



REPORT of the Cosecam Training (1st session)  
in Phnom Penh, Cambodia

# **Lobby and Advocacy: Methods and Principles**

31 March - 3 April, 2003

***bbo***

BBO report of the Cosecam training in Cambodia

## Monday, 31 March 2003

The training was held at Lucky Star Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The trainer is Annemarie Gehrels, a professional lobbyist, who works for BBO, based in the Netherlands. The co-trainers are Yi Dara (programme coordinator Cosecam), Ros Sotha (programme advisor PACT) and John Vijghen (facilitator ECR Cambodia). The training was conducted both in English (by the trainer and facilitator) and Khmer (by the co-trainers and participants), with immediate translations. A report of this training will be made available both in English and Khmer.

### *Introductions*

Every participant was asked to shortly present him or herself to the group.

### *What do we know of lobby and advocacy?*

The group was asked to tell what they think of hearing the word lobby. The group came up with the following:

- ✓ To convince
- ✓ To persuade
- ✓ Talk to persons
- ✓ Sit and talk
- ✓ To make someone do something
- ✓ Take a problem to a decision maker
- ✓ Make a change
- ✓ Talk and meet with person to make him understand something.

Hearing the word advocacy, the group mentioned the following:

- ✓ Do things to make a change
- ✓ Lobby is part of advocacy
- ✓ Deal with several levels, e.g. community and policy maker
- ✓ To change home community
- ✓ To raise voices
- ✓ Define a level for advocacy, define a strategy and find target group
- ✓ Legitimize ourselves from grassroots level
- ✓ To seek popular support.

In general terms one could say that:

<p>Advocacy is: giving a voice to people that was not heard before.</p>
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<p>Lobby is: a systematic informal effort to influence decision makers</p>
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Mrs. Gehrels tried to link the words lobby and advocacy, in a way that lobby is a tool to advocate for certain people, to make sure people are given a voice that was not heard before.

**Lobby and advocacy is:**  
influencing decision makers in a systematic and informal way by  
giving a voice to people that was not heard before.

More in general one could say that without lobby, the powerful command, the marginalized will not be heard. Furthermore it is noticeable that you do not have to have power yourself to be able to lobby. You only have to be 'medium strong' to be able to lobby, so you can help the marginalized, the people who are not strong enough to lobby themselves.

Since lobbying is targeted at decision makers it is interesting to note why we should at all work with those decision makers. Lobbyist and decision makers have different – but complementary – roles. So decision makers have the power to change things themselves, a lobbyist tries to influence the decision maker to try to get a better decision. This is important for the decision maker as well, because of the work of the lobbyist the decision maker does a good job which pleases more people than in the original plan. In this way both win: the decision maker for taking an improved decision, the lobbyist because he got his point through.

**Why work with decision makers?**

- ✓ Different/complementary roles
- ✓ We can both win
- ✓ Good governance needs civil society

In general one could give different reasons why one should want to lobby.

**Why lobby?**

- ✓ To get what we want
- ✓ To be heard
- ✓ To improve the quality of decision making
- ✓ To create a win-win situation

*Lobby and advocacy is worth a try!*

### ***Cases of participants***

Next the group was split up into smaller groups of 3 persons. Each group made their own three flip charts on which the participants stated their name, the name of their organization, a case in which they tried or wish to lobby and who the decision maker involved is. After this group work, the flip charts were presented to the plenary. The cases were put on the wall to use as examples and for further reference. Since the participants came from very diverse organizations, the cases handed in varied quite a bit as well. To name some examples: livelihood of people in forested areas, persons affected by HIV/Aids, “lazy” people in villages, children not going to school, draft law on domestic violence, drug abuse, legalization of sex workers, illegitimate use of weapons, absence of legal aid for minors, mob killing, children’s needs and rights, reproductive health. The participants were encouraged to listen to each other’s cases in order to learn from and try to help each other.

With these presentations the day was ended.

### **Tuesday, 1 April**

The day started with the recapitulation by Mr. Vijghen. He brought to memory that the most important point of the previous day had been that lobby is a specific strategy of advocacy. Advocacy is a very broad term; in general one could say that it applies to everything you do to change things for society. To be able to form the bridge between the marginalized and the powerful, you need to be medium-strong.

After this recap some of the participants made clear that they would like to change the time schedule of the course: in stead of a 2 hour break they asked for a 1 hour break. The participants were challenged to lobby for their own proposal. They did not succeed in convincing a majority of the participants. This “exercise” was referred to later during the course.

### ***Questions and answers***

- ✓ Is it alright when a lobbyist has an interest of his own? There are actually two kinds of lobbyists: the ones who are directly involved (so they do have an interests of their own) and the professional lobbyist. Both kinds have advantages and disadvantages. The lobbyist who has an interest of his own will probably be able to deliver a strong message. This could also be his weak point: when someone is too involved it sometimes becomes hard to analyze and really listen to the opposite site.
- ✓ Is lobby really something informal, since lobbyists also make formal appointments? Yes, although a lobbyist makes official appointments, he still tries to engage in an informal process. In other words, the public stay out of this process, to make sure that the decision maker can speak freely. So if a decision maker (e.g. a minister) wants to change his opinion on the basis of what he has heard from the lobbyist, he can do so without loosing his face.
- ✓ One of the participants asked some further clarification on the difference between lobby and advocacy, by giving an example of domestic violence. In this example a man stabbed his wife, at first the authorities considered this as an internal and personal affair, but after interference by a NGO the man was brought to justice. Mrs. Gehrels explained that the part of trying to get justice for the stabbed woman was a case of advocacy. The way in which the NGO tried to do it, was an example of lobby: a strategic way of influencing a decision maker in order to help someone without power. It should be noted however that both lobby and advocacy have to deal with public affairs.

### ***Principles of advocacy***

Next Mrs. Gehrels tried to explain the four principles of advocacy.

***The four basic concepts of advocacy***

1. Legitimacy – with the related question  
*Where does my organisation get its legitimacy from?*
2. Credibility – with the related question  
*How does my organisation build credibility?*
3. Accountability – with the related question  
*Does my organisation do what it promised; does it (in commercial terms) 'deliver'?*
4. Power – with the related question  
*Where does the power of my organisation to change things come from? How do we use this power?*

After the explanations the group split up into four smaller groups, each trying to answer one of the four questions.

After lunch all groups returned to the plenary and presented their answers found, which was immediately followed by discussion.

*Legitimacy; organizations get their legitimacy from:*

1. Constitution (right to form an association);
2. Authorization by ministry involved or council of ministers;
3. Clear vision, goal, mission statement, target group;
- 4. Support of target group;**
5. Memorandum of Understanding with ministries involved (for registration);
6. Co-operation with local authorities;
7. Support of donors;
8. Not gain benefit from target groups or funding agencies;
9. Not work for political parties.

Lively discussions on the above followed, especially after the remark made by Mrs. Gehrels that legitimacy does not solely have to do with laws. Advocating NGOs get most of their legitimacy from their target group. It is not even absolutely necessary if you want to advocate to be registered with the government. It might help your work, especially in the Cambodian setting, but it is not a necessity. This discussion took a large part of the day.

*Credibility; organizations get their credibility from:*

1. Obey own principles;
- 2. Help target group from beginning to end;**
- 3. Sustainability;**
4. Networking, with other NGOs;
5. Networking, with government, private sector and community, maintain relationship;
6. Human resources, enough for tasks taken up by NGO, clear leadership;
7. Communication with and understanding way of work of other groups.

After again a lively discussion the group agreed that it was also very important to show and communicate results to the target group.

*Accountability; organizations are accountable because:*

This group gave some examples from the field, how a NGO can show accountability:

1. Set up council for mental support children;
2. Arrangement of cases in the field;
3. Provide consultation to target group;
4. Child centers.

Since time had run out, it was decided to deal with the last group (on power) the next day.

### **Wednesday, 2 April**

The day started with a very thorough recap of the day before by the participants themselves. After this the plenary and discussions on the four principles of advocacy were continued.

#### ***The four principles of advocacy (continued)***

*Power; organizations get their power from:*

1. Knowledge (law, constitution, regulations);
2. Skills, based on needs of target group;
3. Finance and logistics;
4. Good cooperation within organization;
5. Good public relations;
6. Support from government departments, related NGOs and support group;
7. Education and training;
8. Networking with key NGOs;
9. Being responsible to real needs of the people;
10. Implementation of own plans;
11. Strategy and planning;
12. Awareness;
13. Transparency, democracy in decision making.

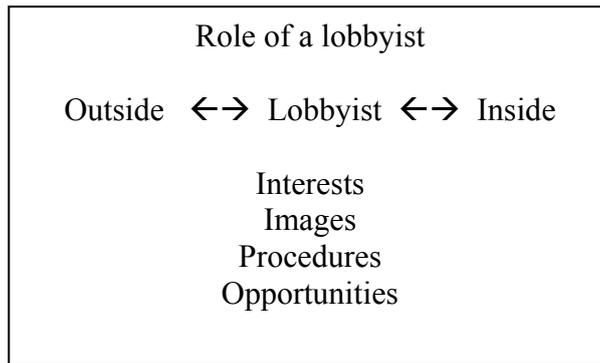
Based on yesterday's discussion the participants quickly agreed that in relation to power the target group should also be mentioned. In other words, power in advocacy is strongly related to the target/support group.

#### ***The role of a lobbyist***

Mrs. Gehrels then went on by explaining the role of a lobbyist. One could see the role of a lobbyist as the role of a broker: someone who tries to link two parties together. So the lobbyist is always in the middle and tries to look at both sides: the outside world (decision makers) and the inside world (the lobbyist's organization or group he / she wants to lobby for).

In doing so, the lobbyist should take four things into account:

1. Interests: what are the interests of the decision makers and of the own organization and how can the two collide?
2. Images: does the outside world have a negative image of the inside world or vice versa? If so, the lobbyist should try to tackle this problem first, or in the case of a positive image, try to take advantage of this.
3. Procedures: what are the procedures of the decision maker and the ones of the inside world? The lobbyist needs to know about these procedures; otherwise he / she will not be able to react in time or in the right manner.
4. Opportunities: looking at it from the positive side, it is worthwhile to think in opportunities; what are the chances for both sides, how can we make both sides win?

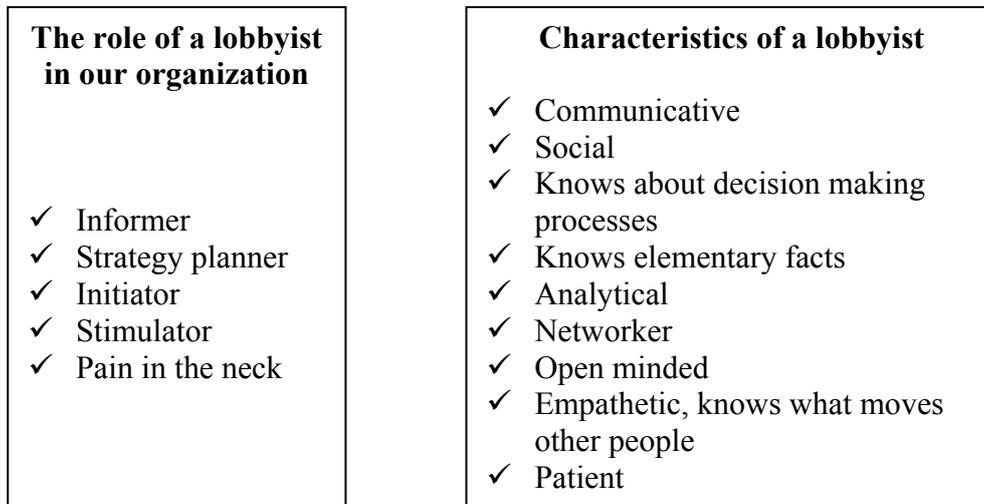


The participants were challenged to state some images that decision makers might have from their own organization. They came up with the following answers:

- ✓ Linked to opposition party;
- ✓ Partial;
- ✓ Problem creator;
- ✓ Only speaking on behalf of the NGO (and not the support group);
- ✓ Creating instability.

If a NGO wants to lobby it is important to try to tackle these negative images. This can be done by way of self-analysis of the lobbying NGO involved. It was agreed upon that special attention would be given to the self analysis during the last day of training.

Mrs. Gehrels then went on by giving some thoughts on the role and characteristics of a lobbyist.



***Actor versus factor driven decisions***

Mrs. Gehrels gave some explanation on the difference between actor and factor driven decisions. Some problems you maybe would like to tackle are “factor driven”, which means that no decision maker is involved. Factors are developments that are not the result of individual decisions. The problem might be a trend (e.g. free market), a result of international developments (e.g. globalization), or even an act of God (e.g. drought). So to make sure you are able to lobby, you need to make sure that you are dealing with an “actor driven” decision. These are decisions that can be influenced by a person (or persons) that can be located.

***Actor driven decisions***

Target: influential groups,  
persons which can be  
located

- ✓ Political parties
- ✓ Members of parliament
- ✓ Members of government
- ✓ Civil servants
- ✓ Local politicians
- ✓ Local leaders

Not suitable for lobbying are factors, developments that are not the result of individual decisions. Examples of factors are trends (e.g. trend towards opening up markets), public opinion, and international developments (e.g. globalization). Factors are the domain of public relations. For instance, you can create a lot of noise because you oppose globalization. But since you do not have a target, since there is no decision maker involved, you can not change things through lobby.

You might also be opposed to the WTO. But again, there is no decision maker involved that can eliminate WTO. So as a lobbyist you need to focus on which issues, taken up by WTO, you do not like and wish to alter. Once you have narrowed this down, you can try to find your target decision maker.

***Group work on cases: targeting the right decision maker***

After this piece of theory the participants broke up into their original groups of the first day to go over their own cases. The assignment was to rethink whether the decision maker targeted was really the right decision maker and to try to pose the most essential “lobby key question”. After the group work, three participants were asked to present their renewed cases.

Case No. 1 Violation of rights of vulnerable children

The problem stated was the fact that some children with HIV/AIDS are not allowed to enter schools anymore. Some attention was given to the fact that in this case providing information about HIV/AIDS is very important. This is not necessarily lobby, but it can support your lobby effort. After some discussion the plenary agreed that a good lobby target could be school directors, asking them to allow entrance for the affected children.

Case No. 2 Lack of legal support for children

The key question the participant originally posed was “do you think of best interest of children?”. After some discussion all agreed that this question was far too general. A key question should consist of something very concrete that can actually be delivered by the decision maker involved. The question was changed into “can you make sure that when a child enters your courtroom, he/she is provided with legal council?”. The participant was challenged to do some further “homework”, because it was noted that in some provinces there are just no lawyers available since there is not enough money. So in these cases another “lobby target” should be found.

Case No. 3 Domestic violence

One out of every six families is confronted with domestic violence in Cambodia. There is no specific law for this and one of the problems is that quite some decision makers do not want such a law, since they consider domestic violence to be a private family matter. The lobbying NGO still believes that a specific law is the right thing to lobby for, so the key question is whether members of parliament are willing to adopt the draft law on domestic violence. Important to note in this case is that, when the participants discussed this case further, that

NGOs do not seem to agree whether they really want the proposed draft law to be approved, since there are quite some weak points in this law. So the NGOs involved should do some more homework, e.g. decide whether they want to block the law (since it is not a good law just yet) or support it (since a bad law is better than no law at all, and hoping the law can be improved at a later stage). Networking is very important in this particular case: the different NGOs involved should try to come to one point of view, one common strategy, to make sure they will not be played off against each other.

### ***Winning as a lobbyist***

To end this day's session some attention was given to the question what winning exactly means, being a lobbyist. It was brought to attention that:

- ✓ Lobbyist do not play just one match, they play a competition;
- ✓ The winner may win the first round, but maybe loses everything the next round;
- ✓ Dirty tricks will present you the bill later (so maybe you win a match by cheating, but you will find during the next round you can not win anymore, because for instance a decision maker does not trust you anymore or you have lost your credibility to your members and they do not allow you to advocate on their behalf);
- ✓ Even losing might be winning.

The last point is important to a lobbyist, since winning is not just getting what you want. There can also be gain in improving your position for the next round (so when you have lost the first match, by learning from your mistakes you enter the next round strengthened), or in a more focused organization and a more committed constituency.

What does winning mean?  
-part one-

Remember:

- \* Lobbyists play competition,  
not just one match
- \* Winner takes all,  
next round maybe loses all
- \* Dirty tricks will present you the bill  
later
- \* Even losing might be winning

What does winning mean?  
-part two-

So winning is:

- \* Get what you want
- \* Improve your position for the next  
round
- \* More focussed organisation
- \* Committed constituency

**Thursday, 3 April 2003**

***Lobby exercise on time schedule***

The day started with the recap and some questions from the participants.

As promised Mrs. Gehrels gave her view on the lobby “exercise” held during the second day, in which participants tried to lobby for a change of the time schedule. At first the participants were asked to give their own view. Finally everyone agreed on the following “mistakes” in this lobby attempt:

- ✓ The lobbyist did not try to create a win-win situation;
- ✓ The lobbyist did not try to understand the interests of other people involved;
- ✓ The lobbyist failed to network beforehand and did not know who would support or block the idea and why;
- ✓ The lobbyist just repeated the own argument over and over again, in stead of really listening to other people’s arguments;
- ✓ The lobbyist did not try to resolve matters in an informal way, but waited until the official meeting, which lead to the situation that everyone took positions right from the start, without the willingness to change one’s opinion.

***Defensive versus pro-active lobbying***

Mrs. Gehrels continued by explaining the difference between defensive and pro-active lobbying.

<b>What's wrong with a defensive lobby?</b>	<b>The answer: Pro active lobbying</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Others define our problem or impose their problems on us</li><li>✓ Others define the arena</li><li>✓ Too late, no time to react</li><li>✓ Winning chances are limited from the start</li><li>✓ Strategy of damage control</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Be aware of the possible developments around you, e.g. upcoming decisions, political programs</li><li>✓ Be aware of your own strengths and weaknesses!!</li><li>✓ Estimate of what there is to win and where there is a chance to win</li><li>✓ Define a strategy of co-operation or obstruction</li><li>✓ Learn from winning and losing (there is always a next round)</li></ul>

So if you want to improve your winning chances as a lobbyist, it is recommended to be pro-active. When you are pro-active you force other people to react to you and your plans, instead of the other way around. Being pro-active also means being aware that there is always a next round, in which an opponent might try to get you into the defensive.

***Towards a pro-active lobby strategy (summary)***

- ✓ Only a pro-active strategy can avoid a defensive position
- ✓ Starting a lobby you need to know yourself thoroughly
- ✓ Learn from both winning and loosing
- ✓ Try to find out what it is you have to offer
- ✓ Lobbyists do not play a match, but a whole competition
- ✓ Winning is more than just getting what we want

When asked Mrs. Gehrels gave some examples of lobbying methods and their effectiveness in the North:

**Some methods  
for lobbying or advocacy  
and their effectiveness  
in the North (\* - \*\*\*\*\*)**

- ✓ personal visit \*\*\*\*\*
- ✓ informal meeting \*\*\*\*
- ✓ exposure \*\*\*
- ✓ strategic alliances \*\*\*
- ✓ report from specialist \*\*
- ✓ media \*\*
- ✓ letters \*\*
- ✓ petition \*
- ✓ hired lobbyist\*
- ✓ contact with a political party \*
- ✓ demonstrations \*

***Self analyses***

The afternoon session was begun by a plenary discussion on the second session of the training to be held from 16 June till 19 June. A schedule was made for some follow-up sessions on Saturdays at the offices of COSECAM. These follow-up sessions are voluntarily and can be used to get some support on assignment, to be made before the second training session in June. The participants received two assignments: self analysis (compulsory) and building of support group (voluntarily). Furthermore it was offered to the participants if they could find two other organizations to cooperate with on a specific lobby case, this case will be used as a real life example during the second session in June.

Mrs. Gehrels went on by explaining the self analysis assignment:

**Self analyses**

What is our strength ?  
+  
What are our weaknesses?

- \* Do we have an open window towards decision makers?
  - \* Do we have a consensus in our organisation?
  - \* Do we know what our constituency wants?
  - \* Do we have some resources?
- \* Do we have valid arguments and what are they?
  - \* What do others think of our organisation?
  - \* Are there lessons to be learned from the past?
    - \* Why are others successful?

The plenary was split up into four groups and was asked to elaborate on each of the above questions. In doing so, the participants would have an easier job working on the assignment for their own organization. The four groups reported back as follows.

*Do we have an open window towards decision makers?*

When the participants try to answer this question for their own organization, they could try to think of:

- ✓ Do we put too much pressure on decision makers?
- ✓ Are we impartial, e.g. do we really work on behalf of our support group in stead of a political party?
- ✓ Do we have enough resources?
- ✓ Sufficient time?
- ✓ Are we open minded, do we accept another opinion?
- ✓ Are we loyal to our support group?
- ✓ Are we flexible?
- ✓ Are we transparent?
- ✓ Are we responsible?
- ✓ Do we have a clear strategy and plan?

*Do we have consensus in our organization?*

- ✓ Do we abide by the principles of our own organization?
- ✓ Do we respect one's duty and role?
- ✓ Is there good communication and solidarity?
- ✓ Are we loyal in performance and duty?
- ✓ Do we accept and provide constructive criticism?
- ✓ Are we not too self-centered?
- ✓ Do we share information and hold regular meeting?
- ✓ Is there equity in work and pay and is there transparency in budget?

*Do we know what our constituency wants?*

- ✓ Do we meet directly and regularly with our constituency?
- ✓ Do we discuss and share ideas?
- ✓ Do we do research?
- ✓ Do we summarize and report back and evaluate with our target group?

*Do we have some resources?*

- ✓ Network
- ✓ Cooperation
- ✓ Target group
- ✓ Materials and means
- ✓ Evidence
- ✓ Finance

*Where do we have good and valid arguments?*

The group worked on a specific example and listed some arguments. An important exercise if you want to enter the arena of lobbying.

*What do others think of our organization?*

This question actually relates to the image of one's organization. Other questions to be asked are:

- ✓ How do people recognize us, know for whom we work?
- ✓ Do we have a strong network?
- ✓ What is our previous experience in lobby and advocacy?
- ✓ Do we have a good reputation in society?

*Are there lessons to be learned from the past? Why are others not successful?*

Negative examples:

- ✓ Organization of a meeting without a clear methodology and plan.
- ✓ No strategy and plan available.
- ✓ Resources not used effectively.
- ✓ Not being able to do emotional control (in discussions, e.g. get angry/frustrated).
- ✓ Lack of flexibility
- ✓ Lack of capacity to increase network.

Positive examples:

- ✓ Strong organizational management.
- ✓ Full support from target group.
- ✓ Have potential to convince partners to participate.
- ✓ Have experience and achievement (know how to learn from past experiences).
- ✓ Trust from donors.
- ✓ Enough human resources, materials and finances.

It was decided that the second session in June would start with the self analysis of each organization and the possible obstacles encountered in doing the self analysis. Furthermore there will be some more theory on the decision making process, to clarify why the work of a lobbyist never has to stop, that it is an ongoing process with new opportunities all the time.

The training ended with an evaluation of the course (anonymously).

Phnom Penh, 23 April 2003

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## Advocacy Training Course At Lucky Star Hotel

**On 31<sup>st</sup> March-3<sup>rd</sup> April 2003**

<b>N</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>NGO</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Phone</b>
1	Bun Seng	M	Goutte D'Eau	Assistant Manager	011 750351
2	Chan Dina	F	CPU	Team Leader	023 210449
3	Chut Wutty	M	Global Witness	Depu. Dire. Operation	012 835353
4	Dum Chan Thida	F	Friends	Child Right Officer	012 822442
5	Em Chantha	M	PADV	Information Assistant	016 863838
6	Hang Makara	M	MONASRI	Government Officer	012 799588
7	Heng Sambath	M	CPN+	Advocacy Officer	012 894989
8	Huot Sovanneary	F	COSECAM	Project Officer	012 970704
9	Ing Chivorn	M	CHRHAN	Deputy Coordinator	012 813100
10	Keam Tanh	M	CCPCR-Takeo	Project Coordinator	011 899219
11	Keo Sichan	F	CWDA	Project Coordinator	016 904915
12	Khun Sophea	F	CARE	Advo.Senior Proj. Officer	012 892130
13	Ly Sunlina	F	Licadho	WR Coordinator	012 947289
14	Sim Saran	M	Wathnapheap	Program Advisor	012 913532
15	Sim Sou Yong	M	PJJ	Director	012 688887
16	Sok Khorn	M	Government	Police Officer	016 868817
17	Srey Sary	M	LAC	Lawyer	012 988144
18	Tep Peov	M	CCASVA	Information	012 947466
19	Tieng Saman	M	WGWR	Project Officer	016 824052
20	Vann Sophath	M	Licadho	H.R.E Coordinator	012 941206
21	Vorn Koy	M	CRF	Program Manager	012 839813