



CCHR’s Annual Report for 2016

Organization	Cambodian Center for Human Rights (“CCHR”)
Project Goal	CCHR’s vision is of a non-violent Cambodia in which people can enjoy the fundamental human rights to which they are entitled, are treated equally, are empowered to participate in democracy, and all can share in the benefits of Cambodia’s ongoing economic development.
Duration	From January- December 2016

During this reporting period from January –December 2016, Cambodian Center for Human Rights (“CCHR”) has worked progressively toward its plan as the following:

I. Progress

During the reporting period, CCHR issued 80 publications including Press Releases/statements and Open Letters, Joint Statements, Human Rights Defenders and/or Freedom of Expression Alerts, Briefing Notes, Research Report, Factsheets, Legal Analyses, joint submission, policy brief and leaflet. These documents were released in order to advocate for and raise awareness of a wide variety of human rights issues, including fundamental freedoms, land rights, business and human rights, sexual orientation and gender identity, judicial reform, minority rights, political participation and more. CCHR publications have led authorities to take action in response to human rights violations. CCHR has provided a principled voice in reaction to current events, with 211 published media articles (both Khmer and English language) containing comments from CCHR being published in 2016.

As a result of ongoing media monitoring through 2016, CCHR’s project work has been informed by an up-to-date understanding of current events and key issues across Cambodia. In total, during the reporting period, 3261 media reports were gathered by CCHR, 445 incidents relating to the freedom of association and other fundamental freedoms were recorded and 73 incident reports were compiled. Moreover CCHR also monitored the sub-decrees published in the Royal Gazette to track the number of land concessions. It found that while no economic land concessions had been granted, indicating that the government was respecting the moratorium issued in mid-2012, there had been 19,459 reclassifications of land from state public land to state private land. It also found that no social land concessions had been issued in the reporting period.

CCHR has developed the four new monitoring templates, more systematic method to record quantitative and qualitative data about fundamental freedoms violations. The project conducted a public poll, collecting 1017 responses across the country, which provided key data on the state of fundamental freedoms in 2016. This was included in the second quarterly Monitoring Tracking Tool

(“MTT”) report. A CSO/Trade Union Leader Survey on the freedom of association and other related issues was also conducted in October/November. There were 214 respondents and the data will be included in the third quarterly MTT report. The second quarterly report of the project has already generated new data and analysis regarding previously unseen trends. Outputs from these monitoring activities include the [Timeline of Human Rights Violations](#), released on 10 December 2016, Factsheet on the [Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Cambodia](#) in December 2016.

In addition, CCHR conducted at least 165 live radio talk shows, each focusing on one or more of the topics above, including related to land rights, business and human rights, fair trial rights, LGBT rights, digital rights, law discussion and weekly analysis. CCHR organized one gathering with activists, four reports launching and nine trainings on various topics ranging from digital security, facilitation skills, land law, documentation and advocacy and two Training of Trainers sessions. Separately, CCHR held three sharing sessions on LGBTs rights with 195 university students in three provinces, raising awareness of LGBT rights. In 2016, 98 cases were monitored by CCHR at the Appeal Court. In total, 35 cases have received legal advice/legal representative, and humanitarian supports from CCHR.

Of particular note, CCHR has also carried out its own advocacy activities during the reporting period, with SOGI conducting advocacy based on the findings of the report [LGBT Bullying in Cambodia's Schools](#). The outcomes of these efforts were very positive: following meetings, the Ministry of Women Affairs (“MoWA”) and Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (“MoEYS”) reacted very positively. MoWA now holds monthly meetings on the issue, and the Ministry for Information accepted the need to avoid stereotypical depictions of LGBT persons in the media. CCHR also had success following its release of the report *Discrimination Against Transgender Women in Cambodia's Urban Centers*. Numerous media sources covered the report as well. This supported [the meeting](#) in December with the deputy provincial governor of Siem Reap province to advocate for the implementation of the recommendations in CCHR's *Discrimination Against Transgender Women in Cambodia's Urban Centers* report. Moreover, CCHR also met with the MoWA representative H.E. Bunchhit Veasna and her two colleagues in order to present the findings and recommendations of the situation of women HRDs in Cambodia.

CCHR also produced two educational videos aimed at promoting freedom of expression online. The first animated video on “Freedom of Expression” was produced with the aim of raising public awareness of freedom of expression and its limitations. The video was published on CCHR's [Youtube](#) channel and CCHR's [Facebook](#) page. The video has received numerous hits on Facebook with 973 shares, 1,400 ‘likes’ and 43,000 views¹ (updated on 23 January 2017). The second animated video on “Online Commentary” was produced with the aim of promoting freedom of expression and opinion online as well as to reduce the public's self-censorship of opinion on social media due to fear of defamation accusations. Like the first animated video, “Online Commentary” was published through CCHR's [YouTube](#) channel and CCHR's [Facebook](#) page. The video received 487 shares, 767 likes and 29,000 views (updated on 23 January 2017). Moreover CCHR also produced a [vox populi video](#) about cyber regulations, helping to stir debate about the proposed Cybercrime Law, receiving 225 shares, 70 likes and 44,000 views (updated on 24 January 2017). In June 2016, CCHR also produced an [educational leaflet](#) on freedom of expression and its limitations under international law, designed to raise awareness of scope the permissible restrictions of online expression.

¹ View: number of times that a post was accessed for at least 3 seconds, source: <http://bit.ly/1upJLvd>

II. What went well and what didn't

Several successes for LGBT rights were experienced through the SOGI Project. The publication of the *Discrimination Against Transgender Women in Cambodia's Urban Centers* report has made an important impact on the visibility of LGBT discrimination, given the positive reception it received. The report also provided a solid foundation upon which to base advocacy.

In addition, CCHR found increased restrictions on fundamental freedoms, discovering that some community representatives in certain provinces had been subject to intimidation and threats, preventing them from contacting external stakeholders to join meetings and training with NGOs. Activists had been closely monitored by police and local authorities prohibited any meetings or interviews in the village, establishing patrols to enforce these restrictions. Local authority engagement is essential and the importance of properly explaining the purposes of the projects cannot be overstated. If properly explained, the local authorities will have the ability to understand and recognize project activities.

III. Lessons learned

CCHR learnt that being persistent in advocacy approach and dialogue engagement from various stakeholders could result in certain outcomes. The *Human Rights Impacts of Sand Dredging in Cambodia* briefing note has been a success with attention from many stakeholders especially from the Ministry of Mine and Energy ("MME"). This advocacy effort has had a very positive outcome, particularly because of the resulting changes to MME policy. In addition, MME showed its willingness to open new channels of cooperation with CSOs through participating in a joint fact-finding mission to Koh Kong to investigate claims of illegal sand-dredging. Since the MME visits to Kaoh Sralau village and Dak Por village, the two affected communities have had contact with MME through MME's hotline. MME has indicated that their livelihood and farm land will not be affected anymore, and this contact is an important tool for ensuring their livelihood sustainability.

IV. Gender and the Rights Based Approach

CCHR strives to achieve gender equality throughout all of its programs and projects. During the reporting period CCHR sought to overcome barriers to women's engagement, such as ensuring equal representation of male and female speaks at events, and at all opportunities restating the fact of men and women's equal legal status with regards to human rights.

As community leaders or civil society activists, WHRDs play a vital role in the promotion, strengthening, and protection of human rights. CCHR has noted with concern that WHRDs suffer from a range of violations and abuses, including gender based violence, rooted in discriminatory practices and social norms that condone violence against women. Thus, CCHR still provide appropriate legal, humanitarian and psychosocial support to WHRDs who have faced violence, harassment and threats as a result of their work.

V. Appendix: CCHR's key publication

- Report on Discrimination Against Transgender Women in Cambodia's Urban Centers
- Report on Cambodia's Women in Land Conflict
- Handbook on Business and Human Rights for Cambodia
- Report on Access to Collective Land Titles for Indigenous Communities in Cambodia

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