



TPO Cambodia Newsletter

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Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year !

By Dr. Chhim Sotheara, Executive Director

Dear Friends of TPO,

As the year 2016 comes to an end, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for all of your support and effort throughout the year to contribute to TPO’s mission. For TPO, it has been a very busy year with plenty of activities and events to bring mental health care to Cambodian.

This time the Newsletter showcases a story of TPO’s family intervention, the recap of Operation Unchain project, Mental Health Day for youth, USAID Mission Director visiting KR survivors, a seminar on treatment resistance of Schizophrenia, Testimonial Therapy with Cham in Kampong Chhnang, TPO joining the campaign to end violence against women and last but not least TPO’s annual conference.

*Wish you Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

In Focus: Dialogue and Healing in Families

The 62 year old matriarch S.J. never told her family, that she was forced to marry a Khmer Rouge veteran after her husband was killed. She kept it to herself all these years, working hard to survive and raising her seven children with great will. But in 2011 she decided to become a civil party to the ECCC and to participate in one of TPO's self help groups which allowed her to talk with other survivors about some of her sufferings for the first time. She felt great release, however with her family she was not able to share in a similar way. All were hard working and time seemed always short.



Mother was emotionally tearful as she had the first hug from her son, in TPO's family intervention

When she heard of TPO's new family intervention, she happily agreed to joint 5 sessions of facilitated dialogue with members of her 3 generation family. With the support of the counselors the family was able to experience a new found intimacy and emotional closeness they were missing before. The older generation could share what they had wanted to share for a long time and the younger generation learned to express questions they had not dared to ask and feelings they had hold back.

Under the project 'Justice and Healing for Khmer Rouge survivors' funded by GIZ/Civil Peace Service, TPO will continue with 3-generation-dialogues in families of civil parties.

Recap of Operation Unchain project

In the past 2 years, 95 mentally ill patients across rural Cambodia have received treatment from TPO's mobile team, 30 patients were unchained. TPO's team has continued to help and support them and to look for opportunities to unchain as many as we can. A video about TPO's Operation Unchain was produced and is available at <http://tpocambodia.org/video-library/>.

In early 2016, two students from the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Australia visited project beneficiaries in Battambang. They wrote an article about their observations of the patients' situation and of TPO's committed work to change it. 'What we saw left us with an overwhelming sense of the undeniable impact a significant lack of mental health services has on a nation. We were, however, warmed by a feeling of hope that the situation could be turned around'. Detail story with images in PDF file by Adam Robert Young and Images by Victoria Reid is available at <https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/mental-health-care-cambodians/reports/#menu> and link to full publication is: <http://au.blurb.com/books/6910866-changes-stories-from-cambodia>

TPO Cambodia would like to express sincere gratitude to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamony of Cambodia for contributing 5000 US\$ which enabled TPO to start this project in 2015 in collaboration with the Department of substance abuse of the Health Ministry, to H.E Ambassador of Germany for advocating twice financial contributions during German Unity Day Celebration (US\$ 4,847.50), to all who donated so generously and to the authors who helped to spread the word for this project.

Fund raising is open via: <http://tpocambodia.org/make-a-donation/>

Mental Health Day for Youth

On 14 October, TPO joined the big event organized by Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) to mark World Mental Health Day 2016. This event brings the major players in mental health together to raise awareness about mental health issues in Cambodia, particularly affecting young people. It is a great opportunity to promote mental health to thousand students and the young generation who participated.

TPO contributed several information (leaflets, mini books, display TPO publication, manuals & posters) to introduce about TPO's mental health program and its services and our staff were available to discuss the questions from students, offered some part of strength based exercise, mini counseling sessions, mindfulness exercises, a video film on healing and reconciliation as well as expert talk on psychological first aid.



Dr. Ang Sody TPO Psychiatrist makes a home visit to see a patient in operation unchain project

What we saw left us with an overwhelming sense of the undeniable impact a significant lack of mental health services has on a nation. We were, however, warmed by a feeling of hope that the situation could be turned around



Mr. Pich Panha, TPO Clinical Supervisor, talked about psychological first aid in Mental Health Day for Youth at RUPP

USAID Mission Director visits KR Survivors

On 31st October, TPO's Executive Director accompanied Mrs. Polly Dunford, USAID's Mission Director to Cambodia to visit Kraing Ta Chan Genocide Center in Tramkok district, Takeo province and meet with survivors of the Khmer Rouge Regime. She visited the historical site and the library, currently used by youth and survivors. She met with survivors whose relatives were killed there and on the next day, she talked to survivors in Kampot. Recounting their stories was still a very emotional memory as they remembered the terror their families and friends had to experience.

The survivors are receiving psycho-social support from TPO to cope with such deep seated psychological wounds under the Truth, Reconciliation, and Healing Project funded by USAID.



USAID's Mission Director and TPO's Executive Director met with KR survivors in Takeo on 31 October

Lecture on Treatment Resistance of Schizophrenia

On 3rd November 2016 Prof. Richard Veith from the University of Washington lectured on treatment resistance of Schizophrenia.

The aim was to strengthen the Cambodian mental health professionals in the delivery of treatment and support of patients. TPO technical staff, psychiatrists and psychologists participated.

If you are experiencing Schizophrenia issues or know someone who does, do not hesitate to contact TPO's clinic for receiving treatment on 023 63 66 991

Testimonial Therapy with Cham (Khmer Islam) in Kampong Chhnang

In November, TPO sent 5 counselors to Chan Kiek village, O Roussey commune, Kampong Trolach district to conduct Testimonial Therapy with five Cham of the Imam San sect, who survived the Khmer Rouge Regime with traumatic losses. All counselors were Buddhist and therefore had prepared themselves with learning about history, customs and religion of the Cham before starting the psychological intervention. For the villagers it was the first time they'd prepare a testimonial and let their community know what the years under the Khmer Rouge Regime meant for them and what they still carry as haunting memory in the present.

Each participant received 6 individual sessions, before a comprehensive summary of their testimonial was read aloud in front of 70 family and community members. The reading at the village mosque was followed by a healing ritual and blessings of their religious leaders. It was a very moving ceremony which ended with expressions of overwhelming gratitude and the desire for more psycho-social support in this community.

The participants had also great interest in the guided exhibition of TPO which gave some illustration to the narratives of the survivors as well as to the work of TPO in other Cham villages.

This activity is in project 'Justice and Relief for the Survivors of Khmer Rouge' funded by the Civil Peace Service of German Development Agency in Cambodia (GIZ).

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Testimonial Therapy with Cham in Kampong Chhnang in November

Campaign to end violence against women

From November 25 (international day to end violence against women) through December 10 (international human rights day), TPO Cambodia joined the campaign 'to end violence against women' with partners to raise this event on Facebook. Also an event in Bay Damrom Commune, Bannong district has been organized. Around 200 community members participated which shows that community members and relevant stakeholders are highly committed to end violence against women and children. TPO staff conducted a role play to raise awareness and gave some advice how to deal with it. Some from the audience performed in our show 'How to end violence and support victims of violence'. This event was organized by TPO and funded by DFAT.

<https://drive.google.com/.../0B38mjPX1rzw0NnktDndGc1.../view>



Around 200 community members participated TPO's event to celebrate campaign to end violence against women in Bannong district, Battambang province

Annual Conference 2016

During this year's annual conference TPO staff had the opportunity to enjoy learning, sharing and leisure time together for one week. There was a training offered on strengths based communication and a refresher on the Unified Clinical Approach (UCA). The achievements in 2016 were discussed and reflected in regards to the lessons learned, TPO's policies were refreshed as well as the minimum standards of NGOs' good practice. Most importantly, strategic and capacity development ideas for the upcoming years were debated in order to continue TPO's mission to improve the well-being of Cambodian people with mental health problems was raised up and discussed.

It was a very busy week with many presentations, workshops, brainstorming sessions and information-sharing, however all staff did find some time for some fun social activities and team building.



Prof. Richard Veith from University of Washington lectured on treatment resistance of Schizophrenia to TPO's staff on 3rd November.

Press and Media Highlight

'TPO Becoming Unbound' (TPO's operation unchain project) by Vitoria and Adam Robert Young (students from the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University, Australia)

<http://au.blurb.com/books/6910866-changes-stories-from-cambodia>

During the 16 days campaign on violence against women and children, Dr. Sotheara, TPO Executive Director talked about providing psychological support to women who are victims of partner abuse. This is a short documentary to raise awareness about GVB issues produced by ISPP's student. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpzjrcWbb_Y

Report of [Newsdeeply](#) mentioned that 'In a study of TPO, a third of female interviewees witnessed rape beside forced marriage'.

<https://www.newsdeeply.com/.../forced-marriage-rape-legacy-k.../>



All staff debated on strategy and capacity development plan for the upcoming years 2017