**Questionnaire for the report of the Secretary-General on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity**

**Organisation: Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR)**

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The following questionnaire is aimed at assisting relevant United Nations bodies, human rights mechanisms, specialised agencies, civil society, particularly international and regional non-governmental organisations and academic institutions, funds and programmes and national human rights institutions in providing information and inputs for the above mentioned report.

1. Please identify the gender-specific obstacles and human rights violations, or risks thereof, faced by women journalists working in your country or abroad. Please elaborate on how these obstacles and violations manifest themselves in practice and how they differ from the obstacles and human rights violations faced by their male counterparts.

Social and cultural norms are not conducive to a career in the media for the majority of Cambodian women. Those who do go some way to breaking the glass ceiling find themselves in an industry dominated by men at management and editorial levels. A March 2015 report by the International Federation of Journalists (“IFJ”) found that men are better represented across all sections of the media, from sport to entertainment. The report also found a $550 gender pay gap in favour of men, in spite of a constitutional guarantee that, “men and women have equal rights before the law… and equal pay for equal work.” Another obstacle faced by female journalists is the weakness of Cambodia’s sexual harassment law, contained in section 8, article 172 of the country’s Labor Law. Given the predominance of men in the Cambodian media, the law’s vague formulation puts female Cambodian journalists at risk. In a survey conducted as part of its report on Media and Gender in Cambodia, the IFJ reported that an overwhelming 61.32% of women surveyed identified stronger laws as the most effective method of tackling sexual harassment in the work place. Since 1994, fourteen journalists have been killed in Cambodia, with successful prosecutions in only two cases. These killings, coupled with a number of attacks against journalists with complete impunity serve to further instil a climate of fear among Cambodian journalists.

1. Please indicate whether you monitor and collect information and disaggregated data (e.g. by sex, gender identity, ethnicity, age, online/offline, focus areas of work) specifically on the gender-specific obstacles and human rights violations, or risks thereof, faced by women journalists.

CCHR does not monitor this information.

1. What programmes and initiatives have your organisation adopted to address the issue of the safety of women journalists, including the underlying causes of the obstacles and human rights violations, and harmful gender stereotypes, experienced by women journalists? How do these measures differ from those adopted to address the issue of safety of journalists more generally, or the safety of male journalists? Please elaborate on the impact of any measures adopted.

CCHR have previously organized training seminars for “cloghers”, female Cambodian bloggers. The internet has developed into a vital democratic space in Cambodia and female journalists in particular have been able to take advantage of the opportunities not available within the realm of traditional media. The rise of the internet as a means of expression and news sharing has allowed Cambodian women to bypass not only the restrictions in press freedom which are a feature of the print media and television, but also the cultural and social bias present in Cambodian newsrooms and society generally.

1. Are the measures – if any - referred to in response to Question 3 above part of a “gender-sensitive approach” (see General Assembly resolution 70/162, page 3)? If so, what does this approach consist of?

The measures outlined in response to question 3 form part of a broader attempt to increase numbers of women working in the media in Cambodia, and to ensure their safety in carrying out their work. By providing *cloghers* with the training and resources to safely and effectively share and receive independent information online relating to governance and human rights, it is hoped that their deserved place in traditional media will come to be normalized.

1. In the country/countries in which your organisation works, are there any specific laws and/or policies or initiatives (e.g. training, awareness-raising) to address harmful gender stereotypes, intersecting forms of discrimination and other human rights violations experienced by women journalists in the course of carrying out their work (e.g. in the workplace, in the field, online)? What is the impact of these laws, policies or initiatives?

As previously mentioned, the Cambodian Constitution contains a guarantee that, “men and women have equal rights before the law… and equal pay for equal work.” As outlined above however, male journalists in Cambodia continue to earn more than their female counterparts. Cambodia’s vague and broad sexual harassment law also contributes to the difficulties faced by women in pursuing a career in the media. CCHR is not aware of any government-led initiatives aimed at tackling discrimination against women journalists. The Ministry of Women’s Affairs Five Year Strategic Plan For Gender Equality And Women’s Empowerment 2014 – 2018 (Neary Rathanak IV) lays out a strategic vision for the advancement of women’s rights and empowerment in Cambodia, with the goal of progressively achieving gender equality. However, there are no specific provisions addressing women journalists contained within it.

1. In the country/countries in which your organisation works, are there any specific laws and/or policies or initiatives (e.g. training, awareness-raising) to address violations of international humanitarian law committed against women journalists?

No.

1. What mechanisms and/or networks do you have in place to share information and increase the protection of women journalists, particularly in situations of conflict or political instability?

Through its work with “cloghers”, CCHR has created a small network of online women activists, allowing them to share and receive impartial and independent information. The links created between these “cloghers” provide a support network for those involved, and are complemented by similar initiatives such as the Women’s Media Centre.

1. What gender-specific barriers have women journalists who are victims of human rights violations faced in obtaining an effective remedy?

Cambodian women journalists face two major barriers to accessing effective remedies through the court system. Cambodia is ranked among the worst countries in the world in terms of rule of law (112th of 113 in 2016, according to the [Rule of Law Index](http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/cambodia-worst-region-rule-law-report)). A pliant judiciary that is tightly controlled by the ruling party ensures that those who dare to speak out and challenge government wrongdoing rarely if ever find justice through the courts, in cases of their rights being violated. Similarly, those who challenge wrongdoing by private actors often deal with the endemic issue of corrupt payments to judicial officials in the courts system.

For women journalists, it is even more difficult to secure justice. Although this issue has not been systematically studies, other studies of the judicial system’s treatment on women suggest that women journalists likely face double discrimination. A [2016 report](http://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports.php?perm=220) by LICADHO pointed to ‘widespread corruption amongst the police and the judiciary, poor understanding and application of the law by judges, and the prevalence of discriminatory attitudes towards women’ as a key barrier to women securing justice in cases of rape and sexual violence.

1. Please indicate if your organisation has developed specific initiatives for the safety of women journalists in light of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 5 and Goal 16.

The trainings catering for Cambodian cloghers fall under the remit of SDG 5, the pursuit of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The purpose of these trainings is to provide Cambodian women with the training and resources not available to them from mainstream, traditional media due to institutional sexism. In addition, CCHR, through profiles maintained and updated on our website, draws attention to and supports the work of female journalists in Cambodia. These profiles provide an overview of the work done by female journalists in Cambodia, and serve to increase awareness of the presence of women in the Cambodian media. The aim of these profiles is to increase the visibility of Cambodian women in the media, in an effort to challenge the social and institutional bias against their participation in such a vital area of a democratic society. Further, CCHR’s Women Human Rights Defenders Project (WHRDs Project) also included women journalists who face risks due to their reporting on sensitive issues such as illegal logging and corruption. The WHRD Project facilitated networking among WHRDs and boosted their profiles, as well as offering individual support. CCHR provides individual support to at-risk women journalists in the form of legal support, security assistance, psychosocial consultations and related supports.