



PRISON CONDITIONS IN CAMBODIA 2008: WOMEN IN PRISON

A LICADHO Report
March 2009



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CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE
PROMOTION AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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LICADHO

CAMBODIAN LEAGUE FOR THE PROMOTION
AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO)

LICADHO is a national Cambodian human rights organization. Since its establishment in 1992, LICADHO has been at the forefront of efforts to protect civil and political and 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 12 provincial offices.

LICADHO pursues its activities through two program departments:

Department of Monitoring and Protection:

- **Monitoring of State Violations and Women's and Children's Rights:** staff investigate human rights violations perpetrated by the State and violations made against women children, and victims are provided assistance through interventions with local authorities
- **Paralegal and Legal Representation:** victims are provided legal advice and in key cases legal representation by our paralegal team and human rights lawyers.
- **Prison Monitoring:** researchers monitor 18 prisons to assess prison conditions and ensure that pre-trial detainees have access to legal representation.
- **Medical Assistance:** a medical team provides medical assistance and referrals to prisoners and prison officials in 12 prisons and victims of human rights violations.

Department of Communication and Advocacy:

- **Community Training, Education and Advocacy:** Trainers and advocates educate the public on women and children's rights, create protection networks at the grassroots level and advocate for social and legal changes.
- **Public Advocacy and Outreach:** LICADHO's investigation 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).

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1. Introduction

Since 1997, LICADHO has issued reports on Cambodian prisons conditions, highlighting the most serious human rights concerns and recommending positive changes. As an independent non-governmental organization, LICADHO has several key aims:

- To monitor Cambodian prisons and prisoners' rights.
- To disseminate relevant, high-quality, non-partisan information.
- To lobby for positive reform.

LICADHO's past two prison conditions reports have profiled the living conditions faced by male prisoners¹ and mothers living with their children in prison². This report aims to profile female prisoners and their experiences in the prison system and to provide an insight into the crimes they committed and the conditions they live in. Each case study is based on true accounts from prisoners, where names and details have been changed to protect the identity of the prisoners. This report also provides supplementary statistical information for relevant issues collected over the period 2007 and 2008.



It is hoped that this report will be used by government and prison officials, human rights advocates, researchers, media, aid donors and legal professionals as a reference tool to identify existing problems, improve prison conditions and promote prisoners' rights.

Methodology: Monitoring Prison Conditions

LICADHO prison researchers and the LICADHO medical team compiled the case studies and statistical information contained in this report. LICADHO prison researchers in Phnom Penh visit each of the city's prisons once a week (CC1, CC2, Takmao and PJ), while in LICADHO's provincial offices, prison researchers visit each provincial prison once a week³.

¹ LICADHO Report 2007, *Prison Conditions in Cambodia 2005 & 2006: One Day in the Life...* <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=104>

² LICADHO Report 2008, *Prison Conditions in Cambodia 2007: The Story of a Mother and a Child*, <http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=116>

³ For logistical and funding reasons, LICADHO prison monitors only visits detention facilities in close proximity to its Phnom Penh office and 12 provincial offices (18 out of the country's 26 prisons). LICADHO visits: Police Judicial (PJ), Correctional Center 1 (CC1, formerly T3), Correctional Center 2 (CC2, for women and minors), Correctional Centre 3 (CC3, formerly Tra Plong, T5), Toul Sleng Military Prison, Takmao, Kompong Som, Kompong Speu, Kampot, Kompong Chhnang, Kompong Cham, Kompong Thom, Pursat, Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Riep, Svay Rieng, and Koh Kong. LICADHO researchers no longer monitor prisons in Prey Veng and Takeo, since it closed its offices in those provinces. In the provinces of Monduliri, Rattanakiri, Stung Treng, Kratie, Takeo, and Preah Vihear, LICADHO does not have offices so the prisons there are not monitored by LICADHO researchers. The Cambodia Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC) meets with the prison directors in these provinces and makes other periodic inspections, although it has no permanent research or medical teams.

Visits last for approximately two or three hours and during that time the researchers will usually interview between two and four prisoners. Researchers use a standard questionnaire form which documents the prisoners' personal details, treatment, living conditions, complaints, legal information (arrest, detention, trial, sentence, legal representation) and any other important information. Visits are normally conducted with a guard present in an interviewing area, which can be a specific room or a specific area outside. Because of the presence of guards or other prisoners, confidentiality cannot be ensured, although LICADHO prison researchers try where possible to conduct interviews privately. All visits are prearranged in advance and prisoners are chosen from the prison register, which is available at the administration office in each prison.

Location of prisons monitored by LICADHO



The number of interviews conducted by LICADHO's prison researchers is indicated below:

Number of Interviews Conducted 2007 & 2008				
Prison	2007		2008	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
PJ	54	2	38	9
CC1	90	0	40	0
CC2	52	48	33	45
Tra. Plong (CC3)	209	0	136	0
Toulsleng	0	0	0	0
Takmao	93	11	60	20
Sihanouk ville	106	3	64	4
Kg. Speu	58	5	49	4
Kampot	129	5	202	7
Kompong Chhnang	169	10	137	5
Kg. Cham	180	26	75	5
Kg. Thom	280	12	290	17
Koh Kong	81	9	70	7
Pursat	217	6	151	8
Battambang	76	5	58	7
Banteay Meanchey	110	11	48	2
Siem Riep	275	44	204	23
Svay Rieng	169	11	127	11
Total	2348	208	1809	174

Methodology: Prison Health Monitoring

LICADHO believes that all people, including those in detention, have a fundamental right to health care. Following the establishment of its Medical Office in 1993, LICADHO began medical work in two Phnom Penh prisons. At that time, Cambodia's prisons were in a state of crisis and health conditions were extremely precarious.

Now, more than a decade later, the LICADHO Medical Office is the busiest office within LICADHO as it visits 12 prisons every month⁴ around the country, covering a prison population of over 2,000 prisoners. Each visit lasts about a day and for some larger prisons the visit is spread across two or three days. Each week the Medical Office will manage to visit three or four prisons and, like the prison researchers, all medical visits are prearranged with each prison.

The medical teams that go out on each visit consist of two doctors and one nurse and with them they bring medicines, medical supplies such as bandages and food. The medical visits aim to provide a general health check of the prisoners and prison guards, at which time medical treatment can be given, medication prescribed (and administered by prison health

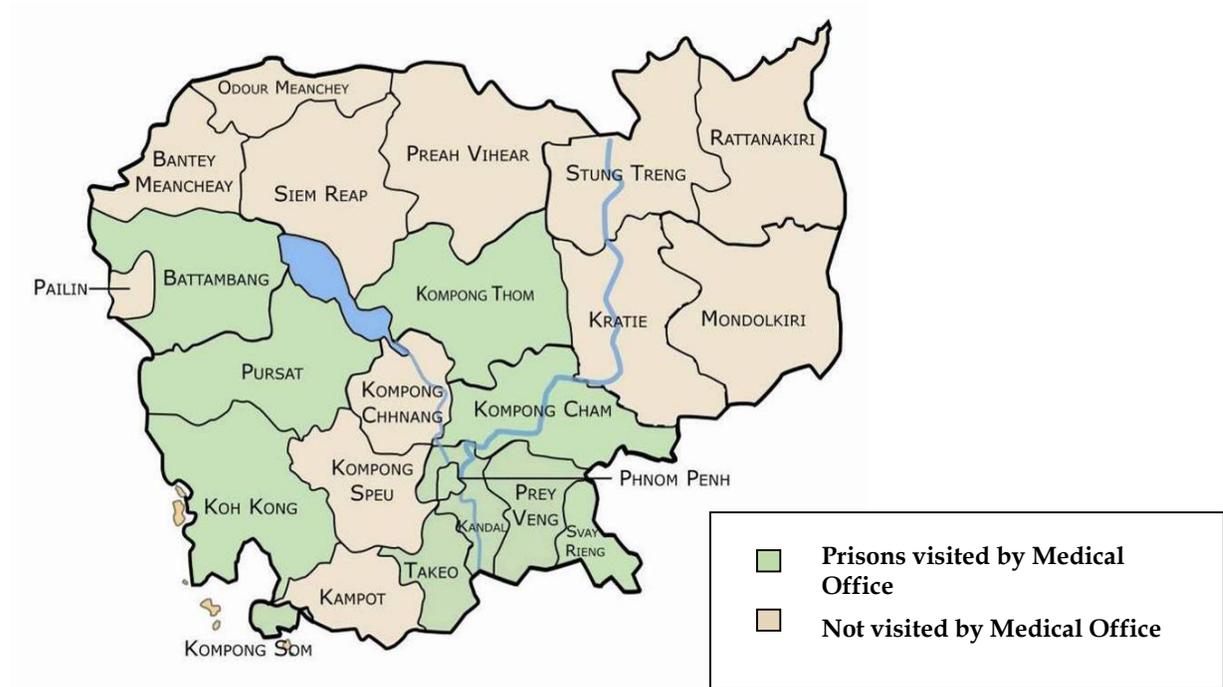
⁴ The LICADHO Medical Office, visits a different set of prisons: Takmao, Kompong Cham, Takeo, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, PJ, Toul Sleng, Pursat, Koh Kong, Kompong Som, Battambang, and Kompong Thom. Occasional visits are also made to CC1 and CC2 on an ad hoc basis.

workers) and any seriously ill prisoners can be referred for further treatment or admitted to a hospital. (Such referrals however are at the discretion of the prison director and the medical team can only make a request). The medical visit also acts as a follow-up opportunity to check if medicine has been properly administered and to ensure that no bribes have been demanded.

The health checks are normally conducted in the prison cells however sometimes they are conducted outside the cells. During each visit the medical team is normally able to see up to 200 prisoners. In addition to the monthly schedule, the Medical Office is also able to make special visits when necessary to provide follow-up medical treatment for seriously ill prisoners or to give urgent medical treatment in emergency situations.

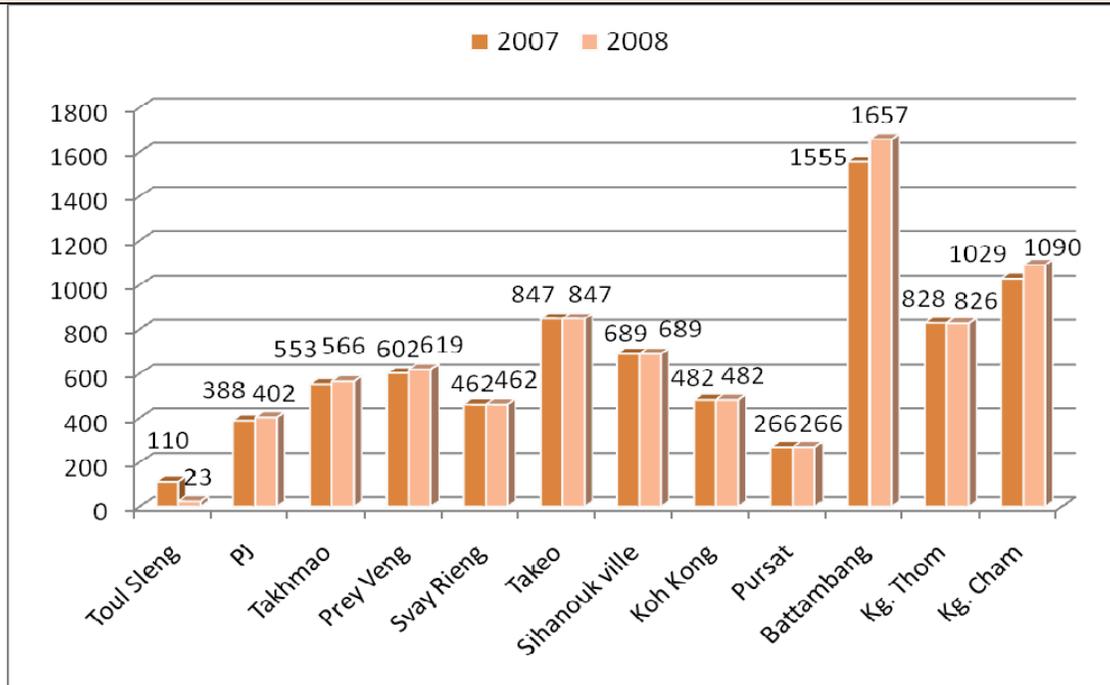


Location of Prisons Visited by the LICADHO Medical Team

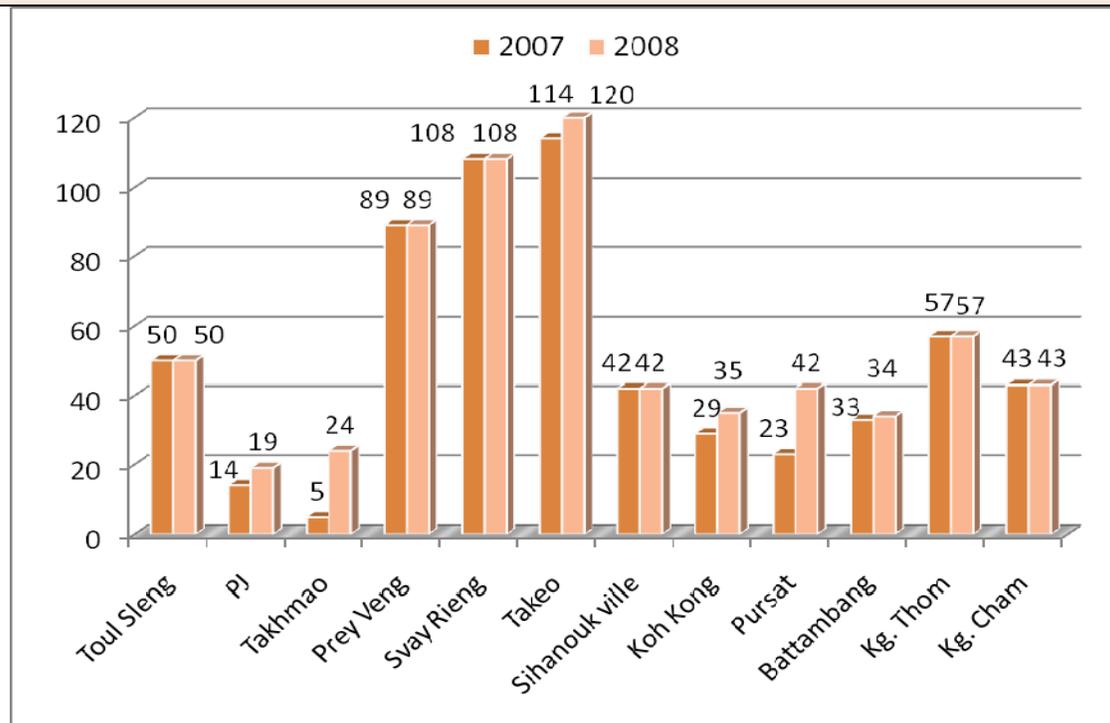


The number of medical checkups provided by the LICADHO medical team is indicated in the following charts:

Prisoners Receiving Medical Treatment 2007 & 2008



Prison Guards Receiving Medical Treatment 2007 & 2008

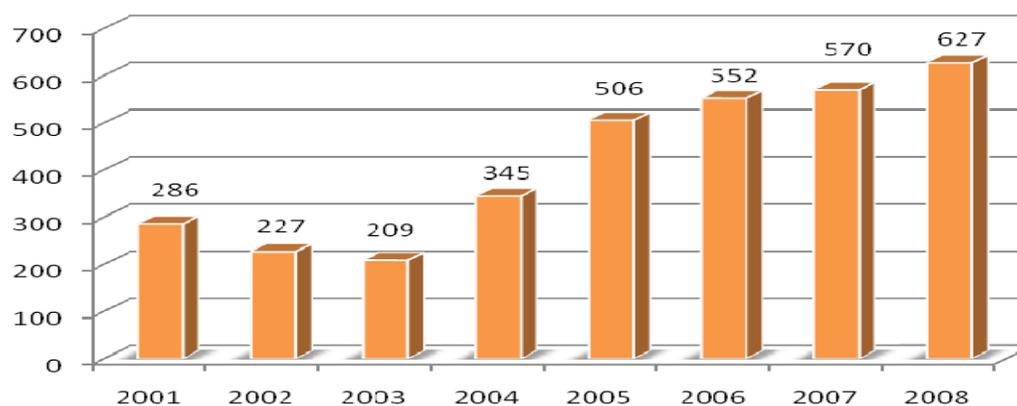


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2. Women in Prison

At the end of 2008 there were 627 women living in 18 out of Cambodia's 26 prisons, representing about 6% of the prison population.

Adult female prison population
18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 2001-2008



Adult female prison population - per prison in
18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 2004-2008

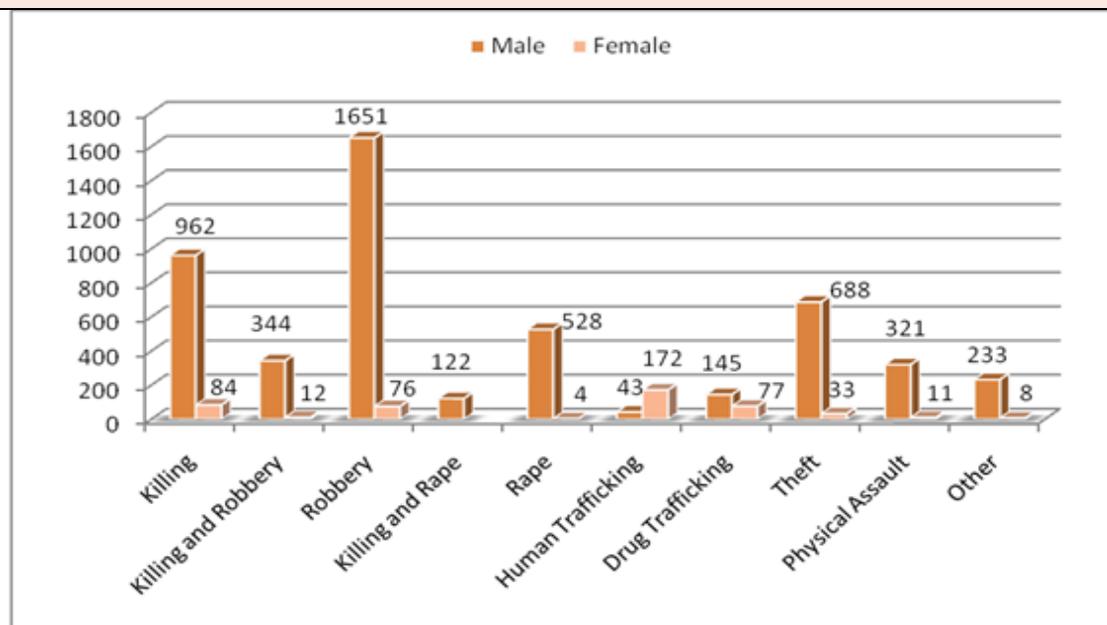
Prison	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
PJ	5	6	7	8	15
CC1	0	0	0	0	0
CC2	166	253	280	262	285
Tra. Plong (CC3)	0	0	0	0	0
Toulsleng	0	0	0	0	0
Takmao	14	16	26	26	29
Sihanouk ville	21	10	7	16	22
Kg. Speu	5	8	7	7	10
Kampot	13	13	13	15	18
Kg. Chhnang	6	9	9	13	21
Kg. Cham	20	18	23	26	19
Kg. Thom	11	14	7	11	17
Koh Kong	6	11	10	8	8
Pursat	29	10	4	7	10
Battambang	21	45	42	35	45
Banteay Meanchey	23	35	49	48	44
Siem Riep	2	52	59	74	76
Svay Rieng	3	6	9	14	8
Total	345	506	552	570	627

Women are imprisoned for a variety of reasons some of the most common are as follows:

- Trafficking of humans (sexual exploitation)
- Trafficking of drugs (acting as drug mules)
- Killings (domestic violence - often in self-defense⁵), and
- Robbery (stealing with violence)

The following are statistics that have been compiled by LICADHO prison researchers during their interviews with prisoners and also from information provided by the prison department. The statistics indicate the type of crimes committed by prisoners, however they only represent approximately half of the prison population that LICADHO monitors. The graphs indicate the top crime types committed for comparative purposes while the table provides a list of all crime types committed.

Top Crime Types Committed by Prisoners 2007



⁵ Self-defense is not explicitly considered a valid defense under any law in Cambodia, and in practice judges may or may not take this into account in ruling on a case.

All Crime Types Committed by Prisoners 2007

Type of Crime	Male	Female
Killing	962	84
Killing and Robbery	344	12
Robbery	1651	76
Arson	16	1
Killing and Rape	122	0
Rape	528	4
Organized Crime or Terrorist Act	44	1
Kidnapping	72	9
Illegal Confinement	14	0
Human Trafficking	43	172
Drug Trafficking	145	77
Drug Usage	73	9
Theft	688	33
Receiving Stolen Goods	63	5
Physical Assault	321	11
Public Document Counterfeit	17	5
Fraud	48	25
Breach of Trust	43	5
Indecent assault	19	0
Defamation and Libel	5	0
Illegal Weapons Usage	79	10
Property Destruction	62	3
Traffic Offense	9	0
Illegal Fishing	6	0
Other	233	8
Total	5607	550

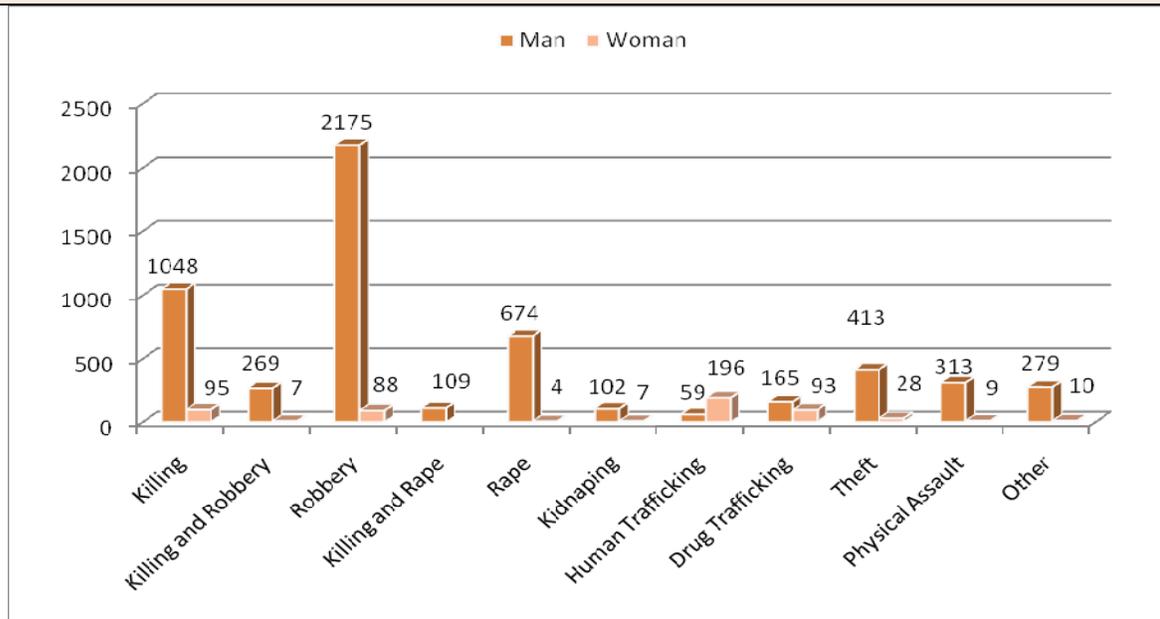
CASE STUDY: THEFT

My name is Sopheak and my family is very poor. When my father died I became the main income earner for my family.

In early 2008, I stole money from patients in a provincial hospital and I was arrested and put in prison. However, I was released a few months later but I do not know when. In late 2008, I stole someone's money in the market and was arrested by the market security guards. I was then sent to prison again for pretrial detention. A few weeks later I had my trial and I was sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

In the prison I share a cell with 16 other women and we are allowed out of the cells twice a day - much more than the male prisoners. I have found that the food is not good and there is never enough. The quality of the food also contributes to our bad health and malnutrition.

Crime Types Committed by Prisoners 2008



All Crime Types Committed by Prisoners 2008

Type of Crime	Male	Female
Killing	1048	95
Killing and Robbery	269	7
Robbery	2175	88
Arson	13	2
Killing and Rape	109	0
Rape	674	4
Organized Crime or Terrorist Act	40	1
Kidnapping	102	7
Illegal Confinement	14	0
Human Trafficking	59	196
Drug Trafficking	165	93
Drug Usage	78	8
Theft	413	28
Receiving Stolen Goods	7	1
Physical Assault	313	9
Public Document Counterfeit	17	5
Fraud	62	39
Breach of Trust	39	16
Indecent assault	19	0
Defamation and Libel	4	0
Illegal Weapons Usage	67	2
Property Destruction	67	2
Illegal Migration	0	1
Traffic Offense	6	1
Illegal Fishing	3	0
Other	279	10
Total	6042	615

CASE STUDY: KILLING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY HUSBAND

My name is Sopheap and I am 49 years old. I got married in 1979 and I have 7 children. When I first got married, my life with my husband was good and we were happy. However after the birth of our first child something changed and the violence started to occur. Most of the time he would be absent from the home and only come home drunk. My husband would physically and emotionally abuse the children and I, sometimes even our neighbors.

The abuse and violence was a constant in our home, every week there would be something he was angry about. Sometimes my husband was jealous of the time and attention I gave to my son and son-in-law. Even our neighbors were used to hearing the violence and it just became part of our lives.

One night in 2008, my husband came back home very drunk and he started to have an argument with my son, I intervened and then he began shouting and punching me. I fell to the ground and then he started to kick me until I lost consciousness. When I regained consciousness I saw my husband standing over me holding an axe, I managed to push him away and I grabbed a long kitchen knife. I closed my eyes and defended myself, when I opened my eyes my husband was on the floor with blood everywhere. He wasn't dead yet but he died later.

After that I was sent to the administrative police station and then put in pretrial detention.

I didn't want this to happen to my family. I didn't want to kill my husband but I couldn't stand living in that situation. What I did was to protect my family and I from his repeated violence.

CASE STUDY: DRUG TRAFFICKING

My name is Sophat and I am 67 years old. I was arrested because my son was a drug smuggler. Normally, my son would give me packages to keep in my house but I never knew what they were. One day my son went to work and while he was out the police came to my house. I had no idea what they wanted they just stormed into my house saying they were looking for something. They searched my house and found my son's packages. The police said that they were drugs and that I was a drug smuggler. I had no idea what the drugs were or even that they were in my house. I was then taken away to the police station.

On the same day I was brought to the court with two other women I did not know. The court accused the three of us running a trafficking ring; one woman worked in a casino and sold the drugs there and the other was a hairdresser who delivered the drugs. The court then gave the three of us two years imprisonment for drug trafficking. It all happened on the same day, it was so fast I was so shocked.

In prison I spend my time washing the prison guards' clothes and working in the kitchen. We are lucky because we are allowed out of the cells almost every morning, there are only a small number of woman in the prison – much less than men so there is much less risk.

CASE STUDY: HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR ADOPTION

My name is Kea and I was born in 1980. I was married in 2000 and I have a son. I was arrested in 2008 for human trafficking for the purpose of adoption.

Sometimes I went to visit my sister and brother-in-law and their 7 year old daughter. One time I took their daughter to another province without telling them. My sister then lodged a complaint with the police accusing me of human trafficking for adoption. The police then came to arrest me.

I am now in pre-trial detention in a crowded cell, where the air is thick and it is hard to breathe. However, I am allowed to be out of the prison cell every morning. For food I get two small meager meals a day, lunch and dinner. At first I couldn't stand these conditions but after time I have gotten used to it. Sometimes, I have to wash clothes in return for getting more time out of the prison cell and getting more food. In prison I don't get adequate medical care; when I have been sick I can't get any medical care or even medicine.

I am still waiting for my trial. I don't know when that will be.

CASE STUDY: KILLING AND ROBBERY

My name is Sunlang and I am 25 years old. I was arrested of killing and robbery. In 2007, I killed a 70 year old woman. I wanted her earrings. The next day I was arrested and sent to pretrial detention. After a few months I was given a 15 year sentence.

In prison I stay in a cell with other women and we are allowed out of our cells each morning. I always like to play games with the male prisoners when we are allowed out of our cells at the same time. I have no relatives that come to visit me. People think I am a weak-minded person who sometimes does foolish things. Sometimes I have sexual intercourse with the male prisoners. The prison guards and NGO workers always tell me off and advise me not to do so but I don't always follow their advice. NGOs often give us donations because they have sympathy for the poor conditions we live in. I am lucky to get such donations and to live more freely than the male prisoners.



CASE STUDY: KILLING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY PARENT

My name is Sreyneang, I am 25 years old. I got married in 2005 and I have one son. Five months after I was married I moved to a new house and my married life was peaceful and happy. However, my father was not happy with my husband and I, I don't know why. He would often provoke arguments and insult me. I tolerated his behavior because he was my father.

One day, my son went to play under the house as usual. At lunchtime I went to call my son to come in and eat. My father was there and he started to argue with me, he became very angry and aggressive and then he began punching me. During the fighting I got a knife and stabbed him in his stomach and chest many times until blood covered his body.

The commune police almost immediately took me away. I was given 10 years imprisonment for killing my father. My brothers and sisters considered me a murderer who stabbed our own father. But they don't understand that he had been abusing me and that he never treated any of us fairly. Neither my relatives nor siblings have come to visit me, except my husband and neighbor who sometimes come. I feel so sad to think what has happened to my life.

In prison every morning, I am able to go out of the cell in order to cook and get water. Sometimes, I have to wash the clothes of guards in return for going outside every morning. I find that I have more freedom than the male prisoners. But this is still prison.

CASE STUDY: TRAFFICKING FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

My name is Ngoc Yav. I was born in 1986 in Vietnam and moved to Cambodia in 2006 to run a massage parlor. I also hired a few Vietnamese girls to work in my shop.

One day in 2008, the human trafficking police arrived at my shop. They accused me of human trafficking and employing underage girls to work and have sex for money. I told them I ran my business without selling sex and only employed women who willing came to work for me. It didn't matter because they arrested me and put me in pretrial detention.

I now share a small cell with approximately 10 other prisoners. It is hard to breathe and sleep at night because the cell is so small and cramped. It is very smelly and dirty and we do not even have enough water to clean ourselves. Our one toilet in the cells does not work now. However I have found that the prison guards treat me like the other Cambodian prisoners and not any different because I am Vietnamese.

CASE STUDY: FRAUD

My name is Rasmey and I am 40 years old. I was arrested for fraud. I lived in Phnom Penh and I would travel to the provinces to get in touch with different people. In one province I built up a good relationship with a nun of a pagoda. Over a few months I would continue to visit the nun at the pagoda and she began to trust me. She would always tell me about her plans to renovate the pagoda.

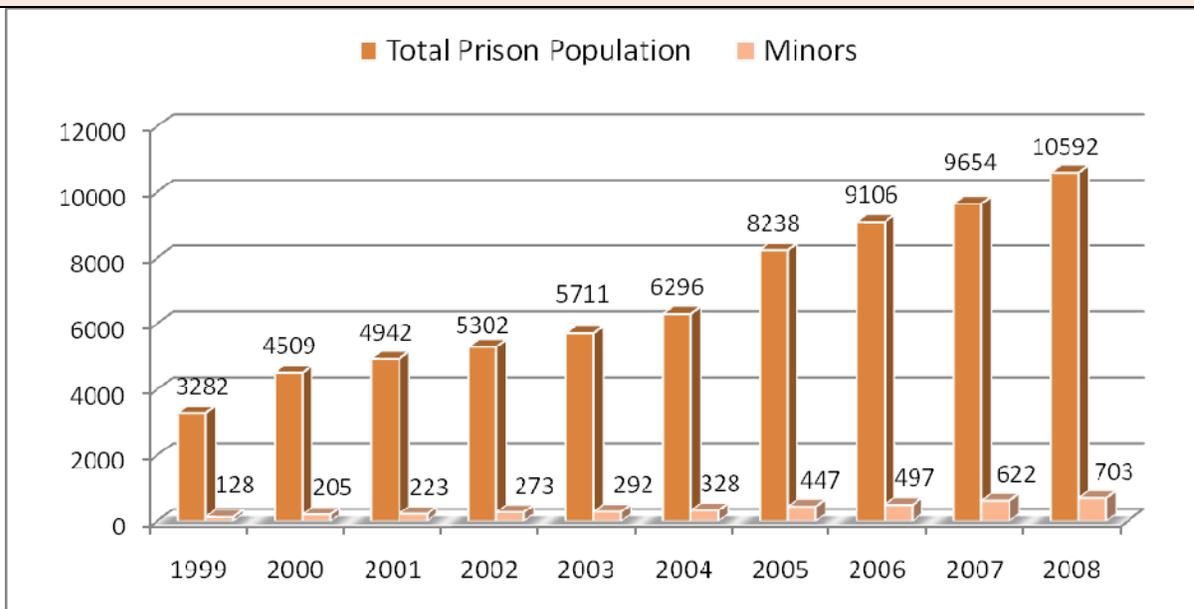
One day, I convinced her to give me 200,000 riels (approximately 50 USD) in order to buy cement to use in the renovation of the pagoda. Once she gave me the money I traveled back to Phnom Penh and I broke my promise to her. I spent all the money for my own personal interests. A few weeks later, I traveled back to the pagoda but I was arrested and put in pretrial detention.

I was put in a cell with 19 other female prisoners. However, it seems to be bigger than the male cells and I am able to get out of the cell every morning. When I am out of the cell sometimes I have to wash clothes of the prison guards and get water to clean the cell. I am still waiting for my trial but I don't know when it will be held.

The Prison Population

At the end of 2008 across the 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO there were a total of 10,592⁶ prisoners, which was made up of 9,262 male prisoners, 627 female prisoners, 684 minor male prisoners and 19 minor female prisoners.

Prison population, 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 1999-2008

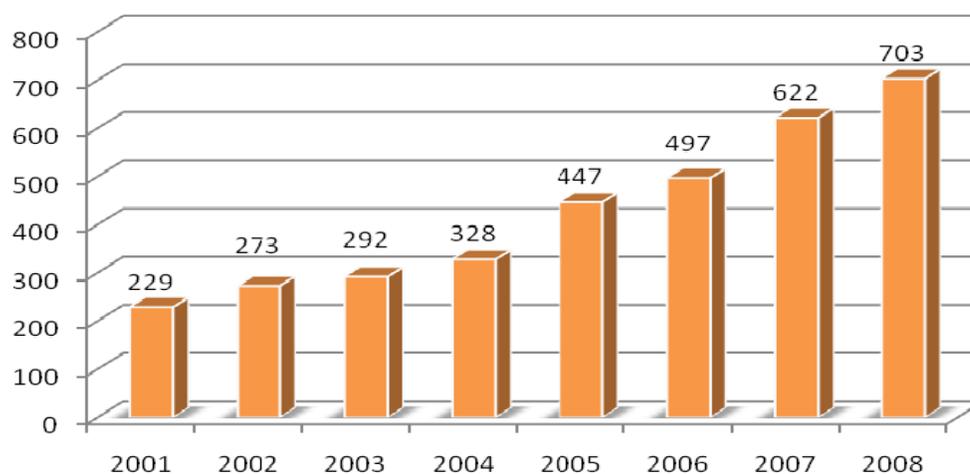


⁶According to the Ministry of Interior General Department of Prisons Annual Report 2008 (released on 26 February 2009) at the end of December 2008 there was a total of 11,688 prisoners in Cambodia.

Capacity of 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO 2008

Prison	Capacity 2008	Prisoner 2008	Capacity	
			2006	2008
PJ	100	156	149%	156%
CC1	1500	2558	147%	170%
CC2	350	659	166%	188%
CC3	1200	1358	102%	113%
Toul Sleng	50	2	12%	40%
Takmao	350	746	186%	213%
Sihanouk ville	100	187	150%	187%
Kg. Speu	200	340	127%	170%
Kampot	180	267	130%	148%
Kg. Chhnang	120	263	166%	219%
Kg. Cham	400	634	126%	158%
Kg. Thom	60	212	245%	353%
Koh Kong	140	160	82%	114%
Pursat	100	217	96%	217%
Battambang	600	931	151%	155%
B. Meanchey	200	541	246%	270%
Siem Riep	550	1142	172%	207%
Svay Rieng	210	219	106%	104%
Total / Avg	6365	10592	143%	166%

Minors in prison, 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 2001-2008



Minor prison population – per prison 2006-2008						
Prison	2006		2007		2008	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
PJ	0	0	0	0	0	0
CC1	0	0	0	0	0	0
CC2	294	8	304	9	364	10
Tra. Plong (CC3)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Toulsleung	0	0	0	0	0	0
Takmao	49	1	41	0	54	4
Sihanouk ville	6	0	6	0	15	0
Kg. Speu	11	0	15	0	15	0
Kampot	2	0	14	0	15	1
Kompong Chhnang	7	0	7	0	7	1
Kg. Cham	9	3	21	0	23	0
Kg. Thom	10	0	13	0	16	0
Koh Kong	1	0	10	0	8	1
Pursat	6	0	8	0	12	0
Battambang	43	0	47	4	48	1
Banteay Meanchey	32	3	24	0	20	0
Siem Riep	0	0	84	1	73	1
Svay Rieng	12	0	14	0	14	0
Total	482	0	608	14	684	19

The Prisons

The physical condition of the prisons across the country varies greatly - from recently renovated modern and spacious facilities (Takmao) to 100-year-old buildings with inadequate prisoner housing (Kompong Thom) - although the one constant is that they are overcrowded and over their capacity. The overcrowding of Cambodia's prisons in practical terms means that for female prisoners they are often housed in close proximity to male prisoners. According to Cambodia Prison Procedure No. 3, women are supposed to be housed in separate facilities to men. However this is not always the case:

- In the following prisons: CC2, Takmao, Sihanoukville, Kompong Speu, Kampot, Kompong Chhnang, Kompong Thom, Kok Kong, Pursat and Banteay Meanchey, female prisoner cells are located in separate buildings to the male prisoner cells.
- In Battambang, Kompong Cham and Svay Rieng female prisoner's cells are adjacent or next to male prisoner cells.
- In Siem Reap prison male pre-trial detainee cells are next to female prisoner cells and male convicted cells are separated from female cells.
- In PJ male prisoner cells are on the first floor and females prisoner cells are on the second floor of the prisoner building.
- In CC1, CC3 and Toul Sleng there are no female prisoners.

Below are brief descriptions of the prisons monitored by LICADHO.

- **Battambang [right]:** The prison was relocated from its central location in the city to a site 4km outside the city. The new prison was completed in December 2005. Prisoners were transferred to the new site in February 2006. In 2007 LICADHO recorded one male prisoner escaping, the prisoner was not recaptured.



- **Banteay Meanchey:** In February 2006 plans to build a new prison were made under a land exchange program between the Banteay Meanchey provincial authorities and a private company. The new prison is scheduled to be completed in February 2009 and the prisoners will be relocated soon after completion. The prison is located about 14km Southwest of Banteay Meanchey town.



- **Kampot [left]:** Built in the 1960s and situated next to the Kampot Police Commission office. Between 1995 and 1996, the prison buildings were renovated and a new building for minors was constructed with the assistance of AusAID.

location to a site 10km away in March 2006. In 2008 LICADHO recorded one prisoner escape, the two male prisoners were not recaptured.

- **Kompong Cham [right]:** The prison was relocated from its central town



- **Kompong Chhnang:** Located centrally in Kompong Chhnang town, the prison was renovated in 1998 with the assistance of AusAID. Renovations included two new buildings for prisoners, a small building for minors, a small building for kitchen facilities, a small building for toilets, and another two buildings for administration offices and houses for prison officials. There is only one old building remaining, which is also used to house prisoners. Despite these renovation the prison population is still noticeably excessive in relation to its capacity (216%).



- **Kompong Speu [left]:** The prison was built in the 1980s and is located near the Kompong Speu Police Commission office. In 1996, three new buildings for prisoners were constructed with the support of AusAID.

▪ **Kompong Thom:** A very old and decrepit prison reportedly built in the early 1900s and located in central Kompong Thom town, close to Kompong Thom town hall. There are only two buildings for prisoners. One building which is known as Room #5 is used to house minors and male prisoners while the other is home to female prisoners. The prison's current population is excessively over its capacity (353%), which means some prisoners are authorized to stay under a tarpaulin

as Room #5 is so over crowded. In 2008 LICADHO recorded three separate prison escapes from Kompong Thom prison – only one prisoner out of five male prisoners was recaptured.

- **Koh Kong [right]:** Relocated approximately 6km East of Koh Kong town in May 2006 after the old compound which was located close to the city hall was sold for commercial development.
- **Pursat:** Built in the 1980s and located in central Pursat town. The prison buildings have not seen any noticeable renovation since its construction. Most buildings were only recently repainted. Recently there has been talk that a new national prison, the largest in Cambodia will be built in Pursat, however there has been no official confirmation.
- **Siem Reap:** In February 2009 another land exchange program between the municipal authority and a private company, will see the prison relocated to make way for residential apartments. Prisoners are expected to move to the new location in April 2009. The new prison is located approximately 14km from the town hall.



- **Sihanoukville [left]:** Built in 1986 the prison buildings have not been seen renovated since its construction. However, in November 2008, a building for vocational training was constructed with the financial support of the Don Bosco School.
- **Svay Rieng:** Located close to the Svay Rieng Police Commission office, the prison only consists of two buildings for prisoners. One building which was built from wood in 1988 is used to house all minors and

male prisoner; while the other constructed in 2003 is used to house female prisoners. In 2008, International Red Cross also built a kitchen and a warehouse. In 2008 LICADHO recorded one male prisoner escaping, the prisoner was not recaptured.

- **Police Judicial (PJ) (Phnom Penh):** In November 2006, the land that the centrally located prison was built on was sold to a private company. The prisoners were relocated on August 2007 to a new prison, which was built in the outer Phnom Penh suburb of Russei Keo District, approximately 13km North of Phnom Penh. This prison is also located in the compound of Phnom Penh Police Commission office.
- **Takmao (Kandal) [right]:** The whole prison was renovated with the assistance of AusAID and was opened in November 2006. Takmao prison is seen as a model prison with new modern buildings, design features and facilities. In 2007 LICADHO recorded



one prison escape, all three male prisoners were recaptured.

- **Correctional Center 1 (CC1):** It is located in Dangkor District, about 15km Southwest of Phnom Penh. It is known as the largest male only prison in Cambodia, with the highest number of prisoners (2,558). AusAID is currently funding some small scale renovations on kitchen and prison industry facilities.
- **Correctional Center 2 (CC2):** CC2 located next to CC1 is the only prison in Cambodia used to exclusively house women and minors. There are more women and minors in this prison than any other prison nationwide (659). In 2008 LICADHO recorded one prison escape, only one out of the two male prisoners was recaptured.



- **Correctional Center 3 (CC3) [right and below]:** Located in Ponhea Krek District, about 75km East of Kompong Cham town. It is the only prison, which is used to exclusively house male convicts (no pretrial detainees). The prison has yet to see any major renovations since its construction in the 1980s. It also has a reputation of seriously restricting prison visits. AusAID is currently funding the construction of a new health center and security fencing.

- **Military Prison (Tuol Sleng Prison):** It is the only prison used to exclusively house military personnel. Currently, there are only two convicted prisoners being detained in the prison.



3. Health in Prison

While most of the health problems in prisons are also common in the general Cambodian population, the nature of the prison environment makes them more frequent and more severe. Aspects of Cambodian prison life that aggravate health problems include overcrowding, poor hygiene and sanitation facilities, unsafe drinking water, poor diet, lack of ventilation in prison cells, inadequate recreation/outdoor time, poor medical treatment and torture and violence.

The types of diseases that affect prisoners differ slightly in each prison according to the size of the prison, its population, location and environment. In the 14 prisons⁷ that the LICADHO Medical Team monitors the most common diseases that prisoners encounter are as follows:

- **Toul Sleng:** Common cold, respiratory problems.
- **PJ:** Respiratory problems (bronchitis), beriberi (numbness, lack of vitamin B1), stress, stomach ulcers.
- **Takhmao:** Skin diseases, beriberi, common cold, respiratory problems, amoebic dysentery.
- **Prey Veng:** Beriberi, diarrhea, respiratory problems, common cold.
- **Svay Rieng:** Beriberi, skin problems, diarrhea, urinary tract infections, tuberculosis, respiratory problems, stomach ulcers.
- **Takeo:** Beriberi, skin problems, respiratory problems, abscesses, diarrhea.
- **Sihanoukville:** Skin problems, tinea, beriberi, diarrhea, abscesses, respiratory problems.
- **Koh Kong:** Skin problems, beriberi, tuberculosis, abscesses, respiratory problems, diarrhea.
- **Pursat:** Skin problems, abscesses, respiratory problems, peptic ulcers, stress, diabetes.
- **Battambang:** Beriberi, skin problems, respiratory problems, stress, tuberculosis.
- **Kompong Thom:** Skin problems, abscess, beriberi, tuberculosis, malaria.
- **Kompong Cham:** Beriberi, tuberculosis, common cold.
- **CC1:** Tuberculosis, skin problems, diabetic, respiratory problems, STDs.
- **CC2:** Abscesses, rhinitis, respiratory problems, diarrhea, peptic ulcers.

The prisons that are considered to have the worse health conditions are: Kompong Cham, Kompong Thom, Prey Veng, Sihanoukville, Takeo. These prisons are amongst the most overcrowded and have small cells. Kompong Thom and Prey Veng prisons also have no running water.

The prisons that are considered to have the better medical facilities are PJ and Takmao. In comparison the prison with the worst medical facilities is Kompong Cham prison, mainly because prison guards are very strict and the medical team cannot provide medical checks on their own as prison guards are the ones who select prisoners for medical checks. Kompong Cham, Battambang, CC1 and CC2 prisons are also far from hospitals.



⁷ CC1 and CC2 prisons are visited by the Medical Team but not on a regular basis

CASE STUDY: HEALTH IN PRISONS

My name is Kunthea and I am 30 years old. I was convicted of fraud and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. Since living in prison I have encountered many health problems. Everyday I do not have clean water to wash myself or my clothes - I don't even have any sanitary napkins - I have to use rags or paper. Because of the conditions I live in I have had many urinary tract and vaginal infections. The prison guards also don't allow me to get treatment at a hospital or a health clinic. The only choice I have is to wait for NGOs to come who provide us with medical checkups and medicine.

Deaths in Prison

Given the poor health conditions and facilities in Cambodia's prisons, death is an unfortunate reality of prison life. The majority of deaths in prison are caused by diseases and AIDS related infections.

Prisoner's Death, 18 Prisons Monitored by LICADHO, 2006-2008

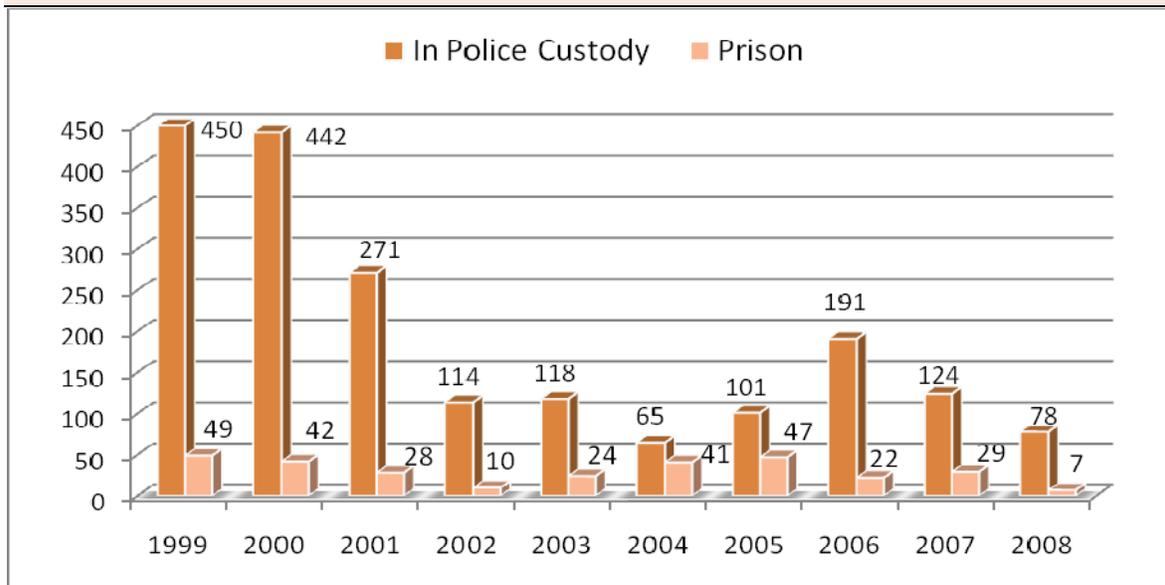
Prison	2006		2007		2008	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
P.J.	0	0	0	0	0	0
CC1	0	0	11	0	6	0
CC2	0	4	0	4	0	0
CC3	24	0	15	0	5	0
Toul Sleng	1	0	0	0	0	0
Takmao	2	0	3	0	4	0
Sihanouk ville	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kompong Speu	1	0	0	0	1	0
Kampot	3	0	2	0	1	0
Kg. Chhnang	1	0	4	0	1	0
Kompong Cham	9	1	3	0	6	0
Kompong Thom	1	0	1	0	2	0
Koh Kong	4	0	1	0	3	0
Pursat	1	0	1	0	0	0
Battambang	9	0	8	0	3	0
B. Meanchey	3	0	2	1	5	0
Siem Reap	4	0	1	0	1	0
Svay Rieng	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total	64	5	52	5	39	0

Torture in Prison

Cases of torture are likely to be under-reported. Gathering allegations of torture is difficult because some victims will not report incidents due to fear of reprisals, shame or psychological reasons. Furthermore, torturers occasionally employ techniques designed not to leave marks visible to interviewers, but which can cause serious internal injuries. Finally, interviews between LICADHO monitors and prisoners are sometimes conducted while guards and/or other prisoners are present.

The following chart indicates reports of torture by LICADHO interviewees over the past ten years.

Reports of torture, 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 1999-2008



Torture can occur quite easily in police custody because prisoners are often detained incommunicado, without access to family members, human rights workers, lawyers or medical staff. Police stations are closed to outsiders, so there is ample opportunity for torture without scrutiny. Cambodian police frequently torture suspects to extract confessions, even though the information collected is highly unreliable, the confessions should not be admissible in court, and the police risk jailing the wrong suspect as a result. Allegations of torture in police custody are thus considerably more frequent than allegations of torture in prison.

The most common forms for torture in police custody reported to LICADHO are beatings with a wooden baton, electric baton, gun or other blunt objects and kicking – in some cases sexual/indecent assault. The following chart indicates the number of torture allegations in police custody made to LICADHO prison researchers:

Reports of torture in police custody, 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 2006-2008					
2006		2007		2008	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
177	14	118	6	77	1

CASE STUDY: TORTURE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT IN POLICE CUSTODY

My name is Mealea, I am 27 years old and I collect garbage for recycling. The district police arrested me and detained me for 5 days. The police said that I had stolen some money. I had no idea what they were talking about because at that time I was with my friends. They kept saying that I stole the money and I had to confess what I did. I tried to explain that I had nothing to do with the theft but they would not believe me.

One policeman used a big baton to hit my body four times, then he used a ruler to hit my mouth and another one slapped me twice. Every time they hit me I cried out loudly that I did not do anything wrong. Later they forced me to take my clothes off, I refused but they did it anyway and they touched me all over my body. I felt so ashamed. In the end I thumb-printed a letter confessing to the theft.



CASE STUDY: TORTURE IN POLICE CUSTODY 2

My name is Vantha and I am 29 years old. I was arrested by the police and accused of murder. It was in the late afternoon around 4:30pm when they arrested me. They kept asking me questions and saying that I had killed a woman. They told me I had to thumbprint a paper saying that I confess to the murder but I kept refusing. They police kept getting angry when I refused, they shoved me against the wall hard and they used chair to beat me on the shoulder. I was so scared and did not know what to do. Suddenly I felt a pain surge throughout my whole body and my vagina started to bleed. The police then sent me to hospital where I was told that I had a miscarriage. I was three months pregnant.

For allegations of torture in prison the most common forms of torture are shackling, kicking and forcing prisoners to carry heavy objects for long periods of time. The following chart indicates the number of torture allegations in prisons made to LICADHO prison researchers:

Reports of torture in prison, 18 prisons monitored by LICADHO, 2006-2008					
2006		2007		2008	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
22	0	26	3	7	0

LICADHO prison researchers investigate all allegations of torture reported to them and, where possible, attempt to intervene on the prisoners' behalf. The LICADHO Medical Office also provides assistance where necessary.

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4. Children in Prison

In January 2009 there were 40 children living with their mothers in prison. According to Prison Procedure 34, children under the age of six are allowed to live with their incarcerated mothers in prison when it is considered in the best interest of the child. Because a child's first five years are so critical to their physical, social and psychological development, Prison Procedure 34 also requires prison authorities to provide such children with basic provisions. However, in reality, these basic needs are ignored. Mothers and pregnant women are not allocated any extra food or materials in order to care for their children.



Children who are currently living in prison lack nutrition, provisions and education vital for proper development. In addition, children are subjected to physical dangers when housed with offenders who have committed serious crimes and are also at risk of mistreatment by the guards.

The LICADHO Adopt-A-Prison project was started in 2003 to mobilize and facilitate material and financial support for children, their mothers and pregnant women living in prison. Since 2003, LICADHO has been able to help more than 120 children and their parents to receive regular support of food, medical treatment and other material goods. With the help of partner organizations and private donors within Cambodia and overseas, these children and women have benefited immensely. Some prisoners receive donations once every two weeks whilst others receive donations on a monthly basis.

Children living in prisons with their parents are not prisoners and should not be punished as such. LICADHO aims to ensure that every child living in prison will have adequate food and drinking water, safe housing, medical assistance, educational and play opportunities and exposure to the wider Cambodian community.

Adopt-A-Prison January 2009			
Prison	Pregnant Women	Children	
		Boy	Girl
CC2	4	11	6
Takmao	0	0	2
Battambang	1	1	2
B.Meanchey	0	1	3
Siem Reap	0	5	3
Sihanouk ville	0	1	0
Koh Kong	0	1	0
K. Chhnang	0	2	0
K. Cham	0	0	2
Total	5	22	18

Children Born in Prison 2007-2008				
Prison	2007		2008	
	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
CC2	3	0	2	2
Takmao	2	1	1	0
PJ	0	0	1	0
K.Cham	0	1	1	0
Svay Rieng	1	0	0	0
Siem Reap	1	2	1	0
K. Thom	1	0	1	0
Pursat	0	1	0	0
Total	8	5	7	2

□□□

5. Conclusion

LICADHO's purpose in publishing this report is to provide an unbiased snapshot of the conditions that a vulnerable and marginalized sector of society lives with everyday - a group that has no means or voice to advocate for change or betterment. This report aims to provide the reader with the facts and statistics that define the living conditions in the 18 prisons that LICADHO monitors, in particular the conditions for female prisoners.

The only definitive conclusion that can be made from the data contained within this report is that prison conditions are worsening with little hope for improvement. Overcrowding, bad living conditions and poor health will only increase. In the past 10 years alone the number of prisoners that LICADHO has been monitoring as a part of its prison project has increased by 322%.

It is often said that a country or society can be judged by the way it treats the most vulnerable of its citizens. Cambodia's prisoners are indeed some of the most vulnerable people in the country.

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