



### SUCCESS STORY

## Scaling a User-Friendly Child Care Case Management System



Photo: Children in Families

*Children in Families (CIF) works to keep children in safe and nurturing family care.*

**"This system is one of the foundational pillars of building an effective and responsive child protection system, to have multiple agencies and Government all using the same system is both remarkable, and a testament to the hard work and commitment of the Child Protection community."**

**- Robert Common, Senior Child Protection Specialist at Save the Children**

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### Telling Our Story

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"We need to travel three to four kilometers just to update a case file," comments Kong Sith, Reintegration Coordinator at Kaliyan Mith, a Cambodian NGO that provides reintegration services for vulnerable children around Siem Reap. Kaliyan Mith stores the paper files on their 500-600 childrens' cases at one of their facilities in Siem Reap, where files need to be manually updated and are at risk of loss. Across town at the Angkor Hospital for Children, Dim Sophearin, Manager of the Social Work Unit, described social workers needing up to 30 minutes just to find a patient's records, which are often physically decentralized across the institution's departments. This kind of paper-based record keeping means social workers may have to spend more time on paperwork than on the kids they are serving.

However, things are about to change. Since June 2017, Kaliyan Mith and the Angkor Hospital for Children have been piloting a web-based case management system called OSCaR (Open Source Case-Management and Record Keeping), developed by their NGO partner, Children in Families (CIF).

Children in Families manages over 200 cases and has helped over 300 vulnerable children to find long-term alternative families. This in-family care is an alternative to orphanages, and has proven a superior way to provide care to kids to help them grow into healthy adults. In 2016, CIF received a small grant from Development Innovations to develop a web-based case management system that could help manage, track and serve children as primary care priorities shifted from institutions to family-based settings. With the help of Rotati, a local web and software development firm in Phnom Penh, OSCaR was launched. OSCaR demonstrated that an open source system could be an effective and affordable solution to provide social workers the information and insights they need to improve the quality of care provided to beneficiaries.

After a successful first six months of active usage and testing at CIF's eight provinces and municipalities, working with 435 direct clients in Cambodia, new features were identified that would allow the system to be scaled up. At the same time, CIF worked with partners across the USAID Family Care First program to access funding to help build capacity for these new NGO users so they could benefit from the digital system. With a second grant from Development Innovations dedicated to scale-up, CIF set to work again with Rotati to focus on technical and user experience improvements, and customizability for the specific needs of partner NGOs.

Importantly, a training manual and video for partners was produced for OSCaR's scale-up. As NGOs and service providers continue to digitize, not everyone is able to grasp new technology immediately and assessments called for parallel development of instructional resources that partner NGOs could refer back to and consult over time.

From these recommendations, CIF developed the OSCaR Wiki, an online database that would explain guidelines and help guide partners to use and customize the system for their own purposes. This database is regularly updated, and written by CIF staff, and together in person support, hopes to close the digital divide that prevents partners from fully embracing the tool in the future.

Since its roll out earlier in 2017, OSCaR now reaches five partner NGOs and institutions serving more than 1,680 beneficiaries. 75% of users reported improved case management quality after using the tool, and 80% reported time savings. In its next phase, CIF hopes to take its OSCaR system beyond Cambodia and is currently in dialogue with partners across Asia and Africa.