

“ I was a refugee 24 years ago and now I work for accessibility of survivors and “durable” solutions for vulnerable people. ” ”



Photo: So Not

JRS CAMBODIA ANNUAL REPORT 2015

ACCOMPANY | SERVE | ADVOCATE

JRS CAMBODIA 2015

SPECIAL MOMENTS OF 2015

- **JRS International was 35!** Pedro Arrupe sj called for a response to the boat people of Vietnam and Cambodia in 1980, and so we began.
- **JRS Cambodia was 25!** Sr Ath, Phongphand Phokthavi, Br Noel Oliver sj and Sr Denise Coghlan rsm entered Cambodia to promote reconciliation, and peace before the return of the refugees from the camps in Thailand. They set up projects to make friends with people "Inside" to promote integrated development in a rural area and to educate people displaced and disabled by the effects of war and exile.
- 300 Montagnards arrived from Vietnam seeking asylum from religious and ethnic persecution. They follow people from places like Iran, Eritrea, Ethiopia, China, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine who have been seeking asylum here since 1993. Australia exported 5 refugees, originally from Iran and Myanmar via Nauru.
- A record number of guests passed through the Reflection Centre, including the Major Superiors of Asia Pacific to reflect and become aware of issues affecting Cambodia through the eyes of the poor and the lens of interfaith. Monks, women with disability, school groups, from many parts of the world came to see, judge, and act.
- School of Peace staged its 3 months programme at our centre.
- Srun Sony and Sr Denise Coghlan were invited to New York and Washington to receive the JRS Accompaniment Award and to advocate with groups and government in Washington.
- Pope Francis spoke at the UN on peace, refugees and migrants, people with disability, the environment and the global economy calling the world to Mercy and Justice. The Cambodian delegation are seem listening to his words and joining the standing ovation.
- The terrible treatment of the Rohingya people and their situation of statelessness grabbed world attention.
- We celebrated the resettlement of 5 of our Rohingya to Canada.



WE ACCOMPANY, SERVE AND ADVOCATE THROUGH OUR PROGRAMMES AMONG:

- 1 **REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS** **03**
PROTECTION/JUSTICE
- 2 **GUESTS AT OUR METTA KARUNA REFLECTION CENTRE** **05**
AWARENESS AND HOSPITALITY
- 3 **SURVIVORS OF WAR, PERSECUTION AND DISPLACEMENT** **07**

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

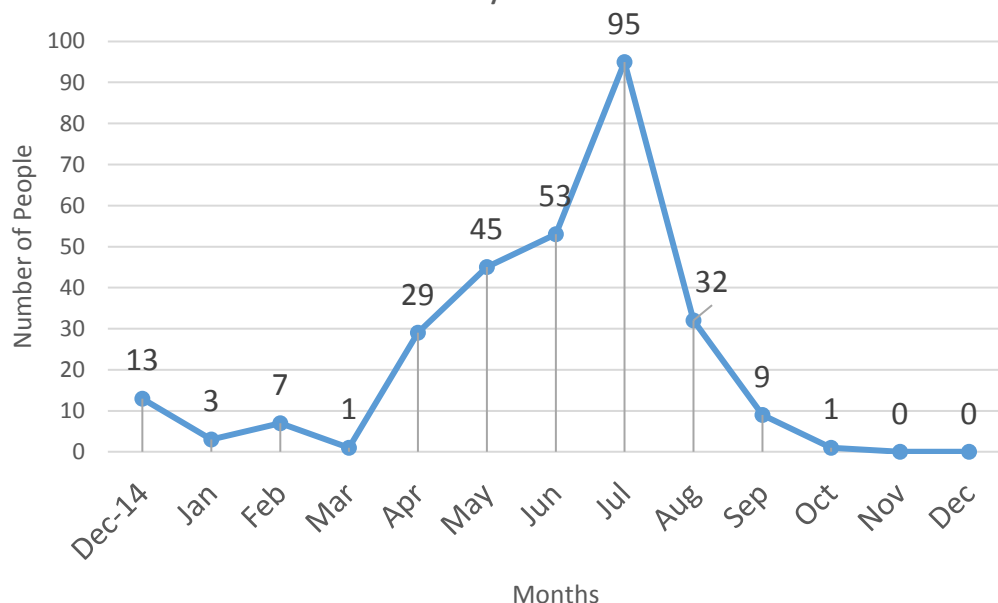
The biggest group of Asylum Seekers in Cambodia in 2015 were Montagnard Christians fleeing the highlands of Vietnam. The first 13 arrivals were brought starving from the forests of north eastern Cambodia by UN agencies and were cared by JRS. They were recognized as refugees in March 2015 by the government of Cambodia.

Over the year more than 300 arrived in Phnom Penh. Some others were forced back at the border but were cared by JRS in Phnom Penh for varying lengths of time. 199 Montagnards are still in our care for rented shelter, food, education and psycho-social activities.

Interviews were conducted with all of them by JRS and some have experienced torture, prison sentences, invitations to police station and being ask to sign that they will not practice their religion (Degar Christianity).

By end of 2015, none had been registered by the government.

Chart of Number of Montagnards arrived in Cambodia by month 2015



STOP PRESS On January 20, 2016, Cambodia government promised to register and process all Montagnards.

We also cared for 100 other refugees and asylum seekers - Rohingya, Burmese, Ethiopian Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Eritrean, Pakistani, Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers.

Education for children, housing, listening, and dialoguing with police and land-lords, assisting people to market and health services, legal briefs, and advocacy for durable solutions were some of the services we offered.

We continued to advocate for Identity Documents, a process towards citizenship, and the right to work. The only new asylum seekers recognized in 2015 were 13 Montagnards. Others wait a very long time.

We monitored the Australia deal. In total 5 people from Nauru arrived in Cambodia. One, a Burmese Muslim (not a Rohingya) returned to Myanmar. Four remain under the care of International Organization for Migration (IOM).

One big joy of the year was the resettlement in Canada of 5 Rohingya friends. We had enjoyed their rotis for years and are glad Canadians may be able to sample then.



THE MINDOL METTA KARUNA REFLECTION CENTER SIEM REAP

The Reflection Centre is a place where Cambodian and Foreigners reflect on the issues of Cambodia from the perspective of the poor and through interfaith lens.

ACCOMPANYING THROUGH AN ENVIRONMENT OF HOSPITALITY

- Visitors participated in our Reflection Centre Tours and Activities. They came from Australia, Cambodia, Japan, Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, USA, UK, Ireland, Korea, Philippine, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan etc
- We accompany some in retreat and reflection including the Maryknoll Lay Missionaries
- Metta Karuna Team prepared clean accommodation and delicious meals and smiling welcome

SERVICE/LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- Group from schools and universities, participated in toilet and house building, wheelchair building, peace activities with children
- Journalists, training in ethical reporting and photography
- School of Peace with young people participants from all over Asia looking at peace making from an interfaith perspective
- Peace Play for small children
- Learning to learn by Yourself for youth
- Self reliance for People with Disability

MINDOL METTA REFLECTION CENTRE COMPOUND



ADVOCACY FOR FORCIBLY DISPLACED AND STATELESS

We published “Living in Limbo”, a follow up to our survey on ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia.

Champions of People with Disability, another publication drew attention to the situation of survivors in remote areas.

Land issues and displacement seminars were held.

Interfaith Days for the environment and its possible effects on forced displacement were held.

Numerous activities to promote peace, disarmament, and understanding of refugees were held.



We networked with UNHCR, UNOCHR, LICHADO, CPCS, Human Right Watch, The Catholic Church, Embassies and Local Groups.

Our new “Emmaus”



KINDLING HOPE, RECEIVING COURAGE AMONG SURVIVORS OF WAR AND DISPLACEMENT

ACCOMPANIMENT:

We visited more than 400 survivors in the remote provinces of Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Kratie, Steung Treng, Rattanakiri and Mondul Kiri and also Kampong Thom and Kampong Cham encouraging, following up people we had assisted in 2014 and listening to their stories and needs. We also supported our liaison people. Six of our team have physical disability and understand with the compassion of peers.

SERVICE:

Relying on our survey we :

- Built 8 houses, 21 toilets, 2 wells, 34 income generating grants, 46 bags of books to promote reading, 19 wheelchairs, 11 bicycles for schooling
- Arranged 10 training opportunities
- Bought \$ 9000 worth of handicraft from people with disability to sell in Metta Karuna Shop
- Gave 2 people university scholarships and 14 primary/secondary scholarships to survivors
- Distributed uniforms made by people with disability
- Helped 10 people with emergency health to hospital
- Taught about home gardening

FOR MORE INFORMATION: READ "I AM HAPPY I AM ALIVE" AND "CHAMPIONS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY" AT WWW.JRSCAMBODIA.ORG



ADVOCACY:

- Arranged many activities to address the root causes of disability (bombs, mines, accidents) in our sites
- Promoted meetings between commune and village leaders and people with disability
- Distributed copies of rights of people with disability and laws on disability
- Advocated for accessibility.
- Reviewed with national government the National Strategic Plan on Disability
- Spoke at International meetings in Geneva and Dubrovnik
- Photo Display on accessibility.

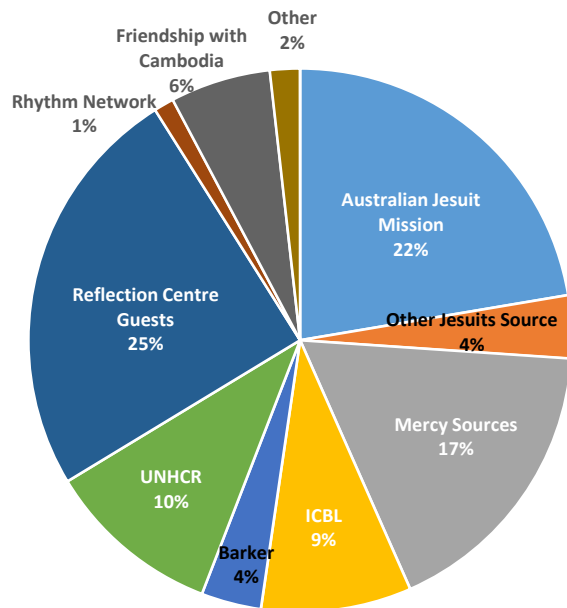
KINDLING PEACE AND HOPE THROUGH LEARNING & AWARENESS

We held 4 workshops for Women with Disability where they shared their stories, learnt about their rights, participated in advocacy for disarmament and thought out plans for improving their quality of life. They laughed, they cried, they had fun. For most, it was the first time to see Angkor Wat and visit the activities at the Cultural Village. Comments: "New thoughts", "Peaceful place", "There are others with problems like mine", "Encouraged", "Hopeful".

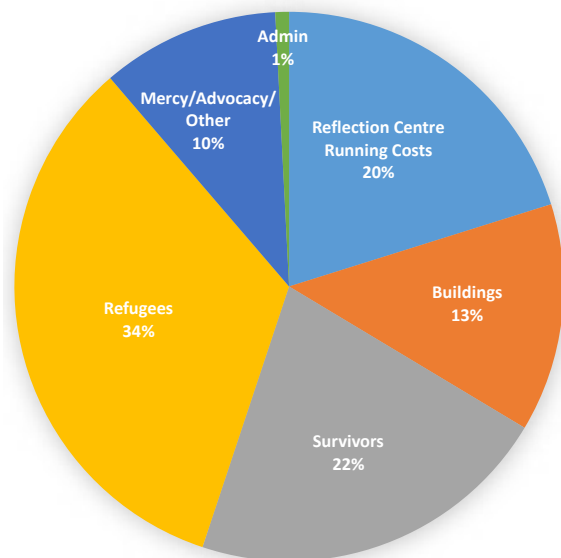
Challenges: Most survive from day to day so making a plan for the future is very difficult.



OUR DONORS



Thank you very much to everyone who gave to our work in 2015



How we spent it

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PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

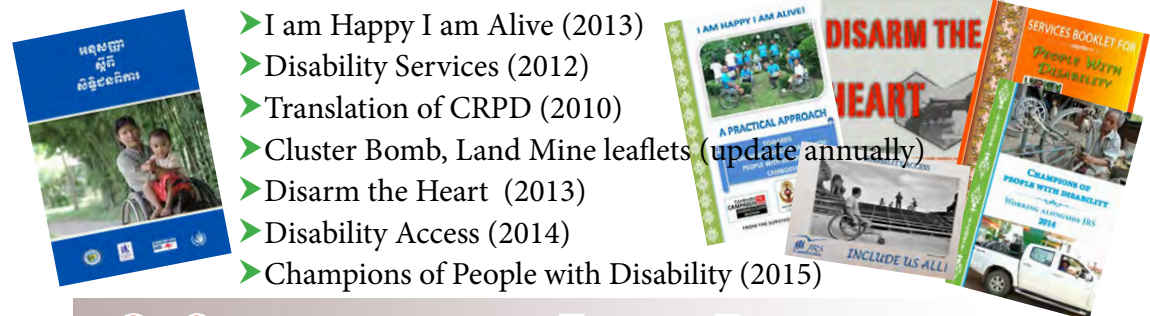
ON REFUGEES AND REPATRIATION:

- Video on Accompaniment (2014)
- Refugee Law / Refugees and Asylum Seekers Law
- Welcome to Cambodia and Refugee Rights Booklet (2014)
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers Manual (2014)
- Repatriation (2000)
- People We Met Along the Way (2012)
- The Search (2012)



ON DISARMAMENT AND SURVIVORS:

- I am Happy I am Alive (2013)
- Disability Services (2012)
- Translation of CRPD (2010)
- Cluster Bomb, Land Mine leaflets (update annually)
- Disarm the Heart (2013)
- Disability Access (2014)
- Champions of People with Disability (2015)



ON STATELESSNESS AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT:

- Boat Without Anchors (2013)
- State of Migration (2012)
- Video on Trafficking (2014)
- To Be Determined (2013)
- Untitled (2009)
- Migrant Workers (2015)
- Living in Limbo (2015)



REFLECTION:

- Words From Faith (2012)
 - Interfaith Workshop (2012)
 - Planting Trees (2014)
 - Banners, Posters, Leaflets on faiths, Year of Mercy
- Our sister organization, Jesuit Service (JS), has published more than 195 books for children in Khmer.**



BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF LOVE TOGETHER



2015

JRS CAMBODIA TEAM

SR DENISE COGLAN, COUNTRY DIRECTOR

PHNOM PENH

Srun Sony
Kim Phirum
Keth Bunthoeun
Nou Sokchanthou
Seng Cheatta

SIEM REAP

Tun Channreth
Sak Sopheak
Pros Pheareth
Sor Not
Chan Men

REFLECTION CENTRE HOSPITALITY TEAM

Soun Thary
Haem Touch
Lon Lok
Him Sue
Kert Reaksmeay
Haem Srey Pov
Choy Sokha
Khut Bunchee
Mit Vichet
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