

ALTERNATIVE CARE IN CAMBODIA

Regional workshop on Alternative Care,
Bangkok, 28-29 November 2005

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY





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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

- Background on Children
- Alternative Care in Cambodia
- Challenges
- Government Strategies
- Lessons Learned
- Steps Forward



BACKGROUND ON CHILDREN

- Population of 13.5 million, of which 52 per cent under 18 years (2004)
- Thirty-three (33) per cent of children aged 5-14 years are working (2004)
- Twenty-two (22) per cent of children are registered at birth
- 670,000 orphans (19 per cent of all children) (2004)
- Estimated 270 children in prison (2003)
- Between 10,000 and 20,000 children living and/or working on the street in Phnom Penh (2004)
- Estimated 78,000 children with disabilities (2001)

CATEGORIES IN ALTERNATIVE CARE

- Residential (institutional) care
- Group home care
- Community and family based care
- Pagoda and other faith-based care

RESIDENTIAL CARE

- Definition of residential (institutional) care
- Group home care
- Estimated 11,470 children live in residential care
- Main reason for entry is poverty
- Most children in residential care have at least one parent alive
- Expense between \$1 and \$4 p/child p/day
- Most children stay in center for 4+ years
- Few placement opportunities for disabled children

NON-RESIDENTIAL CARE

- Community and Family-based Care
 - Kinship care
 - Foster care
 - Adoption
- Most orphans live in informal care arrangements
- Pagoda- and other faith-based Care

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- Alternative Care only partially covered by law
 - National Adoption
 - Inter-Country Adoption
 - Foster Care not covered by law
- Most alternative care arrangements are informal and un-regulated

CHALLENGES

- Weak national capacity in social service provision
- Un-regulated alternative care system
 - Weak registration system of care providers
 - Foster care not covered by law
 - Inter-country adoption not well regulated
 - Absence of standards of care, guidelines on facilities, staffing and monitoring of children in alternative care
- Little data on non-residential alternative care
- Few partner organizations actively promoting foster care



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GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

- De-institutionalization
- Legal reform
- Development of Policy and Regulatory framework
- Improving Monitoring and Follow-up of Children

LESSONS LEARNED

- Early involvement of key stakeholders is essential
- Result will be that the process is very slow (but will increase ownership)
- Involve embassies in ICA discussions
- Leading Ministry should have sufficient 'clout'

STEPS FORWARD 2006-2010

- Research on traditional forms of alternative care and violence against children in institutions
- Promoting de-institutionalization through pilot project on foster care
- Development of an inter-country adoption system & study tour
- Refining the draft Minimum Standards of Care in framework of int'l standard development process
- Guidelines on staff requirements in residential care, HIV/AIDS affected children in need of alternative care, and on child/family family assessment and placements
- Closer partnerships with key (regional) stakeholders and consultation with children

THANK YOU!

