

# FRIENDS-PROGRAMS CHARTER

2009 version



*The Friends Programs Charter has been designed by and is the property of Friends-International*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Friends-International

Friends-International is a social enterprise that started in August 1994 in Phnom Penh (Cambodia) in response to the lack of services for street children and youth. The first program was called Mith Samlanh (“Friends” in Cambodian). Over the years, Mith Samlanh became a best practice program and a reference to working with street children and youth. Since 1999, Friends-International has been developing a range of interlinked programs around the world, including (but not limited to):

- FRIENDS PROGRAMS: best practice programs that provide the highest standards of services to marginalized urban children and youth, their families and their communities and provide effective working models for partners.
- CYTI ALLIANCE: a network of organizations that provide the highest standard of services to marginalized urban children and youth, their families and their communities.
- CHILDSAFE NETWORK: a network of individuals and organizations from all tiers of society and the international community who protect children and youth from all forms of abuse.
- FRIENDS SOCIAL BUSINESSES: social business initiative that ensures Friends-International’s financial sustainability and reduces donor-dependency.

### The FRIENDS PROGRAMS

FRIENDS PROGRAMS are best practice programs that provide the highest standards of services to marginalized urban children and youth, their families and their communities and provide effective working models for partners.

## **FRIENDS PROGRAMS can be:**

1. **A FI Program:** a program that is directly managed by FI.

*Ex: Kaliyan Mith in Cambodia, Teman Baik in Indonesia or Peuan Peuan in Thailand*

2. **A Consortium Program:** a program that is managed by a group of collaborating organizations, including Friends-International, and that is certified a FRIENDS PROGRAM by Friends-International

*Ex: Peuan Mit in Laos is a collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and Friends-International*

3. **A FI Initiated Program:** a program that was initiated by FI and is certified a FRIENDS PROGRAM although it is managed by a separate organization.

*Ex: Mith Samlanh in Cambodia was initiated by Friends-International and was transformed into an independent Cambodian NGO.*

## **FRIENDS PROGRAMS and the other Friends-International programs**

The FRIENDS PROGRAMS are automatically members of the CYTI Alliance and of the ChildSafe Network.

The FRIENDS PROGRAMS are closely collaborating with the Friends Social Businesses and establish common projects.

The FRIENDS PROGRAMS facilitate the implementation and development of the CYTI Alliance, of the ChildSafe Network and of the Friends-Social Businesses in their geographical area.

## **The FRIENDS PROGRAMS Charter**

The FRIENDS PROGRAMS Charter is the guide for the FRIENDS PROGRAMS to become and remain best practice programs. It defines:

- the vision,
- the mission,
- the target group,

- the guiding principles,
- the operating principles,
- the logo and tagline,  
of the FRIENDS PROGRAMS.

The FRIENDS PROGRAMS Charter is based on the FRIENDS-INTERNATIONAL Charter

## 2. VISION - MISSION

<b>Vision</b>	Together, we protect marginalized urban children and youth and with them create innovative and exciting opportunities to build their futures.
<b>Mission</b>	<p>The FRIENDS PROGRAMS provide the highest standards of services to marginalized urban children and youth, their families and their communities to build their futures by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>protecting</b> urban children and youth from all forms of abuse within the scope of the International Convention of the Rights of the Child;</li> <li>- <b>reintegrating</b> marginalized urban children and youth so they become actively involved in the development of their society;</li> <li>- <b>preventing</b> urban children and youth from engaging in risky behavior and/or dangerous situations that compromise their futures;</li> </ul>

## 3. TARGET GROUP

FRIENDS PROGRAMS are working with marginalized urban children and youth, their families and their communities.

Marginalized urban children and youth (0-24 years) are including (but not restricted to):

- Street living children
- Street working children
- Children of street families

- Migrant children
- Children using drugs
- School drop-outs
- Working children
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS
- Children involved in sex work
- Children in prison / contact with the law
- Children involved in gangs-Other related children and youth (“hidden youth”, “hermit youth”, etc.)

Definitions:

- Children: 0-17 (including 17 years old)
- Youth: 15-24 (including 15 years old and including 24 years old)

Families of marginalized urban children and youth. They are including (but not restricted to):

- Biologic families of target children / youth (parents and their children)
- Extended families of target children / youth (kinship families)
- Care takers of children / youth who have no family relations with target children / youth
- Persons willing to become care takers of target children / youth and who have no family relations with target children / youth

Communities of marginalized urban children and youth and their families. They are including (but not restricted to):

- Friends of target children / youth
- Partners of target youth
- Individuals having regular relations with target children / youth (work relations or other relations)
- Individuals living or working around target children / youth or their families
- Organizations residing or active in the same geographic area than target children / youth or than their families (NGOs, police, temples, schools...)

## 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- All actions are based on the ***International Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;***

- Services are for all children/youth in **respect of their gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, political ideals, ethnic background, nationality, health situation, legal status, and social backgrounds**;
- All decisions are taken for the **best interest of the child/youth**;
- Beneficiaries join services on a **voluntary basis** and have freedom to make decisions about their own lives;
- All services are delivered in a **development approach**. Charity is not considered a solution to any issue as it usually maintains people in situations of dependency;
- All **actions are positive** in nature: Friends-International strives to break the stereotypic images of victimized children and “pity charity” and instead promote images of empowerment, hope, and transformation;
- Beneficiaries and teams are always encouraged and supported to express their **creativity and explore new ideas**.
- All services are designed in the spirit of **cooperation** and to avoid duplications and will not replace or go against Government policies and services.

## 5. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

**FRIENDS PROGRAMS have the highest quality of services:**

- Services **ensure all their rights** to children and youth, either directly or through a network of partners;
- **Child Protection** is maximized in all services. Child Protection Policies are designed and operational within all projects;
- Programs aim at **effectively reintegrating** the marginalized urban children and youth to become active and productive citizens of their communities and countries. Families structures or independent living are always preferred options for the reintegration of children/youth, while institutions are always used as a last resort only;
- **Participation of beneficiaries** is effective: projects are designed, implemented and evaluated with the children/youth, and more generally with all their beneficiaries;
- **Programs are result focused**: they have clear strategies, objectives and expected outputs.

- **Programs are responsive:** they adapt to the changing situations of children/youth, their families and their communities;
- **Programs are constantly improving** the quality of their services through regular monitoring, evaluations and research;
- **Programs communicate in a transparent way** about their successes and challenges to their beneficiaries, to their partners and to the wider public.

\* These principles are put into action through the use of Standards of Practice (Guide Books) for all services.

### **FRIENDS PROGRAMS *have the highest quality of administration:***

- **Procedures and monitoring systems for financials and human resources management** are clearly defined, strictly applied and continuously improved;
- **Financials have the highest transparency:** they are audited internally and externally on a regular basis. Yearly financial results are published and made available;
- Each staff member (paid or volunteer) is provided with **Terms of References;**
- Each staff member (paid or volunteer) is provided with the basic FRIENDS PROGRAMS **training** and with an Individual Training Plan;
- A **Code of Conduct** is signed and agreed with by all staff members of a FRIENDS PROGRAM.

\* These principles are put into action through the use of Standards of Procedures for financials and human resources.

### **FRIENDS PROGRAMS *build links, share and learn***

- The FRIENDS PROGRAMS **cooperate with NGOs** and private organizations that share identical objectives and guiding principles;
- The FRIENDS PROGRAMS **coordinate with the CYTI Alliance members and the ChildSafe Network members to complement each others' services** whenever possible and reduce overlaps.
- The FRIENDS PROGRAMS facilitate experience sharing, **training and support** to the CYTI Alliance members and to the ChildSafe Network members.
- The FRIENDS PROGRAMS recognize the responsibility of the Government to ensure all rights to children and youth are protected in accordance with their laws and conventions; and the FRIENDS PROGRAMS recognize the **role of the Government as a potential partner** at central level, local level and / or through its relevant agencies.

\* These principles are put into action through the use of coordinated logframes.

## **6. LOGO AND TAGLINE**

The logo and tagline of each FRIENDS PROGRAM is provided by Friends-International.

A guideline for the use of the name and the logo is provided and must be respected.

Special contracts for FI Initiated Programs are drawn that outline the conditions of use of the name and the logo.