

“Children Outside of Family Care” Training
June 17, 2015
Opening Remark of Her Excellency Hang Lina,
Director of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS)



Respected:

- Dr. Lindsay Stark, Associate Professor, Program on Forced Migration and Health, Director of CPC Learning Network, Columbia University,
- Ms. Beth Rubenstein, Senior Research Associate, Columbia University,
- His Excellency, Deputy Director of the National Institute of Statistics (NIS),
- Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Representatives of Various Government Agencies,
- Representatives of UNICEF, USAID, Friends International, MLT Consulting,
- Distinguished National and International Guests and,
- Ladies and Gentlemen!

Today, I am very pleased and would like to thank and welcome the participation of H.E., Lok Chumteavs, and all of you in this training for research teams, supervisors, and enumerators for conducting research on “Children Outside of Family Care.” I also would like to thank and appreciate the financial and technical supporters, USAID and Columbia University.

This research on “Children Outside of Family Care” in Cambodia is an important measure of vulnerable citizens that has never been conducted. I feel privileged and honored, through the National Institute of Statistics, to cooperate with USAID, Friends International, MLT Consulting and Columbia University, to lead this research and to open today’s training. All of your presence, especially that of Excellencies and Lok Chumteavs, reflects the support that the “Children Outside of Family Care” project has already received.

This research will be a dynamic resource necessary to create better lives, which children are in need of most. We can ensure that Cambodia becomes a place where all children receive attention, encouragement, and adequate family-care.

Excellencies, Lok Chumteavs, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We all know that children outside of family care do not receive proper physical care; they are threatened and often lose love, care, attention, and encouragement from their families and guardians. There is research confirming that children outside of family care often experience multiple forms of violence, such as rape, neglect, exploitation, discouragement, abuse, and malnutrition, at a very concerning rate.

When we think of children outside of family care, there are two important groups of children in Cambodia: children living in residential care institutions, and children living on the streets. Our project's objectives are to count both the number of children who are living in residential care institutions and the number of children living on the streets, so we may have a better understanding of their predicaments.

This study is being conducted to enable the government to conduct routine surveillance of children living outside of family care. The goal of generating data on this population is to facilitate the reduction of children living outside of family care in Cambodia, and also to secure budgetary resources for achieving the determined goal. Measuring children outside of family care and monitoring the study's progress will happen every 3-5 years. Direct interviews with children outside of family care will be used to supplement the existing data of the Royal Government of Cambodia, such as population demographics and the Cambodian health survey. The data will also augment the insufficient data about vulnerable children and enable us to continue monitoring these children over time.

This project happens in tandem with Cambodia's proposed Action Plans for Child Protection, making Cambodia a leading country in child protection and development. A proper, routine account of children outside of family care will enable Cambodia to include this particular measure into the development of a model for all policies of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

I sincerely hope that the training's participants, supervisors, and enumerators will pay attention and listen to the guidelines for accurate data collections.

Ladies and gentlemen...!

Please be informed that if data is incorrect, it will result in faulty policies, and Cambodia will not be able to properly address the areas of child protection.

Today's training represents the initial step toward the actual work in responding to children outside of family care. I hope that one day the data about children outside of family care will be permanently collected and available for the public's use, promoting insight on topics such as HIV/AIDS, child mortality, and vaccination rates.

Finally, may I wish H.E., Lok Chumteavs, participants, ladies and gentlemen four germs of Buddhist Blessings: Longevity, Nobility, Health and Strength, and a successful and safe research process.

I would like to announce the beginning of the training for research teams, supervisors, and enumerators on "Children Outside of Family Care" from this time onward.

Thank You!