

Human Trafficking Prevention Program

Cambodia | University of Richmond, Virginia, USA | Ngan Bui, Vietnam, University of Richmond
June 5, 2023 - July 17, 2023

I. Project Background

According to a recent UNICEF article, it is estimated that there are as many as 250,000 Cambodians living in conditions of modern slavery.¹ In recent years, the problem of human trafficking and sexual exploitation continues to exacerbate in Cambodia, and the pandemic has made it challenging for Cambodian authorities to further anti-trafficking efforts.² With the increased use of technology, traffickers continue to exploit victims through various deceptive recruitment tactics leading to a rise in online child sexual exploitation and cybercams. However, the COVID-19 lockdown hindered government officials' and NGOs' efforts to disseminate human trafficking information to the general population. Hence, there is an immediate need to advance anti-human trafficking efforts in Cambodia through awareness campaigns and prevention programs that educate everyone to be able to identify and understand the risk of human trafficking. In collaboration with local NGOs, this project will strengthen prevention efforts through a series of human trafficking workshops, educate the local community about human trafficking, and raise awareness about the risk of exploitation.

II. Project Summary

I will implement six human trafficking workshops in Poipet (2), Battambang (2), Phnom Penh (1), and Siem Reap (1) Cambodia. In Battambang, I will partner with Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC) to host one workshop for prospective teachers at this local college. The purpose of this workshop is to educate prospective teachers about human trafficking and equip them with the skills to teach others about this topic. The workshop will provide in-depth training for teachers to facilitate future workshops and discussions on this topic. Additionally, I will partner with Love Without Boundaries (LWB) to host two workshops at Believe In Me Schools in Poipet during the weekend to raise awareness and educate the community about human trafficking. The target audience for the first workshop is LWB foster care parents and local adults. The other workshop will focus on young children and teenagers in the area. In Phnom Penh, I will partner with Harpswell Foundation to host one workshop for students residing in Harpswell's dormitory. The target audience for this workshop is female college students, focusing on inspiring and empowering students to take action and raise awareness about human trafficking. In Siem Reap, I will collaborate with Sala Bai Hotel & Restaurant School to host one workshop for the students attending the school. The audience for this workshop is disadvantaged Cambodians between 17 and 23 years old, 70% of whom are girls. I will also partner with One Body Village (OBV) to host one workshop in Battambang for children who are in danger of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. This workshop will take place at OBV safe house, informing the children about exploitation and ways to protect themselves.

III. Project Objective

This project aims to raise awareness and educate the local community about the danger of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. By connecting local NGOs together, this project creates a network of strong partnerships that work toward a common goal: eradicating human trafficking. The project will equip the community with the knowledge and resources to recognize the signs of human trafficking and strategies employed by traffickers to protect themselves and others. Through the workshops, the community will understand the different layers of human trafficking in Cambodia. This project will connect the community to important resources such as crisis hotlines, safety tips, and programs to support and help them navigate potentially dangerous situations. Additionally, it also aims to empower the community to unite against human trafficking. The project will target prospective teachers and students with the hope of inspiring them to join the fight against human trafficking. With the Davis Projects for Peace grant, this large-scale prevention project will reach diverse groups of stakeholders and create lasting impact in the community.

IV. Project Details

The duration of this project is approximately six weeks in Cambodia. The workshops will be facilitated by A21 Cambodia to ensure that all workshops are culturally relevant and appropriate for local communities. Local facilitators will be able to effectively facilitate discussion given their knowledge of local beliefs, cultural values, and practices. A21 facilitators have a lot of experience in facilitating prevention education and awareness programs in Cambodia. This project will provide an opportunity for the organization to expand its reach to many people in the local region. I will collaborate with A21's coordinators to design content and materials that are tailored to the needs of the audience for every workshop.

To mitigate the potential risk of low participation in workshops, I will collaborate closely with all partnered organizations to create pamphlets to promote the workshops. For LWB workshops, the

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/cambodia/stories/victims-trafficking-find-hope-through-education>

² <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/cambodia>

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pamphlets will be given to LWB staff to distribute to community members in landfills and local markets through their food distribution program. For OBV workshop, the regional director will contact community leaders and conduct site visits to villages to promote the workshop. For BTEC workshop, I will leverage social media and campus organizations to attract students. Both Harpswell Foundation and Sala Bai School will require all their students to attend the workshops.

Upon arriving in Cambodia on June 5, I will collaborate with A21 coordinators to finalize workshop materials and prepare prevention packages for all workshops. Below is a tentative schedule for all workshops: June 12 - One workshop in Siem Reap at Sala Bai School; June 17 and June 24 - Two workshops in Poipet at LWB BIM schools; July 1 - One workshop in Battambang at BTEC; July 8 - One workshop in Battambang at OBV; July 12 - One workshop in Phnom Penh at Harpswell Foundation. I will use the time between each workshop to prepare and coordinate the logistics of the upcoming workshop with A21 facilitators and the partnered organization.

The workshop will include interactive activities to engage participants as well as a safe space to encourage insightful discussion. To ensure the information is accessible, workshop materials will be in Khmer with concise language and visualizations. Lunch and refreshments will be provided at all the workshops to create an opportunity for community members to connect with each other and converse about this important issue. I will hire LWB staff to cook lunch for the two LWB workshops. For other workshops, I will cater food from local restaurants. Following every workshop, participants will receive a prevention package that includes human trafficking resources. This prevention package will include prevention resources such as a drawstring backpack, A21 prevention comic books, a custom wristband, a phone card wallet, and a reusable water bottle. Each item will include the human trafficking hotline to raise awareness and encourage conversations around this topic. In addition, I will collaborate with A21 to design new prevention material that can be used for this project and future programs facilitated by A21. A tentative schedule of the workshop is as follows:

10:00 AM - Introductory Remarks | 10:15 AM - Session 1 | 11:00 AM - Session 2
12:00 PM - Lunch | 1:00 PM - Session 3 | 2:00 PM - Closing Remarks

Although each workshop varies based on the target audience, all workshops strive to meet the following three objectives: educate the community on the reality of modern-day slavery and human trafficking in Cambodia, equip the community to prevent, recognize, and report potential scenarios of human trafficking, and empower the community to take action and raise awareness about human trafficking. Each session will focus on one of the three objectives and include activities to help participants understand the concepts.

V. Community Partnerships

In addition to partnering with Love Without Boundaries, One Body Village, Harpswell Foundation, Sala Bai School, and Battambang Teacher Education College to host the workshops, I am collaborating with A21 Cambodia, an organization that focuses on prevention education as part of the solution to end human trafficking. A21 will provide prevention resources and materials on human trafficking as well as their expertise to facilitate all the workshops. Acknowledging that language barrier is a great challenge, I rely on the strong community partnerships to help make my vision a reality. Local organizations will assist with translating workshop and marketing materials into Khmer as well as helping me communicate with the local people.

VI. Project Impact & Sustainability

Prevention education is important in breaking the endless cycle of human trafficking. By preventing human trafficking from happening in vulnerable communities, peace is preserved. This project is expected to reach more than 200 students, teachers, and parents across Cambodia. Prevention education empowers the communities to raise their voices and speak against the injustices happening in their communities. This project equips the community with the knowledge to make informed decisions and recognize the danger of human trafficking. Additionally, the project also aims to train teachers to facilitate future discussions and educate students about this important issue. Although the project will end, the knowledge gained through these workshops will sustain and spark more conversations within the local community, leading to lasting impacts and sustainable knowledge against human trafficking. By establishing a framework for the workshop, partnered NGOs can build off of the framework to continue anti-trafficking efforts. By building a larger network of organizations, I hope to emphasize the importance of community building and partnerships as powerful tools to fight against human trafficking. Together, we are stronger than slavery.

VII. Qualifications/Experience

I hosted a Human Trafficking Conference in 2018, focusing on educating the Richmond community on the dangers of human trafficking. I had the honor of delivering a TED Talk at TEDxYouth@RVA in 2018,

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emphasizing that education is protection from human trafficking. During my undergraduate studies, I participated in the “Human Rights and Modern-day Slavery” Sophomore Scholars in Residence program. I also assisted Dr. Monti Datta, an expert in human trafficking and modern-day slavery, in various research projects relating to this topic.