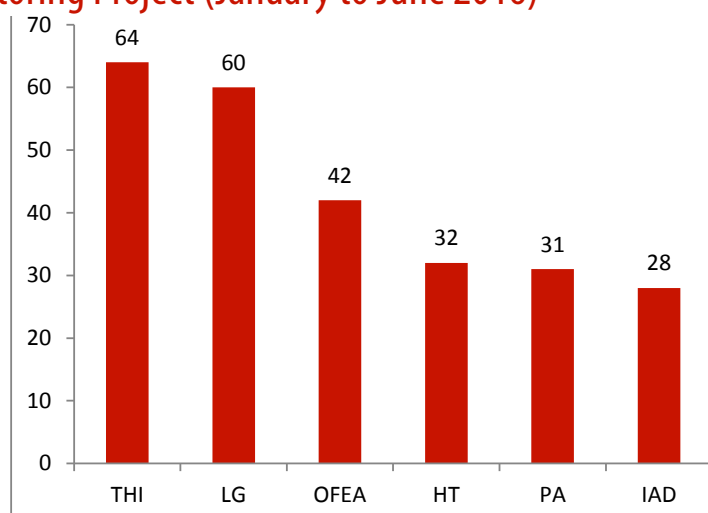
Article: Prey Speu Detention Center Should be Shut for Good

June 8, 2016

<http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20160608/147/index.html>

APPENDIX 2: MONITORING PROJECT STATISTICS

Most common violation investigated by the Human Rights Monitoring Project (January to June 2016)



THI: Threats, Harassment, and Intimidation

LG: Land Grabbing

OFEA: Obstruction to Freedom of Expression / Assembly

HT: Human Trafficking

PA: Physical Assault

IAD: Illegal Arrest, Detention

Land grabbing (LG) and forced eviction (FE) cases newly investigated by LICADHO from January to June 2016

(including all cases featuring state-involvement and affecting multiple families)

	LG & FE Cases	Families Affected	Families Evicted	Cases Involving Land Concession	Cases Involving Military
B. MEANCHEY	7	139	0	0	0
BATTAMBANG	1	108	0	0	1
K. CHAM	0	0	0	0	0
K. CHHNANG	2	37	0	0	0
K. SPEU	4	98	64	2	2
K. THOM	5	419	0	1	1
KAMPOT	6	950	3	0	3
KOH KONG	1	319	0	1	1
PHNOM PENH	1	244	0	0	0
PURSAT	1	20	0	0	1
RATANAKIRI	7	3,098	0	4	1
SIEM REAP	3	10	0	0	0
SIHANOUKVILLE	2	31	31	0	1
SVAY RIENG	0	0	0	0	0
KANDAL	0	0	0	0	0
TAKEO	0	0	0	0	0
TBONG KHMUM	2	435	0	0	0
TOTAL	42	5,908	98	8	11

Challenges & Lessons Learned

Victims of human rights violence are consistently threatened by perpetrators, and are often reluctant to bring perpetrators to courts. Because of this, many cases of violent human rights violations are dealt with privately or via local authorities rather than the judicial system.

Authorities are often uncooperative, especially when it comes to providing information related to sensitive human rights cases such as land grabbing and force eviction.

Authorities criticize LICADHO's support to the communities, as well as its publications. However, LICADHO will continue to support grassroots groups through legal assistance, monitoring, protection and capacity building services.

Lack of communication with community representatives can pose a problem as often communities lack resources telecommunications resources. Monitors maintain relationships with as many community representatives as possible in order to keep communication lines open.

In May, three LICADHO staff were among those detained and questioned for a whole day by national counter-terrorism police and a prosecutor before being released in the evening.

Status of human rights monitoring cases investigated from January to June 2016

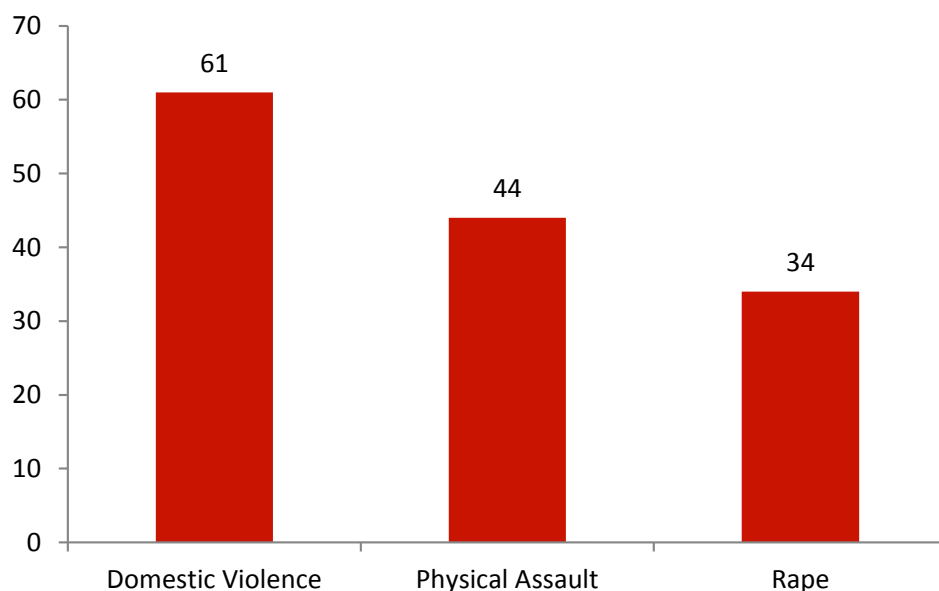
Case type	Total cases	Cases pending				Cases resolved	
		Sent to court	Charged by prosecutor	Authorities	Land commission	Resolved	Unresolved
Killing	6	3	0	3	0	0	0
Attempted killing	2	0	0	2	0	0	0
Mob killing	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Attempted mob killing	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Death threat	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Torture	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Physical assault	27	10	7	8	0	2	0
Threats or intimidation	10	3	0	4	0	1	2
Illegal arrest/detention	10	6	3	0	0	1	0
Trafficking - labour	24	0	0	16	0	8	0
Trafficking - sexual	8	0	0	6	0	2	0
OFEA*	9	1	0	17	0	10	6
DAP**	5	2	0	2	0	1	0
Land grabbing	56	5	2	31	15	3	
Forced eviction	4	0	0	3	1	0	0
Failure to prosecute etc	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
Special case	6	2	0	2	0	2	0
Signboard interference	3	2	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	201	36	12	97	16	32	8

*OFEA Obstruction to freedom of expression/assembly

**DAP Destruction/illegal appropriation of property

APPENDIX 3: CHILDREN'S & WOMEN'S RIGHTS STATISTICS

Most common violations investigated by the Women's Rights Monitoring Project from Jan. to June 2016



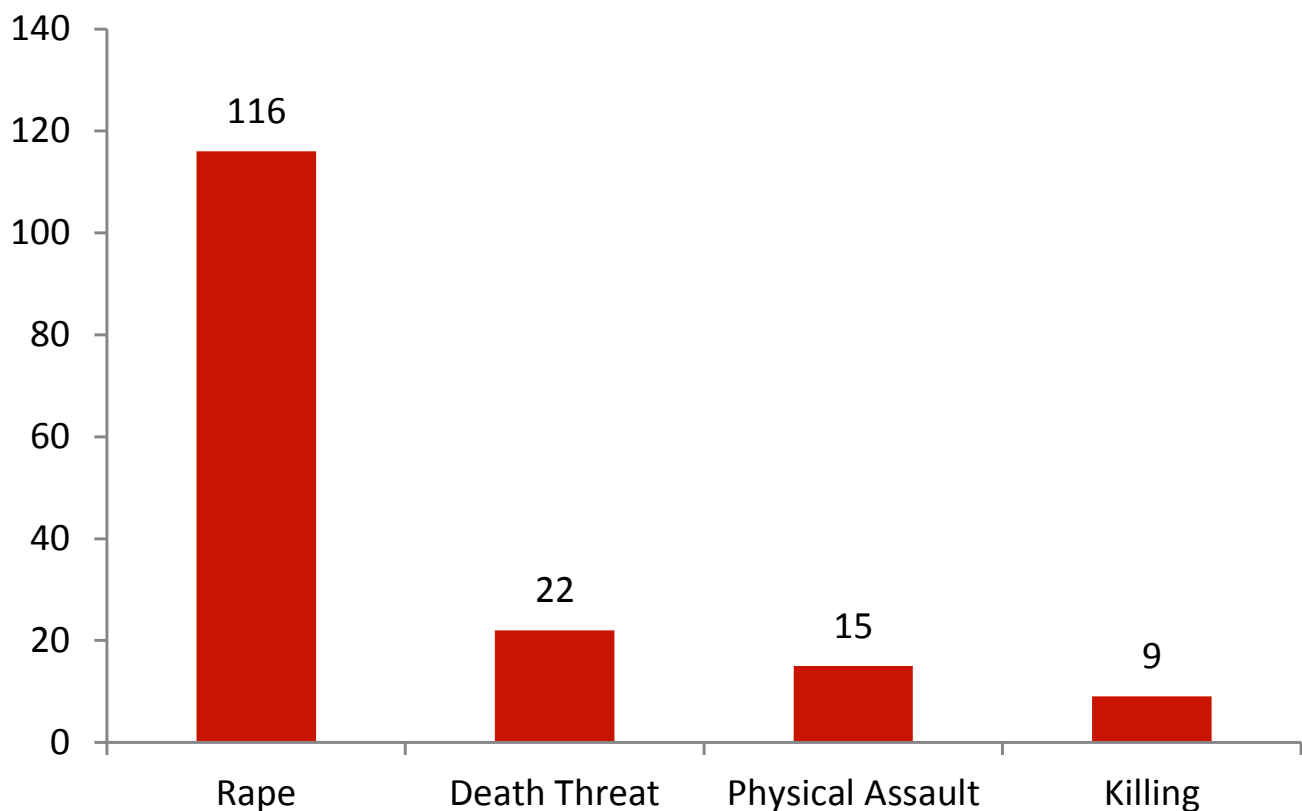
Women's rights cases opened from Jan. to June 2016 pending with authorities

Type	Police	In Court Process				Total
		Suspect escaped	Suspect arrested	Under investigation	Suspect released on bail	
Domestic violence	5	3	24	19	0	51
Rape	3	1	20	3	0	27
Indecent assault	1	0	1	0	0	1
Acid attack	0	1	0	0	0	1
Trafficking - sexual	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	8	5	46	22	0	81

Challenges & Lessons Learned

Victims of domestic and sexual violence require a range of services to meet their various needs. These include legal advice, medical treatment, psychological counselling, housing and other material support. LICADHO can meet some of these needs but it does not have all the necessary expertise within the organisation and the sheer number of cases makes it difficult to provide a comprehensive service to all clients even in areas where staff do possess the expertise. For example, whilst the organisation is able to provide legal advice to all clients, it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide legal representation in court as our legal team is overstretched and organisations with whom we cooperated in the past have lost funding, changed their mandate or do not have capacity. Given the amount of corruption in the court system, lack of legal representation can have a serious detrimental impact on clients' cases. Furthermore, the nature of the work means that all clients have experienced some degree of trauma. Services providing treatment for trauma are extremely limited and most of those that exist are not free. This means that very few clients receive the treatment they need and instead are forced to cope alone.

Most common violations investigated by the Children's Rights Monitoring Project from January to June 2016



Children's rights cases opened from January to June 2016 pending with authorities

Case	Police	Suspect escaped	In court process		No action	Total
			Suspect arrested	Suspect released on bail		
Rape/ Attempted Rape	1	13	85	3	8	110
Indecent Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0
Killing	0	1	1	0	0	2
Attempted Killing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sex Trafficking	1	0	0	0	0	1
Trafficking by Labor	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trafficking by Adoption	0	1	0	0	0	1
Physical Assault	2	0	1	0	0	3
Child Domestic Violence	0	0	1	0	1	2
Child Domestic Work	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Case	1	1	1	0	2	5
Total	5	16	89	3	11	124

APPENDIX 4: LEGAL AND PRISON STATISTICS

New cases opened by Legal Project (Jan.-June 2016)

New case type	No. of cases	Male clients	Female clients	Total clients
Land grabbing	4	10	0	10
Human rights defender	0	0	0	0
Domestic violence	0	0	0	0
Special case	1	0	1	1
Rape	4	0	5 (All minor)	5
Total	9	10	6	16

Monitoring trials of prisoners/pre-trial detainees (Jan.-June 2016)

Provincial	Number of Trials Monitored
Phnom Penh	15
Kandal	8
Kampong Som	9
Kampong Speu	14
Kampot	9
Kampong Chhnang	18
Kampong Cham	10
Kampong Thom	8
Koh Kong	6
Pursat	16
Battambang	5
Banteay Meanchey	14
Siem Reap	5
Svay Rieng	6
Toatal	143

Challenges & Lessons Learned

It is well known that the Cambodian justice system is fundamentally flawed and corruption is rife at every level – leading to regular abuses of the rule of law and unfair decisions by politically-compromised members of the judiciary. However, instances of such abuses have intensified over the past six months, as the government seeks to crack down on dissent ahead of the next election. Court officials are often biased in favor of well-connected and powerful business interests, ruling party officials; prosecutors frequently bring charges without sufficient legal grounds and mistakes; and negligence by police or court officials can lead to wrongful detention of HRDs and activists. Exculpatory evidence, witness testimonies and other statements brought forward by LICADHO lawyers are frequently ignored and defence lawyers are often prevented from cross-examining prosecution witnesses. LICADHO lawyers will continue to persevere despite the attitude of the courts, which will involve maintaining good communication and ensuring lawyers don't respond with a negative attitude, taking the opposite stance to negative behavior.

APPENDIX 5: SOCIAL WORK & MEDICAL PROJECT STATISTICS

Social work assistance by case type (Jan.-June 2016)

Case type	Number of clients (individuals)
Rape (victims and family members)	78
Domestic violence	71
Victims of human trafficking	45
Illegal arrest	51
Land grabbing & forced eviction	1740
Prisoners	67
Physical assault	9
Vulnerable children and family members	139
Others	51
Total	2251

Food and material assistance to communities affected by land grabbing from January to June 2016

No.	Community/Location	Province	Number of Families
1	Samaki Menchey	Kampong Chhnang	7
2	Oral	Kampong Speu	17
3	Ratanak Mondul	Battambang	20
4	Bavel	Battambang	65
5	Boeung Kak	Phnom Penh	10
6	Chhlung	Kratie	26
7	Lor Peang	Kampong Chhnang	30
8	Bantey Srey	Siem Reap	38
9	Kampenh Chas	Sihanouk Vile	24
10	Kiri Sakor	Kiri Sakor	10
11	Phnom Srouch	Kampong Speu	61
Total			308

Challenges & Lessons Learned

The major challenge faced by the Social Work Project continues to be that it is limited in the amount of long-term support it can provide to victims of human rights abuses. Tens of thousands of Cambodian families have lost their homes and livelihoods due to land grabbing in the past few years, making it one of the gravest social issues faced by the country. Due to the magnitude of the problem and the extent of the Social Work team's resources, it would be impossible for LICADHO to provide long-term, sustained assistance to all affected communities. That being said, the Social Work Project addresses this shortcoming by conducting rigorous assessments of victim's needs, referring victims to other organizations that are able to provide assistance, and by shifting its efforts towards endeavors focused on long-term self-sustainability, such as providing grants to victims to help launch small businesses.

Medical consultations & visits by location (Jan.-June 2016)

Location	Consultations	Visits
Kampong Cham prison	1,016	29
Pursat prison	860	18
Phnom Bat resettlement community	765	22
Oudong resettlement community	690	21
LICADHO Office	542	119
Trapeang Anchang resettlement community	439	12
Tuol Sambo resettlement community	357	11
Senserei Mongkol community (Kp. Thom)	189	1
During protests (different locations)	70	4
CC1 (Prey Sar) prison	58	12
Oboengroung community (Kampong Thom)	26	1
Lor Peang community (Kampong Chnnang)	11	1
Field visits (different locations)	9	3
Phnom Penh (PJ) prison	5	3
CC2 (Prey Sar) prison	3	3
During campaigns (different locations)	3	1
Total	5,043	261

Medical consultations by age and sex (Jan.-June 2016)

	Aged 0-12	Aged 13-17	18 and above	Total
Male	390	77	2,334	2,801
Female	312	46	1,884	2,242
Total	702	123	4218	5,043

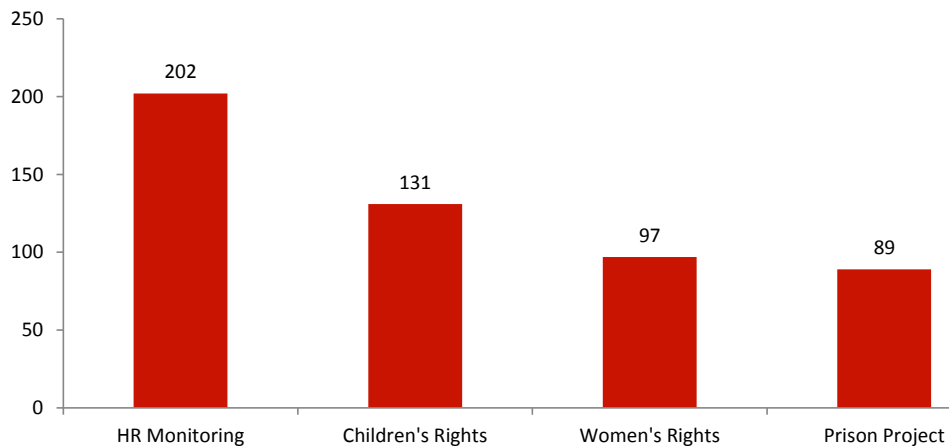
Challenges & Lessons Learned

The main challenge faced by the Medical Office during the first six months of 2016 was that the GDP had not yet reinstated permission for LICADHO doctors to give medical treatment to detainees in all the prisons to which they previously had access. The medical team was limited to just two prisons (Pursat and Kampong Cham) where prison directors had agreed to let them treat prisoners (by the end of the reporting period, access to Pursat was also revoked). This unjustified constraint on medical services from the GDP was a critical blow to the medical needs of detainees in Cambodian prisons, where unhygienic living conditions and various health risks make the provision of regular medical care imperative. The Medical Office continued to provide medical treatment where it had access and, in cooperation with the Prison Project, made requests to the GDP for renewed access. In an encouraging turn of events, a tentative agreement was reached with the GDP in late July, and the medical team hopes to resume its full activities in all Cambodian prisons in the next few months.

The Medical Office faces some internal challenges as it lacks specialized doctors who can offer specific treatments for all medical issues faced by its patients. Given that the government severely underfunds the health system, patients with severe ailments and medical issues, including for example cancer, often find themselves unable to afford hospital treatments. Consequently, LICADHO's doctors often find themselves forced to refer patients to hospitals or specialized clinics for diseases and injuries that they do not currently have the capacity to treat. In the future, the Medical Office will continue to search for medical specialists willing to take on the challenges and rewards that come with working in a human rights NGO.

APPENDIX 6: ADVOCACY AND DOCUMENTATION STATISTICS

Cases entered into central database from Jan. to June 2016



LICADHO's Online Presence (Jan.-June 2016)

LICADHO website:

- Total hits: 2,203,863 hits
- Total visits: 142,985 visits

Top five countries accessing LICADHO's website:

1. Cambodia
2. United States
3. Hong Kong
4. France
5. Vietnam

LICADHO Facebook

- Total reach: 1,105,677
- Total likes: 17,413
- Reach Peak: 407,319 due to the statement and the video clip shows thugs wearing helmets and wielding sticks and hammers savagely beating bus drivers and their supporters as they protested in Phnom Penh on February 6, 2016. The video went viral: it was shared 4,060 times and was viewed 137,000 times on Facebook.

LICADHO Twitter:

- 9,447 followers at the end of June

Challenges & Lessons Learned

LICADHO's advocacy takes place in the context of government structures and national institutions fully controlled by an entrenched ruling party. It remains highly challenging to determine the medium and long-term impact of advocacy in such a volatile, corrupt and unpredictable social, political and economic environment.

In May, LICADHO was threatened under LANGO after publishing a webpage highlighting some of Cambodia's political prisoners. LICADHO did not take the page down and will continue to publish strategic and accurate advocacy material.

For many vulnerable Cambodians, the only way to express disapproval or request solutions is through public protest. However, it remains dangerous to be a protestor in Cambodia. Countless peaceful gatherings were shut down by authorities, often violently, and materials seized. LICADHO continues to support peaceful protests, providing resources and/or publishing them on our website.

As money from China becomes more integral to Cambodia's economy, some of LICADHO's traditional advocacy targets – development partners and governments of donor countries – are becoming less influential in Cambodia policy. Nevertheless, such partners retain influence for now and are still receptive to LICADHO's advocacy efforts, so LICADHO will continue to engage in strategic advocacy.

Notable LICADHO appearances in international media (from Jan. to June in 2016)

Date	Source	Title of article	Link
18/1/2016	Al Jazeera	Cambodia's mothers behind bars	http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/01/cambodia-mothers-bars-160114121403408.html
12/2/2016	International Transport Workers' Federation	ITF condemns arrests and beatings of transport workers in Cambodia	http://www.itfglobal.org/en/news-events/news/2016/february/itf-condemns-arrests-and-
1/3/2016	The Economist: Intelligence Unit	Hun Sen pledges redistribution of controversial agro-leases	http://country.eiu.com/article.aspx?articleid=523988436&Country=Cambodia&topic=Economy&subtopic=F_7
15/3/2016	The Independent	Cambodia jails student over Facebook call to 'change the vulgar regime'	http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/cambodia-jails-student-over-facebook-call-to-change-the-vulgar-regime-a6932666.html
30/3/2016	Yonhap News Agency (South Korea)	Cambodia, promoting private-profit prisons... "prisons for the rich," criticized	http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2016/03/30/0200000000A KR20160330122400084.HTML
15/4/2016	Global Voices	Cambodian Human Rights Group Criticizes Telecoms Law	https://advox.globalvoices.org/2016/04/15/cambodian-human-rights-group-criticizes-telecoms-law/
9/5/2016	Associated Press Daily Mail Macau Daily Times	Cambodia police detain 8 at peaceful protest against arrests	http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3580810/Cambodian-police-detain-protesters-against-arrests.html
19/5/2016	Economy Watch	World Bank May Vote to Lift Punitive Ban on Funding to Cambodia	http://www.economywatch.com/news/World-Bank-May-Vote-to-Lift-Punitive-Ban-on-Funding-to-Cambodia0519.html
1/6/2016	Sveriges Radio	Svenskt bistånd kan bidra till förtryck i Kambodja	http://sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=83&artikel=6444344
8/6/2016	Libération	La démocratie cambodgienne ne tient plus qu'à un fil	http://www.liberation.fr/planete/2016/06/08/la-democratie-cambodgienne-ne-tient-plus-qu-a-un-fil_1458216
29/6/2016	East Asia Forum	Cambodia's devastating economic land concessions	http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2016/06/29/cambodias-devastating-economic-land-concessions/