

Independence
Professionalism
Confidentiality
Collaboration



Action Pour Les Enfants

January - March 2012 Newsletter

Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE)

Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that was registered in France in 1994, with no religious and political affiliations. APLE has extensive experiences in managing projects that provide assistance and protection to the vulnerable in South and South-East Asia.

In 2003, APLE and Spanish NGO [Global Humanitaria](#) partnered to launch **the “PROTECT” project** in Cambodia, which has since then grown from operations in Phnom Penh alone to a countrywide scale. Global Humanitaria continues to provide support, which enables APLE to ensure its ground-breaking work. This support includes development and management of the project, technical and financial resources. APLE implements all activities necessary to fulfill the achievement of its vision and mission statement.

Please report abuse!

If you observe any suspicion of sexual abuse, please call our 24 hrs helpline:

092 311 511 or email us: reportabuse@aplecambodia.org

We assure you of strictest confidentiality!

Cover image

Awareness activity at Banlung District,
Ratanakiri Province, March 23, 2012.

Vision

A community where everyone is free from abuse and exploitation.

Mission

To reduce all forms of sexual abuse and labor exploitation through prevention, protection, promotion of prosecution and advocacy.

Goals

To prevent sexual abuse and labor exploitation through awareness, education, capacity building and dissemination.

To protect victims from sexual abuse and labor exploitation through provision of social, psychological and rehabilitative support, and legal assistance.

To promote prosecution of all offenders and perpetrators by collaborating with law enforcement agencies to investigate and prosecute any person who commits sexual abuse and labor exploitation against children and adults to legal accountability.

APLE has been operating under **Memorandum of Understanding** with the **Royal Government of Cambodia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, and Ministry of Interior.**

About our work

APLE conducts reactive and proactive investigations into suspected incidents of child sexual abuse, child pornography, child prostitution, international pedophilia, child sex tourism, rape and human trafficking for sexual or labor exploitation in close collaboration with the Cambodian National Police and International Law Enforcement Agencies.

Our dedicated staff consists of seriously working people whose first interest is to prevent abuse. Investigations of suspicious sexual abuse behaviors often take months or years before enough hard evidence is collected to present to police or courts. This is for various reasons: traveling child sex offenders often stay in one place for a limited time and tend to go into and out of a country regularly; child sex offenders are mostly aware of the fact that they are involved in illegal activities and are very cautious; victims and their

families are often not cooperative or fearful to disclose abuse, because they receive substantial financial support from perpetrators or feel guilty to denounce someone they've trusted.

Further, cultural beliefs, lack of knowledge and understanding, but also ignorance and sometimes corruption create a discrepancy between the number of arrests and the actual amount of convictions and sometimes disappointing sentences.

APLE is NOT a law enforcement agency; we are merely helping police to detect the crime, identify victims, investigate the crime scene, and ensure that collecting evidence in case of signs of abuse is done in compliance with national and international laws and standards. It is up to police to put parts of the puzzle together and to make a decision of what legal proceedings to undertake.

Our dedication to and support of victims (and their families) does not stop with an arrest or a conviction. Our social and legal teams often continue supporting them many months or years after abuse has taken place to guarantee successful rehabilitation.

APLE wants you to have this in mind while reading this newsletter or our website.

For comments, ideas, suggestions, criticism or questions about this newsletter or other issues, please mailto: info@aplecambodia.org

Investigations January - March

In the **first three months of 2012** APLE investigated **64 cases in Phnom Penh, 41 cases in Sihanoukville and 07 cases in Siem Reap**, which led to the arrest of **7** Cambodian and **8** foreign nationals. The cases against **6** Cambodians are pending; **1** woman, suspected of criminal responsibility to sexual intercourse with a minor under 15, was not charged because of lack of proof; **2** suspects were charged with rape and **1** suspect was charged with unlawful removal of a minor.

Among the **arrested foreigners** were **2 Swiss** - (1 released without charge; 1 with purchase of child prostitution against 2 male victims and illegal border crossing), **1 British** - (charged with indecent acts against 2 male - and 2 female minors) and **1 French tourist** (charged with indecent acts against 8 male minors); **1 Australian** - (charged with sexual intercourse with a minor under 15 years), **1 American** - (released

without charge) and **1 French resident** (charged with indecent acts against 3 male minors) and **1 British English language teacher** working in Siem Reap (charged with indecent acts against 5 male minors).



Educating children about grooming techniques and preventive measures in Russei Village, Stung Meanchey District, Phnom Penh, June 19, 2012.

4 Cambodians were arrested on charges of gang-rape of a 15 year old female victim from Chhouk District, Kampot Province, while they were all working in Thailand. The **serious crime unit of Kampot provincial police commissariat**, who received a complaint from the victim's parent, referred the information to APLE in order to provide support to the traumatized victim and to assist in investigating the case. The suspects were identified by the victim in Thailand. APLE team accompanied the victim and Cambodian police to meet with the Thai Senator, chief of the committee on social welfare and labor security, in Bangkok and file a complaint.

On 25th January, 2012 Thai police arrested the four suspects and referred them back to Cambodia to face justice. They are currently being detained in Kampot prison awaiting further court procedures.



Suspect and victims of ongoing investigation.

Social Support for Victims and their Families January - March

APLE social workers have been taking care of **36** victims in Phnom Penh, **30** victims in Sihanoukville and **37** victims in Siem Reap.

Following is one example of all cases the 3 social workers have been supporting: 15 Year old male victim **Pok Veashna** (name changed) from Kien Svay District, Kandal province has been the victim of abuse by a 41 year old French national since 2007. The mother looked for help late 2011 after her son changed his behavior. Victim testimony and APLE investigation led to proof of abuse. The victim received some money from the suspect for school fees and books as part of the grooming process. The suspect was arrested on January 18, 2012, by Anti-Human Trafficking and Juvenile Protection Unit of Kandal provincial commissariat.

The victim worried about his health, so medical care was facilitated by APLE social worker.

After returning to the community Pok Veashna was afraid of the community's response and was referred to stay in a temporary shelter in Kandal province.

Initially, before the arrest APLE social worker did counsel the boy on multiple occasions to help him disclose abuse. Since the arrest, she's been supporting the victim to be able to talk about the abuse and make it easier for him to talk about it during court hearings. And she is informing him about his child and victim's rights. She is visiting the boy twice per month for 60-90 minutes and will continue doing so.

Pok Veashna is also receiving counseling from the shelter's own counselor once a week and receives trauma-counseling because he is having massive sleeping problems and needs medicine to sleep.

Pok Veashna has also been well supported by two lawyers provided by APLE during the prosecution against the accused. He was accompanied and counseled to testify before the investigating judge and will be legally represented in court hearings.

APLE social worker also contacted World Vision's 'My Son' Project to assist the family. They drilled a well, supplied water pipes, and small capital to the family to be able to grow vegetables.

More information about other cases and work of APLE, you can find on our website: www.aplecambodia.org



Awareness activity and promotion of APLE hotline 092 311 511 during MTV Exit Event against human trafficking at Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, December 17, 2011.



Awareness activity at Pour un Sourire d'Enfant (PSE), Stung Meanchey District, Phnom Penh, March 30, 2012.

Legal Department January - March

In the facts and figure page you can find proof of the successes from APLE's lawyers' legal counseling and representation of the victims and/or their families. But they have also faced challenges and difficulties: Executing the court verdict with offenders who left Cambodia (escaped or released on bail) remains problematic, especially regarding retrieving financial compensation for the victims. The lawyers have advocated in some cases successfully with Cambodian courts to inform foreign judicial authorities about verdict and sentence in Cambodia and to have them implemented abroad.

Most of APLE clients tend to focus on compensation rather than punishment. As a reactive strategy, lawyers have changed to make victims and their families focus on punishment of the accused, rather than focusing on civil compensation.

Lawyers have been facing negative conduct from court officials on several occasions, like judges limiting their time to speak or refusing them to represent the victims. Often this is a result of judges' attitude or lobbying with the victims and their families by the accused and their defense lawyers. They have addressed the problematic with court officials in cooperation with other agencies and the situation has improved since.

Other challenges APLE lawyers encountered while representing victims of sexual abuse were uncooperative victims, especially when perpetrators are their fathers, close relatives or have financial influence; uncooperative clients filing complaints against APLE or their lawyers and reversing their testimonies to support the offenders; lack of medical examination or lack of forensic evidence.

Top: Lawyer Ms. Peng Maneth attends a police interview of a male victim. March 11, 2012

Bottom: Ms. Peng Maneth (2nd left) accompanies Pok Veashna (name changed) at Kandal provincial court. March 3, 2012.





APLE social worker counseling Pok Veashna's family, Kien Svay District, Kandal Province, March 1, 2012.

Facts and figures January - March

- **1115** Children, villagers and authorities have better knowledge on child sexual exploitation, preventative measures and how to report abuse, after participating in our awareness - or training activities.
- **150** Victims and their families received efficient therapeutic counseling, legal representation and assistance.
- **80** Judges, Prosecutors, Police, Military Police, Public Officials and NGO representatives have better understanding on Law of Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation and Criminal Code through the forum workshop organized by APLE in cooperation with Terre des Hommes Netherland.
- **66** cases APLE legal team defended: **80** accused were charged and are pending trial at all levels of courts.
- **110** children, **90** of whom were victims of sexual abuse, were provided legal counseling and given advice by APLE legal team.
- **7** Underage victims were referred to aftercare shelters.
- APLE successfully advocated and lobbied the Ministry of Interior to issue the deportation order on Alexander Trofimov. He will be expelled from Cambodia when the police manage to find him.
- **17** Victims in four cases are awaiting civil compensation to be made by perpetrators, after being sentenced to do so by the courts.
- APLE staff attended workshops and training events as trainers and or attendees on a wide range of topics: on investigation techniques, on management and leadership, on computer search and forensic, on climate change, on understanding of traumatism and chronic response, on child counseling skills, on modus operandi of traveling child sex offenders and preventive measures, etc.

Awareness activity, Chheuteal Commune, Kandal Province, March 1, 2012.





APLE social worker educating 7 children about grooming techniques from offenders and preventive measures, 29 February, 2012.

Donation Page

For being able to work for the better of vulnerable children and adults, APLE relies on donations.

If you have a pay-pal account, just go to our website, or you transfer your donation through our bank account:

Bank name:

Foreign Trade Bank of Cambodia

Bank address:

#3, Street 114 (Kramuon Sar),
Phnom Penh 12203

SWIFT code:

FTCKHPP

Account name:

APLE Other Donors

Account number:

3040016160

For administrative enquiries,
please call:

023 950 151 from Monday to Friday:
7.30am -12pm and **1.30pm - 5.00pm**

What can we do for the victims with your donation?

- Momentarily we are directly or indirectly involved in the aftercare of more than **500** victims and/or their families.
 - For **\$30** we can have a medical examination of a victim, which can be used as forensic proof of abuse.
 - For **\$75** per months we can send a child to school, provide school materials, books and buy a bag of rice to support the family.
 - For **\$94**, we can run an awareness campaign of one tuk-tuk with banner (printing and monthly allowance for driver) to promote APLE's hotline and report-abuse for one year.
 - For **\$100** per month we can send an adult victim to a vocational training course, learning any professional skills ranging from motorbike/car mechanic, welding, hairdressing, teaching, etc. This amount includes accommodation and food.
- APLE social workers spend around \$150 per month on all their cases for:**
- Medical treatment or medical examination in public hospitals for victims and victims' families.
 - Transportation for victims and victims' families to join the court processes.
 - Rice and grocery for victims/victims' families when social workers provide social counseling.
 - Materials social workers provide for understanding of children's rights and sexual abuse to vulnerable children on the street.

APLE Cambodia Head Office

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Please report abuse!

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We assure you of strictest confidentiality!

APLE thanks the following donors for their support.

