



COSECAM

Minimum Standards for Residential Child Care:

Result of Workshop

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March 2003



Report No: 005

Project funded by
Stichting Kinderpostzegels Nederland & American Jewish World Service

Year 2004 – 2006 Coalition Program

ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Effective Policy Influencing project

Report on local NGO Child Issue Lobby
NGO Consensus on Addressing Child Abuse
MP Lobby on Addressing Child Abuse

Constituency Support Building project

Report on Existing NGO Constituencies
Building CSEC Support

Child Advocacy Unit

Rape of Children
CSEC Victim Lobby

RESEARCH PROGRAM

Capacity of Local Organisations

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Vocational Training
Annual Capacity Report
Counselling Capacity
Management Capacity

Demand Factor Study

CSEC Victims' Perspective
Field Workers' Perspective
CSEC Facilitators' Perspective
Child Sex Abusers' Perspective
Comprehensive Analysis & Recommendations

Situation Analysis CSEC

Fact Finding Mission
Report on Situation of Sexually Abused Children

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAM

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'Rainbow' Programming & Strategy Formation project
Child Participation in Planning project

Child Rehabilitation Services project

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Centre Exchange Visits
Platform Shelter Staff Phnom Penh
Mobile Counselling Team
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Monitoring Reintegrated Children

Provincial Member NGO Support

Platform Shelter Staff North-west
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Corporate Development & Co-operation project

Annual Financial Audit
Website Member Information
Sponsorship Joint Initiatives
CSEC Newsletter
Project Fund Management

HUMAN RESOURCE PROGRAM

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Psycho-Social Counselling training program
Management training for Child Centre Staff
Reintegration Monitoring training for NGO workers
Vocational Skill Training of Teachers

Co-ordination & Program Staff Capacity Building

Project Monitoring Planning
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Gender Programming & Mainstreaming
Reporting for Advocacy Purposes

Summary Report

Result of workshop on Minimum Standards for Residential Child Care

I. INTRODUCTION

On 17 March 2003, COSECAM held on a workshop on Minimum Standard and Child Shelter Management. There were 60 participants who came from different departments, such as government, national and international organizations.

In order to make the draft, COSECAM formed a working group to conduct research on it. This working group did exchange visits in 13 shelters in provinces and cities. They got good results, for example they found some good points, some points that were lacking, and all the objectives of the shelters. This report was prepared formally by COSECAM. It has been made to be taken as a basis for drafting Minimum Standards and Child Shelter Management by studying in detail some national and international law policies, especially the four policies of Child Rights. Moreover, during many meetings they worked and discussed some main points in detail, such as legal procedure, staff and their roles, custodianship and care, standard services in the shelter, child integration, and budgeting. The workshop was a great success in what was accomplished, especially in that the participants discussed the draft carefully. The participants discussed in detail some recommendations to complete the draft, giving it better quality and making it comply with the policies of the Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and the children, acceptable to them all.

II. LEGAL PROCEDURE

1. Based on basic legal policy, all NGOs must be recognized by government or state. Shelters for children must be in compliance with Prakas, circulars, sub-decrees, laws or relevant standards of the country. Information on the establishment of shelters must be submitted to relevant national institutes.

2. Shelter managers (or heads) must inform local authorities in writing of the children's ages, sex, names and identities, length of stay at the shelter, and specifying clearly the reason for staying in the shelter. Authorities are informed and sign to acknowledge their awareness so any allegation that may bring about litigation is avoided. Any information related to the child must be confidential if the safety and security of the child is threatened as a result of such information.

3. For admission of a child to a shelter, the child must consent first. The agreement shall include the consent of the child and the parents or custodians in order to prove that the stay of the child is done without coercion or persuasion. If the child is orphaned, such an agreement shall be done by the person who brings the child to the shelter.

III. STAFFS AND THEIR ROLES

1. Shelter staffs

Each shelter shall function at least with the following staff: *a Shelter manager or shelter*

Coordinator, Counselor(s), Vocational Trainer(s), Care Giver(s), Monitoring/Follow-up Staff, and Security Guard(s). The recruitment of such staff shall be done very carefully based on honesty, humanity, professionalism, good character, and effective child-work. Tasks and roles of the staffs shall be clearly defined in order to avoid duplication or confusion of work.

2. Role of Shelter Manager or Coordinator

The Shelter manager plays an important role, responsible for administration, reporting, budgeting, financial management and overall coordination in the shelter. S/he is a person of honorable character, respectful attitudes, well-trained skills, and experienced and trained on shelter-related work.

3. Vocational Trainers

A vocational trainer of a shelter must have suitable skills, good character and be healthy. In term of vocational skills, s/he must be well and specifically trained, and have work experience in at least one child care shelter.

4. Caregivers

A caregiver in a shelter must be gentle and kind with the ability to understand the child's true values and needs. The main duty of such caregiver is to provide good-hearted and thoughtful cares to children up to their full physical and intellectual development. A caregiver shall take care of no more than 15 children.

5. Psychosocial Counselors

A counselor of a shelter plays a crucial role in providing counseling for the recuperation of the child's mental health, intelligence and general knowledge such as vocations, literacy, psychology and how to keep oneself healthy. The counselor must be one who has a heart for children, who loves and truly understands the value of children. Most importantly, a counselor shall be a person who has undergone proper counseling training.

6. Integrative officers (Follow-up Officer)

An Integrative Officer plays a significant role in referring, investigating, and following up a child after s/he has been integrated back into his/her community. S/he must immediately report to shelter manager orally or in writing on the loss of a child, hazards, accidents, or any catastrophe that has occurred to the child. Integrative officers must have much experiences and training related to the work.

7. Security Guards

The guards must be healthy, and they have duties to provide full security to his/her shelter day and night. S/he is responsible for safety, order and surveillance. S/he must alert or warn the shelter manager of any incidents occurring, or about to occur, in or around the shelter.

IV. CUSTODIANSHIP AND CARES

1. Purpose of shelter

This mainly refers to the guidance for children to take care of themselves once back to their

community. For this objective, they shall be offered training, education, general knowledge and health. Children shall be prompted in any way possible to know dignity and love, to be responsible, and respect each other, so they become good members of society.

2. Childcare services

The services provided to children in shelters shall not harm them or make them suffer. The services shall be aimed toward giving them appropriate knowledge, so that they will be able to make a proper living after leaving the shelters.

Children residing in shelters/shelters shall get at least one day off per week. Children who have made achievements in changing their attitudes while in care shall be encouraged. Rewards and remuneration shall be given to children for their work in the shelters. The amount left over from such personal expense shall be kept by the shelters and returned to the children when they are integrated back into their communities.

3. Keep different categories of children separately

Children shall be allowed to choose a vocational skill from those offered by the shelter, applicable to the situation in their community. The provision of vocational training must first have the child's full agreement. Forcing children into skills they do not want to take must be avoided.

Children shall be placed into shelters, which have appropriate services for that category of child. It is better for shelters to focus on services for only one category of children. Mixing different categories of children in one shelter shall be avoided.

4. Childcare Shelter

A shelter shall be a spacious place that has fresh air, shade, sufficient air to breath, enough space, sufficient sunlight, and large doors and windows for adequate air circulation.

Each shelter shall be a place for rehabilitation of children in accordance with its programs, such as literacy, language skills, vocational skills, counseling and other skills that are suitable for the children's future.

Management and services in shelters/shelters shall not differ too much between one shelter and another, or between the shelter and the community. This is to avoid children thinking that the shelter they are residing in is not a place that offers them rehabilitation, and that life is more difficult in the shelter than in the community outside.

5. Penalization/Punishment

Shelter shall be a place suitable for children physically, functionally and environmentally. No child shall be beaten, locked inside the shelter, or tortured, which leads to the devaluation of humanity, due to a minor fault of the child or their failure to fully comply with the shelter's instructions and policies.

Shelters shall be better places with very different characters from detention centers or prisons. Children in the shelter shall be offered opportunities and encouragement at all times.

6. Shelter Rules and Principles

Children who are accepted to stay at the shelter shall receive orientation about their rights, especially the decisions in the choice of vocational skills. They shall be told the length of time the shelter is able to let them stay according to policy, and the rules of the shelter. The staff of the shelter must give children orientation in the child's rights and the shelter's regulations. Children must be allowed to start children's groups in order for them to be involved in shelter management.

Children shall not be allowed to wear valuable jewelry, such as necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, or other valuable objects during their stay in the shelter. The shelter manager has the right to keep those objects in order to take good care of them for the children, keeping clear records and having a witness who knows about it. All jewelry and valuable objects, including savings accrued from their work at the shelter, shall be returned to the children when they reintegrate with their community.

7. Information for children

Besides the rest breaks from their schooling or training sessions, children must be allowed access to both national and international news via radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.

8. Meeting with the child's relatives

The Child must be allowed full rights to communicate with his/her siblings, relatives, family members, or other visitors to the child, through personal meetings with the child, through written correspondence or on the telephone.

The right to communicate with siblings, relatives, family members or other visitors to the child must be forbidden if the shelter believes that the siblings, relatives, family members or other visitors come to meet the child for reason of attracting or tempting the child back to his/her former situation.

9. Listen to children's complaints

A child's complaint shall be carefully and seriously listened to and measures shall be taken immediately after such a complaint is received. A report of the complaint must be submitted immediately to the shelter manager by staff in order that measures taken can be effective. The shelter manager may be an important assistant in lodging a complaint or seeking legal representation for the child in order to penalize the perpetrators in a court of law.

V. STANDARD OF SERVICES IN A SHELTER

1. Residential house of the children

The children's residence, especially the place where they sleep, shall meet the health requirements, such as air to breath, enough sunlight, enough space and large doors and windows for adequate air circulation.

When it is dark, there must be sufficient light, which lets children read books, magazines, newspapers or do whatever they are doing.

The shelter must have enough toilets with good hygiene, for all the needs of the children, including toiletries and other necessities.

2. Personal hygiene

Each shelter shall set rules for personal cleanliness to remind children how to keep themselves clean and healthy. The bathrooms must be supplied with clean water, soap, , toothpaste, toothbrushes, sanitary towels. that are necessary for children's health and their cleanliness, including all the proper supplies children need during menstruation.

3. Clothing and Residency

Children must not be allowed to wear anyone else's clothing. Children shall be given at least four sets of clothes (4 trousers and four shirts) per year. They shall only be allowed to wear their given clothes, but not those of their friends. These clothes shall be suitable and proper. There shall be someone to teach how to care for personal hygiene for example, how to clean clothes to keep the children clean and healthy.

The child shall be given a mosquito net, blanket, pillow, mat and bed to sleep separately. To avoid transmission of different illnesses and sexual misconduct, they shall not be allowed to share beds.

4. Food for children

The shelter shall provide sufficient food to children at regular mealtimes, three times per day: breakfast, lunch and dinner.

At least 2,000 riels per day shall be spent on meals for one child. Food shall be of good quality and rich in vitamins that are good for the child's health. There shall be sufficient clean drinking water available for the children. Children shall be given a sweet or dessert at least once a week.

5. Sports and Exercises

After the children have spent a long time on their studies, whether literacy classes, vocational training or other activities, they must have the opportunity to do some exercise, such as badminton, skipping, basketball, football, volleyball, and other recreation activities for at least one hour a day in the open yard of the shelter.

6. Recreation

The children are encouraged to take part in big events, such as national and international holiday, human rights day, women's day, children's day, or closing ceremony of their training, for example parties, expeditions, field trips etc.

7. Medical check and treatment

Each shelter shall have medical services available. This does not mean that each shelter needs to have full time medical doctors; it means that each shelter shall have a relationship with a doctor who is near the shelter, who can make his services instantly available when they are needed. The medical doctor shall be an expert on medical and psychological treatment.

Children with an infectious illness shall not be allowed to stay together with those who do not have the illness. Such infectious children shall immediately receive care and treatment from the

shelter and medical staff. After completion of the treatment, the children shall be returned to the shelter.

Shelter staff shall care for children both physically and mentally. The shelter staff shall build close relationships with the children, especially with those who are sick. Medical check-ups shall be done regularly, at least once a fortnight.

The shelter staff shall report children's illnesses immediately to the shelter manager in order to call a doctor to check and treat the child, including medical treatment for the children during pregnancy and for post-natal care.

VI. REINTEGRATION

1. Post-shelter cares

Shelters shall have reintegration programs for children to return to their families. For those children who have clear skills, the reintegration shall be focused on giving cash-loans so that they have the capacity to start up their own careers to support themselves. Such loans shall be interest free, and the children shall repay the cash bit by bit, as set out in the shelter's policy.

Reintegration is divided into two: before children leave the shelter, and taking cares of them after they leave the shelter. The shelter shall have a policy to give cash loans and choices to children for starting up their careers. Furthermore, it must cooperate with the Ministry of Social Affairs and authorities. The shelter must monitor the children in their communities.

After reintegration with their families, the children shall be closely followed up or monitored. They shall be assisted with additional technical skills as required, if they think that they lack techniques for their jobs. They shall be further guided and educated to prevent them from being re-victimized.

Children shall be encouraged to work in the agricultural area, such as in raising chickens, ducks, pigs, cows, and farming vegetables. They shall be assisted in identifying a market for their products.

VII. BUDGETING

The shelter manager shall have some necessary skills in budgeting for their annual activities. The budgeting shall take general expenses of the shelter, such as; food, utilities, health cares, loans to children, and emergency expense, etc. into consideration.

Shelter shall cautiously build and maintain trust from donor agencies. Corruption and financial mismanagement shall be strictly avoided. All expenditures must have receipts and precise financial reports.

*** SUGGESTIONS**

1. Carefully evaluate the shelter's expenditure such as salary, shelter rent, children's food, health, materials, vocational skills, cash loans, other expenditures.
2. Shelter manager must be clarify on expenditure and shall avoid taking advantages from children through corruption.
3. The finances must be audited at the end of every year.

4. Job descriptions and ethics shall be created for the staff in order to avoid threats and child abuse, such as using strong language, and scolding other staff.
5. Children shall be given opportunities to be involved and share their opinions when making rules for the shelter.
6. Staffs shall be given appropriate salary.

CHILD REHABILITATION SERVICES PROJECT (CRS)

Several projects implemented during first half of 2003 were brought together with new activities in one umbrella project aimed at services for child rehabilitation/recovery centres operated by local NGOs. This are the activities:

❑ Sub-project Child Centre Regulation (CCR)

The coalition initiated a co-ordination meeting to bring agencies working on the issue of regulation together. This co-ordination meeting has become a monthly meeting group with regular attendants to discuss regulation procedures, registration requirements, guardianship issues and other formal matters. The coalition has taken steps to recruit a local consultant to work together with a UNICEF expatriate expert and to safeguard that the NGO recommendations are taken into account. This process will extend through 2004.

❑ Sub-project Centre Exchange Visits (CEV)

Like the previous year the project aims to bring personnel of the shelters and centres in contact with each other in order to learn and to improve care, training, counselling and management in their own organisation. During the last quarter of 2003 the project will arrange 3 visits (a group of counsellors, teachers and managers). Other visits will continue during the first half of 2004 and will be concluded with a workshop during the second half of 2004.

❑ Sub-project Platform Shelter Staff (Platform Phnom Penh)

During 2002 and continuing through 2003 a varying group of management and senior staff of NGO child-care centres met monthly to discuss issues of common concern at COSECAM's office. Although the activity was a spontaneous initiative and access not limited to members the group preferred to continue its discussions during 2003 in the framework of a coalition project. This Platform will continue its meetings during 2004 as well.

❑ Sub-project Mobile Counselling Team (MCT)

Currently Local NGOs employ their own counsellors full-time or use their specific skills only in part-time (giving them other tasks to do, e.g. teaching, management etc.). The Coalition has organised a special training program on psychosocial counselling skills. The investment in terms of time for NGOs and costs of the training itself is high. Services of trained counsellors should thus be used as efficient as possible. Further, there is a shortage of qualified counsellors - another argument to make use of their services in full. However, it is not likely that most counsellors will have a full-time job at any of the centres. A solution for these constraints can be found by bringing counsellors together in a team and making their services available when and where needed – the 'pool' formula. This pooling would also increase the opportunity to share experiences with their colleagues while it would facilitate collective training sessions to keep their skills updated. The project aims to find the most appropriate model for pooling counselling staff and making their professional skills available to those children most in need of such services.

❑ Sub-project Mobile Teacher Team (MTT)

Local NGOs employ teachers they need to train vocational skills to their occupants full-time or use their specific skills only in part-time (giving them other tasks to do, e.g. administration, management etc.). NGOs generally do not have the resources to employ enough teachers to offer a great variety of training opportunities; in fact most centres offer only the most common skill training, e.g. sewing or hair dressing. Hence they are not able to respond to specific needs of the children under their charge. A solution for these constraints can be found by enhancing existing skills and introducing new vocations to teachers employed by child-centres. The basic idea is to bring well-qualified teachers together in a team and making their services as trainer of trainers available when and where needed. The team would have to consist of specialists in a great variety of vocational skills. This format would also increase the opportunity to share experiences with their colleagues while it would facilitate collective training sessions to keep their own skills updated. The project aims to find the most appropriate model for teaming teaching staff and making their services available to those in need.

❑ Sub-project Monitoring Reintegrated Children (MRC)

The follow-up of reintegrated children is an important but too often neglected aspect of the care of and support for child victims. Without a good functioning follow-up and support mechanism too often child victims fail to reintegrate successfully. This negligence is not intended but often due to lack of funds (many sponsors are not very eager to include these costs in their grants) and if it concerns remote locations often inefficient practices to transfer the monitoring to local based NGOs. The project aims to design, test and implement co-operative mechanisms to improve effective monitoring of reintegrated children. One idea is to organise the monitoring through a central agency; not to do the monitoring itself but make proper arrangements for referral of the monitoring tasks. First step will be to motivate a number of NGOs to participate in the project.

Minimum Standards for
Residential Child Care:
Result of Workshop

A workshop was organised to discuss minimum standards and management issues of child recovery centres by COSECAM on 17 March 2003. A great number of NGOs and representatives from international and government agencies attended this workshop. The proceedings and recommendations are presented in this report. Main conclusions of the participants were that regulation and registration of centres or shelters that provide residential care to children is required; that minimum standards for centre management and childcare need to be developed; that more professional training should be made available to centre staff; and that centres should be established on the basis of need (and not on a religious, commercial or other basis).

This publication is a result of the projects:

Child Centre Regulation (CCR)

A varying group of managers and caretakers from child recovery centres met monthly during year 2002 to discuss matters of common concern. This Shelter Platform was hosted by COSECAM but participants decided themselves about topics and

Centre Exchange Visit (CEV)

Staff from different child recovery centres made study trips to 13 child recovery centres located throughout the country. They used SWOT analysis techniques to report on the situation and conditions they observed. A report was prepared describing *best practices* and *lessons learned* to be used as input for the workshop.

AVAILABLE PUBLICATIONS

- 003 *Draft Minimum Standards for Shelters*, 2003 by Sim Soyong (English and Khmer).
- 004 *Exchange Visits to Child Rehabilitation Centres*, 2003 by Amanda McLoughlin (English and Khmer)
- 005 *Minimum Standards for Residential Care, Result of Workshop*, 2003 by Sim Soyong (Khmer with English summary).
- 006 *Sold like Chicken: Trafficked Cambodian Girls Speak Out*, 2003 by Sandy Hudd (English and Khmer).

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