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A BIG THANK YOU FROM TPO TO YOU!

By Dr Chhim Sotheara, Executive Director

Dear friends of TPO,

Throughout the entire month of June, TPO Cambodia has run an online campaign to raise more funds for our new project to treat and unchain mentally ill Cambodians in rural areas who have been chained or locked up by their desperate families due to a lack of knowledge, financial resources and access to mental health treatment. We are humbled and grateful for the support we have received, and delighted that we have reached our fundraising goal.

You can find more information in this newsletter in which we highlight this new project '**Operation Unchain**' and inform you about TPO activities from the second quarter of 2015.

Your support and contributions are making a big difference to some people's lives! Thank you to everyone who has supported and contributed to our program. Awkun chran!

In Focus: Operation Unchain

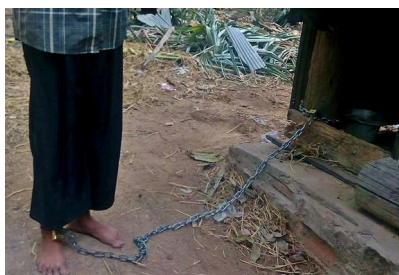
In Cambodia, there are still many mentally ill patients who have been locked up at home by desperate family members - chained to the house or a tree. This happens in communities around the country, because family members do not know how to deal with the patients, there are no mental health services available in their community and they lack the finances to seek help further afield or to even take care of the patients.

TPO has been working in response to mental health issues, but due to funding limitations we can't respond to all needs in Cambodia. Fortunately, during TPO's 20th Anniversary Celebration this year, His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia kindly donated US\$ 5,000 to TPO Cambodia for mental health work. With this donation, the TPO team set up a new project '**Operation Unchain**' to raise awareness of mental health issues in rural Cambodian communities and demonstrate that there are alternatives to chaining up family members struggling with mental illness.

Our team aims to treat and unchain as many patients as possible and we decided to run an online fundraising campaign to raise more funds (<http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/operation-unchain/>).

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Mentally ill patient who has been chained to the house

With this funding support from so many generous people, the TPO mobile team has started its mission, traveling to rural areas to treat patients, educate families on how to take care of their loved ones, and to train local health workers

The online fundraising campaign was a success, we spread the word about ‘Operation Unchain’ to networks, friends, donors, and stakeholders via Facebook, email and also to all staff. In the end we raised \$5,510 online, plus \$11,602 in contributions direct to TPO during the 1-month period. With this funding support from so many generous people, the TPO mobile team has started its mission, traveling to rural areas to treat patients, educate families on how to take care of their loved ones, and to train local health workers.

So far we have selected 22 patients (9 women & 13 men) in 8 provinces (Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kratie, Thbong Khmum, Takeo, Siem Reap, and Svay Rieng) to get our service. We have been providing treatment to 5 patients and unchained 3 of them already. We want to extend our thanks also to the Ministry of Health for supporting TPO in its cooperation with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse to run this program.

The fundraiser is still open, so if you would you like to contribute visit <http://www.globalgiving.org/projects/operation-unchain/> or contact: admin@tpocambodia.org or Tel 023 63 66 992.

TPO study on Testimony Therapy

TPO launched the preliminary results of our Randomized Control Trial study on the effectiveness of Testimony Therapy, a culturally adapted trauma treatment program as used by TPO Cambodia to treat survivors of genocide in Cambodia. This study was carried out with a sample of 76 civil parties and its findings reflect TPO’s recent work in trauma treatment, as a symbolic reparation, to civil parties in the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

At the launch, TPO presented the research results, discussed the findings and provided recommendations for future treatment of civil parties. Participants also learned more about related research and the importance of ethical research in the field of mental health. TPO Executive Director, Dr. Chhim Sotheara briefly talked about ‘baksbat’ (broken courage). And there were other presentations by TPO’s partners such as the Royal University of Phnom Penh on ‘parenting and parent-child interactions in three generations after the Khmer Rouge regime’, the National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) of the Ministry of Health about ‘the importance of ethical research in the field of mental health’, and ‘Mental Health challenges and opportunities in Cambodia in the context of research’ by Caritas-CCAMH, Chey Chumneas Referral Hospital.

Our research study and the event were funded by the CENTER for VICTIMS of TORTURE (<http://www.cvt.org/>) with support from USAID. A video of the event can be watched via: <http://youtu.be/k5VVSazAwHw>

Workshop on Child Development

About 80 people from various NGOs, schools and businesses participated in the workshop and discussion on the topic of child development and how to effectively manage misbehaviors in children that we organized at TPO. We believe it is an important topic for people who are parenting or taking care of children. So, this year, TPO has included this topic in our training offer (http://tpocambodia.org/fileadmin/user_upload/pdf/training-file/001.JPG).

TPO’s Training Unit provides a number of courses for individuals, organizations and community groups to raise awareness and build technical



Launch of our research results on the Effectiveness of Testimony Therapy, 8 May 15 at Sunway Hotel, Phnom Penh

capacity in mental and emotional health issues. The training modules have been sensitively developed for relevance and application within the Cambodian context.

For more details and upcoming dates, access TPO's training page via www.tpocambodia.org or ☎023 63 66 993 & ☎095 666 827 or contact ROS Saray Endeth ☎ 012 921 113 training@tpocambodia.org VITH Kimly ☎ 016 866 236 vithkimly@tpocambodia.org

Project Partnership with Friends International

We are pleased to announce that Friends International (FI, <http://www.friends-international.org/>) selected TPO to run a project Partnership for the Prevention & Protection of Children (3PC) with funding from UNICEF. The goal is to strengthen Cambodia's child protection system in response to and to prevent violence, and to promote a protective family environment. This 1-year pilot project started in April 2015. TPO's focus is to provide support and services to survivors of gender-based violence, vulnerable children and local authorities in the community (Battambang province in Banan district in Kanteu 1 & Kanteu 2 commune). We will:

- Provide training on child protection policy to all TPO staff.
- Identify and train local authorities in Mental Health First Aid.
- Provide individual counseling to victims.
- Train Child Club members on identifying and supporting children at risk and form a Child Friendly club.
- Create effective referral mechanisms with other organizations so that support for survivors of gender-based violence and for vulnerable children is maximized.
- Set up a functional network to respond to violence and refer victims to proper services.

TPO will also be working closely with government at national and sub-national levels, as well as NGOs in the community, to build a stronger protective family environment to improve prevention of abuse and offer better child protection responses.

Center for Victims of Torture workshop

Our partner and supporter Center for Victims of Torture (CVT, <http://www.cvt.org/>, USA) hosted their annual Partners in Trauma Healing (PATH) training workshop in Georgia. Four TPO staff in charge of our clinical activities, monitoring & evaluation and organizational development had the opportunity to attend the full workshop alongside CVT's partners from various other countries.

The theme this year was 'Sustaining Gains and Integrating Domains'. The workshop provided an opportunity to all partners to discuss mental health counseling, monitoring and evaluation, and organizational skills to provide more effective treatment for torture survivors. This included sharing their organization's progress over the past four years through the support of the PATH Project. Also, all partners had the chance to see and learn more about the great work of CVT's partner organization in Georgia (Empathy Center) and to build a community across all areas of technical expertise and share the overall vision after the end of PATH project. TPO was offered time to present the results of our research study on the 'Effectiveness of Testimonial Therapy' funded by CVT and also shared



Workshop on Child Development on 25 May 15 at TPO's training center

TPO will also be working closely with government at national and sub-national levels, as well as NGOs in the community to build a stronger protective family environment to improve prevention of abuse and offer better child protection responses.



Group photo with all CVT partners who attended the PATH workshop from 1-5 June 2015 in Georgia

information about TPO's fundraising campaign 'Operation Unchain' to all partners so they could learn from us.

With the support from the Center for Victims of Torture, TPO and the other organizations are expanding their skills in helping trauma victims tell their story and heal.

UN Day in Support of Torture Victims

To mark the annual UN Day in Support of Torture Victims on 26 June, the TPO team hosted a short tree planting event and ceremony at Choeung Ek (aka the 'Killing Fields') near Phnom Penh. We gathered to honor torture victims, to listen to survivors sharing their experiences and the challenges they have faced and continue to face. This event allowed us to send a message of hope, speak out and demand that the right to rehabilitation becomes a reality for all torture survivors, in Cambodia and elsewhere in the world. We planted the "TPO Tree of Hope & Peace" in honor of torture survivors and as a symbol that rehabilitation works, with blessings from monks.

This year's UN theme "Right to Rehabilitation" is linked closely to TPO's work in providing support and treatment to survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime. As the NGO at the forefront of trauma treatment for torture survivors in Cambodia, and member of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT, www.irct.org/26june) we will keep joining the worldwide campaign to speak out against torture and for the right to rehabilitation. A photo report has been published on <https://www.facebook.com/tpocambodia>



Mr SOUM Rithy, and Ms Vanna, both Khmer Rouge survivors, plant 'TPO Tree of Hope & Peace' together.

Primary Mental Health Care for Prison Staff

The TPO team hosts workshops on primary mental health care for health staff and other staff from Cambodia's provincial and municipal correctional centers. Recently, our team provided this training to 4 groups from Correctional Centers 1 & 2, Kampong Chhnang provincial prison and Kandal provincial prison and the General Department of Prisons.

This training furthers the prison staff's knowledge about mental health and enables them to identify prisoners with psychological problems and refer them to the appropriate services. This capacity building activity makes part of our project 'Mental Health Care & Psychosocial Services for Cambodian Prisoners' funded by Dynamic Share and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development.

TPO has been working on improving health care for prisoners with pre-existing mental health conditions, and for those who develop mental health problems while in prison, since 2012.

TPO Publication Launch Event

On 2 July, at Meta House in Phnom Penh, we launched our new publication 'My Testimony' which contains the personal life stories of 10 survivors of the Khmer Rouge regime. More than hundred guests joined us and discussed the ongoing psychological impact of the regime on individuals and Cambodian society, and what can be done about it. For a copy of the publication in English or in Khmer, please contact TPO Cambodia via email admin@tpocambodia.org. This publication and the event were funded by GIZ.



Prison staff attended a Primary Mental Health Care workshop, 30 Jun-2 July 15 at TPO's training center

Press & Media Highlights

The second quarter of 2015 was a busy one for TPO in the media:

Ms. Sokunnara Thlen, TPO counselor, talked (in Khmer) about 'Women's Mental Health' on **Radio FM 99.5** on 10 July. <https://soundcloud.com/tp0-sokhoeun/mental-health-for-women>

Dynamic Share, TPO's donor for our project to provide Mental Health Care & Psychosocial Services to Cambodian Prisoners, in Bern, Switzerland, recorded an interview with **Dr. Chhim Sotheara**, TPO's Executive Director, about his personal motivation to serve vulnerable people in Cambodia and about TPO's work. http://www.dynamicshare.ch/en/blog/2015/5/22/10/interview_on_medical_services_for_inmates_in_cambodia

In Geneva, Switzerland, **the UN Fund for Victims of Torture**, brought together practitioners & experts in the medical, psychological, legal and social rehabilitation of torture victims to exchange knowledge and best practices. **Dr. Sotheara Chhim**, TPO Executive Director, was interviewed about TPO's work with torture survivors of the Khmer Rouge. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/TortureFundMeeting.aspx> Since 1981, the UN Fund for Victims of Torture has financed rehabilitation centres providing assistance to close to one million torture victims. TPO Cambodia is one of the recipients of funds to help Cambodian torture survivors.

Dr Sotheara Chhim, TPO Executive Director, talked with **Voice of America** about the lack of resources for mental health in Cambodia. <http://www.voanews.com/content/cambodias-mental-health-services-critically-neglected/2775810.html>

Two senior TPO counselors, **Ms Chhay Marideth** and **Mr. Taing Seung Hun** talked with **Phnom Penh Post** about their work providing psychological support to civil parties at the Khmer Rouge Tribunal. <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/somebody-lean>

TPO counselor **Ms. Sokunnara THLEN** also made the press during her work supporting civil party giving testimony about their traumatic experiences and painful losses at the ECCC. <http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/discovery-doomed-family>

Mr. Youn Sarath, project coordinator (counselor) spoke at a conference of **The South-South institute** on 'Sexual Violence Against Men and Boys'. <https://www.facebook.com/1546909112250066/photos/pb.1546909112250066.2207520000.1437450348.1605942123013431/?type=3&theater>

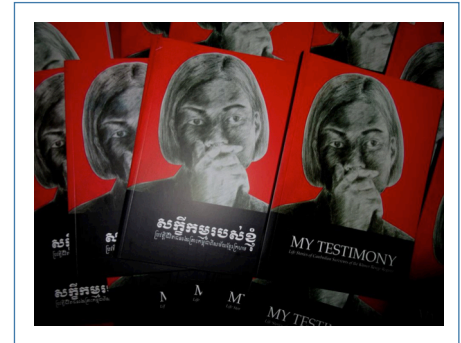
Dr Sotheara Chhim, TPO's Executive Director talked with **Radio Australia** in Melbourne about 'Testimonial Therapy (TT)' which was introduced to TPO Cambodia by its partner Dignity in Denmark, and adapted to the Cambodian cultural context. TPO's Randomized Control Trial study indicates that TT has been effective in reducing symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, depression and baksbat (broken courage). <http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/khmer/radio/onairhighlights/1455840>

You can also watch a Video by **CTN** about TPO's Launch of our Research Results on The Effectiveness of Testimony Therapy. <http://youtu.be/k5VVSazAwHw>

The **Phnom Penh Post** also wrote about the effectiveness of Testimonial Therapy to treat trauma victims of the Khmer Rouge regime as applied by TPO in Cambodia. www.phnompenhpost.com/post-weekend/trauma-treatment-works-study

Dr. Sotheara Chhim, TPO Executive director, was quoted in **Phnom Penh Post** about his overview related to adopting a new clinical guide by the WHO and the UN refugee agency on mental health response after humanitarian emergencies as the Kingdom currently lacks this type of mechanism. http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/mental-health-guide-could-help-kingdom?utm_source=The+Phnom+Penh+Post+News+Brief&utm_campaign=a8211bd904-atpgha&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_53e48d7faf-a8211bd904-250378597

Mr. PICH Panha, TPO's clinical supervisor (psychologist), commented in the **Phnom Penh Post** about Takeo's plan to combat future crimes against mentally ill people found on the streets by sending them to live in local pagodas under the care of monks. http://www.phnompenhpost.com/search/node/national%20mental%20health%20plan%20risky?search_options=search_title



The cover of TPO's publication 'My Testimony'



Ms. Sokunnara, TPO counselor (on the right) supporting civil party Seang Sovida (left) during her testimony at the ECCC.