





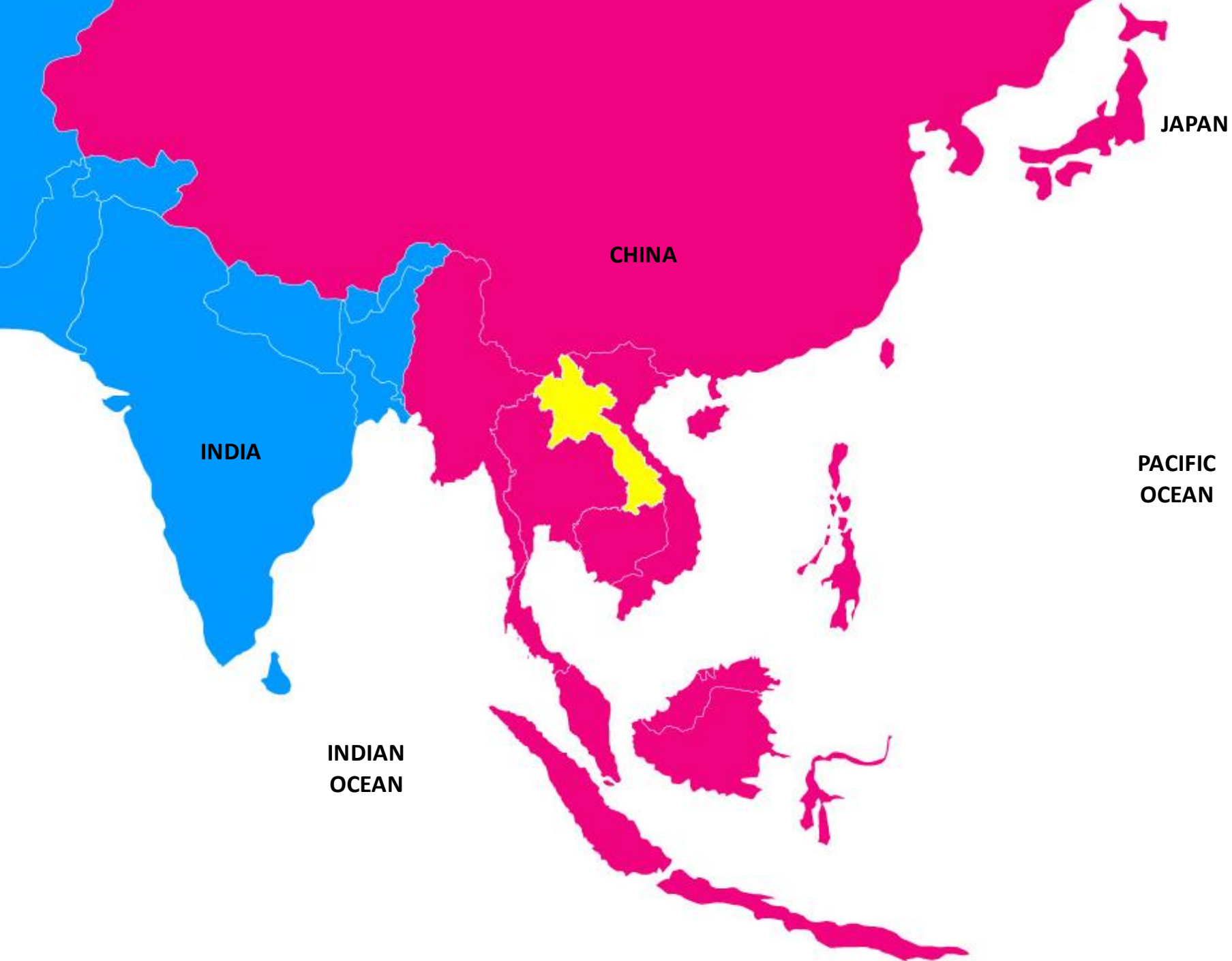




FOR EVERY CHILD...

Lao PDR

Lao PDR is one of the world's
poorest countries, situated at
the center of a fast
developing region





CHINA

VIETNAM

MYANMAR

LAO PDR

• LUANG PRABANG

• VIENTIANE

• SAVANNAKHET

• PAKSE

THAILAND

CAMBODIA

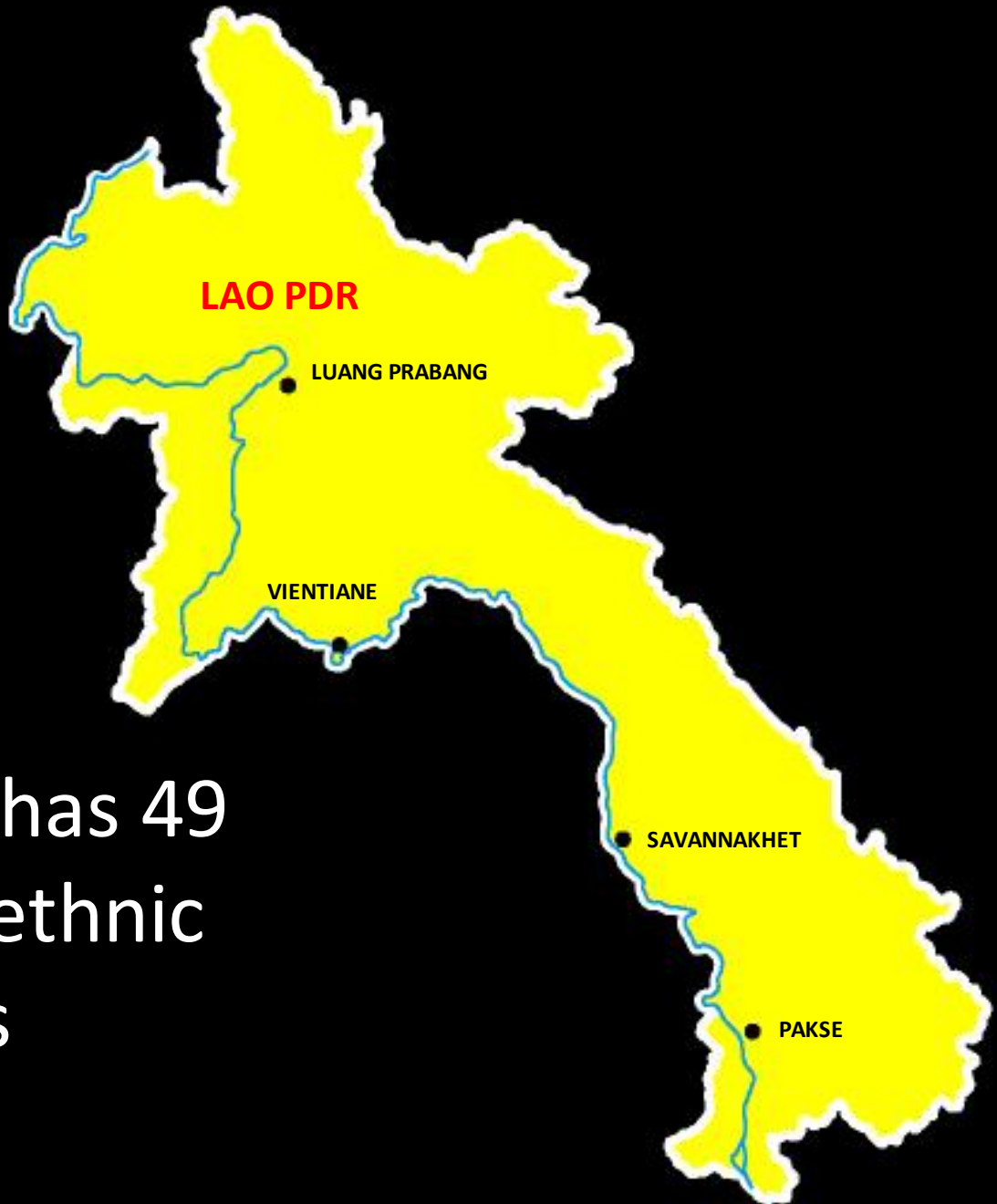
Two thirds of the
country is
mountainous





73% of the population
live on less than \$2 a day

The country has 49
recognised ethnic
groups



PROTECTION

More than half the population is
under 20 years of age and lacks
skills and opportunities

Laos also continues to suffer from the
legacy of the Indochina war

Children account for almost half of the injuries and deaths still caused by UXO (unexploded ordnance)





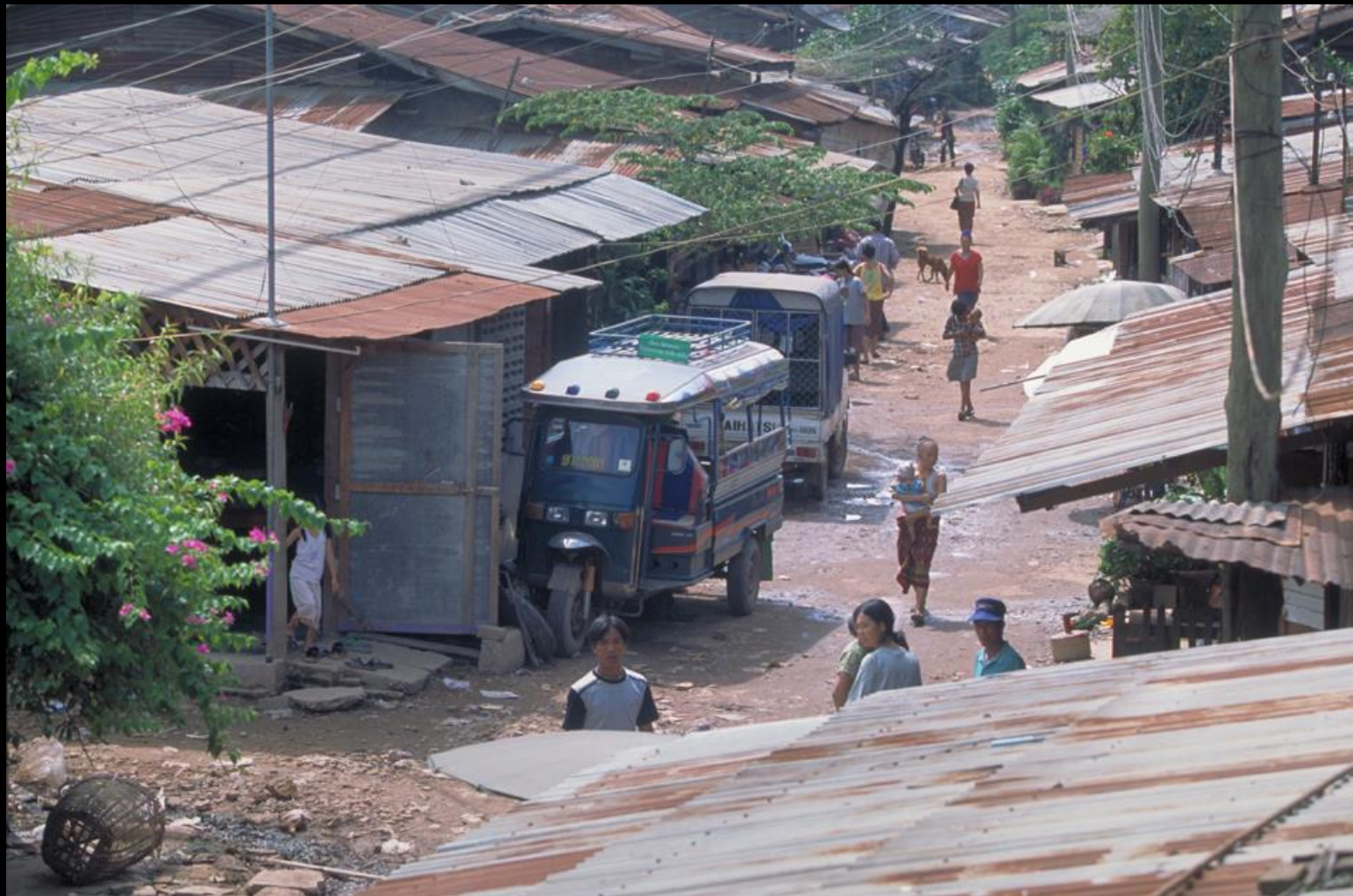


UNICEF is a leader in mine
risk education





As the country opens up, new problems are emerging such as urban migration, child trafficking and HIV/AIDS





UNICEF is working to create a
protective environment for
children and young people



Young people are at high risk of
trafficking due to poverty
and limited opportunities

60% of trafficking victims are
girls between 12 and
18 years old



Lao PDR is considered low prevalence
for HIV/AIDS but the real
incidence of infection may be much
higher

It is surrounded by countries in the
midst of HIV epidemics



UNICEF is supporting a Lifeskills programme for young people and outreach by Buddhist monks to advocate for community acceptance and compassion

It is also helping provide care and support for people with HIV/AIDS

រួមມື ຮ່ວມໃຈ
ໃຫ້ອາເກດທີ່ສົດໃສແກ່ຜູ້ຕິດເຊື້
HIV



ມາພ້ອມໃຈສາມັກຄີກັນທຸກພາກສ່ວນເພື່ອຕ້ານເຊື້ HIV ແລະ ໃຫ້ໂອກາດ
ແກ່ຜູ້ຕິດເຊື້





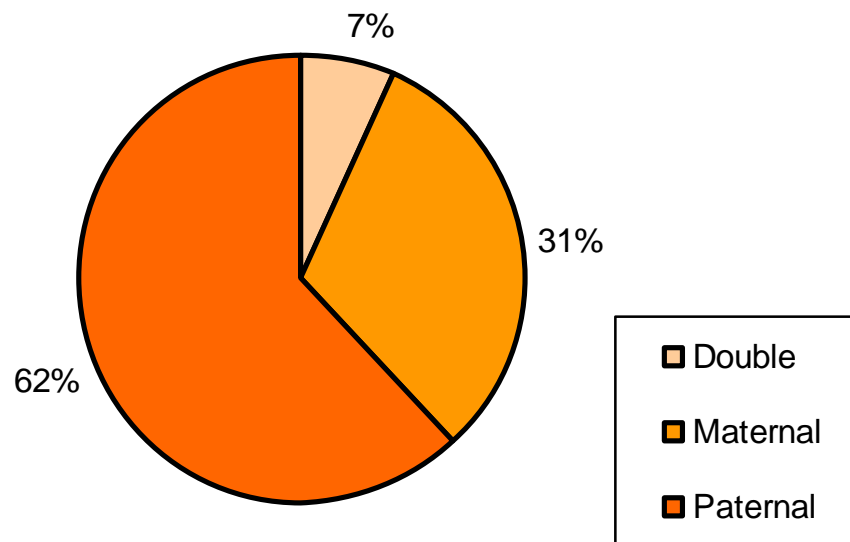




ພະພຸດທະອົງ ເມດຕາບູກຄົນ



Orphans in Lao PDR



At the end 2003, an estimated 99.9% were in the care of their families and communities and about 750 in institutions



Draft of Law
On the Protection of the Rights and
Interests of Children

Draft of Law
On the Protection of the Rights and
Interests of Children



“peuan mit”

*Building a sustainable
street children project in Lao PDR
Implementation and capacity building*

A collaboration between the
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
and **Friends-International**
With the support of **UNICEF**

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

53% of girls married at age 15-19 years have at least 1 child (*PSI - 2003*)

37% of population has access to a water supply system (*Unicef 2004*)

65% of adults are illiterate (*Unicef 2004*)

Children in Lao PDR

Population under 14 years: 42.5%

80% of children in school age, go to public school (*Unicef 2003*)

Only 60% of children study further than grade 5 (*Unicef 2003*)

Infant mortality rate: 4.7% (*PNUD 2004*)

233 children HIV+ children under 18 (*NCCAB 2003*)

Share of the Lao National Budget spent on education (*Unicef 2004*)

- 1995: 14%
- 2003: 8.5%

Street children in Lao PDR

- The Peuan Mit team is running quarterly snapshot surveys to monitor the trend of street children. **An average 202 street children were met over one day** in 2005 (40% females)
- 83% street WORKING children, 10% street LIVING children and 7% street FAMILIES children
- Between January and June 2005, **303 new street children** (on the streets either on a full time basis or occasionally)
- Based on this number an estimated 400 street children are in Vientiane Capital (either on a full time basis or occasionally)

Street children in Lao PDR

- **Main reasons pushing children to the streets are:**
 - domestic violence,
 - the need to make money because the family is not capable of supporting the children,
 - drug problems,
 - high number of youth without employment in poor communities
- **Trend:** growing number of street children from the Savannakhet province



Photo credit: PEUAN MIT



Photo credit: PEUAN MIT

Peuan Mit - Objectives

a. Overall Objective:

Setting up the Lao National Program in favour of street children

b. Specific Objectives:

- Reintegration of street children in their society (school, work, family, culture, citizenship)
- Prevention
- Capacity building of staff of the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) in working with street children in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child

A few numbers about the Peuan Mit street children project

Working with 500 children / month

- 50% are street children
- 50% are children at risk of becoming street children

Teams: 26 Lao National staff (F=13), including 3
MoLSW staff and 1 LSW Vientiane Capital staff
**+ 1 expatriate Program Advisor (and 1 expat Social Worker
coming)**

Estimated expenses 2005: \$180,000



Photo credit: PEUAN MIT



Photo credit: PEUAN MIT

Challenges for Peuan Mit reintegration team

Some children are staying in Peuan Mit center and cannot be reintegrated with their family (**orphans, domestic violence, parents heavy drug users...**)

**Among 20 children under 15 staying at Peuan Mit center:
13 children cannot live with their parents**

- 69% because of substance abuse
- 23% because of arguments with parents/step-parents
- 8% are double orphans

8 of them have no relatives to stay with

Strong need to find legal alternative care placement

Challenges

- **Institutional care in Lao PDR is very limited** if compared to the estimated needs (less than one percent of the 80,000 estimated orphans)
 - **Lack of legal procedures for alternative care** such as long term formal guardianship / foster care / adoption (local)
- Informal guardianship** is very common in Lao PDR but the lack of clear procedures makes it difficult to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children
- **Cost efficiency** of institutional care needs to be considered (cost of one child 10 years in 1 orphanage compared with the price of supporting a family to take care of a child)

Challenges

- Institutional care is often perceived positively by adults, but children in a great majority prefer family or community based care
- Use strong existing kinship networks in Lao society: parents who cannot take care of their children are usually able to find someone in the extended family or in the community who is willing to provide alternative family care
- Community based care needs to be promoted in order to respect the best interests of children.

Lessons learned/recommendations

- Placement in Alternative care must be **officially recognized** and needs to **involve authorities**. Possibility to link with the Child Protection Network.
- **Common standards of practices** need to be set up (and monitored) on a national/regional scale.
- **Sustainability:**
 - Government / organizations cannot pay guardians forever
 - Need to support long term income generation activities
 - Support guardians to be able to eventually support children's education and development on a long term basis
 - Regular financial support is rarely a sustainable solution
- Preparation of alternative placement is a long process. **Preparation and follow up** of placements in guardianship require **well trained social workers and important resources**.



Photo credit: PEUAN MIT



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Peuan Mit Reintegration System



**REINTEGRATION IN:
FAMILY / SCHOOL / WORK**

PEUAN MIT REINTEGRATION SYSTEM

Example: Steps for Family Reintegration

PREPARATION



REINTEGRATION DAY



FOLLOW UP and TROUBLESHOOT

long time

- Check medical and mental health of child
- Find the family
- Inform officials
- Family assessment
- Plan with child, family and chief of village
- Visit family with child (AT LEAST 2 TIMES)
- Support the family so the family is ready to take the child

1 day only

- Reintegration only when everybody is ready (child, family and community)
- Importance of working with officials (giving information / preparing follow up)
- The reintegration day should be a party (so everybody knows)

Long long time

- Regular visits to:
 - Child
 - Family
 - Chief of village
 - Community
- As soon as there is a problem, the social worker (para professional) tries to solve it with the child, the family, the chief of village
- Follow up should be facilitated by the village officials and LSW officials.

The process for Family reintegration can be adapted and reinforced to prepare placements into guardianship.

Document prepared by:

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
and



The Street Children Network

www.friends-international.org