

PRISON AND REHABILITATIVE MINISTRY PROJECT VC#101

A Summary of Project submitted by SONYA CHEONG YEE CHING (Malaysia)

Present state of Prisons and Juvenile Rehabilitation Centers in Malaysia

Overall, it is dismal in our country, whether due to lack of official government funds, or due to corruption when allocated funds are diverted away, and generally lack of political will to look into the lives of people branded as prisoners or “scums of society”.

Our country has several prisons site, namely Sg. Buloh, Kajang, Pulau Jerejak, etc

Present privately funded ministries towards prisoners' care

A few churches and organizations have been formed, namely :

1. Crossroads Malaysia (a branch with HQ in Grand Rapids Michigan, USA) under the care of Ps Bobby John.
2. Malaysian Care – Prisons Ministry, AIDs and Drug Rehab
3. Full Gospel Assembly – Prisons Ministry

There may be other organizations of which I am not aware.

My Intended Project

I intend to discuss with and work with the above three and possibly other organizations whose pastors or members have been involved in looking after the spiritual, emotional and mental well being and needs of prisoners. Funds that I get from the zim redemption will be used to provide grants and allocation to these ministries so that more professional and full time staff can be employed by these organizations to expand their focus and to provide for better care of people behind bars and those on death row.

I will also need to liaise with the government Prisons Department under Home Ministry to discuss funding for new and upgraded buildings, officers' salaries, prisoners' welfare (as I know, many prisoners do not even have pillows or mattresses, they are cramped together into small cells and sleep on cement floors in unhygienic conditions).

Prisoners' Ministry

- weekly visitation of prisoners, prayer, counseling, Bible study
- proclaim God's forgiveness, restoration for them, dealing with their past and pointing them towards their future, give them a sense of self-worth and hope
- reconcile them to God and family members and victims

After-Care for newly released prisoners and juveniles

- provide half-way homes for newly released prisoners who have nowhere to go
- teach them some skills to enable them to reintegrate into society and find jobs.
- continue with counseling, prayer, reconciling them with family

Drug rehabilitaion centers

This is for people imprisoned for drug-related offenses; statistics show that most released offenders tend to go back towards their old lifestyle if there is no oversight or care for them. We will have staff at centers who will walk with them as they exit the system and stand on their own feet without substance abuse again.

Family Care

Ministry towards the care of spouses, old parents and children of prisoners and drug offenders who have been imprisoned. For small children whose parent (s) have been imprisoned, funds are given to enable them to continue their livelihood and education and provide foster parenting with good families / volunteers.

Restorative Justice (Legal aspect)

Dialogues to be held with the Police, Prisons Dept officials, initiating reforms in the justice system for victims and offenders. Funds to be allocated towards legal fees for certain offenders and advocacy groups for human rights.

Referral Services

Establishing incentives and grants for prospective employers to provide jobs for ex offenders

Businesses and employment hubs

- allocations and grants to qualified ex-offenders to run their own businesses
- setting up suitable businesses that are able to absorb them into employment

Conclusion

The above are just a summary of one of my non-LWS humanitarian projects to uplift this group in society who are considered castaways and forgotten by society. In addition, once a person is imprisoned, his National Identity card will bear the words Ex-Prisoner which is very injurious to his future life and job prospects.