



# CAMBODIA

## THE PROBLEM SEX TRAFFICKING

In the early 2000s, Cambodia was known as a haven for pedophiles: children as young as 6 were openly sold for sex, while local police looked the other way or even actively profited from the trade. The country continues to rebuild from forty years of war, instability and violence. During the 1970s, the Khmer Rouge genocide killed over 2 million Cambodians—specifically targeting educated professionals. Without a functioning justice system, human trafficking and the sex trade flourished. When IJM opened our office in 2004, laws were not enforced, deterrence did not exist, and the public did not trust that their justice system could stop trafficking. Over the past decade, we have witnessed a dramatic decrease in the number of children available for sex in Cambodia.



### THE FACTS



Worldwide, there are nearly **two million children** in the commercial sex trade.<sup>1</sup>

Human trafficking is a massive global enterprise, generating about **\$150 billion a year**—two-thirds from commercial sexual exploitation.<sup>2</sup>

Worldwide, about **80% of human trafficking victims are women and girls**, and up to 50% are minors.<sup>3</sup>

## IJM CAMBODIA PROGRESS SINCE 2004



**500+**

rescued from sex trafficking



**198**

criminals convicted for sex trafficking crimes



**500+**

anti-trafficking police officers trained



“I despaired—my life did not have meaning... [now] everything has changed.”

–Mien,\* trafficked when she was 14 and rescued by IJM and police, reflecting on the difference between her life in the brothel and now

## How IJM Cambodia Combats Sex Trafficking

**We rescue victims** by identifying brothels, bars, massage parlours and karaoke lounges where girls have been trafficked. We partner with the National Anti-Human Trafficking & Juvenile Protection police and other local authorities to conduct operations and ensure each child is brought to a place of safety.

**We bring perpetrators to justice.** We advocate for police reports to be filed against criminals and support public prosecutors as they press charges. When IJM started, we could not find any Christian lawyers; in 2010, a former IJM investigator passed the bar exam to become our first lawyer. He is now the country's top attorney specializing in anti-trafficking law, and he regularly represents children in court.

**We restore survivors** by creating individualized care plans. IJM helps government social workers place survivors in aftercare programs where they can return to school, receive trauma-focused therapy, and take vocational classes. We continue to work with survivors after they return to their communities to help them thrive in freedom.

**We strengthen justice systems** by training law enforcement and mentoring prosecutors, government social workers and other authorities on the laws that protect children from trafficking. An IJM study in 2012 revealed a dramatic decrease in the number of children being sold for sex—less than 1% are minors under the age of 15.

### IJM CAMBODIA MILESTONES

2004

#### IJM CAMBODIA OPENS

2004

#### FIRST CONVICTION

First trafficker convicted under Cambodian law in an IJM case.

2006

#### POLICE TRAINING AGREEMENT SIGNED

IJM was the first NGO invited to sign an official agreement with the government agency that oversees all Cambodian police and allowed IJM to train all anti-trafficking police.

2014

#### CONVICTION OF FORMER U.S. MARINE

Former U.S. Marine sentenced to 210 years in prison in U.S. trial for abusing Cambodian girls.



#### FIELD OFFICE DIRECTOR CHRISTA HAYDEN SHARPE

Christa joined IJM in 2005 as the Director of Aftercare in Cambodia, where she designed IJM's program for sex trafficking survivors, trained Cambodian social workers, and instituted IJM's first staff care program. She moved back to Washington, DC, where she served as IJM's Director of Church Mobilization, equipping communities throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. She and her husband moved back to Cambodia in January 2012.



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**INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION** is a global organization that protects the poor from violence throughout the developing world. IJM partners with local authorities to rescue victims of violence, bring criminals to justice, restore survivors, and strengthen justice systems. International Justice Mission Canada shares in this mission.

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