HUMAN RIGHTS 2018:
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

A report issued in
February 2018
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CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
LICADHO is a national Cambodian human rights organization. Since its establishment in 1992, LICADHO has been at the forefront of efforts to protect civil, political, economic and social rights in Cambodia and to promote respect for them by the Cambodian government and institutions. Building on its past achievements, LICADHO continues to be an advocate for the Cambodian people and a monitor of the government through wide ranging human rights programs from its main office in Phnom Penh and 13 provincial offices.

**Monitoring & Protection**

**Monitoring of State Violations & Women’s and Children’s Rights:**
Monitors investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the State and violations made against women and children. Victims are provided assistance through interventions with local authorities and court officials.

**Medical Assistance & Social Work:**
A medical team provides assistance to prisoners and prison officials in 14 prisons, victims of human rights violations and families in resettlement sites. Social workers conduct needs assessments of victims and their families and provide short-term material and food.

**Prison Monitoring:**
Researchers monitor 18 prisons to assess prison conditions and ensure that pre-trial detainees have access to legal representation.

**Paralegal & Legal Representation:**
Victims are provided legal advice by a paralegal team and, in key cases, legal representation by human rights lawyers.

**Promotion & Advocacy**

**Supporting Unions & Grassroots Groups and Networks:**
Assistance to unions, grassroots groups and affected communities to provide protection and legal services, and to enhance their capacity to campaign and advocate for human rights.

**Public Advocacy & Outreach:**
Human rights cases are compiled into a central electronic database, so that accurate information can be easily accessed and analyzed, and produced into periodic public reports (written, audio and visual) or used for other advocacy.

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Cambodia’s authoritarian backslide dragged the country’s democratic institutions to a new low in 2018 when the ruling Cambodian People’s Party (CPP) swept the 29 July general election, claiming every seat in parliament. The non-competitive election was held in the shadow of a severe political crackdown spearheaded by the government since the previous year, and the result consolidated the ruling party’s absolute control of government institutions.

The crackdown saw the forced dissolution of the main opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), the banning of over a hundred of its leaders and activists from politics, and attacks on human rights defenders, civil society organisations and media outlets aimed at silencing dissent before the general election.

These repressive tactics continued unabated in 2018 with increased legal and administrative restrictions on the activities of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), harassment and surveillance of political and human rights activists, and further attacks on the free press.

As the year drew to a close the European Commission announced its intention to suspend the Everything But Arms (EBA) trade preference scheme which grants Cambodia’s garment industry tariff-free access to the world’s largest trading bloc. In response, the government made public overtures about easing restrictions on civil society organisations, reinstating banned politicians and allowing shuttered media outlets to re-open. These declarations and gestures, including mass meetings with NGOs, appeared to be little more than window dressing and were not accompanied by real change on the ground.

This review of 2018 focuses on the heightened political repression and violations of fundamental freedoms in Cambodia. Other significant human rights issues are described in thematic sections of the report.
DE FACTO ONE-PARTY STATE

The year began under the shadow of the November 2017 dissolution of the CNRP, the only viable opposition party which took more than 40 percent of the vote in the 2017 commune elections and 2013 general election. A political ban was also imposed on 118 senior CNRP members (two were later allowed to return to politics, without their party, one died post elections). The crackdown on the opposition was facilitated by a series of new repressive legislative and criminal code amendments granting the ruling party arbitrary powers to neutralise any political opponent.

Despite the appearance of 19 other political parties on the July ballot, none stood a realistic chance of challenging the CPP in the general election. There was also little evidence that they were independent of the ruling party, with only a few exceptions. As a result, the general election was devoid of any serious challenger and the result - a National Assembly with all 125 seats held by the CPP - attracted widespread condemnation from the international community, notably from the EU, US and UN. The lack of credible election observers also meant that the high turnout of 83 percent claimed by the CPP-controlled National Election Committee (NEC) could not be independently verified. The number of spoiled votes was higher than the number of votes obtained by any opposition party.

The banning of the opposition meant that more than 5,000 elected CNRP commune councillors lost their positions. These local officials were replaced almost entirely by ruling party officials with some token seats allocated to other minor parties. This had an immediate impact on the February Senate elections, where commune councillors and National Assembly lawmakers select Senators and other sub-national council members. With nearly all commune council seats filled by the CPP, the party swept the elections, claiming all 58 Senate seats on the ballot.

“These amendments would provide yet more legal weaponry to a government that appears determined to eliminate all forms of peaceful dissent, pluralism and open political debate.” Joint CSO Statement on Draft Amendments to the Constitution and Criminal Code, February 2018.

Throughout 2017 and 2018, CNRP members came under intense pressure to defect to the ruling party. Amid widespread reports of harassment and intimidation, at least 100 CNRP activists and politicians left the country. Some of those who remained called for an election boycott, dubbed the “Clean Finger Campaign” (referring to the ink used to mark a voter’s index finger). This prompted an aggressive campaign by authorities, including by the NEC itself, to label the boycott illegal and threaten stay-at-home voters with repercussions. Authorities threatened to withdraw essential services from traditionally pro-opposition communities that refused to vote. CNRP members and activists in Battambang and Kampot were fined for participating in the boycott campaign and a lawyer faced criminal proceedings for posting a Facebook video arguing for the legality of the boycott.

Following the general election, the Cambodian government made a series of gestures aimed at easing international pressure. It began by releasing or bailing 21 political prisoners, including land rights activist Tep Vanny and former CNRP activists and members who were convicted for “insurrection” following protests in the wake of the 2013 general election. Cambodia’s most prominent political prisoner, the president of the disbanded CNRP, Kem Sokha, was granted bail but the court imposed harsh restrictions on his liberty. At the end of the year he was still under effective house arrest, prohibited from leaving the area around his home or talking to foreigners or former members of his party. Sokha was arrested in September 2017 on treason charges for allegedly conspiring with the US to overthrow the government. In May, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention declared his detention to be arbitrary and contrary to Cambodia’s international human rights obligations.

Moving Sokha’s confinement to his house removed the requirement of the court to release him from prison within a legally defined time frame, raising the possibility...
that his detention could be extended indefinitely. In December, his lawyer asked the court to drop the charges against him, but that request was rejected by a judge who said additional testimony was needed to complete the investigation.

Apart from Sokha, there were at least another 27 high profile political prisoners in Cambodian jails during 2018, including two other opposition party leaders, 16 CNRP politicians and activists, two Radio Free Asia (RFA) journalists, a prominent human rights defender and an Australian filmmaker. In May, the Appeal Court upheld the conviction of 11 CNRP “insurrectionists”, jailed for their alleged involvement in a 2014 demonstration that turned violent. As in previous hearings, no credible evidence was provided.

Released prisoners reported similar surveillance, harassment and intimidation to former CNRP members and several left the country. Those who travelled to Thailand risked surveillance from Thai authorities and even Cambodian military officials operating in Bangkok. The two countries have a bilateral agreement to return political exiles. This was used to deport United Nations-recognised refugee Sam Sokha, who had featured in a video where she threw her sandal at a CPP billboard.

### Everything But Arms Investigation

On 5 October 2018, the European Union announced plans to initiate an investigation into Cambodia’s compliance with its obligations under the EBA preferential trade scheme, which requires beneficiary states to respect human rights, including labour rights. The tariff-free trade access has become the linchpin of the country’s garment and rice sectors.

The announcement came in the wake of a more than year-long crackdown which saw the government forcibly dismantle the opposition party, severely curb the activities of civil society groups and orchestrate attacks on critical media outlets resulting in the forced closure of a major daily newspaper and dozens of FM radio broadcasts.

The Cambodian government immediately reacted to the announcement, pledging to improve the political and human rights situation in the country. However, this initially cooperative rhetoric failed to be matched by the actions of authorities on the ground. For example, Interior Minister Sar Kheng announced that civil society groups and grassroots organisations would no longer be required to get prior permission for planned activities, yet authorities continued to ban meetings and block public gatherings. Several communities were prevented from celebrating International Human Rights Day on 10 December. An event organised in Phnom Penh was conducted under the heavy presence of mixed security forces. Farming activists were prevented from travelling to Phnom Penh to submit a petition highlighting their grievances.

Prime Minister Hun Sen’s instruction to end pending cases against union leaders, most of whom faced spurious charges related to minimum wage protests in 2014, led to the conviction of six trade union leaders on 11 December. They were handed suspended sentences and punitive fines. If their convictions are upheld, they will also be unable to remain in union leadership positions due to new legislation banning anyone with a criminal record from leading a union.

The controversial Law on Political Parties was amended and promulgated, through an arbitrary and ad-hoc procedure, in January 2019 (after the reporting period) to allow banned CNRP politicians who get approval from the government to re-enter politics, without their former party or their democratically won seats. The initial amendments, which were passed in 2017 and allow the Ministry of Interior to dissolve any opposition party and blacklist its politicians, remain in effect meaning any new party or politician that rises in popularity can be eliminated at any time.

The government’s actions following the EBA announcement demonstrate that no fundamental changes have occurred to improve the country’s human rights situation. Communities and activists are still unable to exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly, millions of voters have been disenfranchised by arbitrary legal amendments and the government continues to jail, threaten and intimidate real and perceived critics.
ASSAULT ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION DEEPENS

The crackdown on the opposition was accompanied by an unprecedented attack on media and civil society aimed at eliminating dissenting voices. In November 2017, two former RFA reporters – Yeang Sothearin and Uon Chhin – were jailed on groundless treason charges that carry up to 15 years imprisonment. Their arrests came two months after the US-funded RFA network closed its country office, citing government repression and the silencing of its FM transmissions, which were shut down alongside about 30 other independent or critical news broadcasts. The two former RFA reporters were released on bail – as part of a mass post-election prisoner “release” – in August 2018 but still faced restrictions on their movement and the threat of imminent re-arrest.

The Phnom Penh Post, the last remaining independent English-Khmer language daily, also came under attack. Its sale to the owner of a Malaysian public relations firm who had worked for Prime Minister Hun Sen was announced in May shortly after the publication was hit with a massive and arbitrary $3.9 million tax bill. Within two days, 13 editors and reporters had resigned, citing editorial interference by the new management. The editor-in-chief was fired. The Cambodia Daily, which like the Phnom Penh Post carried out critical investigative reporting, was forced to close in September 2017 when it was presented with a seemingly arbitrary US$6.3 million tax bill. In March, the defamation trial of The Cambodia Daily owner Deborah Krisher-Steele commenced. She was accused of harming the dignity of the General Department of Taxation by suggesting it had leaked confidential documents and abused tax law to silence the free press.

While traditional media outlets were being shuttered or silenced, the government continued to strengthen its monitoring of social media, especially Facebook, which is becoming one of the main sources of news and online expression for most Cambodians. In February, a 20-year-old man from Kampong Cham province was arrested on his wedding day for calling the government “authoritarian” in a Facebook video posting. It was just one of about a dozen arrests made over social media postings. In May, the government released an inter-ministerial notice calling for heightened monitoring, surveillance and censorship of online expression. The notice ordered the ministries to use surveillance and “block or close” websites and social media pages containing content “considered as incitement, breaking solidarity, discrimination and willfully creating turmoil leading to undermining national security, public interest and social order”.

Critical expression was further curtailed by a controversial lèse-majesté law passed in February. The repressive legislation was used in May to arrest a former CNRP district leader in northern Siem Reap for sharing a Facebook past that allegedly criticised the King and Prime Minister Hun Sen. The district leader, Ban Somphy, was convicted in October and handed a one-year sentence – marking the first conviction under the controversial law and further raising concerns that it could be wielded to silence criticism online. Another two Facebook users were also jailed for posts that criticised the prime minister and the monarch (one after the reporting period in January).

This ongoing crackdown on free speech has resulted in widespread self-censorship as Cambodians become increasingly aware of the dangers of appearing critical online. As critical news became less common in Cambodia’s public space it was replaced by an uptick in pro-government messaging, notably in the form of propaganda videos on government controlled TV and social media sites reinforcing a “colour revolution” narrative.

“This ministerial order threatens the privacy rights and freedom of expression of every single internet and social media user in Cambodia and further diminishes the limited space left for public debate following months of attacks on media freedoms.” Joint Statement by 117 Civil Society Groups, June 2018.
CLOSING CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE

As the general election approached, communities stepped up street protests, calling for the resolution of decade-old land grabs. However, they were regularly pushed back by security forces and at times parts of the country appeared to be under martial law with groups stopped by military police and ordered to return home and not deliver petitions to authorities. Civil society groups continued to function under the shadow of false accusations of being part of a so-called “colour revolution” or for having “opposition tendencies”.

At the start of the year, activist monk But Buntenh, media advocate Pa Nguon Teang and labour rights activist Moeun Tola were charged with “breach of trust” linked to fundraising for the funeral of slain political commentator Kem Ley. While sustained international lobbying saw the charges against Moeun Tola dropped, the two others still faced the spurious charge at the end of the year.

Two activists with the youth environmental group Mother Nature were convicted in January for incitement and invasion of privacy for filming alleged illegal sand dredging linked to a powerful CPP senator. They were released a month later after serving four months in prison, most of which was pre-trial detention.

The Coalition of Cambodian Farmer Community (CCFC), which works to advocate for farming communities and improve their livelihoods, faced increased obstruction and intimidation. Its members were repeatedly harassed and police shut down about a dozen meetings – including eight workshops on raising chickens. In September 2017, the outspoken land rights group, Equitable Cambodia, was suspended for 30 working days for allegedly violating LANGO. The suspension was extra-legally continued until February 2018.

During 2018, the independent labour movement also faced an existential crisis as Cambodia’s Trade Union Law made independent unions, collective bargaining and lawful strike action virtually impossible. This has inhibited

LAND RIGHTS ACTIVISTS REFUSE TO BACK DOWN

Despite efforts by authorities to silence communities seeking the resolution of land grabbing cases, land protests were the most visible face of dissent in Cambodia during 2018.

As elections approached in July, communities with long-standing demands for compensation stepped up their pressure on the government to find a fair resolution. By June, Phnom Penh saw nearly daily land rights protests, with those affected defying threats of arrest and violence. Communities did not back down even when security forces blocked buses from entering Phnom Penh, prompting families to walk to the capital, often with babies and elderly people.

Many of the protests were linked to decade-old sugar ELCs in Koh Kong, Preah Vihear, Kampong Speu and Oddar Meanchey provinces owned by politically connected tycoons who forced thousands off their land without compensation. In 2017, the Cambodian government preempted plans for a EU-assisted audit into these land grabbing cases and set up an opaque and hurried dispute resolution process for the concessions which were established to take advantage of tariff-free access to EU markets under the EBA scheme.

Under the government’s resolution process some affected families from Koh Kong province received ad hoc and meagre amounts of compensation, but many others from Preah Vihear and Kampong Speu were excluded from the process or given land unsuitable for farming. Families from Oddar Meanchey province were almost entirely excluded.

During one of the most alarming cases of authorities over-reacting to land protests, security forces opened fire on protesting farmers in Kratie province whose homes had been razed to make way for a rubber plantation connected to the influential Memot Rubber Plantation Co., Ltd. Three farmers received bullet wounds and others were beaten and arrested. The area was then cordoned off by security forces, preventing human rights observers from investigating the incident. The farmers continued their protests throughout the year and were frequently blocked from travelling or were forcibly sent back from Phnom Penh while attempting to petition authorities in the capital.

More shooting took place in Sihanoukville in January 2019 (after the reporting period) and at least one man was seriously wounded when security forces opened fire on a crowd attempting to stop a demolition crew.

improvements to the working conditions of Cambodia’s estimated 600,000-700,000 garment and shoe workers. Prominent land rights activist Tep Vanny was pardoned and released from prison in August after being imprisoned for two years on groundless charges relating to land rights protests. She was then immediately convicted again, along with five other activists, and handed a suspended sentence for another baseless charge. Like other released prisoners, she reported aggressive surveillance and intimidation and chose to temporarily leave the country. Political commentator Kim Sok, who completed an 18-month sentence in August, was granted asylum in Norway after he was threatened and ordered to stop airing dissenting opinions in the media. Four rights workers from human rights NGO Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) and an election official were convicted and given suspended sentences in September on charges related to a politically motivated case against opposition leader Kem Sokha. The convictions came after the five spent more than a year in pre-trial detention. While the Cambodian government pointed to prisoner releases and verdicts in long dormant cases as evidence of goodwill, the suspended sentences and bail releases, combined with surveillance and threats, were in fact used to maintain pressure on activists and journalists to remain silent.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
As the year drew to a close there was little to suggest that the government would cease to close down civil society space or make any significant concessions that could undermine the domination of the ruling party over almost all aspects of political and social life. Nonetheless, there were signs of vibrant critical debate and resistance to the democratic shutdown on social media, despite the clear danger of critical expression leading to arrest. The intensity of land rights protests during 2018 demonstrated that communities and other civil society groups remained determined to hold the government to account, to challenge ongoing rights abuses and to occupy public spaces, despite pressure from authorities. This continued to be the case at the end of the year, despite signs that the government was showing less restraint towards critics, and continuing to react to any real or perceived traces of the outlawed opposition. The violent suppression and shooting of protestors in Kratie in March and again in Sihanoukville in January (after the reporting period) also highlighted the fact that abuses can no longer be easily hushed up due to the presence of smartphones and the swift arrival of human rights monitors. As land prices skyrocket in much of the country, largely in response to Chinese investment, this violent suppression of protests can be expected to increase.
At least 136,000 households have been affected by land grabbing and forced evictions in Cambodia since 2000 according to LICADHO figures. These are often perpetrated with impunity by companies or tycoons with close ties to the government. Land rights communities continue to face harsh repression, judicial harassment and extrajudicial violence at the hands of Cambodian authorities.

Despite a repressive crackdown on civil society and fundamental freedoms in 2018, communities continued to advocate for their rights and to protest unjust land grabbing on a near-daily basis, in the capital and around the country. These communities were involved in dozens of peaceful demonstrations in the lead-up to and aftermath of the general election, most often urging the government to prevent land grabbing and ensure fair compensation and relocation when it occurred.

All of LICADHO’s offices worked to support and assist these communities in their struggle to secure respect for basic human rights and the rule of law by closely monitoring peaceful protests, providing legal assistance, medical and social care for affected community members, assisting activists in prison, and advocating on behalf of communities to amplify their voices and ensure they were not silenced.

**MONITORING PROJECT**

LICADHO’s monitoring team documented dozens of peaceful gatherings during which communities affected by land grabbing petitioned ministries or state institutions for assistance. In June alone, more than 23 communities representing 2,400 families from 11 provinces came to Phnom Penh to petition the government. On several occasions these groups were met with heavy-handed tactics by police and security forces aimed at preventing them from publicly demonstrating.

The monitoring team documented the communities’ struggle for justice by recording details and footage of many demonstrations, which informed the work of LICADHO’s advocacy and social work teams. The presence of monitors added a level of protection for demonstrators from the most excessive uses of state force.

Notably, the monitoring team was dispatched to Kratie in March to document the aftermath of a violent forced eviction during which security forces opened fire into a group of farmers who were protesting the destruction of their homes to make way for an ELC granted to the politically connected Memot Rubber Plantation Co., Ltd. Travelling with a team of LICADHO doctors, the monitors investigated the shootings and accurately ascertained the number of casualties. Despite local authorities denying access to the site, monitors were able to gather evidence of disproportionate use of violence by security forces and to verify reports of gunshot wounds during a time when disinformation, rumours, and denials of casualties were widely disseminated.

**LEGAL PROJECT**

Victims of land grabbing regularly face unjust imprisonment for resisting the seizure of their land, including when protests are peaceful. LICADHO’s legal team defended 69 such clients during 2018 who were involved in 19 criminal cases. Lawyers provided legal representation, as well as legal advice on how to advocate for the return of their land or fair compensation.

LICADHO lawyers have particular expertise in preventing the pre-trial detention of suspects in land conflict cases. For example, in Banteay Meanchey province, following an intervention by LICADHO’s legal team, a judge agreed to revise an improperly filed case. Four defendants were allowed to appeal charges filed against them related to a pond that they created to bring water to their community. This enabled the defendants to remain free during the appeal process instead of being held in pre-trial detention.

LICADHO also continued to provide legal assistance to Boeung Kak Lake human rights defender Tep Vanny, defending her in several court hearings. The legal team also helped write an official request for her pardon that was granted by the king in August 2018, leading to her immediate release.

**MEDICAL AND SOCIAL WORK PROJECTS**

The heightened suppression by authorities and continued impunity enjoyed by police and security forces led to
several instances of unjustified violence against peaceful land protesters.

In Kratie province in March, following the shooting of farmers protesting their forced eviction, LICADHO’s medical team treated two victims suffering from bullet wounds. The medical and social work teams provided follow-up visits and food to ensure that they fully recovered.

The medical and social work teams also provided care to hundreds of people displaced by land conflicts in Banteay Meanchey and Stung Treng provinces. A medical team, including four doctors and a nurse, provided health check-ups and care for 236 patients in O’Chrov district in Banteay Meanchey whilst social workers distributed food, clothes, and footwear to the villagers. In Stung Treng, a LICADHO field clinic treated 270 people who were displaced by the Sesan 2 hydropower dam, including infants, pregnant women and the elderly. The social work team provided material support to members of indigenous Phnong and Laos-Khmer minorities affected by the dam’s construction.

**PRISON PROJECT**

LICADHO prison researchers worked in conjunction with the social work and medical teams to provide food, material support and medical check-ups to imprisoned land activists as well as to monitor prison conditions. Visits from prison researchers helped to maintain the spirits of jailed activists as well as their connection to the outside world.

In 2018, prison researchers supported three land activists and community representatives involved in forced evictions who were unjustly imprisoned for their activism, detained in Correctional Centre 2, Banteay Meanchey, and Koh Kong prisons.

Land rights activist Long Sokunthy, imprisoned since 19 March in Banteay Meanchey prison on charges of intentionally causing damage, was sentenced to one year in prison and is awaiting appeal. She represents 136 families who were forcibly evicted from their properties. During her detention in 2018, LICADHO prison researchers visited her eight times and provided her with food, materials and financial support.

Land rights activist Heng Sok, arrested on 24 February, is currently in pre-trial detention in Koh Kong prison. Prison researchers and the medical team met with him on a monthly basis in 2018, providing him with food, materials and financial support as well as coordinating with his family.

LICADHO prison researchers typically visited human rights defender Tep Vanny on a weekly basis until her release, inquiring about her health, and prison conditions. Prison researchers provided food, materials and financial support and communicated with her family when required.

**ADVOCACY**

As the government continued to intensify its crackdown on civil society and freedom of expression and assembly, LICADHO worked to amplify the voices of land rights activists and communities affected by land grabbing. This was achieved by mentoring communities and by including their accounts of events in LICADHO’s domestic and international advocacy.

For example, the advocacy team documented details of an ongoing land dispute impacting the Phum Sela Khmer community in Banteay Meanchey province and provided training to community members to support their own efforts. In Stung Treng province, LICADHO provided training to communities affected by forced evictions on the use of smartphones to better document their conditions and to communicate in a secure way with both LICADHO and other partners.

With the systematic destruction of the independent press in Cambodia, LICADHO’s advocacy efforts have become even more important as they provide one of the few sources of evidence-based narratives and information from across the country. In some cases, facts and evidence about events related to land grabbing were only gathered and made available through LICADHO’s advocacy efforts, most notably in the immediate aftermath of the security forces firing into a crowd of farmers in Kratie province.

The advocacy team was also involved in monitoring and creating online “Flash Info” bulletins for dozens of gatherings held by land activists and affected communities around the country, helping to ensure the messages behind those demonstrations were not suppressed by the heavy presence of security forces and the worsening media climate.
8,092 new families affected by new land grabbing and forced evictions cases during 2018.

118 senior politicians prohibited from taking part in politics.

25 political prisoners (prisoners of interest) detained during the general election.

100 percent of elected seats in the National Assembly and Senate won by the ruling party during 2018 non-competitive elections.

7,390 inmates in Correctional Centre 1 - three times over its official capacity.

28 high profile political prisoners (prisoners of interest) detained over the course of the year.

203 children under the age of three in prison.

0 independent newspapers in circulation.

0 independent or critical radio stations on the air.
The Human Rights Monitoring Project collects information, investigates cases and refers people affected by rights abuses committed by or involving the government to relevant projects within LICADHO or to other partner organisations. Cases come from a variety of sources, including direct requests from affected people or their relatives, referrals from other NGOs and media reports. Monitors cooperate closely with LICADHO’s other teams to ensure that those seeking justice receive appropriate support. This includes monitoring and negotiating with authorities, as well as ensuring access to legal aid for serious human rights violations, medical care, social support, and assistance with investigating cases and advocating for change.

Cambodia’s increasingly restricted space for civil society has also prompted monitoring and other teams to improve planning, security and protection measures to mitigate against the heightened risks now associated with human rights work and advocacy.
**Human Rights Monitoring Project - Civil and Political Rights**

**CASES AND INTERVENTIONS**

During 2018, monitors based in Phnom Penh and 13 provinces investigated 272 new cases of human rights abuses, down from 329 in the previous year. The drop in cases can be partly attributed to citizens’ growing fear of reporting abuses and their sense that the risks of seeking justice have increased. It was also partly due to human resource restructuring within LICADHO.

The overall figure included 46 new cases related to land conflicts, bringing the number of Cambodian households affected by land conflicts monitored by LICADHO to 8,092. Other common state-backed human rights violations included threats, harassment, and/or intimidation (96 cases), as well as obstruction to enjoyment of freedom of expression and assembly (32 cases), physical assault (26 cases), and illegal arrest and/or detention (14 cases).

The provision of paralegal advice by LICADHO monitors helps victims of human rights abuses to understand their legal rights and options. When victims seek assistance, LICADHO monitors help with filing complaints and petitions or meet with relevant authorities on their behalf. During 2018, monitors conducted 558 field investigations and 1,640 interventions with local authorities in the form of official letters or meetings to discuss ongoing cases. Of the 272 newly opened cases, 72 were closed by the end of the year, while 108 cases were pending further actions from national authorities and 64 cases were being processed by the courts. An additional 28 cases were pending at the provincial land commissions.

LICADHO’s presence in the field remains an effective safeguard and mechanism for accountability. This is particularly the case in the land sector, where authorities at all levels of governance continue to ignore the ownership rights of citizens for their own financial benefit or on behalf of well-connected individuals.

**Timely Intervention Helps Prevent Land Grab**

In April 2018, shortly before Khmer New Year, a community of 35 families approached LICADHO to seek intervention in protecting their land in Banteay Meanchey’s Poipet city. The families had settled on the land in Kbal Spean village in 1991, and had ownership rights since 2001. In February 2018, a provincial systematic land registration committee arrived to issue land titles to villagers in the area. However, the team left the 35 families out of the titling measurement, claiming the land was overlapping with a development project. Following this arbitrary rejection, the families began petitioning municipal and provincial authorities and approached LICADHO to seek intervention.

In April, a provincial LICADHO staff member met with the secretary of the provincial cadastral office in charge of the titling committee, and held a follow-up meeting with the provincial land department in July. By late August, the systematic land registration committee re-visited the village and measured the land of the 35 families. It is highly likely that the authorities would not have corrected the situation for these without the intervention provided by LICADHO’s monitors.

As in previous years, LICADHO remains engaged in providing services to victims of human trafficking abroad. In 2018, LICADHO documented 10 new cases of trafficking of migrant workers for labour exploitation. In five cases, victims were trafficked for labour exploitation by recruitment agencies. Despite a moratorium on the sending of domestic workers to Malaysia being issued in October 2011, Malaysia continues to be the primary destination country for the vast majority of migrant trafficking cases documented by LICADHO, with Saudi Arabia coming in second. In February 2018, the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training announced a new Memorandum of Understanding between Cambodia and Malaysia, which re-opened the door to allowing recruitment agencies to...
send workers to the country. The Ministry of Labour has announced that 71 recruitment agencies are now allowed to send workers to Malaysia. This has raised the spectre of an increase in labour trafficking cases.

**BEARING WITNESS**

Amid a difficult and worsening situation for rights workers, LICADHO monitors maintained their crucial role in observing public gatherings and court hearings in 2018. Monitors were deployed 187 times on such occasions throughout the year. This represents a major decrease from 361 deployments in the previous year, and can be attributed to the overall decline in the number of public gatherings due to crackdown fears earlier in the year, as well as a slowdown in politically motivated court cases before the general election.

Throughout the year, LICADHO noted an increase in the range of civil society activities which were no longer tolerated by authorities, as both public and private spaces became more heavily policed.

Notably, on 17 September, police officers were dispatched to shut down a chicken farming workshop conducted by the Coalition of Cambodian Farmer Community (CCFC) in Svay Rieng’s Romeas Hek district. It was the second time a chicken-raising workshop was shut down in Romeas Hek district, and the eighth time CCFC was barred from conducting farming workshops that year, illustrating the near-zero tolerance approach authorities have taken to freedom of assembly.

Monitors continued to keep track of political prisoners throughout 2018, monitoring and following up with the legal situation of 29 such prisoners. Shortly after the general election, a large number of political prisoners were swiftly released. By the end of the year only three political prisoners remained. However, intimidation and threats against former prisoners began as soon as they were released, forcing some prominent former activists to leave the country.

A growing number of Cambodian social media users were arrested for expressing views or sharing posts on Facebook. Following the amendment of the penal code adding a lèse-majesté provision, three Cambodians were imprisoned for having published or shared critical views of the King. On 5 October, the Siem Reap provincial court delivered Cambodia’s first lèse-majesté conviction, sentencing a former opposition party official to a year in jail for sharing a Facebook post.

This fits in a broader campaign by the authorities to aggressively prosecute online content during an election year. The clearest sign of this campaign came on 28 May when an inter-ministerial prakas (guideline) was signed by the Minister of Interior and Minister of Posts and Telecommunications ordering the formation of a secretariat to monitor and prosecute online content as well as forcing telecommunication companies to install equipment to facilitate those goals. While some abusive ministerial prakas were revoked by the end of the year – most noticeably the Ministry of Interior’s prakas restricting Cambodian groups’ right to assemble – the prakas regulating online content remained in effect.

**A Wave of Cyber-Attacks Targeting Critics**

During 2018, LICADHO twice uncovered evidence of cyber-attacks perpetrated against LICADHO itself as well as a broader list of targets, including government critics and civil society groups, in the run-up to the general election.

In May 2018, following the sale of Cambodia’s last remaining independent English language daily the Phnom Penh Post, LICADHO discovered a malicious code inserted into the newspaper’s website. Impersonating Google, the code was attempting to convince targets, including LICADHO, to provide access to email inboxes to an unknown application controlled by hackers. Working alongside a journalist and a Singapore-based cyber security firm, the perpetrators were identified as a group of hackers named APT32, allegedly linked to the Vietnamese state. Following the public disclosure of the attack, the malicious code was removed from the Phnom Penh Post website.

Less than two months later, LICADHO gathered evidence of another cyber-attack, this time targeting key opposition figures, as well as a broad array of civil society groups and journalists. The evidence was once again forwarded to the Singapore-based firm, which concluded that a Chinese state hacking group named TEMP.Periscope was behind the attack.

Both of these cyber-attacks highlighted the heightened dangers in 2018 of online communications. LICADHO hopes that the public disclosure will help raise awareness and stress the need for better understanding and protection against attacks.
LICADHO’s Women’s Rights Monitoring Project supports victims of gender-based violence and works to provide them with material support, investigations and legal advice in order to ensure that all possible steps are taken to bring perpetrators to justice. Although the challenges in obtaining justice for women victims of rape and domestic violence are significant, LICADHO continues to help victims pursue justice and ensure that cases are fully and properly investigated.

**CASES AND INTERVENTION**

From January to December 2018, LICADHO investigated 99 cases involving women aged 18 and over, including 71 cases of domestic violence and 28 cases of rape. The number of cases fell compared to the previous year (128 cases), largely due to resource constraints. The Cambodian justice system remains inefficient and corrupt, and most of the cases investigated remained open at the end of the year. Judges and prosecutors remain reluctant to pursue charges against perpetrators of domestic violence and it is more difficult to find lawyers to handle such cases than in previous years.

In 2018, LICADHO staff took on significantly more cases involving women who were victims of emotional abuse or rape-in-marriage, particularly from Phnom Penh, and who wanted to pursue divorce through civil proceedings. Whilst this was previously not a focus of LICADHO’s work, the women’s rights team noticed an increasing number of women seeking to exercise their rights and extract themselves from abusive relationships, and therefore sought to assist them. LICADHO expects that demand for such services will continue to rise as more women learn about their rights and demand an end to abusive marriages.

Another development during 2018 was the decrease of safe shelters available to women seeking refuge from domestic abuse. This made LICADHO’s support to victims more important as it is often the only opportunity victims have to tell their stories fully and be treated with sympathy and respect.

**Perpetrators Brought to Justice in Rape and Murder Case**

An 18-year-old woman was raped and killed by two taxi drivers while travelling from Phnom Penh to her job at a casino in Bavet, Svay Rieng province. One of the men, her taxi driver, took her to a quiet road and called the second perpetrator to join him. Both men raped her, strangled her until she was unconscious and threw her body down a well, where it was discovered two days later.

LICADHO began investigating the case and provided legal and social support to the victim’s family. Four days after the investigation began, authorities arrested both perpetrators. They were charged by an investigating judge three days later and sent to pre-trial detention in Svay Rieng.

LICADHO provided legal assistance to the family and met with the court prosecutor, investigating judge and court clerk to continually check on the status of the case, which languished in Cambodia’s court system for eight months. After an initial court date was scheduled, the defence lawyer successfully requested a delay by claiming new evidence. Finally, after more than a year following the arrest of the two perpetrators, the Svay Rieng provincial court sentenced both men to life in prison and ordered $60,000 to be paid to the victim’s family in compensation.
LICADHO’s children’s rights monitoring team investigates many forms of abuses against children including rape, physical assault and trafficking. As with women’s rights cases, the team provides legal services and coordinates with the social and medical teams to provide support to victims and their families.

It remains difficult to pursue criminal cases against perpetrators of crimes against children because most violations occur in private homes. Children are also often unwilling to testify against family members. Significant improvements are required within Cambodia’s justice system in order to better handle these cases and provide justice for the victims.

CASES AND INTERVENTION
LICADHO investigated 151 cases of child rights violations in 2018, of which 130 were rape cases. While cases of gang rape decreased in 2018 compared to 2017, there was an increase in the number of reported cases of children being raped by their relatives. This is likely due to increased awareness among local authorities that sex with children under the age of 15 is not a private or family matter, but should be investigated and prosecuted by authorities as a criminal matter. It is also likely due to an increase in local news coverage of child rapes, which can help raise awareness in communities that child rape by family members is a criminal matter.

News coverage of child rape is a double-edged sword, however, because many news organisations in Cambodia lack proper ethical standards and publicly identify the minors who were victims of rape, with some publishing photographs of their faces. This must be urgently addressed to protect the victims of such abuse from further rights violations.

Hospitals Triple Price for Victims’ Rape Kits

Government-run hospitals in Phnom Penh and Kandal province arbitrarily increased the price of medical examinations for victims of rape, which are universally required by judges in order to pursue criminal charges against perpetrators of rape in Cambodia. In the case of Phnom Penh, the cost of such an examination nearly tripled from just over 50,000 riel to 150,000 riel (about $12.00 to $36.00), making it more difficult for victims to access this crucial service.

Hospital administrators and staff have provided various explanations for this increase. One staff member in Phnom Penh said it was because too many people were requiring these examinations, while a hospital administrator said it was a new policy and did not provide additional explanations. Prices vary from province to province, with tests remaining free in some provincial hospitals, further highlighting the arbitrary nature of these price increases.

LICADHO and its partner organisations continued to provide support for rape victims and their families; however arbitrary policy changes like this price hike make it more difficult to ensure victims have access to the proper medical care and legal services they deserve.
LICADHO’s Medical and Social Work Projects provide timely and short-term support for people affected by human rights abuses. The ultimate goal of both projects is to support the long-term health of individuals so that they are able to better advocate for respect for human rights and justice in Cambodia.

The projects particularly focus on human rights defenders, including those advocating on behalf of communities affected by land grabbing and those who have been imprisoned due to their activism. Medical and social work teams visited land activists, environmental activists, journalists, opposition party members and human rights defenders in prison during 2018.

MEDICAL PROJECT
Many Cambodians lack access to proper healthcare, as trained doctors and modern equipment are still rare and expensive. This is especially true for communities affected by land grabbing, which are often impoverished and located far from proper medical facilities. LICADHO’s medical team works to serve the most vulnerable groups affected by human rights violations, including those in prison due to human rights abuses.

CASES AND INTERVENTION
The medical team made 300 visits to 12 Cambodian prisons and provided 8,640 consultations for patients (2,258 female and 6,382 male), including treatments for ailments such as scabies, myalgia, HIV, diarrhea, arthritis, skin abscesses, pulmonary tuberculosis, cancer and influenza. These included 283 consultations for prison guards (41 female and 242 male), 141 for children with their mothers in prison (64 female and 77 male) and 8,216 consultations for regular inmates (6,063 female and 2,153 male). Many of these treatments were for conditions related to prison overcrowding, a shortage of clean water, poor diets and unsanitary conditions. The number of consultations in prisons dropped from 10,753 the year before. This decrease was due to both the increased thoroughness of LICADHO’s consultations, meaning individual consultations were more time consuming, as well as prison officials beginning to provide more care to inmates than previously.

Medical staff also provided a range of medical services for evicted or resettled communities that live far from healthcare facilities due to their evictions. The medical team visited four relocation sites: Phnom Bat community in Kandal province, Sila Khmer community in Banteay Meanchey province, and two communities in the Se San district of Stung Treng province that were affected by a hydropower dam project. A total of 718 consultations were given (622 patients), providing much-needed care for people on extremely low incomes who suffer from a lack of healthcare services, proper living environments and poor sanitary conditions. In serious cases, LICADHO staff referred and accompanied patients to hospitals.
for consultations with specialists. The number of consultations was relatively consistent with the previous year (734 consultations).

Supporting and treating human rights defenders is an important part of LICADHO’s work and aims to ensure that activists are able to continue their advocacy. The medical team provided 363 consultations for LICADHO staff (96 patients) to prevent and address work-related stress and trauma. One doctor accompanied five staff and partners to obtain additional specialised medical treatments at an international hospital in Bangkok as part of LICADHO’s extended medical services. During the time in Thailand, LICADHO’s doctor also provided treatments to four Cambodians who had fled to Thailand and suffered from chronic stomach and intestinal problems due to their lack of income and security concerns.

A total of 641 consultations (259 patients) were conducted at LICADHO’s outpatient clinic in Phnom Penh. This included 156 land community members (from 21 communities) as well as environmental activists and other human rights defenders, victims of human trafficking, domestic violence, rape, physical assaults, and illegal arrests.

SOCIAL WORK PROJECT
The social work team provided short-term relief, including food, household materials and livelihood support to people affected by human rights abuses, including human rights defenders, victims of state harassment and survivors of rape.

CASES AND INTERVENTION
The government’s increased surveillance and harassment of civil society organisations and communities, in particular its rhetoric attempting to tie these groups together as part of a fictional “colour revolution”, has made providing material support to victims of rights abuses more difficult than in previous years. The number of cases LICADHO’s social work team was able to take on in 2018 was lower than previous years, but despite these challenges, the team continued to provide crucial support and sought new ways to help the victims of rights abuses, assisting them in rebuilding their lives and recovering from trauma.

LICADHO provided support to 5,925 people, including 1,471 children, in a total of 289 cases (compared to 6,416 people in 441 cases in 2017). The majority of the people assisted were from communities affected by land conflicts, with 4,801 such individuals receiving support in 16 different communities. The team also provided support to 29 political prisoners which included land rights activists, political prisoners, former journalists, a monk, and environmental activists. Social workers provided support to victims and families in 71 cases of rape (210 individuals), in addition to other support from the Women’s and Children’s Rights Monitoring Project.

Support for Jailed Journalists
Two former RFA journalists were arrested and imprisoned in November 2017. They suffered from a variety of medical conditions in prison due to the poor living conditions, the lack of proper diet and the insufficient medical care. Their families, including small children and grandchildren, were affected by the loss of the primary income earner in each household.

LICADHO’s social work team provided the family of each former journalist with a monthly stipend and helped with costs related to visiting the two men in prison. They also provided money to help cover the children’s school costs as well as for food to the prisoners.

LICADHO’s medical team requested that the prison director facilitate medicine, blood tests, and regular health check-ups for the two men, which resulted in both men’s health improving. They continually monitored their well-being and advocated for better care for the two men, who were later released on bail in August 2018.
LICADHO’s Legal Project provides legal services to victims of land grabbing, human rights defenders targeted for their activism, and victims of domestic violence, rape, and trafficking.

All cases are first investigated by LICADHO’s monitoring team. Following a referral, LICADHO’s lawyers assist clients throughout each step of the legal process by gathering and submitting evidence, conducting regular client consultations, accompanying clients to interviews, submitting bail applications, and petitioning the prosecutor and investigating judge to dismiss cases where there is a lack of evidence.

CASES AND INTERVENTION

The legal team represented 76 new clients (22 females and 54 males) in 22 new cases in 2018, in comparison to 25 new cases during 2017. Support was provided to victims in 19 land grabbing cases (16 females and 53 males), 2 rape cases (4 female minors), and 1 case involving human rights defenders (2 females and 1 male). Compared to previous years, there was a noticeable reduction in the number of human rights defender cases considering that the government released many imprisoned human rights defenders following the heavily criticised general election.

LICADHO lawyers closed 16 cases in which 52 clients were represented. These included 10 land grabbing cases (5 females and 36 males), 4 human rights defender cases (7 females and 2 males), and 2 rape cases (2 female minors). This represented a significant increase in closed cases in comparison to 2017, in which just two cases were closed.

In the lead-up to the general election, court proceedings regarding land grabbing cases stalled, as these can often inflame tensions and land rights issues faced by communities. Following the general election, verdicts were more swiftly announced and implemented leading to the increase in closed cases.

LICADHO lawyers also provided support to activist networks and communities, particularly those involved in land conflicts, and helped build confidence in individuals and communities exercising their rights and advocating against rights abuses.

LICADHO lawyers regularly take on high profile human rights cases involving political prisoners. Notably, the legal team provided continued support to land rights activist Tep Vanny who was imprisoned on spurious grounds for over two years. When her options to appeal her conviction had been exhausted, LICADHO’s lawyers advised Tep Vanny on her remaining rights under the Constitution. In July, LICADHO’s legal team assisted to file a request for a royal pardon, following which she was immediately released in August.
False Charges Dropped in Land Grab Case

In 2014, two farmers false charges dropped in Land grab case from Tokong commune in Banteay Meanchey province were charged with theft and discrediting judicial decisions after a wealthy soldier and businessman claimed ownership of the land that they had been using for rice farming since 2001.

The defendants first appeared in court without legal representation, arguing that they had occupied the land since 2001 with the permission of local authorities. The prosecutor charged them with theft and discrediting judicial decisions.

In 2015, LICADHO began working with the defendants to ensure that they understood the charges against them and assisting them with each step of the legal process. LICADHO lawyers successfully obtained their release whilst they were awaiting appeal procedures, thereby preventing them from being unnecessarily held in pre-trial detention.

Despite exculpatory evidence and witness statements collected on behalf of the clients by LICADHO’s lawyers, an investigating judge failed to drop the charges and sent the case to trial. LICADHO lawyers made multiple trips to Banteay Meanchey to work with the defendants, conducting mock trials to build their confidence and familiarise them with the legal process.

During the trial in August 2018, LICADHO lawyers provided legal representation. In a verdict announced the same month, whilst they were convicted of discrediting judicial decisions and handed a two-month sentence, the theft charges were dropped and a sentence of up to three years’ imprisonment was avoided.
Prison researchers in 2018 regularly visited 18 out of Cambodia’s 28 prisons in 13 provinces to monitor for signs of torture and other human rights violations. The prison team also provided support with legal processes such as filing applications for over-detention, filing appeals and providing referrals for legal assistance.

Overcrowding continues to be a major problem in every prison monitored by LICADHO. Correctional Centre 1, the primary men’s prison in Phnom Penh, housed 7,390 inmates at the end of 2018, more than three times its intended capacity of 2,050. Additionally, extended periods of provisional detention continue to be regularly enforced, with the vast majority of prisoners classified as pre-trial detainees or held in provisional detention. The number of children and pregnant women behind bars has steadily increased as a direct result of a so-called war on drugs, launched by the government in 2017 which continued through 2018.

**CASES AND INTERVENTION**

Prison researchers interviewed detainees in order to prepare interventions with relevant authorities when necessary. During 2018, LICADHO’s prison researchers interviewed 1,148 inmates (172 female and 976 male), including 34 minors (5 female and 29 male). Prison researchers also conducted interviews with 348 families of prisoners and 120 released prisoners (19 female and 101 male) to gain further information about conditions in Cambodian prisons.

Prison researchers provided legal support to 1,116 prisoners (203 female and 913 male) and to 299 family members of prisoners (203 female and 96 male). This was an increase compared to 2017, when 1,034 prisoners were provided with legal support, an increase that can be attributed to improved access to prisons. An additional 23 prisoners (6 female and 17 male) were referred to partner NGOs for legal assistance.

LICADHO intervened directly in 410 cases (191 female and 219 male) including 17 appeals (4 female and 13 male), 3 cases of illegal detention (all male), 12 cases of prisoners who had finished jail terms but were not released (4 female and 8 male) and 9 cases of illegally long pre-trial detention (all male). Prison researchers also investigated 350 cases of beatings, corruption and other abuses of prisoners’ rights (175 female and 175 male). There were 42 prisoners interviewed in relation to reported torture (5 female and 37 male). In addition, the Trial Monitoring Project monitored 82 trials (9 female and 73 male).

The Early Years Behind Bars Project provided 203 children and 55 pregnant women with essential food and materials. This was more than in the previous year, as the number of incarcerated pregnant women and mothers with young children or babies continued to grow.

Prison researchers also worked with other LICADHO teams to support 29 political prisoners with regular visits, food and materials, as well as referrals to medical and legal services. A major outcome for the project was the release of the majority of political prisoners, many of whom were given follow-up medical support upon release.
Jailed Over Two Years Without Trial

In August 2018, LICADHO’s prison researcher in Pursat met with the prison director of Pursat Prison who informed her that there was a 30 year-old detainee who had been held for more than 29 months and had not yet faced trial, far exceeding the 22 months maximum allowed for this crime.

The prosecutor had charged him on suspicion of drug trafficking in March 2016 and the case was sent to an investigating judge the same month.

Upon investigation, LICADHO’s prison researcher discovered that the man’s trial had been postponed three times for various reasons, including the absence of the detainee’s lawyer at trial. The case had been filed at trial chambers three times: in July 2017, August 2017 and October 2017.

LICADHO’S prison researcher met with the presiding trial judge of the Pursat Court of First Instance who promised to arrange for the detainee’s trial. Less than one month after LICADHO’s intervention, the trial was held on 11 September 2018 and the verdict was announced on 30 October 2018. The man was sentenced to five years imprisonment with credit for time already served during the pre-trial detention period.
LICADHO promotes human rights through advocacy that is driven by the demands of communities, victims of violations and grassroots civil society groups. All activities are informed by the daily work of monitors, lawyers, medical staff and social workers in communities, courts and prisons. Written texts, audio-visual materials, face-to-face advocacy and informal communications aim to raise awareness, build national and international solidarity, and ultimately persuade Cambodian authorities to respect human rights, social justice and the rule of law.

During 2018, the increasingly repressive human rights environment forced LICADHO to engage in more private international advocacy as domestic advocacy ran a heightened risk of reprisals. The political crackdown prompted LICADHO to intensify planning and risk management measures to maximise the protection of staff, partners and communities. It also prompted a shift toward more intensive private advocacy in the international sphere, using safe communications. As the year progressed, LICADHO returned to being more vocal domestically on key human rights issues, working closely with civil society partners to oppose the deepening crackdown on freedom of expression and judicial harassment of government critics.
SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ACTIVISTS

During 2018, LICADHO’s advocacy team closely monitored the cases of 28 high-profile political prisoners who were unjustly held in pre-trial detention or convicted on spurious grounds. Authorities continued to threaten, intimidate and target real or perceived government critics including activists, human rights defenders and journalists with physical, judicial and other harassment. LICADHO’s advocacy team publicised their cases in Khmer and English and worked with international rights groups to raise their profiles. This was achieved through joint public statements, news updates, private briefings, media interviews and LICADHO’s political prisoners’ webpage, Court Watch, which continued to be widely accessed by media and national and international stakeholders.

Until land rights activist and Amnesty International (AI) Prisoner of Conscience Tep Vanny was released in August after over two years in jail, the advocacy team campaigned for charges and convictions against her to be dropped, publicising each stage of the deeply flawed legal process. In parallel with her community’s protests for her release, LICADHO published a campaign video and profile which was widely shared on social media. Following her release, she participated in a LICADHO online campaign highlighting women land rights activists as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

Two former RFA reporters Yeang Sothearin and Uon Chhin were released from pre-trial detention in August. Until that point, LICADHO had worked with regional and international partners to publicise their case and advocate for their release. AI declared the two former reporters Prisoners of Conscience. A LICADHO video documenting their unjust imprisonment was released by the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA). LICADHO also publicised each step of the politicised legal process through bilingual website and social media postings, which was more important than in previous cases as self-censorship has largely become the norm in Cambodian media. LICADHO also advocated for two youth activists from the environmental group Mother Nature, Doem Kundy and Hun Vannak, both also AI Prisoners of Conscience. They were finally released in February after spending five months in pre-trial detention for their work in documenting suspected illegal sand dredging linked to a powerful ruling party senator.

When four Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) staffers – Lim Mony, Ny Sokha, Yi Soksan and Nay Vanda – and an NEC official, Ny Chakrya, were wrongly convicted and handed suspended sentences in a trumped-up case in September, LICADHO publicised the ruling and participated in a joint civil society petition. LICADHO also advocated privately and publicly in support of civil society groups and individuals who were subjected to administrative or judicial harassment. These included land rights group Equitable Cambodia, which faced arbitrary suspension from September 2017 until February 2018, and three civil society leaders pursued on trumped up charges related to the funeral fund of slain government critic Kem Ley. In the latter case, international pressure appeared to contribute to charges being dropped against one of the three, Moeun Tola, director of the Center for Alliance of Labor and Human Rights (CENTRAL) in July.

As the crackdown resulted in a lack of independent media coverage, information about curbs on fundamental freedoms no longer easily reached the public. The advocacy team worked closely with community representatives and LICADHO monitors to publicise roadblocks, threats and other measures taken by authorities to prevent communities from marching or delivering petitions to authorities. This form of state repression was particularly prevalent in October and December during World Habitat Day and International Human Rights Day. It also occurred throughout the year, whenever communities under close surveillance such as those from Kratie and Koh Kong provinces sought to advocate for their rights and petition national-level government authorities. LICADHO also highlighted the systematic harassment and repression of the Coalition of Cambodian Farmer Community (CCFC).

PROVIDING A CIVIL SOCIETY SAFE SPACE

The government’s crackdown on freedom of expression was accompanied by constitutional amendments and changes to criminal law in February, which were followed by an inter-ministerial directive in June. These initiatives were coupled with a growing number of arrests for critical expression on social media.

Despite the crackdown, LICADHO refused to remain silent and sought to organise the support of a broad range of civil society groups to reject the new laws. An online petition against internet surveillance and censorship in June was by far the biggest in several years, supported by 117 local, regional and national civil society groups. The seemingly forced sale of the last remaining independent bilingual
daily newspaper, the Phnom Penh Post, was also seen by many as an attack on free expression, with LICADHO advocating alongside civil society groups opposed to its sale.

LICADHO has unique in-house expertise in cyber security and was able to publicise two specific digital attacks (see Monitoring Project section), thereby helping other rights advocates to avoid security breaches which would disrupt their online advocacy work. The advocacy team was also instrumental in mentoring best practice in digital security among partners, notably youth groups and communities affected by land grabbing.

ADVOCATING AGAINST UNLAWFUL ADOPTIONS

In March, LICADHO published a report entitled Cambodia’s Stolen Children: Fraud and Corruption in the Inter-Country Adoption System. It was based on the testimonies of several mothers whose children were sold abroad with the complicity of authorities in the 1990s. The report and an accompanying video were widely spread on social media and resulted in a substantial reaction, particularly in Italy, where many of the children had been trafficked to, as well as in other destination countries.

One mother whose child was taken in the 1990s participated in a radio phone-in program broadcast by the Women’s Media Centre. The program attracted calls from several women who had experienced similar tragedies. The report resulted in more than a dozen people who were adopted from Cambodia, as well as adoptive parents, contacting LICADHO for advice on how to trace their children or birth parents. At the time of publication, others in similar situations continued to contact LICADHO for advice and assistance.

During the preparation of the report, LICADHO investigators contacted several national and regional authorities. Although efforts to secure the cooperation of Italian authorities have not been successful so far, progress was made in Austria and there are ongoing discussions with other national authorities, including in the US. LICADHO has also sought the assistance of the Cambodian Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation and continues to attempt to engage the ministry in the process of providing information to adoptee and birth parents in accordance with international guidelines on inter-country adoption.

The main objective of this ongoing advocacy is twofold: to support Cambodian mothers who lost children to abusive international adoption rackets and to ensure that unregulated adoptions from Cambodia do not resume.

CALLING FOR PRISON REFORM

LICADHO issued a report entitled Time for Bail: Ending Needless Mass Detention in Cambodia in September which drew on data gathered by the Prison Project. An analysis of the numbers of prisoners held for unnecessarily long periods of pre-trial detention as well as the alarming number of babies behind bars attracted widespread media attention.

The report was soon followed by a flurry of government declarations acknowledging the growing problems associated with chronic overcrowding in prisons. Some of LICADHO’s recommendations featured in subsequent government announcements of planned judicial reforms, notably the need to accelerate court proceedings.
Supporting and Amplifying Grassroots Advocacy

LICADHO’s partnerships are primarily with grassroots and membership-based groups, as well as informal networks. The support LICADHO provides takes many different forms including: monitoring, documenting and providing medical care at public gatherings which authorities seek to curtail, providing material support and transport for grassroots advocacy campaigns, coaching and mentoring on digital security and assisting with international networking, awareness raising and alliance building.

The government’s attempts to close public and civic space and the portrayal of community groups as agents of a fictitious “colour revolution” have made human rights advocacy more difficult and potentially more dangerous. Groups which support the legitimate demands of communities have been targeted with surveillance, threats and trumped-up charges. LICADHO helps to support their crucial work with legal aid, security advice and by amplifying the voices of activists on the national and international level through community-driven advocacy.

During 2018, LICADHO coached and mentored 268 members of youth groups, communities affected by land grabs and LICADHO staff on general and advanced ICT skills, including digital security — particularly secure communication methods using smartphones. Some participants also received second hand smart phones and were coached in video shooting.
and editing skills.

The LICADHO website carried regular bilingual updates of advocacy initiatives from grassroots and community groups, as well as rights violations, particularly restrictions on freedom of movement and assembly. The number of unique visitors to the website increased in comparison to recent years — to 222,566 in 2018, compared to 162,049 in 2017 and 154,491 in 2016. Website postings were also shared on social media, which is the primary way that Cambodians obtain news.

RAISING VOICES

LICADHO’s monitors continued to provide timely and accurate information about a wide range of land rights conflicts, community events and peaceful demonstrations, including documenting rights abuses perpetrated by authorities against demonstrators. In March, authorities opened fire on a group of farmers who were gathering to protest the demolition of their homes in order to make way for a rubber company in Kratie province. LICADHO’s monitoring and medical team worked to independently verify three victims of bullet wounds and worked closely with the UN human rights office, OHCHR, in order to communicate this fact to media and partners.

LICADHO also provided assistance to hundreds of community members who were harassed or blocked from holding events to mark International Human Rights Day. LICADHO provided support to events that gathered more than 7,000 people around the country. Monitors observed severe restrictions on civil society nationwide, which were publicised by the advocacy team.

In addition, the advocacy team continued to support victims of decades-old land grabs linked to sugar ELCS. This was done through web texts, photos and videos shared on social media — some of which were used by local media — as well as private briefings and participation in networks seeking justice from the Cambodian government. In some cases, video footage was published online of community members being mistreated by security forces as they attempted to submit petitions to authorities.

The advocacy team participated in the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign by making videos and writing short profiles of women land rights campaigners who were victims of state-based violence in Cambodia. The project helped raise awareness inside Cambodia about the personal struggles of individual land rights activists in communities affected by land grabbing. One of those videos, featuring land activist Um Sophy, was viewed more than 44,000 times and shared almost 2,000 times on Facebook.

A series of advocacy videos was released in November as part of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.

- On 8 March, more than 7,000 people celebrated International Women’s Day in five provinces and the capital. One group in Koh Kong, led by a trade union confederation, took the occasion to protest outside a sugar factory against a land grab affecting hundreds of families.
- On 1 May close to 1,000 people gathered in four provinces and the capital to celebrate International Labour Day. The largest gathering in the capital was restricted to a small area away from the city centre but several trade union groups succeeded in delivering petitions to ministries.
- In the week leading up to 10 December, more than 7,000 people in 13 provinces gathered to celebrate International Human Rights Day. Authorities disrupted peaceful demonstrations in Ratanakiri, Banteay Meanchey and Koh Kong provinces. Phnom Penh authorities refused to grant permission for demonstrators to march. When organisers instead held an event at a government-approved location with several hundred union leaders, garment workers and community members, a large security force surrounded the park.

During the month of June (ahead of the general election), other public and even private gatherings were subject to arbitrary restrictions set by local authorities. Despite these challenges, LICADHO was present to monitor key gatherings, document violations of the right to freedom of assembly, and provide logistical and material support to a number of celebrations, including:

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RAISING INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

The advocacy team provided regular private briefings to key international community actors and other stakeholders as the human rights crackdown that began to accelerate in 2017 deepened and media coverage became thinner and less reliable. Regular social media postings, news bulletins, joint statements, photos and video clips helped to keep international actors informed about key human rights developments. LICADHO also worked closely with local partners engaging with international organisations to seek justice for communities affected by forced evictions related to ELCs.

As in 2017, the worsening security situation forced the advocacy team to focus more at times on international advocacy. More than 20 detailed human rights briefings — drawing from evidence gathered by monitors and trusted partners — were distributed to key stakeholders. LICADHO’s director travelled to Bangkok, Thailand on three occasions to brief embassies, UN Special Rapporteurs and international NGOs on key human rights issues and cases. Two trips were also made to Europe (Germany, Belgium, Denmark, UK and Sweden) with close union and NGO partners to brief key members of parliaments, ministries, human rights ambassadors and international NGOs. Several videos and presentations were also shown to convey the reality on the ground in Cambodia. As in previous years, close informal contacts were maintained with trusted international media outlets and international NGO partners all year around.
APPENDICES AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

LICADHO Administration

LICADHO Promoting Client Empowerment & Well-being Chart

LICADHO Program Flowchart

Appendix 1:
LICADHO Publications

Appendix 2:
Monitoring Project Statistics

Appendix 3:
Women’s and Children’s Rights Statistics

Appendix 4:
Medical & Social Work Project Statistics

Appendix 5:
Legal Project Statistics

Appendix 6:
Prison Project Statistics

Appendix 7:
Advocacy & Documentation Statistics

Appendix 8:
Notable LICADHO Appearances in International Media
LICADHO STAFF
In 2018, LICADHO employed 105 staff (47 female and 58 male), including 5 staff with disabilities (3 female and 2 male). LICADHO also employed four interns (all male). LICADHO recruited 20 new members of staff (10 female and 10 male) including four interns. A further 18 staff members transferred to other offices, changed position, or were promoted. During the year, nine staff including interns completed their contracts, whilst an additional 12 staff members stopped working at LICADHO.

COMMUNICATION
During 2018, LICADHO received 2,219 clients (1,169 female and 1,050 male), and 1,563 visitors (857 female and 706 male).

INTERNAL MEETINGS
• The Management Team met at least once per month to discuss and resolve internal issues and challenges such as those related to taxation, staff reflection and self-care, annual events such as International Human Rights Day, internal policies and staffing changes. In a tumultuous year, LICADHO’s Management Team also met several times to discuss the precarious political situation and its impact on the organisation.
• Provincial coordinators met in Phnom Penh for 1-2 days on five occasions over the course of the year to discuss key issues.
• All Phnom Penh staff participated in meetings to discuss sensitive issues such as LICADHO’s funding situation, arrests of human rights defenders, and on-going campaigns.
• All staff participated in the annual retreat in Kep from 17 to 19 December to build and strengthen staff relationships. During the annual staff meeting, members of the Staff Committee and Staff Care Committee were selected.

EVENT ORGANISING
In 2018, the Administration and Human Resources Office co-organised numerous events in cooperation with other project offices and partners, including distributing campaign materials, food and care packages. These included support for events related to:
• International Women’s Day
• International Labour Day
• International Children’s Rights Day
• World Day Against Child Labor
• Campaigns to release human rights defenders
• World Habitat Day
• World Environment Day
• 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence
• International Human Rights Day

LICADHO’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An Nan</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td><a href="mailto:orn_nan@yahoo.com">orn_nan@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Lowrie</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lowriejohn@gmail.com">lowriejohn@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Pung Chhiv Kek</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td><a href="mailto:President@licadho-cambodia.org">President@licadho-cambodia.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are smart, we are strong and we stand together.
For all people in Cambodia to live in a peaceful society that respects human rights, democracy and social justice
## APPENDIX 1: PUBLICATIONS

### JANUARY 2018

- **Video:** Borei Keila Community Calls for Justice on 6th Anniversary of Forced Eviction, January 2, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Borei Keila Commemorate Sixth Anniversary of Forced Eviction, January 3, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Equitable Cambodia Defamation Convictions Quashed, January 12, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Civil society groups call for justice for slain trade union leader, January 22, 2018  

### FEBRUARY 2018

- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Supreme Court Upholds Tep Vanny Conviction, February 7, 2018  
- **Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Human Rights Defenders Summoned as ‘Suspects’ after Being Beaten by Para-Police, February 7, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** CSOs Call for Rejection of Draft Amendments to Constitution and Criminal Code, February 12, 2018  

### MARCH 2018

- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Koh Kong communities protest sugar land concessions, March 6, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** International Women’s Day Celebrated by Communities, March 8, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Farmers call for resolution of decade old land grab disputes, March 12, 2018  
- **Flash News (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Former RFA journalists denied bail, March 16, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Cambodia Daily Defamation Case Underway, March 22, 2018  
- **Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer):** Sam Sokha Sandal Throwing Conviction Upheld, March 22, 2018  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 12, 2018</td>
<td>Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Former RFA journalists await release or further detention decision,</td>
<td><a href="https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=244">https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/flashnews.php?perm=244</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JULY 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Supreme Court Upholds Mother Nature Conviction,
July 13, 2018

AUGUST 2018

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Civil society groups call for the release of Tep Vanny,
August 14, 2018

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Free Tep Vanny: Two Years Too Long,
August 14, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20180814/150/index.html

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Religious Ceremony at Boeung Kak to Call for Tep Vanny Release,
August 15, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Boeung Kak Lake Activists Get Suspended Sentences,
August 24, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): James Ricketson Convicted for Espionage
August 31, 2018

SEPTEMBER 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Kem Sokha Transferred to House Arrest,
September 10, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Police Shut Down Chicken-Raising Workshop in Svay Rieng,
September 17, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): ADHOC and NEC Staff Await Verdict Of Bribery Trial,
September 18, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Former Rights Worker Tried for Defamation at Supreme Court,
September 26, 2018

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): ADHOC and NEC Staff Handed Suspended Sentences For Bribery Convictions,
September 26, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20180926/151/index.html

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Cambodia’s First Lèse Majesté Conviction,
October 5, 2018

Report: Time for Bail: Ending Needless Mass Detention in Cambodia
October 5, 2018

OCTOBER 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Supreme Court Rejects Conviction of Former Rights Worker,
October 1, 2018

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Authorities Stop Communities Collecting Garbage and Discussing Land Rights,
October 1, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20181001/152/index.html

Photo Album: Communities Celebrate World Habitat Day 2018,
October 5, 2018

Flash Info (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Cambodia’s First Lèse Majesté Conviction,
October 5, 2018
NOVEMBER 2018

Media Statement (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Time for Bail: Ending Needless Mass Detention in Cambodia,
November 1, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/collection/36/prisons,_pre-trial_detention,_cambodia

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence: Tep Vanny,
November 26, 2018

DECEMBER 2018

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence: Um Sophy,
December 5, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20181205/156/index.html

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence: Phav Nherng,
November 29, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20181129/155/index.html

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence: Sor Sorn,
December 7, 2018

Article (and Audio Clip in Khmer): Cambodia Civil Society Restrictions Still in Place on Human Rights Day,
December 10, 2018
https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/articles/20181210/157/index.html

Video: “Our Tears Are Our Strength”: Women Human Rights Defenders,
December 10, 2018

Photo Album: Celebrating Human Rights Day 2018,
December 10, 2018
APPENDIX 2: MONITORING PROJECT STATISTICS

Most common violations investigated by the Human Rights Monitoring Project (January to December 2018)

- THI: Threats, Harassment, and Intimidation
- OFEA: Obstruction to Freedom of Expression/Assembly
- LG: Land Grabbing
- PA: Physical Assault
- IAD: Illegal Arrest, Detention
- HT: Human Trafficking
- FPP: Failure To Prosecute / Protect / Provide Service
- DT: Death Threat

Land grabbing (LG) and forced eviction (FE) cases newly investigated by LICADHO from (January to December 2018)

(Cases featuring state-involvement and affecting multiple families)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LG &amp; FE Cases</th>
<th>Families Affected</th>
<th>Families Evicted</th>
<th>Cases Involving Land Concession</th>
<th>Cases Involving Military</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. MEANCHEY</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. CHHNANG</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. THOM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOH KONG</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratanakiri</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Siem Reap</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sihanoukville</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kandal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>260</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Oddar Meanchey</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stung Treng</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tbong Khmum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5,176</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8,077</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>
### Status of human rights monitoring cases investigated from January to December 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case type</th>
<th>Total cases</th>
<th>Sent to court</th>
<th>Charged by prosecutor</th>
<th>Authorities</th>
<th>Land commission</th>
<th>Resolved</th>
<th>Unresolved</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted killing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mob killing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abduction/Extortion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection of voter card</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Death threat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats or intimidation</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal arrest/detention</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTL*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTS**</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFEA***</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAP****</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land grabbing*****</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced eviction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to prosecute</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special case</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signboard interference</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote buying</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>272</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*HTL  Human trafficking for labor exploitation (1 special case involved labor trafficking)
**HTS  Human trafficking for sexual exploitation
***OFEA  Obstruction to freedom of expression/assembly
****DAP  Destruction/illegal appropriation of property
*****Land grabbing  Other cases also involved land grabbing (3 DAP, 1 physical assault)

### Number of cases involving restriction on social media investigated by LICADHO from 2015 to 2018

![Graph showing the number of cases from 2015 to 2018](chart.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of cases related to restriction on social media monitored by LICADHO from January 2015 to December 2018.
### APPENDIX 3: WOMEN’S & CHILDREN’S RIGHTS STATISTICS

Most common violations investigated by the Women’s Rights Monitoring Project from January to December 2018

#### Women’s rights cases opened from January to December pending with authorities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>In Court Process</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suspect escaped</td>
<td>Suspect arrested</td>
<td>Under investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acid attack</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking - sexual exploitations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special case</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 10 Cases are closed (8 domestic violence, 2 rape)
Challenges & Lessons Learned

LICADHO’s monitors faced greater workload pressures investigating a range of rights violations such as freedom of expression and land rights cases, meaning fewer women and children cases could be investigated and monitored fully by provincial staff. Additionally, the number of lawyers willing to represent victims continued to fall in 2018, and many judges continued to ask for (illegal) payments before processing a case.

A further challenge was the increase in cases of emotional abuse or rape-in-marriage where victims wanted to file civil divorce proceedings. LICADHO staff adapted, worked to review relevant case law regarding division of property and child supervision regulations, and cooperated with partner organisations in order to expand the type of legal services provided and meet the needs of these victims.

Most common violations investigated by the Children’s Rights Monitoring Project from January to December 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Suspect arrested</th>
<th>Suspect released on bail</th>
<th>No action</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape/ attempted rape</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted killing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex trafficking</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking - labour</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafficking - adoption</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child domestic violence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child domestic work</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special case</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>108</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>144</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 7 Cases were closed (3 physical assualt, 2 rape, 1 child domestic violence, 1 trafficking for adoption)
APPENDIX 4: MEDICAL & SOCIAL WORK PROJECT STATISTICS

Social work assistance by case type (January to December 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case type</th>
<th>Number of clients (individuals)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape (victims and family members)</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal arrest</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land grabbing &amp; forced eviction</td>
<td>4,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of human trafficking</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prisoners</td>
<td>534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerable children and family members</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,925</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food and material assistance to communities affected by land grabbing from January to December 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Community/Location</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Damnak Ampil</td>
<td>Kampong Chhnang</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Phnom Bat</td>
<td>Kandal</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chi Tres</td>
<td>Koh Kong</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prek Khxach</td>
<td>Koh Kong</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Traapaing Cho</td>
<td>Kampong Speu</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kbal Romeas</td>
<td>Stung Treng</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sre Kor</td>
<td>Stung Treng</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Phnom Krom</td>
<td>Siem Reap</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ou Sway</td>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sela Khmer</td>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Am Laing</td>
<td>Kampong Speu</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Boeung Pram</td>
<td>Battambang</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kbal Spean 1</td>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kampenh Chas</td>
<td>Sihanouk Ville</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Thmar Da</td>
<td>Pursat</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Tam Chi</td>
<td>Ratanakiri</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>805</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenges & Lessons Learned

The medical team struggled to recruit specialized doctors, and thus relied heavily on referrals to treat specific conditions. The team continues to recruit volunteers and specialized doctors to alleviate this problem.

LICADHO’s doctors also faced problems getting access to prisoners, particularly when they needed special treatment, and the team continued to urge authorities to transfer prisoners to hospitals when they needed urgent care. However, doctors have all noticed that care at public hospitals can be insufficient and result in further illness or even death, so the team works to continue to monitor patients inside and outside prisons until a full recovery has been made.

Medical Consultations (January to December 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Consultations</th>
<th>Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Cham prison</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>1,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursat prison</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Chhnang Prison</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prey Veng Prison</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svay Rieng Prison</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tbong Khmum Prison</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koh Kong Prison</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampot Prison</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LICADHO Office</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC1 (Prey Sar) prison</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC2 (Prey Sar) prison</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phnom Penh (PJ) prison</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC4 (Pursat) prison</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sela Khmer (Banteay Meanchey)</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phnom Bat</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kbal Romeas (Stung Treng)</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srekor (Stung Treng)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,109</td>
<td>6,890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 5: LEGAL PROJECT STATISTICS

New cases opened by Legal Project (January to December 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New case type</th>
<th>No. of cases</th>
<th>Male clients</th>
<th>Female clients</th>
<th>Total clients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land grabbing</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights defender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (Minors)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New cases closed by Legal Project (January to December 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New case type</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>Male clients</th>
<th>Female clients</th>
<th>Provincial Court</th>
<th>Case Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land grabbing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>LICADHO lawyers succeeded in persuading the courts to drop charges in five cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LICADHO lawyers secured the freedom of one imprisoned client.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LICADHO lawyers withdraw from one case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights defender</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>LICADHO lawyers succeeded in persuading the court to drop charges in one case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clients in two cases that had been imprisoned were eventually freed by Royal Pardon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>One case was kept without processing by the prosecutor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment/rape</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>In both cases, the LICADHO lawyer succeeded in persuading the court to sentence the perpetrators to prison and secured compensation for the victim.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Challenges & Lessons Learned

Fair trial rights are routinely undermined. In particular, the right to question prosecution witnesses is often denied and convictions are routinely made without sufficient evidence to meet the burden of proof. Investigating judges and prosecutors continue to overuse pre-trial detention and judicial supervision as a first response in criminal cases. Intimidation of defendants further makes it difficult to communicate with them, especially in remote locations.

Making defendants familiar and comfortable with court procedures enables them to speak effectively in court and increases the likeliness that unnecessary pre-trial detention is not arbitrarily imposed. Given the resources required to travel to remote communities to meet with clients, LICADHO has continued to work to schedule multiple meetings in different locations over a single visit.
### APPENDIX 8: Notable LICADHO Appearances in International Media (January to December 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title of article</th>
<th>Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/4/2018</td>
<td>Aftonbladet</td>
<td>Mörkt läge i Kambodja inför val (Dark times ahead of Cambodian election)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/KvqeJE/morkt-lage-i-kambodja-infor-val">https://www.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/a/KvqeJE/morkt-lage-i-kambodja-infor-val</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Title of article</td>
<td>Link</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>