

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST US!



SUMMARY REPORT

A Preliminary National Research Study into the
Prevalence & Perceptions of Cambodian Children
to Violence Against Children in Cambodia

GLOSSARY



Domestic Violence:

A pattern of actions that one person uses to dominate and control another person (including women or children) in a domestic (home) setting.

Physical Violence:

Acts that cause actual physical harm or the potential for harm - beating, hitting, slapping, kicking, pulling hair, burning, corporal punishment.

Corporal Punishment:

Acts that cause actual physical harm or potential for harm as a form of discipline.

Psychological / Emotional Abuse:

Non-physical acts that have an adverse effect on the emotional health and development of the child (denigration, constant belittling, humiliation, ridicule, threat and intimidation, rejection and other non-violent forms of hostility).

Rape and Sexual Abuse:

Forced intercourse and other forms of sexual assault and coercion. Where an adult sexually abuses a child (under 18 years), it is considered abuse whether or not the child consents.



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or funded this report



Child Welfare Group



The Child Welfare Group, started by UNICEF in 1993, is a network of 30-40 NGOs and IOs committed to meeting monthly on the 20th of each month to share information, learn from each other and advocate on behalf of children. Its advocacy efforts have also included research and lobbying against the access of pornography to youth in 2003 and stopping child rape and trafficking in 2004.

Tearfund



Tearfund have been involved in funding and capacity building Christian organizations in Cambodia since 1990 working with children at risk and bringing 'good news' to the poor. Apart from this research, Tearfund is currently also in the process of facilitating with RDI the development of a karaoke video training pack for children and another for youth that will address child safety issues including protection from child sexual abuse. A TV slot and comic have been developed simultaneously. Tearfund has supported the Child Welfare Group since 2000, helped set up the EFC Children's commission since 2002 and also 'Chab Dai' Hands Together coalition against sexual abuse and trafficking in 2004.

World Hope



World Hope International is a Christian relief and development organization with a mission to alleviate suffering and injustice through education, enterprise and community health. WHI works in over 25 countries. Over the past five years, WHI has been helping to provide financial and human resources to a variety of NGOs operating in Cambodia. WHI has assisted organizations in Cambodia to create opportunities through primary and secondary education, and economic development in rural areas.

WHI's newest project is the establishment of an Assessment Centre which will be the first step in the rehabilitation of child victims of human trafficking. The centre will provide quality and loving care as they conduct a medical and mental health evaluation and family assessment for each child. Based on this information and input from WHI partners, the child will either be returned to their family or placed in a foster home or other home where they can receive quality aftercare.

World Vision Cambodia

Child protection and participation has been an integral part of World Vision in its program and advocacy efforts for the last 25 years in Cambodia. With projects focusing on reducing child sexual exploitation, child labor, street children, and child rights, it has shown a deep commitment to working against all forms of violence, exploitation, and marginalization of children. Among other projects, World Vision Cambodia has helped to build capacity and commitment to promote a greater response from Cambodian Police on prosecution, a 24-hour hotline for child exploitation and abuse; partners with the Ministry of Tourism to combat child sex tourism; it has developed children's clubs with over 8500 members in 6 districts which focus on child participation and violence reduction, and a child labor project assisting child scrap collectors and their families. Partnership and collaboration are key features in working to promote the best interests of children.

World Vision partners with ministries of the Royal Government of Cambodia, United Nations, International Organisations, the Church and local organisations to build capacity in child protection, development and participation. All of World Vision Cambodia's 23 integrated development programs are designed with the impact on children as a primary factor.

World Vision

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



We are grateful to so many people who have made this project possible

In the first phase a number of partner NGOs arranged for us to meet focus groups of children - CRM Innerchange in Kompong Cham, Cambodian Association of Farmers and the Poor in Kampot, Cambodian Hope Organization in Poipet, Servants to Asia's Urban Poor in Mean Chey, Phnom Penh, International Cooperation Committee (ICC) in Rattanakiri.

In the second phase, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS), especially **Khin Sokhum** and the Provincial Education Offices, and 125 heads and teachers of schools throughout Cambodia all worked very hard to enable us to do this research with the children in schools.

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Photos are credited to **Jim Loring**, **Laura Byrne**, **Clive Wilson** and **Nigel Thomas**.

We are grateful for comments to earlier drafts. Most of all we are grateful to the children who trusted us with information and took the time to respond. We hope and pray that this information will be used to improve their situation.

Glenn Miles and Sun Varin, Researchers

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FOREWORD BY

British Ambassador



Through the Global Opportunities Fund of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the British Embassy, Phnom Penh is pleased to have been able to support the preparation of this report.

No society in the world can prosper without healthy children; therefore children are the most valuable assets of any nation. The children of Cambodia are the future of the country and their well-being ultimately the well-being of the entire nation.

Yet paradoxically children are among some of the most vulnerable members of society and are often unable to stand up for their rights on their own, the girl child faces particular disadvantage. Children can be damaged so easily. Violations of their rights produce some of the most horrific and lasting consequences. Maltreatment of children takes many forms including violence, deprivation of schooling, exploitative child labour and trafficking. In particular the sexual exploitation of children is an abhorrent and despicable phenomenon.

Violence that occurs in the home is a health, legal, economic, educational, developmental and, above all, a human rights issue. It cuts across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity and age. Relatively hidden and ignored, it is the most prevalent form of violence against women and girls. The cycle of violence can only be broken through early intervention. Changing the power dynamics between men and women bodes especially well for children. This makes good sense. Addressing family and community attitudes and behaviour towards women may rescue girls from a lifetime of beatings and discrimination and may spare boys from perpetuating the role of batterer that they learn from their fathers and uncles.

There is a long British tradition of standing up for the weak against unfettered abuse by the strong. Upholding human rights including the rights of the child throughout the world is firmly in this tradition. It is at the core of the UK's national interest, and one of the strategic priorities of our foreign policy.

However, we can only achieve this objective by backing diplomacy with practical action on the ground; and by engaging with the widest possible range of people and organisations at all levels from the international to the local. This makes our support for projects an increasingly important part of the work of the Embassy

I do not expect the challenges we face in Cambodia to lessen in the years ahead. Among the problems to be addressed - as this report makes clear - is that of violence against children. We look forward to working with our partners across civil society on this and other issues. In closing, I would highlight the dedication and expertise of the members of the Projects and Programmes Team in the Embassy and their colleagues in London whose hard work makes many of the projects we support possible.

David Reader

FOREWORD BY

General Director for Tearfund, UK



Violence against children is perhaps the greatest of the evils that mankind can commit. Children offer the world hope. Our investment in their lives produces long-term fruit that can break cycles of violence and poverty. This study reveals the sad reality that children in Cambodia have come to accept unacceptable levels of violence in their families and schools. The children's own voices paint a terrible picture of acquiescence to adult violence. They face a daily reality where physical punishment and sexual violence is the norm and to be expected. Without serious attention being paid to this situation, today's children can become the violent offenders of tomorrow.

Cultural practices that violate a child's right to safety and protection from abuse are difficult to address. This study clearly shows the validity of listening to children's views. In Khmer culture, children do not commonly speak out. They play an important but silent role in the family and community. But their silence does not condone the violence that they experience and witness. The children show not only remarkable resilience in coping with such abuse, but contribute practical suggestions as to how to deal with it. Their ideas should be given due weight and respect.

Tearfund is committed to listening to children and enabling them to play a meaningful role in our development work. Children are not only the ones who know the most about their lives, but also are the building blocks for sustainable, just and equitable development in their communities and society. This research is part of our commitment to ensuring a child's right to participate, as well as recognising that families, communities and governments play a vital role in protecting and nurturing children.

The research reveals that Cambodian children still have faith in adults to address the violence that is perpetrated against them. That faith can be fulfilled if their concerns are taken up by all of us who work to improve children's well being. Should we fail in this call, nations such as Cambodia will continually struggle to build a strong civil society where violence is a mere historical footnote.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Graham Fairbairn'.

Graham Fairbairn



FOREWORD BY

Chairperson, Child Welfare Group



The Child Welfare Group (CWG) is an open forum network for all organizations working with children in Cambodia. Since its inception in 1993 by UNICEF we have been committed to children's rights. As a network we are strongly supportive of collaborative advocacy on children's issues.

The Child Welfare Group have appreciated opportunities to work together as a network to raise up the awareness of children's issues to key stakeholders and the public.

On behalf of Child Welfare Group, I want to support this important research which gives us an understanding of the disturbingly high level of child abuse in Cambodia.

In the research, children from every province in Cambodia speak out about the concerns that they have. As organizations working with children, we are committed to listen to what children say and to involve them in the things that affect them and are important to them.

This research also enables these children's voices to be heard by representatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia. This is an important contribution, as the Government consider their responses to the UN Study on Violence and the report of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

As organizations committed to the rights of the children we want to explore what is happening to ordinary children and not just children in extremely difficult circumstances. This research begins to reveal some of the violence these children are subjected to.

As NGOs we are also committed to ensuring that children are protected from violence in our organizations through the ongoing development and review of our child protection policies.

It is time for all of us concerned for children's welfare to work together to address this problem. The future of Cambodia is at stake.

Pang Sophany

EXECUTIVE

Summary



Little research has been done to explore how violence affects children in Cambodia from their perspective or even the prevalence of the problem.

This year Cambodia must respond to the UN with two significant reports.

1. A response to The 'UN Study on Violence Against Children' which has been mandated by the General Assembly "to draw together existing research and relevant information about the forms, causes and impact of violence which affects children."¹
2. A response to how Cambodia is moving further towards achieving the rights of the child as proposed in the 'United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child' (UNCRC)².

This report is an attempt to get information about the prevalence of three aspects of the problem of violence against children – sexual abuse, domestic violence and corporal punishment. It is also an attempt to listen to children's own perceptions and to continue to explore ways to address violence that include those not yet considered.

This report gives children an opportunity to express themselves through samples of some of their quotes in a format that is acceptable to policy makers and politicians.

The sample is of 1314 children, 671 girls and 639 boys. Originally the survey was of 13 and 14 year olds; but 100, 12 year olds (7.6%) and 119, 15 year olds (9.1%) were also included (as they showed up for the survey and we didn't want to turn them away or waste the information they had).

A disturbingly high percentage (63.5%) of girls and 64.0% of boys say they know children who have been raped. 21.4% of girls and 23.5% of boys say they have witnessed the rape of a child by an adult. 13.5% of girls and 15.7% of boys say they have been sexually touched on the genitals before 9 years old and 13.5% of girls and 18.9% of boys say they have been sexually touched on the genitals after 9 years old.

Children had a good understanding of the consequences of rape and the importance of primarily dealing severely with the perpetrator.

Half of boys (50.5%) and 36.4% of girls admitted to having been beaten by their parents. 82.4% of girls and 81.1% of boys say they have seen other children being beaten by their parents.

1. www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/crc/study.htm

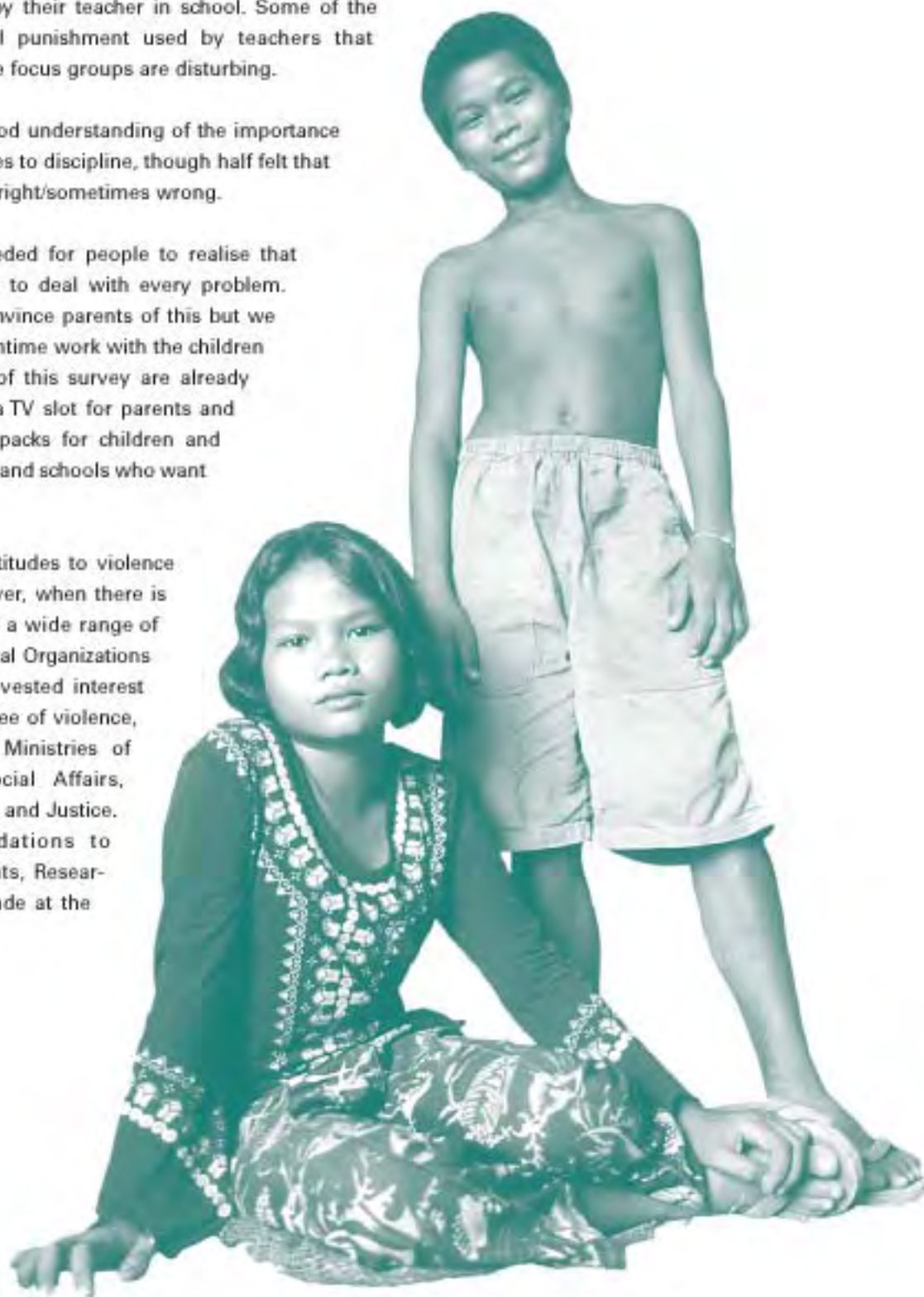
2. www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/80256404004ff315c125638800542a65?OpenDocument

Children had a good understanding that parents needed advice and support if they were able to consider alternatives to violence. Nearly one quarter (24.1%) of girls and 34.7% of boys said that they had been beaten by their teacher in school. Some of the descriptions of corporal punishment used by teachers that children described in the focus groups are disturbing.

Children again had a good understanding of the importance of non-violent alternatives to discipline, though half felt that beating was sometimes right/sometimes wrong.

A paradigm shift is needed for people to realise that violence is not the way to deal with every problem. It may be difficult to convince parents of this but we must try and in the meantime work with the children and youth. The results of this survey are already being used to develop a TV slot for parents and karaoke video training packs for children and youth available to NGOs and schools who want to work on this issue.

A change in people's attitudes to violence will only happen, however, when there is good collaboration from a wide range of Government, International Organizations and NGOs who have a vested interest in seeing a Cambodia free of violence, and that includes the Ministries of Education, Health, Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, Interior and Justice. A list of recommendations to Government Departments, Researchers and NGOs are made at the end of the report.



INTRODUCTION



Cambodia was once known as the 'Gentle Kingdom' but the genocidal regime in the late 1970's shattered that reputation. Instead of gentle, Cambodia gained the reputation as a violent country. As Cambodia struggles to gain a positive reputation once again, it has had to come to terms with some of these labels and try to address them. In recent years the issue of trafficking has reared its ugly head and Cambodia has been seen as an epicentre for foreign paedophiles seeking young children.

But is it true that 25 years after the genocide Cambodia is any more violent than neighbouring countries? How big is sexual abuse of children apart from the sex industry? One of the problems has been the lack of even basic data. Apart from some significant exceptions, very little data is available about violence against children, one of the most vulnerable groups in society.

Children do what they see. Violence leads to more violence. If children see or experience violence they will imitate it with their peers now and with their own children when they grow up. They will consider it an acceptable means of resolving problems. If however, children see adults using alternatives they will learn a different way.

The effects of violence on children is also significant. Violence in childhood can affect children's ability to learn. It can cause physical and emotional illness both when they are children and on into adulthood. It can lead to isolation, depression and/or suicidal behaviour. It can lead to criminal and risk taking behaviour including drug and alcohol abuse. Sexual abuse of children can also have additional results including HIV AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STI's), pregnancy and negative self esteem. Preventive strategies are therefore of interest to the Ministries of Education, Health, Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, Interior and Justice.

It is hoped that this study will make a significant contribution to the UN Study on Violence against Children which has been mandated by the General Assembly "to draw together existing research and relevant information about the forms, causes and impact of violence which affects children" (www.unhcr.ch/html/menu2/6/vrv/study.htm).

Research on its own does not always effect change but the idea of the UN study is that it "will promote ideas for action to prevent and reduce such violence and to suggest ways in which this might be strengthened at local, national and international levels". So, part of the objective of this study is to provide understanding of children's views so that materials can be developed that take these views into consideration. A karaoke video training pack is therefore being developed that can be used by NGOs and schools to help children to learn how to protect themselves against violence where it is possible.

It is also hoped that the current legal and policy framework of the Royal Government of Cambodia that protects children will also be strengthened.

An integral part of the UN study is that children's views and experiences must inform every aspect of the UN study. We are pleased to say that child participation has been a major element of this research.

This research is part of a larger research project on Cambodian children's perceptions of violence, which also includes children's understandings of bullying, trafficking and 'gang' violence from children towards adults. Results of these other areas will be made available at a later date.

His Royal Highness, King Norodom Sihanouk has expressed his concern in an open letter that decried the high level of violence in Cambodian society and asked people to 'mend their ways'. Among violent crimes listed by King Sihanouk was the 'rape of children'.

(Cambodia Daily, April 24-25 2004 p.3.)





WHAT IS

the current evidence of Violence & Rape against children in Cambodia?



The UNCRC definition of a minor is under 18 years

Only a few organisations have conducted research on various forms of child abuse and even fewer on children's own perceptions. Most research on domestic violence has been written about domestic violence against women.

Sexual Abuse and Rape of children

Sharma and Bose (2003) specifically cite child sexual abuse and violence in their report on 'Violence prevention in South-east Asia: A Challenge for Public Health'. They say that in 2000 about 13,000 young children aged 5 to 14 years killed themselves in South East Asia and 8,000 children of the same age were killed by other people. In the same year and region 16,000 young people aged between 15 and 29 years died due to violence.

In the Cambodia National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey of 2004, although less than 2% of the 9,388 young people interviewed admitted to sexual activity, 33% of all young people said they personally know young men who take part in gang rapes. Most of those who admitted to sexual activity in the past 12 months were out of school. Of the 148 children who admitted to sexual activity, 23 young people said they had forced someone else to have sex. These were mainly young people in school. Nine said they had been forced to have sex. These were mainly young people out of school.

In 2003 alone ADHOC, Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association, received 356 complaints about rape but suggested that "this is only a small portion of all the rape crimes committed in Cambodia during the year". Nevertheless, 75% of rapes reported to ADHOC in 2002 were minors; 22% were 15-17 years, 30% were 11-14 years, 18% were 7-10 year olds and 5% were 4-6 year olds.

In 2002, 91.6% of the rape victims in LICADHO's, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense Human Rights, investigations were 18 years old or younger, 29.2% were 12 years or younger, while 6% were 5 years old or younger. In 2003, 77.8% of victims were less than 18 years old, 41.1% were 12 years old or younger while 8.7% were 5 years old or younger.

A significant number of perpetrators were also minors; 8% were 15-17 years old and 2% were younger than 14 years (reported to ADHOC, 2002)

ADHOC report that 23% of rape crimes reported to them in 2002 were in the victim's house whilst 55% took place whilst the victims went to work at a place far away from home.

ADHOC and LICADHO's research is based on the experience of victims but these can give a distorted view of the reality for the 'normal' child in Cambodia. What does the 'normal' child

experience? What have they seen or heard about children in their community? What do they think would help prevent the situation and then help the victim and even the perpetrator?

A study by Raghda Saba, a clinical psychologist, in partnership with the University of Phnom Penh's Psychology Department in 1999 found that of the 400 children aged 10-12 years from randomly selected schools in Phnom Penh, 49% had heard of an incidence of rape, 8% had witnessed a rape and 1% had experienced a rape.

A qualitative survey by Cathy Zimmerman and Men Savorn called 'Plates in a Basket will Rattle' in 1994 cited many examples of extreme and excessive violence against women and children which LICADHO describe in their report on Torture in Cambodia ('Less than Human', Barber, 2000) as domestic torture. Important to note here is that children were not involved in the surveys.

In a quantitative study of 580 young people aged 13-28 years from 24 'sangkat' (district) across Phnom Penh several questions were given about 'bauk' "the practice of one or two students hiring a woman for the night and then taking her back to a guesthouse where several more men are waiting". (PSI, 2002). 34% of boys and 14.5% of girls at school said they knew others involved in 'bauk'. Disturbingly, only 13% recognised 'bauk' as rape or being wrong because the woman had 'consented' to having sex and was a prostitute.

Domestic Violence against children

The 'Cbab Srey' or 'Rules for Women', has been taught to girls in schools for many years giving instructions for them to act in an appropriate way in the home including remaining silent rather than provoking men which could cause anger. These traditional views have been said to "play a role when relatives or friends incite husbands to abuse their wives even for minor matters". (UNICEF 'Fire in the House', 1994).

This research by 'Women's Rights in Cambodia' suggest that "Children have always been easy targets for violence, not only by their fathers but also their mothers who want to retaliate from the beating of husbands"

In the National Youth Risk Behaviour Survey of 2004, of the 9,388 young people interviewed 26% said that domestic violence had occurred in their families over the previous 30 days, 14.4% more than once. Sixty five per cent blamed alcohol for domestic violence and 38% mentioned an absence of mutual understanding.

Other reasons cited were poverty (28%), gambling (16%), no mutual trust (14%) and illiteracy (14%).

Sixty nine percent of young people consider domestic violence as physical violence and 21% mentioned intimidation. Twelve percent said domestic violence was mental violence and 8% mentioned property or asset destruction. Young people said that the mothers were the primary victims of domestic violence (73.5%) but girls were secondary (50.1%) and boys were still high (40.7%).

In the Child Rights Foundation study of 'Children's Views on the Implementation of the UNCRC in Cambodia' (2004) children were asked if people hit each other at home and how often. Fifty two per cent of respondents said people were hit, but the question did not specify who. When asked 'How often do people hit each other at home?' only 8% answered "often", and 2% "very often". Most respondents answered "sometimes" (66%) and "rarely" in only 20% of cases.

A study by Raghda Saba of the University of Phnom Penh's Psychology Department in 1999 found that of the 400 children aged 10-12 years from randomly selected schools, 41% had witnessed domestic violence, 56% had witnessed the beating of a close relative and 3% had witnessed the

killing of a close relative. 58% of children had been beaten themselves.

In the comparative study of children across E. Asia and the Pacific by UNICEF and the Research International Asia (Thailand) in May 2001 it was cited that of the representative sample of 500 children aged 9-17 years in school, 27% of children in Cambodia had witnessed or experienced aggressive and violent incidents and 44% of children said they had been beaten by their parents. Cambodian children compared to those in other countries also expressed more frequently that their opinion was not valued both in society and in the home.

Research by Zimmerman (1994) focusing on domestic violence against women describes specific cases of sadistic violence by parents against children.

Emerson says that 'domestic violence has served as a coping mechanism for many men following stressful experiences' but goes on to say that it is difficult to compare pre and post conflict differences due to lack of earlier data.

The Household Survey on Domestic Violence in Cambodia by Nelson and Zimmerman (1996) for the Ministry of Women's Affairs was conducted

using interviews with 2,764 households on a representative sample of six provinces. Interviews were conducted with 1,374 women and 1,286 men. The majority (67.5%) believed they should hit their children as a disciplinary measure (more women (71.6%) than men (57.3%). Where spousal abuse was occurring, both the abuser and the abused were more likely to abuse their children.

Furthermore, 28% of abused women and 36% of injured women said that their spouses hit their children after a spousal conflict. 7.8% of men and 8.8% of women reported that they had witnessed physical violence between their parents. Over 98% of this violence was reported to be by the father against the mother. Significantly higher numbers of abusive men (29%) and abused women (24%) report they saw physical violence between their parents. Alcohol played a significant role in the abuse.

A qualitative survey by Cathy Zimmerman and Men Savorn called 'Plates in a Basket will Rattle' in 1994 cited many examples of extreme and excessive violence against women and children which LICADHO describe in their report on torture in Cambodia ('Less than Human', Barber, 2000) as domestic torture. Important to note here is that children were not involved in the surveys.

The most common reason, for women who had been beaten by their husbands, not to leave their husbands, was for the sake of the children, because children without fathers are 'looked down on' or 'pitied'. This reason was given even when the husband battered the children to the point of serious injury or unconsciousness.

A centre run by World Vision found that, of 193 street children in Phnom Penh, 34% said that they were on the street because of violence/punishment. (Paul, 1995). Further research is needed to explore whether their brothers and sisters at home are also experiencing violence/punishment? In any case how representative are street children of children in general?

A study by Sam Ouen and Catalla (2001) 'I live in Fear!' describes the consequences of small arms and light weapons on women and children from two provinces (Banteay Meanchey and Kompong Channang) where weapons were readily accessible and consequently families were threatened or small arms abuse was practiced by people from outside the family. However, it does not describe whether this increase in accessibility increased their use inside the family.

Corporal Punishment against children

The Child Rights Foundation research 'Children's Views on the Implementation of UNCRC' (2004) in Cambodia asked: "When you do something wrong, would you be punished by your teacher?" More than nine out of ten respondents answered yes to this question. However, when asked to list what kinds of punishments

they would receive, nine out of ten said the teacher would 'advise me'. However, one in five listed 'Beat me', 'Insult me' or 'Shout at me', although boys were twice as likely to list one of these options. Also 12-14 year olds were almost twice as likely to cite 'Beat me' as 15-18 year olds.

Very little other research has been conducted on corporal punishment of children in schools, although clearly this is a sensitive topic.

The level of violence cannot be separated from the fact that Cambodia has only just emerged from 30 years of war. Many parents of today were children in the time of the brutal genocidal Pol Pot regime where many witnessed torture and killing of relatives. How does this affect their parenting? Does exposure to such violence precipitate more brutal forms of domestic violence?



HOW DOES

Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence and Corporal Punishment against children affect children?



behaviour and self harm, unsafe sexual behaviour, increased risk of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Sexual Abuse / Rape

Fatal Health Consequences

suicide, homicide, AIDS related mortality.

Sexual and reproductive problems

gynaecological disorders, infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease, pregnancy and complications/miscarriage, sexual dysfunction into adulthood, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV AIDS), unsafe abortions, unwanted pregnancy.

Psychological and behavioural problems

alcohol/drug abuse, depression, eating and sleep disorders, feelings of shame and guilt, phobias and panic disorders, poor self esteem, post traumatic stress disorder, psychosomatic disorders, smoking, suicidal

Domestic Violence & Corporal Punishment

Physical Health Consequences

abdominal injuries, brain injuries, bruises, cuts, broken bones, eye damage, chronic pain, disability, gastrointestinal problems.

Psychological and Behavioural Problems

poor school performance, poor relationships, alcohol/drug abuse, delinquent and violent behaviour, development delays, depression, eating and sleep disorders, feelings of shame and guilt, poor relationship development, phobias and panic disorders, poor self esteem, post traumatic stress disorder, psychosomatic disorders, smoking, suicidal behaviour and self harm, unsafe sexual behaviour.

The immediate and long term effects of both sexual abuse and/or violence is enhanced depending on:

- what **type** of abuse or neglect
- how **often** it happens
- how **severe** it is
- the child's **stage** of development
- **when** the abuse occurs
- the **relationship** of the abuser to the child.

(Based on information presented at the Seminar on Domestic Violence, 6-7 December 2004 by Dr. Robin Harr from Arizona State University, USA).



WHAT IS

Considered to be Culturally Appropriate / Inappropriate touch / forms of 'violence' ?



One area that needs further consideration is what is considered to be culturally appropriate and inappropriate 'touch' between adults and children. For example, holding hands between men is considered to be acceptable in Cambodia but in other cultures this might be considered as sexual in nature.

Regarding children the researcher has observed the following:
Babies being touched or kissed on the genitals as infants, apparently to sooth them when they were upset.

Boys at age 2-3 years being teased by men pulling down their shorts and exposing them to ridicule, then tugging on the penis.

Hugging children in an affectionate way does not appear to be common after children have become toddlers.

Where gender is unclear ex. girl with short hair, adults grabbing the genital area is considered acceptable.

Certain methods of medical treatment such as 'coining' are painful and might be considered violent in some cultures but are considered therapeutic in Cambodia.

Adults (teachers and parents) believe that beating children is 'normal' and necessary to teach, control and discipline them, to ensure they don't become delinquents. Children are seen by parents as something they own and have rights over. They relinquish these rights to teachers during school time.

People don't feel they should intervene in another family's 'arguments' and this feeling extends to the police.

Suffering is valued over bringing shame and dishonour to yourself or your family. Children are expected to endure hardship rather than seek help from outside of the family.

This is not the place for value judgements, but in attempting to consider the issue objectively, the researcher would like to suggest that the following is considered:

It is not always easy to discern the motivation of the adult. Whilst many adults may have no sexual motivation or a sadistic nature, others may have, so how can children be protected from the latter?

Sexual and verbal teasing can be harmful to the child's self esteem and healthy sexual development. What is in the child's best interest?

Violence can affect children's health, self esteem and development. At what point is it unacceptable?

Would it be culturally acceptable to do the same thing to an adult? Is it "acceptable" / "allowed" because children do not have the physical strength to respond in the same way and because their opinions have less value?

More anthropological research is needed to understand this further in the cultural context.

Many parents/grandparents of today were children/parents in the time of the brutal genocidal Pol Pot regime where many witnessed torture and killing of relatives. How does this affect their parenting? Does exposure to such general violence and abuse precipitate

more violence and rape? There does not appear to be any research yet conducted on this, though it would be interesting to compare it with research conducted with parents and children in other post-genocidal situations such as Rwanda.

There is a danger of blaming everything on Pol Pot but while the level of violence cannot be separated from the fact that Cambodia has only recently emerged from 30 years of war and later civil unrest, the trend to become more materialistic, the effects of increased access to images on the media through globalisation, and a move towards urbanisation might be equally significant factors.





WHAT IS

The current Policy & Legal Framework in Cambodia?



In October 1992, the Royal Government of Cambodia ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). UNICEF state that the Rights of the Child are enshrined in the Constitution but although Cambodia has ratified the CRC it still has some way before it can be said to be fully implemented.

Article 5 says "No one should be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment".

Article 19 says "State Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement".

Article 34 of the UNCRC says "States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent: (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials".

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW, 1993) states the following:

- Article 1 defines gender based violence as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, physiological harm or suffering to women, including threats or such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether or occurring in private or public spheres"
- It recognises that gender violence is rooted historically in unequal power relations.

- It recognises that it occurs in the family, community and is perpetrated by the state through non-management of the issue.

It puts a duty on the state:

- Not to invoke religion or customs to justify violence against women.
- To set standards to prevent prostitution.
- To set standards to prevent, prosecute and punish perpetrators of violence against women, whether it occurs in private or public.
- To change laws, create national plans of action, train members of the criminal justice system, engage in research and collect detailed statistics on issues of violence against women.

The recently published UNIFEM, World Bank, ADB, UNDP and DFID collaborative report entitled "A Fair Share for Women: Cambodia Country Gender Assessment" states that 23% of women report suffering domestic abuse whilst in 2002 there were 270 reported cases of rape. Under-reporting is ever present due to a number of cultural and

social factors that do not support the victim seeking protection or punishment for the perpetrator.

As cited in the Cambodia Country Gender Assessment document, "one of the most serious manifestations of unequal power relations between men and women is the environment of impunity and tacit acceptance under which all types of violence against women take place" (UNIFEM, WB, ADB, UNDP & DFID/UK. 2004: 113). The country gender assessment focuses on three forms of violence against women: domestic violence, rape and trafficking for sexual exploitation.

"Rape and indecent assault are illegal under the 1992 UNTAC Criminal Code and the 2001 Law on Aggravating Circumstances relating to the Felonies"

United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia - Provisions Relating to the Judiciary and Criminal Law and Procedure Applicable in Cambodia During the Transitional Period [hereinafter, "UNTAC Criminal Code"]. The UNTAC Criminal Code was drafted by the UNTAC, and was adopted by the Cambodian Supreme National Council September 10, 1992.

"Rape is a criminal offence. It is defined as, 'any sexual act involving penetration committed through cruelty, coercion or surprise."

UNTAC Criminal Code, Article 33, Law on Aggravating Circumstances of the Felonies, Article 55, Law adopted by National Assembly on December 19 2001.

"Committing, or attempting to commit, rape are both

punishable by a term of imprisonment of 10 to 20 years, (15-20 years imprisonment if the victim is aged under 14 years), potentially with additional labor."

Law on Aggravating Circumstances of the Felonies, Article 5.

"Indecent assault is a misdemeanor. It is defined as, sexually offending another person of either sex by touching, caressing, or any other sexual act not involving penetration."

"Guilt of indecent assault is punishable by a term of imprisonment of one to three years."

UNTAC Criminal Code, Article 42.

Sentences shall be doubled where the victim is less than 16 years of age.

UNTAC Criminal Code, Article 42(2).

The 1996 law on the Suppression, Kidnapping, Trafficking and Exploitation of Human Beings' contains a clause which says that "debauchery" is a sexual offence against children. Cambodia has also acceded to the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Pornography but there is nothing implementing this either.

Cambodia does not as yet have a law expressly forbidding parents to strike their children. Cambodia has signed the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Furthermore, the Constitution states as follows: "Art. 32: Everyone shall have the right to life, freedom and personal security"

"Art. 48: The State shall guarantee and protect the rights of the child as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, such as the right to life, the right to education, the right to protection in wartime and protection from economic or sexual exploitation. The State shall protect children from work that is liable to interfere with their upbringing and studies or to injure their health or welfare."

The Transitional Criminal Law (article 67) states "Any person who deliberately inflicts blows which result in wounds entailing permanent disablement or temporary disablement for more than 6 months shall be held guilty of the offence of deliberate wounding and shall incur a penalty of one to five years' imprisonment. However, this does not appear to extend to corporal punishment of children.

The Cambodian Government report to the UN regarding the UNCRC (1998) (<http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/80256404004ff315c125638800542a65?OpenDocument>) stated that, "In Cambodia, the practice of striking children by way of family chastisement is widespread. But if the ill-treatment is excessive, the local authorities or neighbours have been known to intervene and in some cases the children are entrusted to their

grandparents or transferred to the Centre for Assistance to Children”.

A subsequent question was raised in the 630th meeting of the UNCRC wondering whether the Royal Government intended to conduct a study of child abuse and neglect at the family level. The Government were then asked "Did the Royal Government plan to educate parents about physical violence committed against children or to prohibit corporal punishment?" The response from the Cambodian Government was "Domestic violence was not a major problem in Cambodia, although it did exist. The Royal Government had tried to raise the population's awareness of the problem through radio and television campaigns”.

This research in collaboration with the Ministry of Education has partially helped the Government to start gathering information for the study suggested. However the responses indicate respectfully that domestic violence problem is a bigger problem than suggested.

The Domestic Violence Bill was drafted by the Ministry for Women's Affairs, in cooperation with women's NGOs and supported by UNDP and UNIFEM. After several revisions the draft bill was approved by the Council of Ministers and was tabled for debate by the National Assembly, but the debate was not completed when the first session rose. The debate resumed at the commencement of the second session at the end of May 2003. However, at the present time the domestic violence bill has still not been passed into law.

The Ministry of Education (MOE), Youth & Sport 'Internal Regulation of General Knowledge for Primary Schools',

Article 17 'Awards and Corrections'

Section (b) states that as a punishment the teachers should do the following in this order:

1. Verbal discipline.
2. Requesting the child to write lines of script as a form of punishment.
3. Writing the written discipline in the report card of the student.

Section (c) says that the discipline committee of the school can decide how the child can be (awarded) and disciplined but no further suggestions are made.

In Article 18 physical punishment is not allowed

The MOE 'Internal Regulations of General Knowledge for Secondary School' Article 25 regarding 'students who do something wrong', states that the school disciplinary council must decide how to discipline the students. First, advice is given, second, verbal discipline, third the discipline is recorded in the report card of the student, fourth the student is expelled (not allowed to attend

school) for one time, one day, one week, one term or one year. Fifth the name of the student is deleted from the student list of the school.

The Royal Government of Cambodia/UNICEF's 2001-5 document 'Investing in Children' Master Plan of Operations says that the goals are that "Youth and adolescents acquire life skills, express their views and lead meaningful and secure lives". In order to reach these goals the aim is the "development of child protection networks at regional, national, provincial and village levels" and "the completion of the policy and legal framework for child protection and improvement in the enforcement of laws and regulations, especially with regard to child abuse, sexual exploitation and trafficking" and "increase the awareness and skills of individuals and families to adopt behaviours, leading to better child survival, care, development, protection and participation."

This also mirrors the commitment of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing (September 1995) to "Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls" and both the World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996 and Yokohama, Japan in 2001 in which Cambodia played an active part.

The World Health Organisation 'World Report on Violence & Health' put violence high on the agenda for health professionals.

WHY ARE

Children's Views important to understand?



The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child confirms the children's right to express their views freely in all matters that affect them. This was reiterated at the 'World Congress on Commercial Exploitation of Children' in Stockholm, Sweden (1996) and Yokohama, Japan (2001). It is hoped that this kind of research will make organizational decision-making on children's issues more relevant and appropriate as children's voices are heard.

Article 47 of the Royal Cambodian Constitution says that "citizens shall be free to express their views". Article 41 says that citizens have the right to freedom of expression.

In the Cambodian's Government report to the UN submitted June 1998 (www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/80256404004ff315c125638800542a65?OpenDocument) the Government

suggest that there are some opportunities for children to express their views but "... children cannot exercise this right fully because custom does not allow them to challenge decisions taken by adults or to be present at discussions between adults".

The report went on to say that the Government had "not adopted any measure which prohibits children from exercising the right to express their views. Nevertheless", it said, "children cannot fully exercise this right (because) in Cambodian society, parents or guardians are habitually heavy-handed and do not allow children to talk a great deal. Because of such oppression, children lack courage, initiative and determination in exercising their rights".

This research gives children the right to express their opinion in a format that is accessible to decision-makers. At the same time it will be useful to use authentic children's 'voices' backed up with statistical data on prevalence.

In a society where adults have been afraid to communicate for fear of consequences especially during the two Communist regimes, Cambodian children's opinions may be able to reveal much that is 'hidden' in adult responses. Boyden and Gibbs (1997:205) suggest "a carefully planned process of consultation with Cambodian children, rather than investigations of Cambodian children, could provide the most appropriate basis for future planning..."

Since then, research in Cambodia has increasingly recognized the importance of children's opinions starting with Physicians for Human Rights 'Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children in Cambodia'(1997), World Vision's "Crying out; children and communities speak out' (Dorning, 2002), COSECAM's

'Sold Like Chickens', (Hudd, 2003) and 'Tricked into the Trade: Cambodian Trafficked Girls Speak Out!' (Lawrence, 2004) and more recently Tearfund's research 'Tell them to Stop!' in 2004. There needs to be a shift in the way we view children so that they are not just 'beneficiaries' of adult interventions but also those who can shape their futures. Whilst adults decide what we want to hear and how we want to hear it, then we won't be ready for face-to-face discussions with children.

However, in a comparative study of children across E. Asia and the Pacific by UNICEF and Research International Asia (Thailand) in May 2001, it was cited that Cambodian children compared to children in other countries expressed more frequently that their opinion was not valued both in society and in the home. If children believe that their opinions are not valued then how does this effect research? Do they need more convincing that adults are genuinely interested in what they have to say?

One would expect that this very situation would inevitably have an affect on conducting research and therefore the results. How can children's opinions be collected, without them feeling intimidated, and in a way that useful information can be obtained? A number of creative methodologies have been developed over the past few years but do they produce the kind of information needed? Surveys are often looked down on but how else can quantitative information be obtained?

In this study it was decided to make the most of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, primarily using role plays and then focus group discussion to answer some why questions and then secondarily anonymous questionnaire surveys to answer some of the prevalence questions with additional open-ended questions.

Adults listening carefully to what children have to say, and then putting it into a form that other adults can hear, can act as a bridge. Nevertheless this bridge needs to be temporary only until we find better ways to adequately consult with children and take into consideration their opinions according to their age and ability. 'Victims Lobby Members of Parliament' (a project of the COSECAM Advocacy Unit) might be an example of such an approach where victims of trafficking and rape were given the opportunity to inform MPs and high level officials about their situation face-to-face.

The Child Rights Foundation have also worked hard to involve children in advocacy efforts including their recent survey of 5,000 children in 'Children's Views on the Implementation of the UNCRC in Cambodia' which is also to be submitted to the UN Study on Violence Against Children.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) also emphasises the need for children to have access to appropriate information. It is hoped that one of the outcomes of this research will be for a 'Safe Children' karaoke video training project to be developed using key information gained from the project. This will enable key messages to focus on areas of concern that children have themselves expressed, together with information lacking in their responses.

HOW WERE Childrens Opinions Sought?



The research was primarily conducted to give a representative sample of Cambodian children an opportunity to express what they felt about child rape.

Preparatory phase:

A meeting with LICHADO in 2001 helped us to establish what were common types of violence against children. A Cambodian artist was invited to make line drawings of scenarios of children experiencing and acting violently for use in the first and second stages.

The research was then conducted in three stages.

First Stage: Role Play Focus Groups

Each focus group of 5 boys and 5 girls aged 11-13 years was involved in a half day workshop. The day began with children's games to help the children relax. After introductions the children were shown a series of pictures that

were drawn by a Cambodian artist illustrating different scenarios of violence against and by children. The pictures were as follows:

1. children bullying a disabled child
2. a teacher beating a child
3. a drunk step-father beating a child
4. a child being sold/trafficked
5. rape of a child by an adult
6. a woman being robbed at gun-point by a teenager.

Each picture was presented separately. In each group, the children themselves selected a leader and volunteer 'actors', who then acted out the scenario in a role play, of both before the incident on the picture and the follow up. A video-tape recording was made of them acting out each scene and then the resulting video was viewed together and discussed. An audio-tape was made of their responses about what happened and what could have happened as well as what would have helped, both to prevent the situation from occurring and after the situation had occurred.

Using games, involving them in a role play and using a video recorder all helped children to relax or at least be less intimidated by the adults. The order of topics was also carefully chosen so that the more personal scenarios were only shown after children had a chance to 'trust' the facilitator. Children were told at the beginning that whilst it would be appreciated if they could all take part, if they felt uncomfortable at any point they could opt out. With 10 children in each focus group it wasn't difficult to leave it to the others.

Second Stage: Written Questionnaire Survey

In order to understand how representative the responses were in the focus groups, it was decided to conduct an anonymous survey questionnaire with school children. It was hoped that this would

also provide a more considered response to potential solutions. Information from the discussions after the role plays in the first stage were then used in developing a questionnaire survey using the same line drawings. The anonymous self-administered questionnaire surveys were conducted in schools.

After 18 months of negotiation, the Ministry of Education agreed to support the project, and allocated Khin Sokhum, to be involved in securing official permission from each Provincial Education Office and in accompanying the researcher.

Five schools were selected from each of the 24 Provinces and 10 students were selected by the provincial education office, of children (5 boys and 5 girls) aged 13 and 14 years. 100 children were selected from 10 schools in Phnom Penh as this has a different demography from the more typical rural areas in most Provinces. Each provincial education office was requested to provide a representative sample of children.

Some children aged 13 and 14 years are in primary schools due to repetition of grades or inaccessibility of secondary schools in some provinces. In order to get a more representative sample we requested the provincial education office to provide children from 3 primary and 2 secondary schools and to ensure that

they were of mixed ability, not just clever children, including children with disability if they were available.

In fact, children as young as 12 and as old as 17 came to be surveyed so whilst the majority were 13 and 14 some were outside of this age range. This was partly because children were selected by teachers who went on the age that was recorded when the child was registered which was not always the age the child themselves gave. The age that we used was the latter. Those who were 16 and 17 were excluded from the analysis.

Although classrooms were used, teachers were asked not to be present when children were responding. Some teachers needed to be reminded of this! Children were assured of individual confidentiality - that parents, teachers and others would not be given their papers to read and they did not need to put their names on the papers.

Most of the questions were multiple-choice but there were a number of open-ended questions as well. We were pleasantly surprised that most children completed most of these open-ended sections giving us some considerable additional data.

Children were informed at the beginning that whilst it would be appreciated if they were able to read and answer each question, that if they felt uncomfortable at any time then they could leave a question blank.

Third Stage: Presenting the Results to stakeholders and noting their responses

When the initial research analysis is completed it will be presented to Children and Adults at the Children's Forum and Adults Forum of the 'National Conference on Violence & Children' in March 2005. This conference will be a launch-pad for advocacy efforts of key stakeholders including the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Affairs, Women's Affairs, Justice and Interior of the Royal Government of Cambodia. Also UNICEF, UNESCO and the NGO community through the Child Welfare Group, ECPAT, COSECAM, and MEDICAM.

Furthermore, information from the research will be used to develop the teachers training manual for a 'Safe Children' karaoke video training pack facilitated by Tearfund and Resource Development International to be launched in April 2005. All NGOs are welcome to use this product and it is also hoped that the training pack will be of interest to the Ministry of Education to train teachers. Further information on this project can be obtained from the Tearfund office.

WHAT ABOUT

The Ethics of this kind of research?



It was important that in the research process we did not exploit the children further. The following are some of the ways we ensured that any stress or risk to children was minimised:

1. We started by playing games to help the children relax.
2. It was unlikely that the children would have been informed by their teachers why they were coming, so we made clear at the beginning the purpose of the research, the value of their input and that they were free not to answer any questions if they preferred.
3. All research staff had child protection screening and no research staff were left alone with children at any time.
4. Although sensitive information was asked, it was done in such a way that

personalised questions were left until later in the focus group/questionnaire. Personalised questions were avoided in the focus groups.

5. If children did the survey in a school that was not their own they were escorted by teachers to ensure their safety.
6. Confidentiality was assured. Teachers were asked to wait outside the classroom.
7. Posters were given to each of the teachers accompanying the children, giving a contact number of a child rights organisation (LICADHO or ADHOC). Where possible, children were informed of a local NGO which they could contact if they had concerns after the researchers had left. A child rights booklet was given to children on completion of the paper.
8. Children were given a snack after an hour and then lunch on completion of the survey after another hour.
9. Children were given enough money to cover their transport costs. For children not at school and in focus groups sufficient money was given to cover any money they might have earned.
10. Teachers gave consent but consent was not sought from parents. This was not because their opinions were not valued but the reality of getting consent was logistically impossible when the literacy rate of the adult population is limited. Also they would not be familiar with the concept of receiving a letter from the school and giving permission.

Further information on ethics is included in the Laws & Mann (2004) 'So you want to involve Children in Research?' Save the Children Fund.

What are the Limitations and Challenges of this kind of research?

General

The research is with a combination of victims and non-victims, those who have witnessed, heard about or experienced sexual abuse in their community and those who have not. The results of both are considered to be significant because children know their own context and environment and can therefore make a significant contribution to the debate about what can be done to prevent rape in their communities and support the victims afterwards.

Due to the workload of the researchers, the study was conducted over a period of more than 3 years so it does not represent a snap-shot in time as many national surveys are able to do. The first stage was conducted mainly in 2002 and the second stage in 2003 and 2004.

The research focused on rape rather than loving sexual relations. The word rape "រំលោភផ្លូវភេទ" clearly implies forced sex. There was no opportunity to discover about other consensual and non-consensual sexual relationships apart from sexual touch. The 2004 Cambodia Youth Risk Behaviour Survey gives more information on this.

More explicit questions on the nature of the abuse were avoided as these might have been psychologically harder for the child victim to respond to without the kind of psychological backup not always available. Questions were not asked on who did the rapes and why and where they occurred as this could have created more stress.

As one of the outcomes of the research is to plan training on preventive measures, it might have been better to have been more detailed in what precautions might have been taken to avoid rape but time did not allow this.

Limitations Specific to the First Stage - Role Play Focus Groups

For most of the focus group sessions, the children were eager to perform a role play based on the picture, but due to the embarrassing nature of sexual abuse, with the exception of one group, children preferred not to do a role play but only to discuss it.

Children are not a homogenous group. Focus groups have been conducted with tribal children and children in border areas and more are planned with Cham and ethnic Vietnamese. More anthropological research is needed to draw out the differences between the different groups.

The primary researcher was English speaking with limited Cambodian language. This means that translation was necessary for the focus groups and some information could therefore have been lost in translation. In one of the focus groups the only way to conduct research with a tribal group was to have translation from Cambodian to the tribal language so this increased the potential for misunderstanding. However it was felt important to at least try to get information from this minority group.

Even though a tape recorder and digital recorder were used to record group interviews, getting adequate quality tape recordings of the focus groups proved much harder than expected in the noisy outside environments of Cambodia, so some information when transferring information onto the transcripts was lost.

Limitations Specific to the Second Stage - Questionnaire Survey

Although the school research was supposed to be of 13 and 14 years old school children a number of children came from outside of this range. However it was felt that the opinions of 12 and 15 years old were still useful so they were included rather than discarded. The age differential is more significant for those researching young people where they need to differentiate between over 18 years old and under 18 years old, as this is the age that they are considered by the UNCRC to be a child/adult. However in our research the data from twelve 16 year olds and one 17 year old was removed. The age was determined by the child not the school record.

Although we asked the provincial education office in each province to get a representative sample of school children, children were usually selected from schools within 10 km of the provincial town. This meant that children's opinions in deeper rural areas were not obtained. However, some provinces are very rural close to the provincial town.

The school environment was familiar but for some children it may also have been intimidating and uncomfortable for them to answer personal questions. The children however were present when teachers were asked to leave the classrooms and wait outside to avoid any of them looking over the shoulders of children and seeing their responses. This sometimes needed to be re-enforced but was the reason for conducting the research ourselves rather than leaving it to teachers.

Whilst some children in the focus groups said nothing, no questionnaires were completely unanswered except where the child was illiterate. This happened in only one province where the teachers did not understand that literacy was a requirement. In this case, children who had completed the questionnaire then helped the 11 children who had not. Whilst this was not conducive to confidentiality and may have affected the responses about themselves, the children who helped appeared to be very respectful towards those who were not literate. They were asked to respond with the responses of the children they were responding to and not their own.

Having a self-administered questionnaire assumes a certain level of literacy. It is possible that illiterate children and those no longer at school at ages 13 and 14 years may be more susceptible to rape. More research is needed with children not at school but then representativeness is harder to achieve.

Children were usually seated in a similar way to the way that they would be at school - in pairs. They were requested not to talk together but as this was not an examination and we wanted them to relax and not feel intimidated this was almost impossible to enforce. As a result, some of the open ended questions have identical results which could indicate that results were copied. However, this does not necessarily mean that answers were not what the respondent themselves thought.

A sample of 50 children were selected from 5 different schools in each province rather than exact proportional representation where the smaller provinces would have had a smaller number. However, Phnom Penh had a sample of 100 children to take into consideration its differing demography.



WHO WERE

the children selected for the focus groups?



Focus Groups of 5 boys and 5 girls were selected from 5 communities

An **urban slum community** in Phnom Penh city. The children were selected by a project worker of 'Servants to Asia's Urban Poor', a partner NGO working in the area.

A **rural community** in Kampot Province. The children were selected by 'Cambodian Association for Development of Farmers and the Poor' (CADFP), a partner NGO working in the area.

A **provincial town** community in Kompong Cham Province. The children were selected by 'CRM Inner-change', a partner NGO working in the area.

A **border town** on the Thai-Cambodia border - Pailin. The children were selected by Cambodian Hope Organization (CHO), a partner NGO working in the area.

A **border town** on the Vietnam-Cambodian border-Svay Rieng. The children were selected by LICADHO, a child rights NGO with a branch working in this area.

A **tribal area** in Rattanakiri Province. The children were selected by International Cooperation Committee (ICC), an NGO working there.

Children are not homogenous (all the same). It is outside the scope of this report to describe the differences here.

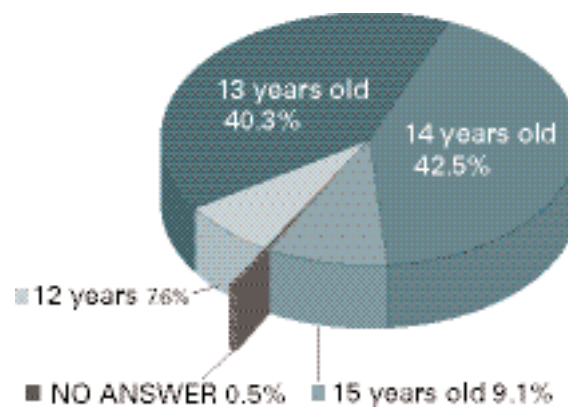
More focus groups are planned with Cham and ethnic Vietnamese groups.

WHO WERE

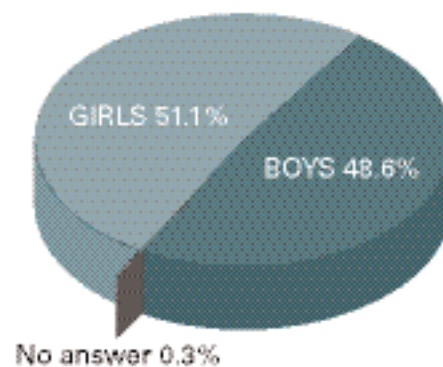
the children selected for the Questionnaire Survey?

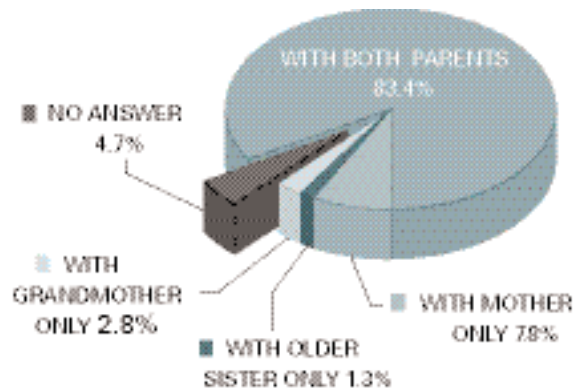


The majority of children were aged 13 and 14 years but, as we did not want to waste data from other children who had come long distances to take part in the survey, we included 12 and 15 year olds. Children were both pre- and post-pubescent. However we did exclude twelve 16 year olds and one 17 year old.

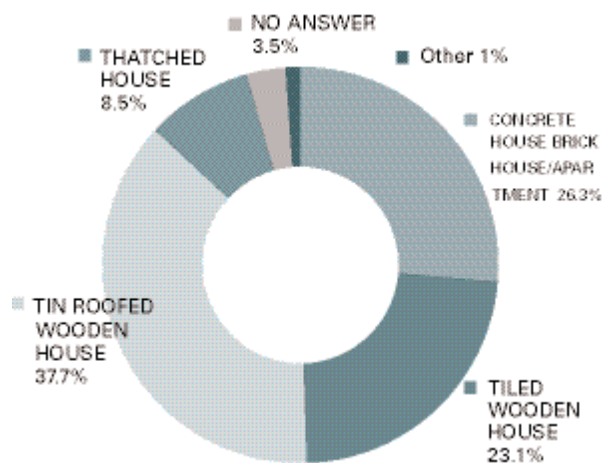
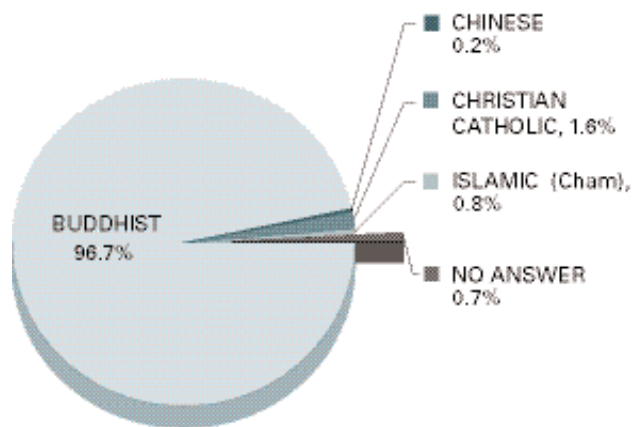


The research team requested the Ministry of Education to ask schools to provide equal numbers of boys and girls but slightly more girls attended. In fact the gender ratio in much of Cambodia is 85-95 males per 100 females. (Mekong River Commission, 2003)





83.4% of children indicated they had both parents. 11.9% indicated they were from female-headed households, which is a lot less than the 25.7% in the General Population census of 1998. However, this could indicate that children still in school at 12-15 years are less likely to need to leave school and to work to support the family.

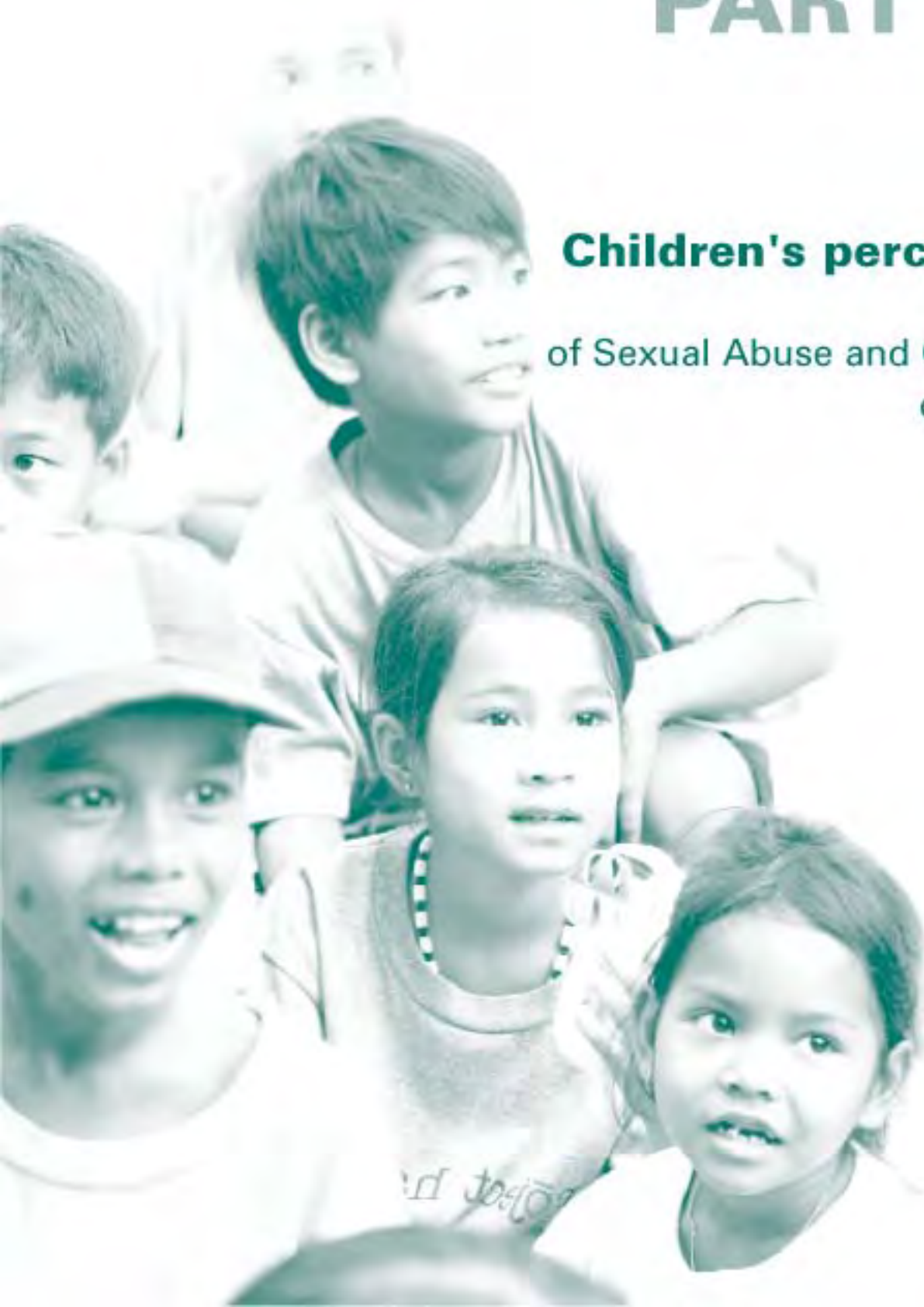


RESULTS 1

PART

Children's perceptions

of Sexual Abuse and Child Rape
of Children



CHILDREN'S

Perceptions of Sexual Abuse and Child Rape of Children



Results of the Focus Groups

Who is the victim and who is the perpetrator?

In most focus groups children said that rape did not happen much in their community. In the urban focus group children said it didn't happen in their area but they had heard about it on the TV, radio, newspaper and magazine. In another group they also mentioned they had heard about it on the radio.

In one focus group, the children said that rape happens to children around 15 years to 17 years and that it never happened to boys only to girls. This comment about boys was repeated by several groups, although in the questionnaires sexual abuse appears to equally affect boys and girls. It may indicate how taboo it is for boys to discuss this in public.

When asked who did the rape, children in one province said "Neighbours, uncles". One group said they heard of a policeman who had raped a child and of a father who had raped a daughter resulting in a baby who was then sold by the mother.

What are the consequences of rape to the child?

When asked about what happens to the rape victim all groups except one had ideas. Children said the rape victims, "lose their virginity". When compared to other children, the raped child "didn't want to eat" was "weak, about to collapse" and "not happy", "upset/suicidal". They "can become crazy", "nervous". They "lose hope".

They were "isolated" presumably because "people in the community look down on her". "They don't want to talk to her, they don't want to make friends with her". Also they might be "afraid she has HIV/AIDS that can spread to them". People "feel pity and look down on her".

Most children in one group agreed that the girl who has been raped should not get married "because (people) hate the girl who has been raped". "Because she has lost her virginity and doesn't have the right for someone to love her. Everywhere she goes people will hate her" but one girl said "Yes, they have the same right as everyone else".

Children felt that compensation must be paid to the girl in the form of money.

In one group, the group agreed the victim must marry the perpetrator. She must put a complaint forward that he must marry her, if not ask for a lot of money from him or get his pay and ask him to be responsible for her life until death".

One group said, "if they faithfully love they will agree to get married" but another said that in the future "she must stay unmarried forever".

Whose responsibility is it to do something?

The children seemed to put the responsibility more onto the child when we discussed how the situation could be prevented. "She should tell the mother not to leave her alone" or "she should stay away and play with someone or her relative, not stay alone in the house".

The girl should "not walk alone, not go out at night, she should have good self protection such as lock the door properly". She should "have the knife for protection". "We have to cut them, any people (even the Uncle), because we need to protect ourselves".

This emphasis on the responsibility of the child could lead to self blame so it is very important in educating children at risk or victims that the child is never to blame and that whilst things can be done to lower the risk they cannot eliminate the risk.

Children said "the local authority should be informed" and that the Government should help to give instructions about "how to live a new life".

If someone sees a child being raped "he must go and tell the village chief or someone else so that they can help solve the problem". "Complain to the police...calling for help from the parents".

When discussing the responsibility of other adults, the children said, "The teacher should give instructions about these things", but when asked if they actually did, the response was mixed.

In one play the police came to rescue the child. They said afterwards that the people who saw the rape, neighbours or people in the village would inform the police. "Arrest all the bad people and put them in prison" was a suggested solution.

"Complain to the police and arrest and send the guy to jail for 5-10 years in prison".

If she says she has been raped and the mother doesn't believe her what should she do? "She should complain to the village leader or police" who can help by "Punishing them according to the law". "Rapists must go to jail".

When asked about what would prevent child rape from happening many groups seemed to only think about what could happen after

the event. When discussing the Government's responsibility one group said "The government should declare through the TV and radio to stop all bad things like this". When asked if this would work they said, "Some work. Some won't but then if someone knew any bad person they can complain to the police and the police will arrest them".

Another group suggested that there should be "no more showing of pornography in coffee shops".

In discussion about dealing with the perpetrator one group said "some people change, some people don't". The parents, relatives and their children were cited as those who might help them change their heart.

Children said religion could help by "providing the education, giving the advice, helping the bad people to change themselves".

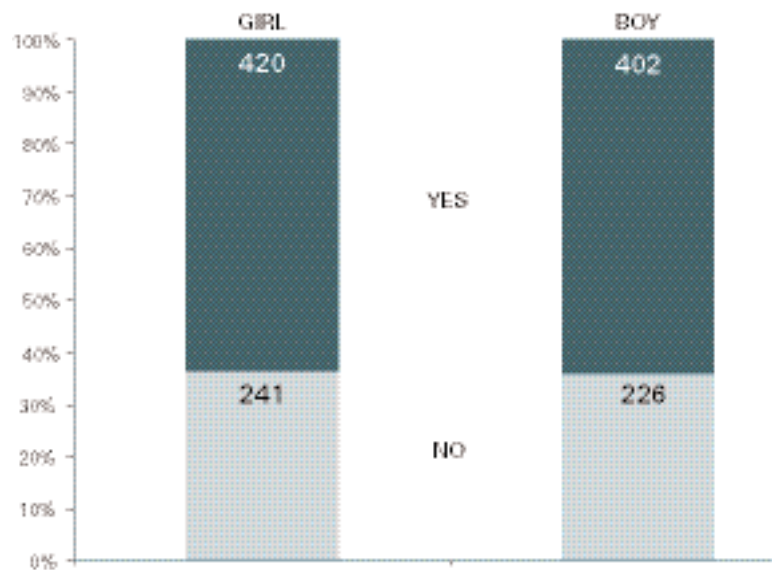
"Some people change, some people don't".

Results of the Questionnaire Survey:

It is important to read the section on limitations beforehand so that you can make an informed decision about whether you agree with the data.

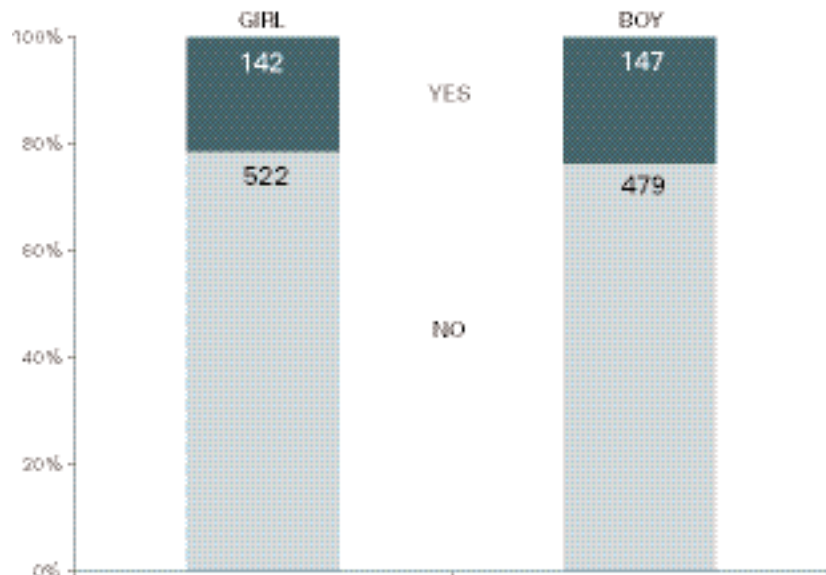
1. Have you known (ငါ့ - 'daung') any children who have been raped by an adult?

Well over half the number of children (63.8%), said they have known children who have been raped by an adult. There is no significant difference between the responses of boys and girls. It is difficult to say whether the children all fully understood that rape involves forced penetration but their responses in other questions appear to indicate they at least understand it to be sexual abuse.

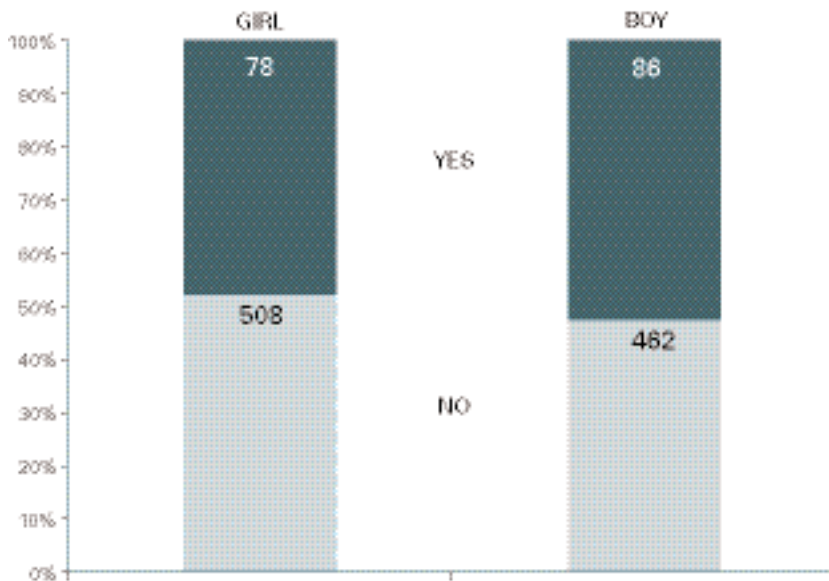


2. Have you ever witnessed the rape of a child by an adult?

Nearly one quarter (23.5% of boys and 21.4% of girls) said they have witnessed rape of a child in their community. This is much higher than Raghda Saba's findings of 8% in 1999. Is it possible that children who themselves have been raped are reluctant to say so and prefer to say they have witnessed the rape of another child instead?

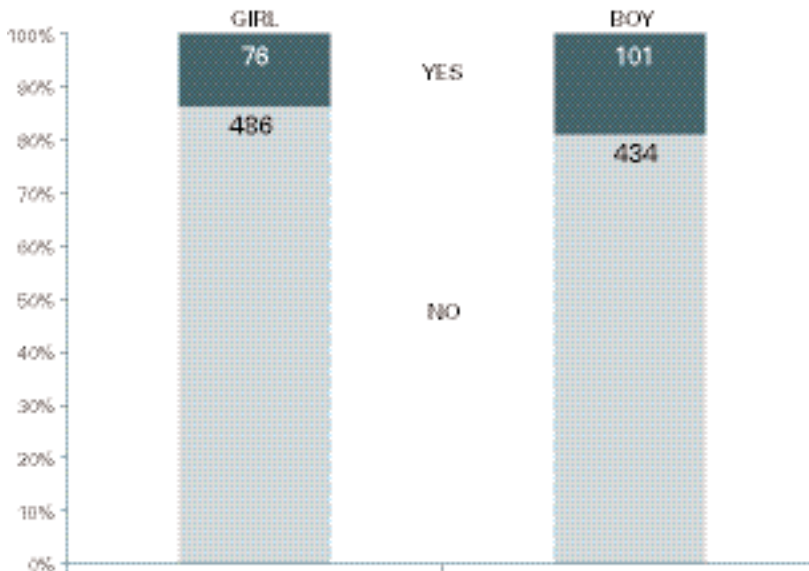


3. Have you been sexually touched on the genitals by an adult before you were 9 years old?



Children admitted to being sexually touched on the genitals. Children of both genders (14.5%) said that they had been touched on the genitals before 9 years old and more boys (15.7%) than girls (13.3%).

4. Have you been sexually touched on the genitals by an adult since you were 9 years old?

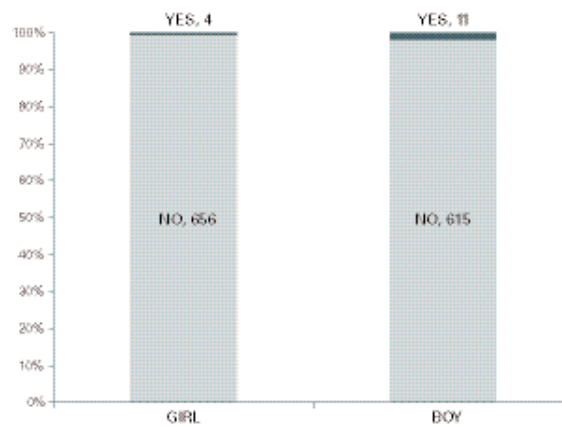


The differential between genders continues when children are over 9 years old. 18.9% of boys and 13.5% of girls said that they had been sexually touched on the genitals. It is interesting to note that the percentage of girls between 3 and 4 appears to be the same but the percentage of boys increases.

In research conducted by Salas (2003) on men who had sex with men, 17% of the 'Beautiful Girl' compared to 2% of the 'Handsome Man' in Siem Riep said that their first sexual encounter with a man was between the ages of 10 and 14 years. The average age of first sexual intercourse with a man, in comparison among all respondents, was 18 years.

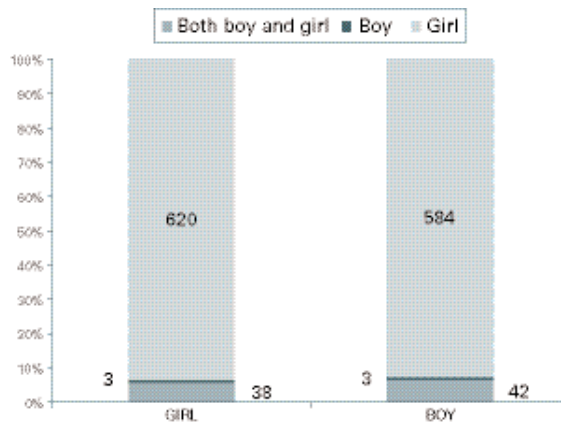
5. Have you ever been raped by an adult?

A comparatively small number (1.8% of boys and 0.6% of girls) who responded said that they had been raped. It is interesting that in a culture where rape of both girls and boys is so taboo, that some boys are willing to admit this.



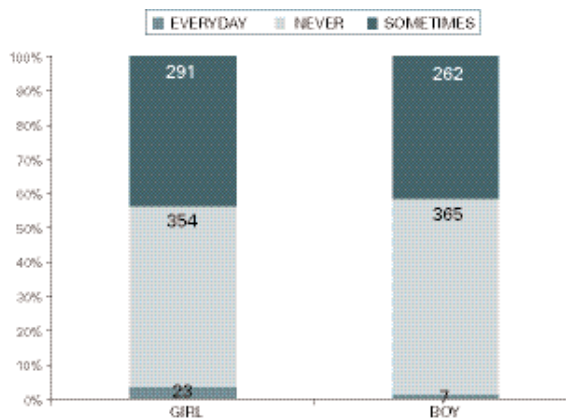
6. What kind (gender) of children are raped by adults? Boys, Girls or both?

Nearly all the children (93.8% of girls and 92.8% of boys) said that only girls were raped, and only 6.7% of boys and 5.7% of girls said that rape can happen to girls and boys.



7. How frequently does rape of children by adults happen in your community?

Only 3.4% of girls and 1.1% of boys said that child rape happened frequently in their community. However, 43.6% of girls and 41.3% of boys said that it happened 'sometimes'. This is a significantly high figure.



8. What happens to children after they have been raped?

(Open ended question with quotes from children)

Weakness | not healthy | thin (42.4%)

It is interesting that 42% of children mentioned "weakness", both physical and mental, as a characteristic of children after they have been raped. This is a term familiar in health clinics and may be related to general depression.

"After the children are raped, they feel weak and tired; resulting in many illnesses".

"After being raped the children get skinny and have health problems because they are not mature enough yet".

Ashamed | shy | regretful | weeping | feeling hurt | sad (36.5%)

Shame and related words were mentioned by nearly 40% of children. However, there needs to be more research to understand whether the shame is because children feel somehow responsible for being raped. If so, this is of concern, because children are the victims and should not feel responsible.

"After the children are raped, they feel they have suffered badly. They are regretful, weary, have no strength to do anything, and they become hostile with violence".

Afraid | scared crazy | mad | nervous (37.8%)

Fear is another characteristic mentioned by a large number of children (30%). It takes many forms - afraid of self, of others, of being alone. These are symptomatic of post-traumatic stress syndrome.

"After the rape, the children become crazy and confused".

Hopeless | bad future | lost future (15.2%)

This was also mentioned by about 15% of children indicating their understanding of the link between rape and depression.

"Any children that have been raped feel that there is no future for them at all".

"After being raped the children become weak, spiritless, quit school and are hated by their community".

"After the children are raped, they tend to cry harshly. They regret losing their virginity and feel ashamed to face anyone".

"After being raped, the children become frightened and sometimes they could be mad".

Suicidal (11.4%)

It is of concern that 11% of children mentioned this without prompting because this indicates that children may consider this an option if they were raped. It needs to be addressed in the education of children.

"After they are raped, they don't want to live, they think negatively like having thoughts of suicidal tendency, and they don't want to meet everybody".

Loss of virginity (7.9%)

"After being raped, the children feel they are no longer pure and that they have been deflowered".

Pregnancy (5.2%)

"Pregnancy may occur at their young age and their baby will become an orphan".

"After they are raped, they might be pregnant and they might not be able to marry".

Experience Discrimination (5.1%)

"After the children are raped, they lose their face value and their family are degraded by people".

HIV/AIDS (2.8%)

"They may contract the disease called AIDS".

Prostitute/Taxi girl (1.4%)

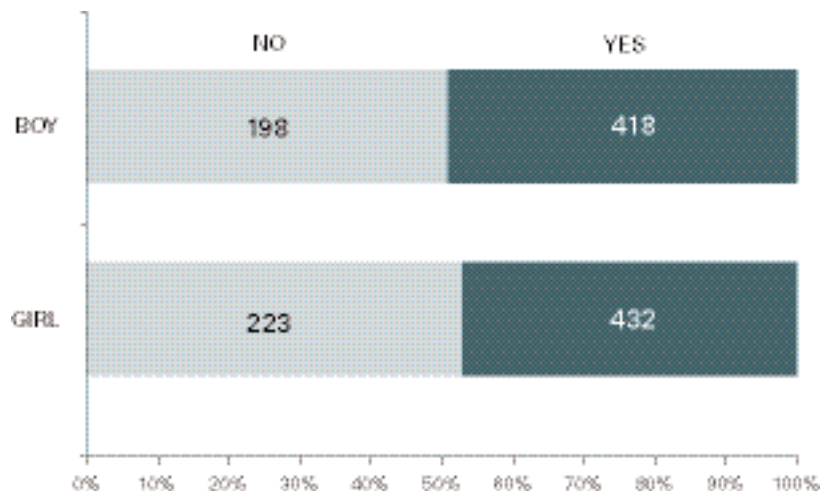
"A child who's been sexually abused would end up becoming a prostitute".

9. Can a child who has been raped ever get married?

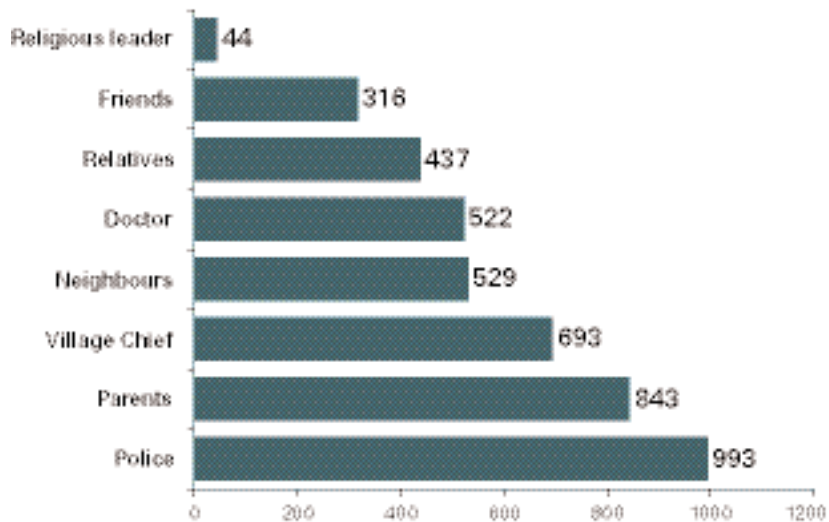
In discussion in one of the focus groups, although one child said that the girl who is raped has the same right as other girls to get married, most of the children felt that children who are raped shouldn't get married, because "they hate the girl who has been raped" and "Because she lost her virginity and doesn't have the right for someone to love her. Everywhere she goes, everyone will hate her". When asked about her future the response was "She must stay unmarried for ever...because she has been raped".

In another focus group, "They should get married to the rapist but if they don't know them they should not get married".

This is of serious concern because of what it tells us about the way other children treat children who have been raped and perhaps how prejudices can evolve and develop.



10. Who can help the child after they have been raped?



Only 2 children did not respond to this question but 1,314 did. In this question they have been placed in order of children's 'votes'. It demonstrates children's expectations of the police to respond. It would be interesting to know how they came to this conclusion. Were they influenced by previous conversations with parents or friends?

11. How can children be helped after they have been raped? (open ended question)

Dealing with the perpetrator | police | law | courts | prison (49.3%)

The children appeared to understand well that rape is a criminal act and had confidence in the police and legal system. It would be interesting to see if adults respond in the same way. 43.8% of boys and 37.8% of girls mentioned dealing with the perpetrator in some way through the police, law, courts or prison.

Some responses indicate that rape is often only considered to be serious where there is penetrative sex or physical damage, but responses to question 8 indicate that other serious 'damage' can occur as well. Another concern is that compensation whilst important is not enough. Rapists need to be jailed so that they don't do it to other children.

"They need to report the incident regarding the children being raped to the authority and they need to warn the rapist not to do it again or else they will pay fines. If not, the rapist must be detained in jail so justice can be served for the rape victim".

"They can help resolve the problem by arresting the rapist for committing the crime and breaking the law".

Emotional support - encourage/support child (28.5%)

Children understood something which is often overlooked by adults - the tremendous emotional effects the rape has on a child and the responsibility of adults to encourage the child and try to restore hope. It may not be possible for the child to 'forget', as one child suggests, but not scolding or blaming the child when it was not her/his responsibility is vital for healing.

"They can help the children who were raped by building their confidence and never speaking of the raping incident again".

"By motivating the victim not to think that they have no value to live in the community".

Doctor (13.4%)

Some children saw the combined team work of parents, doctors, police and friends. Other children felt that the doctor could help the perpetrator too and that the rapist needed to pay for any treatment for the child.

"They can help by taking the victim to the doctor to have a check up".

Education of victim (11.1%)

"They can help the children by guiding them in the right direction so they won't be misled in wrong-doing and won't believe anyone they don't know".

Education of perpetrator (9.2%)

"They can help by advising the rapist to surrender to the authority and be prosecuted according to the law".

Protection from further abuse (8.2%)

"They can help by relocating the children to a better environment and by locating the culprits hideouts so there won't be any problems again".

Physical support | money | care (4.4%)

"They can help the children by providing money, food, clothes, educational materials, finding jobs for them, etc...etc..."

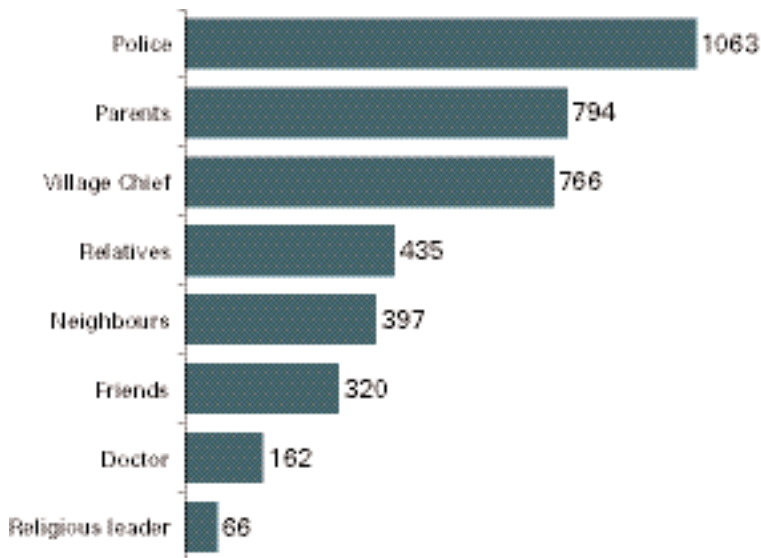
Marriage (0.6%)

"They can help by getting the rapist to marry the victim when the victim becomes an adult"

Children and their parents understand that the rapist has a responsibility towards the victim. A rape cannot be undone but is the marrying of the child to a rapist the solution, assuming they are old enough?

12. Who can help the perpetrator?

(In order of degree of response)

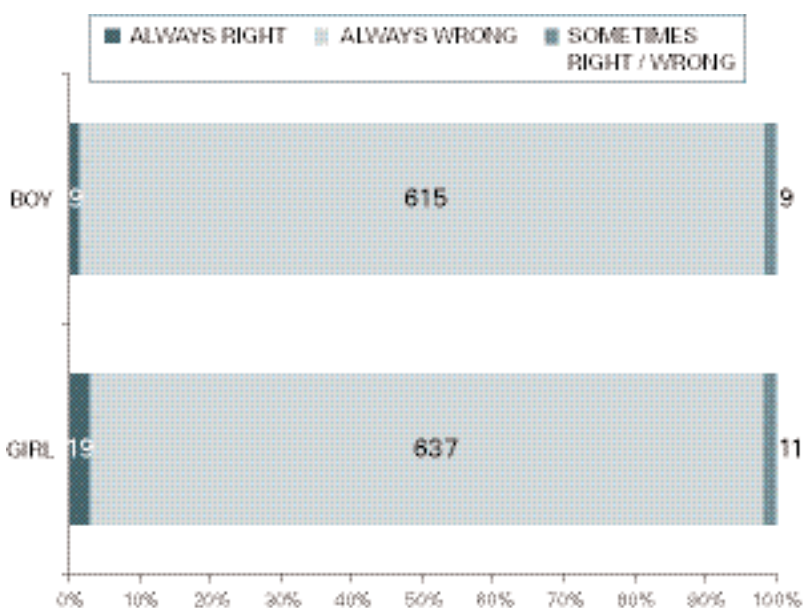


The majority of children had faith that the police would deal with the perpetrator with support from the village chief. It is not clear whether it is the parents of the victim or of the perpetrator who would help the perpetrator.

13. Do you think the rape of a child is ...?

By Gender

Most children (97.2% of boys and 95.5% of girls) said that it was always wrong for a child to be raped by an adult. This appears to dispel the myth that children 'enjoy it'. However it is of concern that 2.8% of girls and 1.4% of boys think it is 'always right'.



These results are very different from the findings of older children found in the Gender & Development report 'Paupers & Princlings' which indicated that young men did not see 'bauk' (gang rape) as anything wrong. Could it be that this is a largely urban phenomena of urban youth or is there a change in behaviour and attitudes as children get older?

14. How serious do you think it is for a child to be raped?

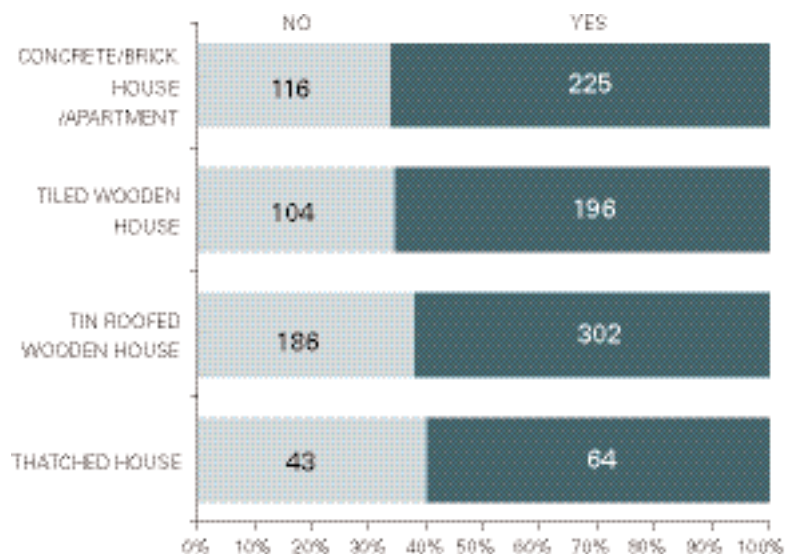
Again by far the majority of children (94.8%) think that it is extremely serious for children to be raped by an adult.



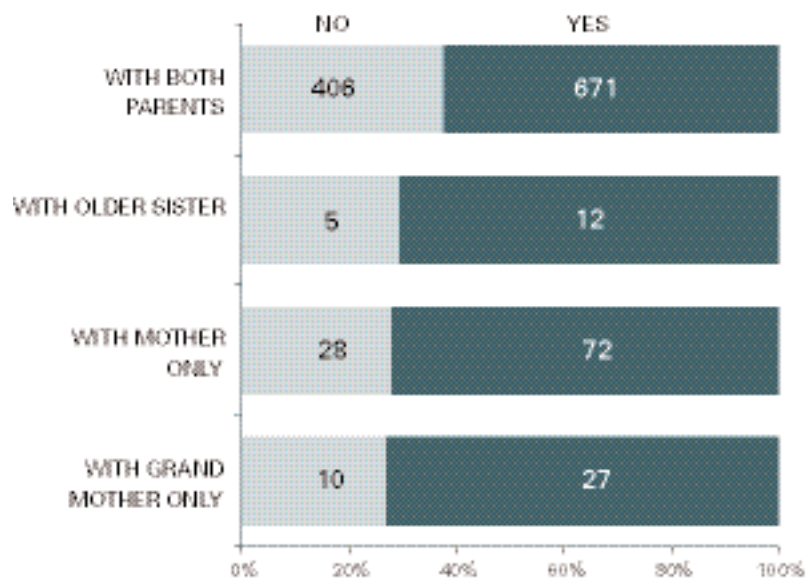
15. Do you know any child who has been raped?

By socio-economic status (housing)

There does not appear to be a significant difference between socio-economic status. Slightly more children in more wealthy accommodation (66.0%) appear to know of children who have been raped, a little more than children living in thatched housing (59.8%).

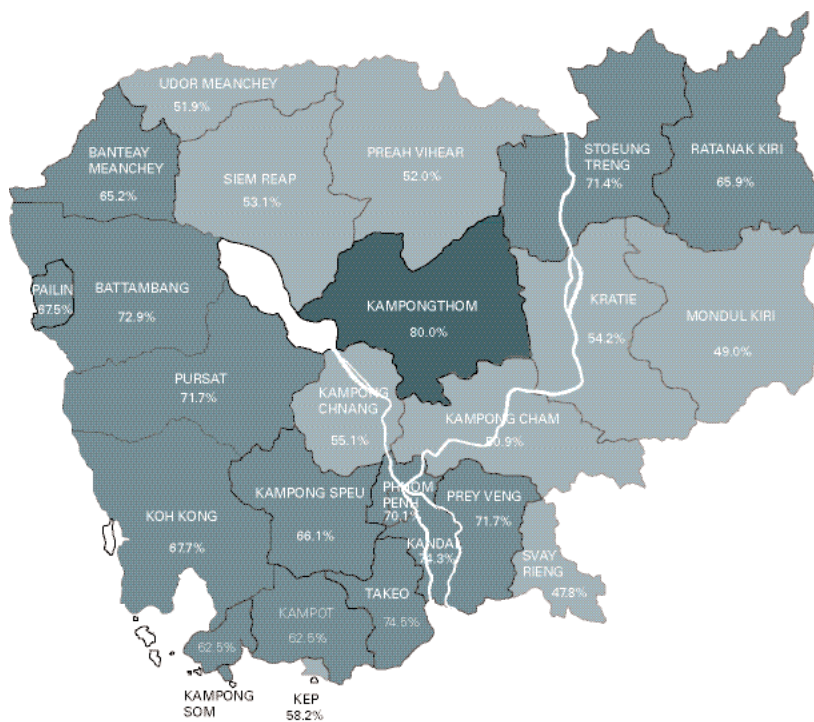


16. Do you know any child who has been raped? By family status



Children who do not live with two parents appear to be more aware of children who have been raped and could be more vulnerable, but further research is needed to verify this.

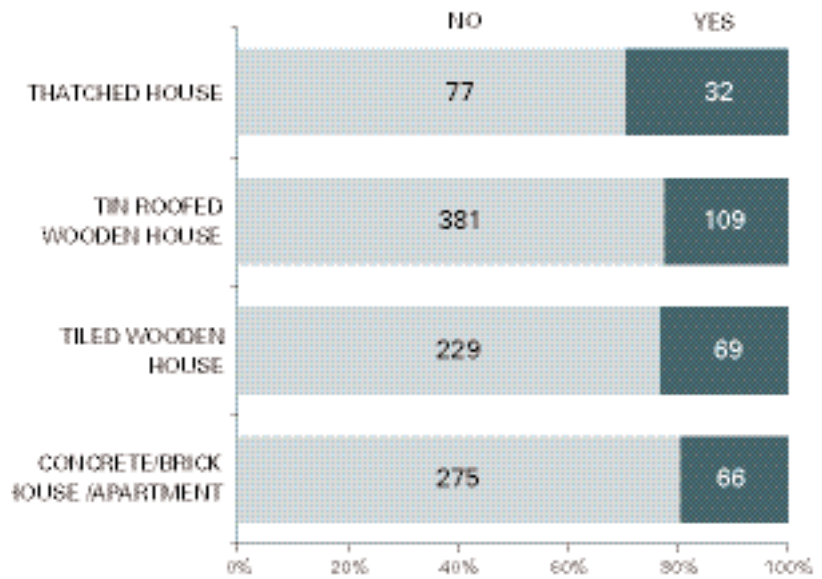
17. Do you know any child who has been raped by an adult? By Province



The percentages between provinces vary considerably from 80% in Kampong Thom to 47.8% in Svay Rieng, but more research is needed with larger numbers to verify this. Factors which may affect the difference between provinces, for example, could include provinces where children are more vulnerable to trafficking. Urban centres and those close to urban centres - Phnom Penh, Battambang, Kandal, Takeo - seem to have higher figures but more research is needed to verify this.

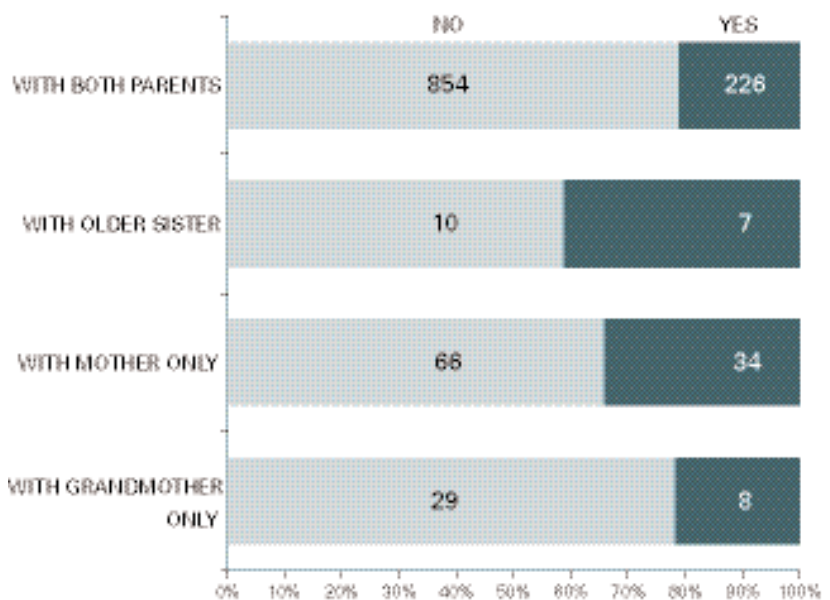
18. Have you ever witnessed a rape of a child by an adult?
By Socio-economic Status (Housing)

Children from thatched houses appear to be more vulnerable to witness a rape than children from concrete/brick houses. Perhaps this is because it is easier to hide such things in a concrete/brick building with doors and walls than in a flimsy thatch house.



19. Have you ever witnessed a rape of a child by an adult?
By family status

Children who live with both parents appear to be less vulnerable to being a witness to rape than other children but more research is needed to verify this.



20. How can child rape be prevented? (Open ended question)

Children understand clearly that strengthening the law and dealing with the perpetrators, including keeping them in jail away from other potential victims, is vital in doing prevention well. They also understand that the perpetrator/potential perpetrator needs education and all the focus should not be on the child.

Most children's advice to peers was encouraging and positive but some advice was negative and patronising perhaps reflecting advice they had heard from parents. Of concern is when children label other children as 'bad' as it can be harmful to children labelled in this way.

Children also understand the importance of advice for parents and between them came up with some advice that parents should seriously consider.

Some children also linked rape to what they saw as underlying root causes such as brothels, pornography and karaoke bars.

Legal measure:

Advocacy and enforcement to authority: Police, Law judge, Court and involving Human Right Organizations. (22.8%)

"They need to enforce the laws upon the rapist and make sure that justice is served and that corruption does not exist between rapist and the law enforcement departments".

"The Ministry of Interior should make and enforce laws to protect those children efficiently and effectively".

Punishment to perpetrators: Arrest, Jail, prison, (21.2%)

Children understand clearly that strengthening the law and dealing with the perpetrators, including keeping them in jail away from other potential victims, is vital in doing prevention well.

"They can prevent by reporting to the authority to arrest the perpetrator and prosecute according to the law".

Using media / public awareness (16.3%)

Children understand some of the uses and misuses of media to educate the public and children.

"We can prevent by educating people on video, radio, newspaper, and magazine so that they all understand the negative impact of this unacceptable behaviour".

Education of the perpetrator (14.8%)

"They can help prevent by advising them to not commit this act again because this type of behaviour is not good for society".

Close / Ban / Eliminate bar / Karaoke / brothel / drug / porn / anything related to sex business (8.5%)

"They can prevent the children from being raped by stopping the trafficking of children and by eliminating the brothels".

"Do not allow sales of obscene magazines, tapes or VCDs".

Positive advice to children: Education, explanation, advice (8.0%)

"They can prevent the children from being raped by educating them on how to protect themselves and to be cautious at all times".

Negative advice to children (6.0%)

"They can prevent the children from being raped by not allowing them to go out alone".

Parents responsibility (2.0%)

"We can prevent rape by advising the parents to keep a close watch on their children's activities".

Positive advice to parents (1.3%)

"They can prevent rape by not allowing strangers to take the children to the city to work there".

Negative advice to parents (1.2%)

"They can help the children from being raped by educating the parents to stop selling the children".

Improving poverty (0.9%)

"They can prevent rape by ending poverty, motivating the victim to be happy, and making them forget the incident".

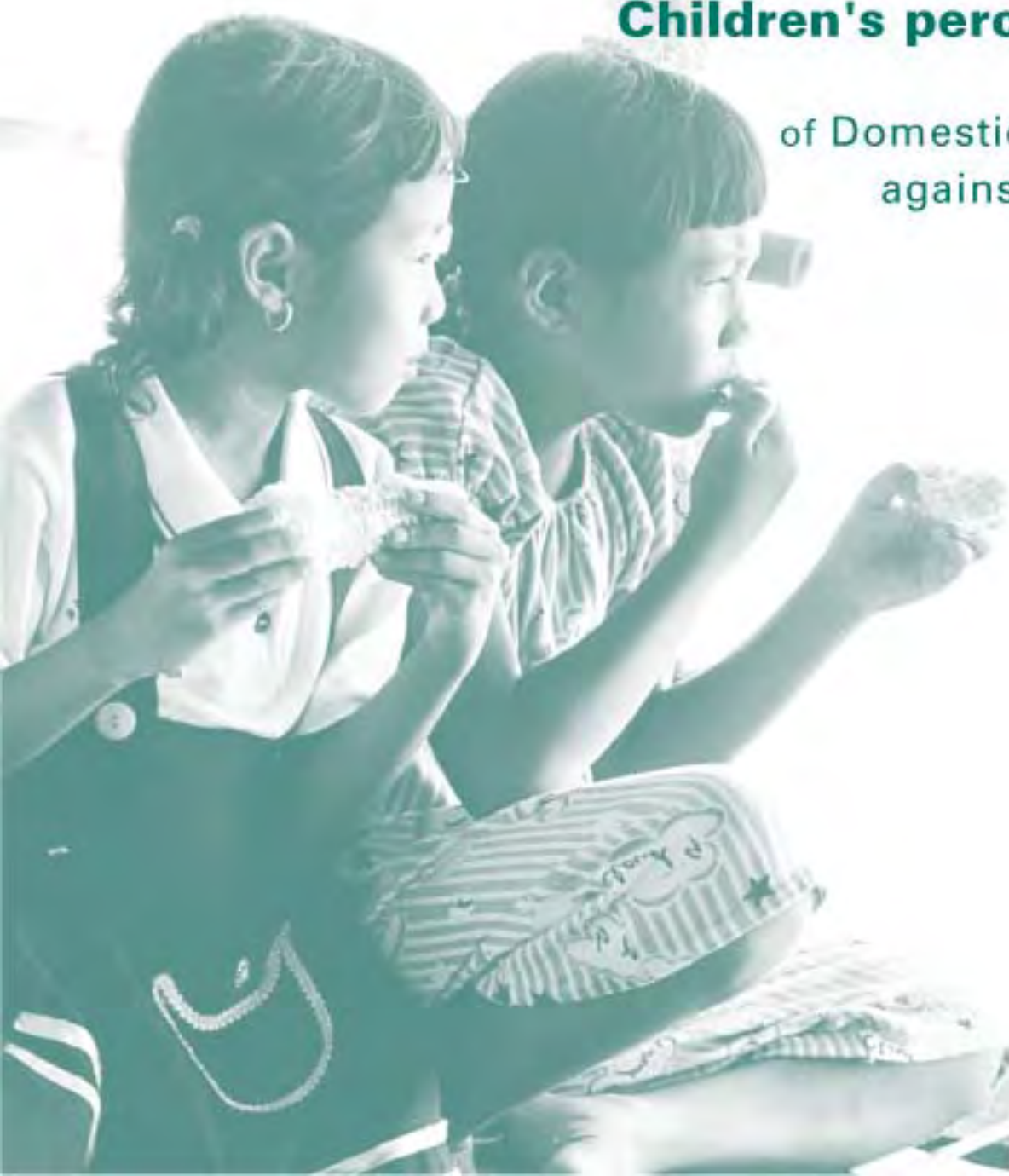
"They can prevent the children from being raped by not allowing them to go out alone".

RESULTS

PART 2

Children's perceptions

of Domestic Violence
against children



CHILDREN'S

Perceptions of Domestic Violence against children



Results of the Focus Groups

Is it right for adults to beat children?

When asked if parents have the right to beat their children, children said, "Yes, they should because the children make the mistake, make them angry". They use the Khmer proverb, "Yes because they have more knowledge than us, they have seen the sunlight before us. They have seen the world before us", "They have known us since we were very young". In one discussion they mentioned the obligation/reciprocity that children have towards their parents .

What kind of beating?

"Hit with a stick. Twist the thigh. Kick".

Alternatives: "Stay at home, clean up plates, wash the clothes, cooking".

When?

When asked when parents should beat the child they said "Gambling children, going out too much, doing bad things".

When asked when they should use a stick, they said "when the children do something wrong, such as fighting with other children" or "When we don't do the work in the house that the parents ask us to do".

Who?

When children were asked who it was in the picture they responded

"This could be the father, uncle or grandfather".

"beaten by parent, elder brother or sister".

Why?

"They (the parents) beat the children when they are drunk and they also beat them when they are not drunk".

"Men drink too much alcohol. Also women".

"Believe other peoples' gossip, such as 'Your wife has another lover' ".

Does it help?

"Some (beating) could help. Some does not"

Prevention?

Rather than the adults having responsibility to control their own behaviour, the children emphasized what children should do, for example "avoid the mistake such as not taking care of the clothes

properly", "try to stay away from him (the father). If you get too close to him you will get hurt. Don't make him upset", "beg the parents not to beat them", "we need to hurry to cook the food - we must be ready for him".

Another suggestion was that "They could discuss with the neighbour and the brother and sister could help the father to find a bed to sleep".

But other children said the importance of education of the father, "give instruction, education, explain, teach, discipline".

When asked who could help stop this the children said, "The government at the higher level, the people in the village and the neighbour".

"The villager, friends, neighbour, police, uncle, relative or grand-parents need to give instructions to the father and explain about the difficulty in the family and the effects of the beatings on the children".

"Ask the next door neighbour to help the parents when the beating is happening" and if they are not helpful, "Ask relatives, both sides, village leader, older uncle, head of the district".

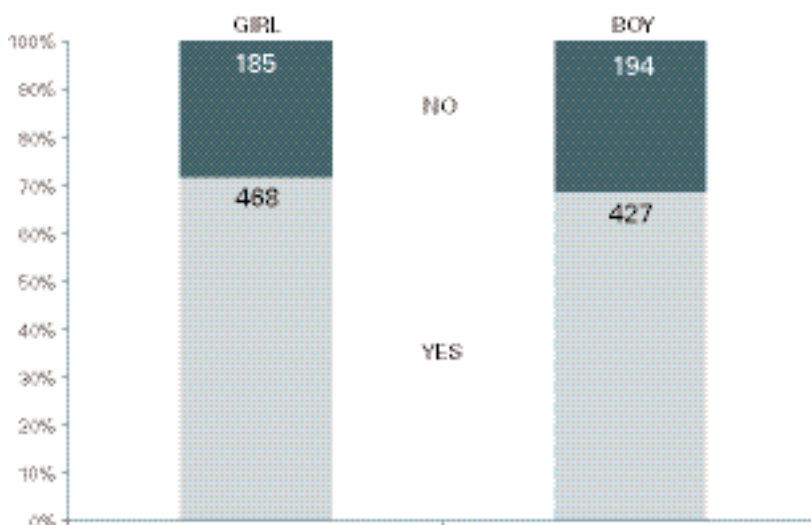
"Tell the Commune Leader to give advice to the father".
 "They give the advice, give the explanation and teach them about domestic violence in the family and not to beat the children."

"Provide the education, 'Do not drink and beat the children, be patient, don't get angry'". Another, "Ask the father not to drink... Get him out of the place that sells alcohol and bring him back home".

"Ban alcohol and stop selling alcohol". But when asked if it was possible to ban the sale of alcohol, the children said it was "impossible, because we can't stop them, but the Minister can do. We are the simple people - we can't do it".

Results of Questionnaire Survey:

1. Have you heard (of) of parents beating children?



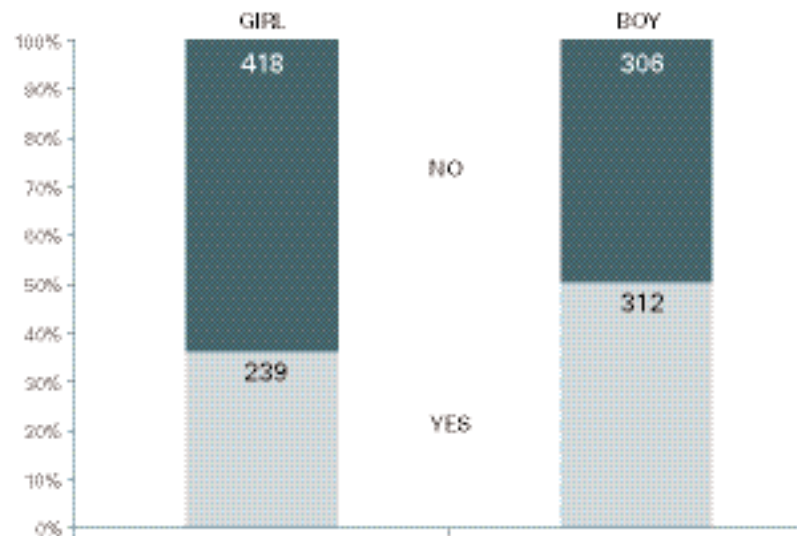
2. Have you ever seen other children being beaten by their parents?

The number of children who say they have seen children being beaten appears to be higher than those who say they have heard of parents beating children, but this question is asked later in the survey when children may feel more relaxed and confident to respond. It is interesting that there is no gender difference.

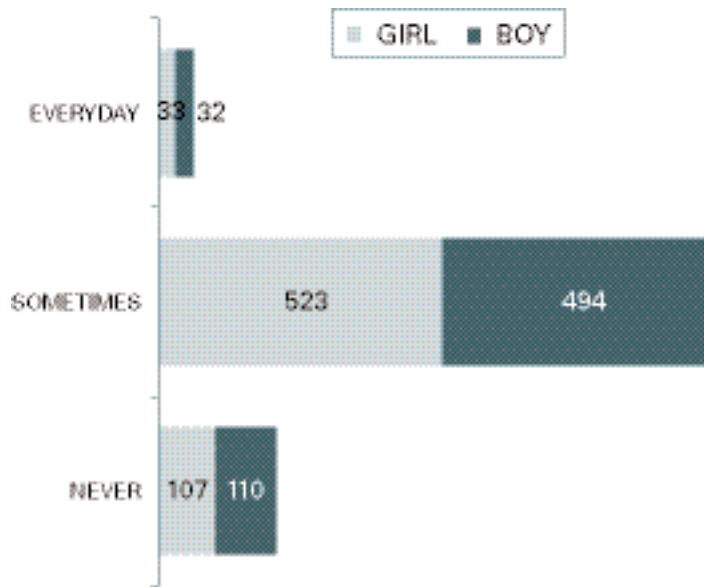


3. Have you ever been beaten by your parents?

It is interesting that in this survey, boys more frequently personally report being beaten than girls compared to the National Survey (2004) where girls were seen to be victims of domestic violence more than boys (50.1% - 40.7%). The difference could be explained by the fact that this survey is of school children whereas the National survey is of children in and out of school. Girls are expected to help around the home whereas boys are expected to work or be left to play out of the home so there may be less time and opportunity for the mother to be angry.

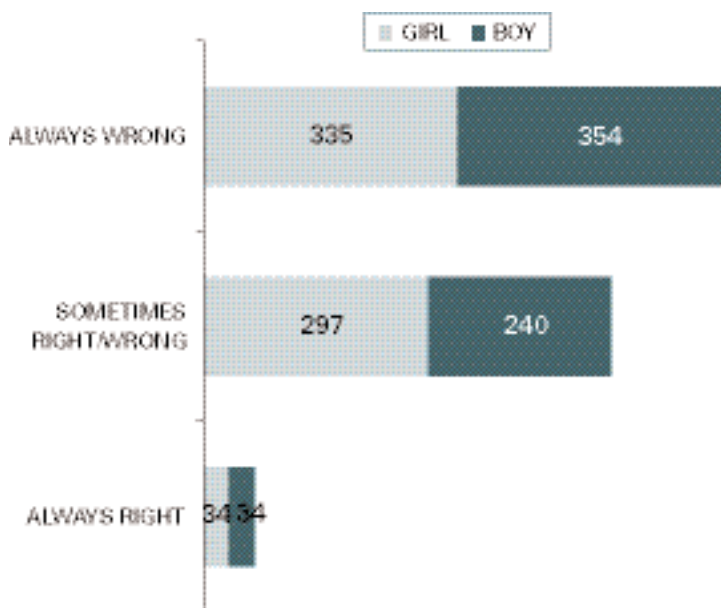


4. How frequently do parents beat children in your community?



This indicates it occurs commonly in most communities.

5. Do you think beating a child is ...?



Only a few children thought that beating was always right. Just over half the children felt that beating a child was wrong but a large number (over 40%) still felt it was sometimes right and sometimes wrong. While a large proportion of children believe this, then they are probably more vulnerable to being beaten.

6. How serious do you think it is for a parent to beat their child?

According to gender

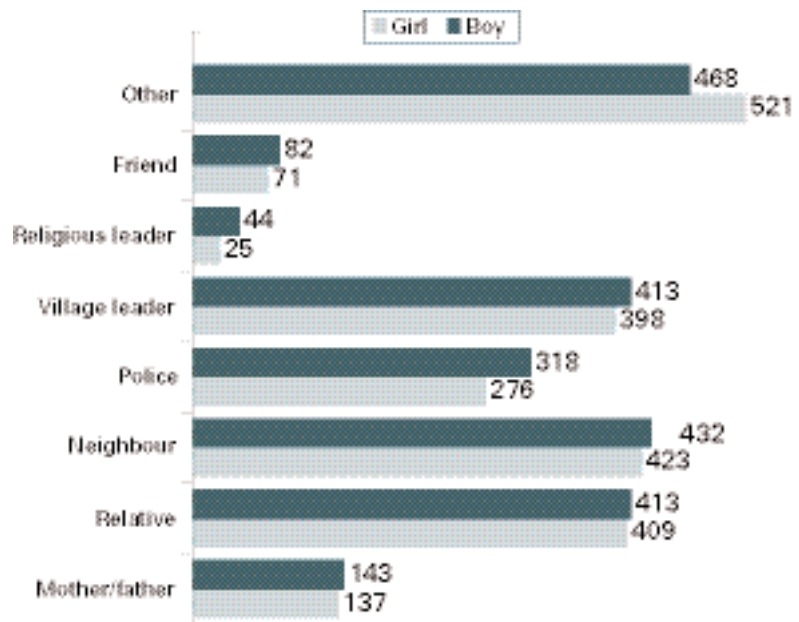
A further indication is the strength of feeling the children had about how serious it is. A quarter felt it was not serious but about 20% felt it was extremely serious. The difference in opinion is very diverse.



7. Who should stop this action?

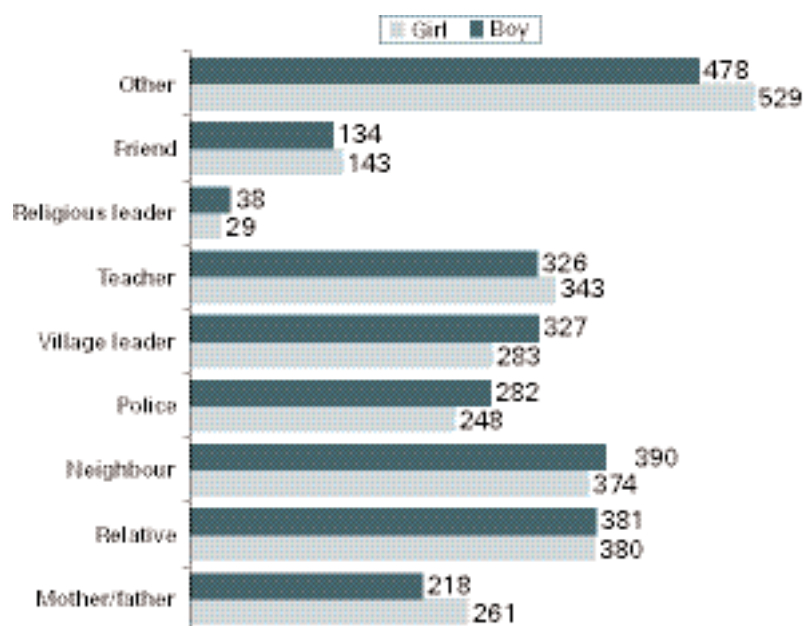
(Able to choose more than one response)

Children felt that the most helpful person to intervene would be a neighbour or relative (65.7%, 63.1%). The expectation (and therefore faith in) the involvement of the police is still relatively high (62.3%, 45.6%). There is low expectation of religious leaders (5.3%).



8. After that, who else can help the child?

(Able to choose more than one response)



Again neighbours and relatives are considered to be primary helpers to the child (59.0%, 58.7%). Police and Village leaders are still high (44.8% and 52.0%) but teachers and parents are also considered (51.7%, 37.0%).

9. How can they help the children?

(Open ended question)

Education of the parents / abuser (38.7%)

"They can help the children by advising the children's parents not to abuse them whether the children all right or wrong. The parents must help assist their children to correct their mistakes."

"By educating parents not to continue their abuse on the children, and they must learn how to love, to care, and value their children".

Education of the children (25.4%)

"They can help the children by teaching them to respect other people because every individual is equal and they need to respect their parents since they are the one's who gave birth to them".

"They can help the children by educating the children not to use violence to solve their problems."

Prevent from further abuse / to protect children (12.8%)

"They can help the children by preventing the parents from abusing the children and for the teachers and friends to educate the children and help resolve any problems the children may have".

Dealing with the perpetrator: (police / law / courts / prison / punishment / intervention) (7.6%)

"They can help the children by getting the parents who beat their children to listen to village leaders' explanation; if they still beat the children they must face the strict law."

Physical support (money, care, relocation) (7.3%)

"They can help their children by providing them clothes money, food, etc... etc... so there will be no act of violence or child abuse among that family any further."

Emotional support - encourage, (encourage / motivate / support the children) (6.6%)

"They can help the children by motivating them to have confidence and building their self esteem".

Education of the public / public awareness (4.0%)

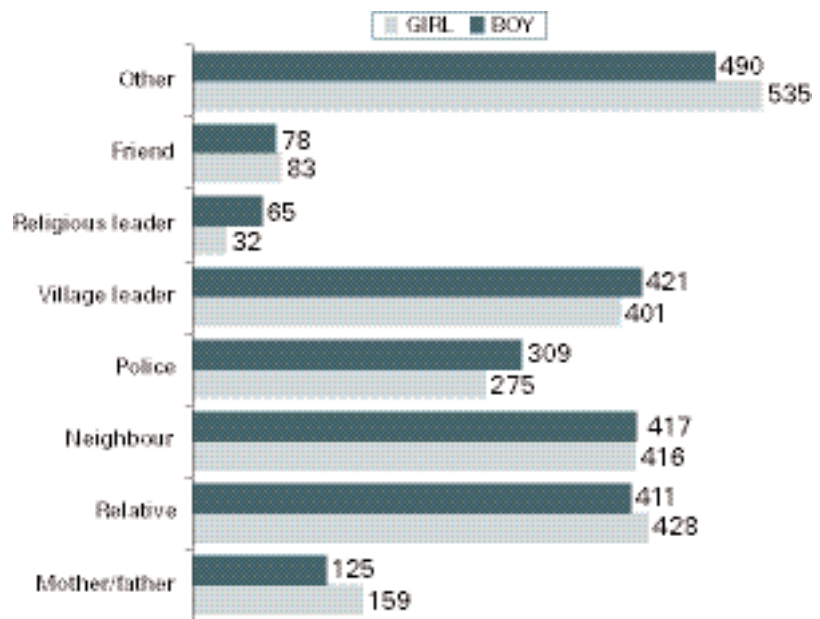
"By educating people to get to know their rights, they should respect each other's rights, and stop trafficking or exploitation of children".

Inform NGOs (0.3%)

"They can help the children by getting an organization to be involved to help children".

10. After that who else can help the parents?

Once again the village leader, neighbour, relative and police are also expected to intervene.



11. How can they help the parents?

Education of the parents (65.5%)

"They can help the parents by helping them to understand about violence and that violence is wrong in our society and it is against the law".

"They can help the parents to understand that children have rights too. The parents must also provide love and care for their children. The parents must get involved with their children's education and spend quality time at home with them".

"By advising them to understand about the consequence of child abuse".

Prevention of further abuse (14.4%)

"They can help the parents to respect their children's rights because the children are tomorrow's future".

Support of the parents (6.5%)

"By motivating the parents not to be stressed, for them to love their children, and not to abuse their children".

Dealing with the perpetrator (5.4%)

"They can help the parents by yelling to the neighbours for help so they can report to the authority to arrest the perpetrators and prosecute them according to the law".

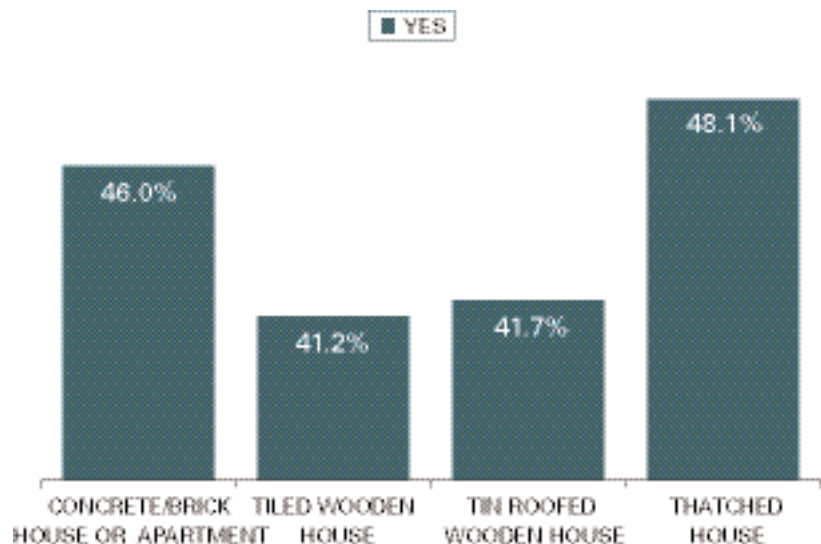
Education of the children (3.7%)

"They can help the parents by advising them to understand and for them to love their children. Also, the children must learn to respect each other".

"They can help the parents by explaining to them to understand about the violence and that violence is wrong in our society and it is against the law".

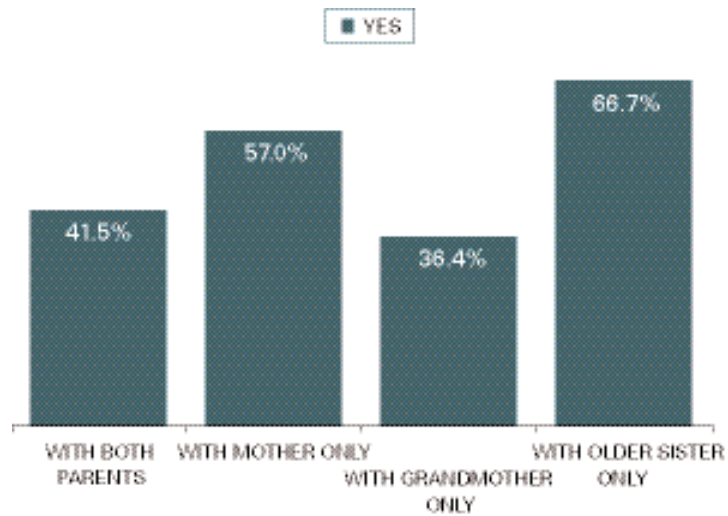
12. Housing type vs. Ever been beaten by your parents?

Domestic violence appears to occur in all social classes. The poorest and wealthiest appear to be slightly higher in this survey.

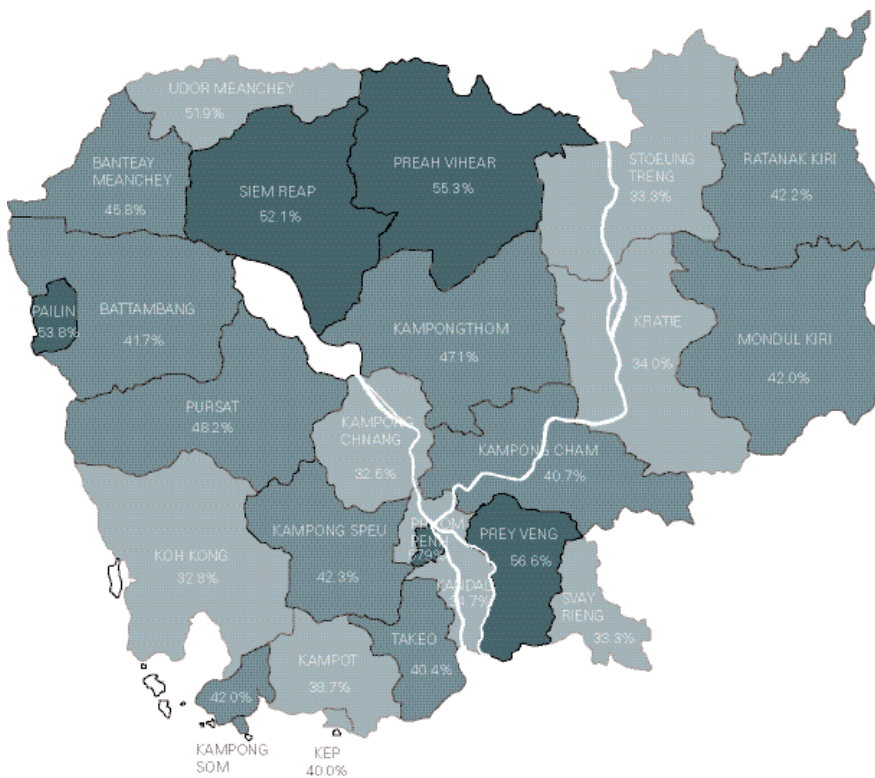


13. Family status vs. Ever been beaten by your parents?

Children living with only their mother seem to be more susceptible to being beaten. You would expect children living with an older sister only to not be beaten by parents, but the percentage is high. Was this before they became child headed households? More research is needed.



14. Province vs. Ever been beaten by your parents?



More research is needed to demonstrate whether there really is a difference between provinces but it is significant that prevalence seems higher in Phnom Penh (57.9%) than anywhere else. Is this due to additional stresses of urban life such as overcrowdedness? It may be helpful to determine whether the prevalence is higher

in areas where soldiers last demobilized or where the Khmer Rouge last had a presence e.g. Pailin. Also what other factors could make children more vulnerable? e.g. border areas (Preah Vihear).

RESULTS 3

PART

Children's perceptions
of corporal punishment in schools



CHILDREN'S

Perceptions of Corporal Punishment in Schools



do their homework incorrectly, they are not so clever, and especially they are not quiet".

Results of the Focus Groups

Why do teachers use violence with children?

When asked whether it happened in their schools as pictured the children in all the focus groups said it did. "Yes, very often when we make a mistake".

When asked why they said a variety of answers; "because the children are very naughty or they are fighting", "because the students disobey, or make lots of mistakes, come late to class, make a lot of noise, don't do school or homework, have bad manners or play during study time", "(because the children) make a noise in the classroom, beat the other students, disturb the teacher and play the game that the teacher will not allow them to play while the teacher is teaching" and "they disobey the school regulations, they

What kind of punishment is used?

According to the children in the focus groups the following methods are used by teachers to physically punish children:

- Beats child with stick
- Beats the back of the student
- Asks student to stand on one leg
- Asks student to kneel down
- Asks children to stand on the skin of the Durian fruit
- Asks children to stand outside in the heat
- Pins the ear of the student and pulls them up by their ears
- Uses the clothes-pin to pin the lip or the ear of the student
- Twists hair/Pulls hair
- Twists the ear
- Pushes and holds the child's head to the wall or white board
- Throws the thing in his/her hand

Also:

- Run around the school
- If the child has long hair or nails they are cut by the teacher

Does it help to improve the situation?

Children were mixed as to whether they thought it was right or wrong but they seemed to agree that teachers have the right to beat children. The groups had lively discussion about the merits and demerits of teachers using violence. "Yes, if I am doing wrong I would prefer the teacher to hit me". "No, the teacher should ask me to clean the rubbish or classroom or kneel down".

"They should not beat them all, just the lazy ones". When asked if they differentiated between those who were lazy and those who were not clever some said they did, others said "sometimes". "The teacher should not use the stick because it is very painful and the students don't get any knowledge from beatings like this".

Students said "Teachers should ask for the reason first and then beat later or talk first and if students still didn't listen beat later", implying that teachers usually beat first and then asked questions later. But whether the children believed in being beaten or not they often still had a sense of justice. For example "The teacher should not throw their anger on the student without reason".

Some children said it could help the children, others said they would stay the same as before. Others said they would get worse than before because they will lose hope/get discouraged.

A common theme for the disobedient student was "The teacher should give more explanation" and "more homework". "If they make a mistake they should give more explanation". They must give the one that doesn't understand more explanation".

When asked if beating children helped them to improve their knowledge the children were mixed. Some said it "could help to improve". Others said "This is not a good way".

When asked what happens if a teacher makes a mistake, and who should beat them, the children smiled and said "nobody would beat them...because teachers have more rights than the child, because the teachers are the second parents so they have the right to beat students". This is consistent with the Khmer Proverb that says "When I give my child to the teacher, all I ask in return is their eyes and their bones".

How can corporal punishment be prevented?

When asked how it might be prevented, children sometimes were more concerned with what the children needed to do rather than considering the possibility that the teacher could be disciplined. For example, "Cry and say sorry to the teacher, promise not to do this again and respect what the teacher says", "Plead with the teacher not to beat them anymore", "Listen to the teacher", "Help to explain to the weak students and encourage the weak students to learn more at home". "Tell the parents to help to explain or teach more". "Take them to their parents and explain to them about their children".

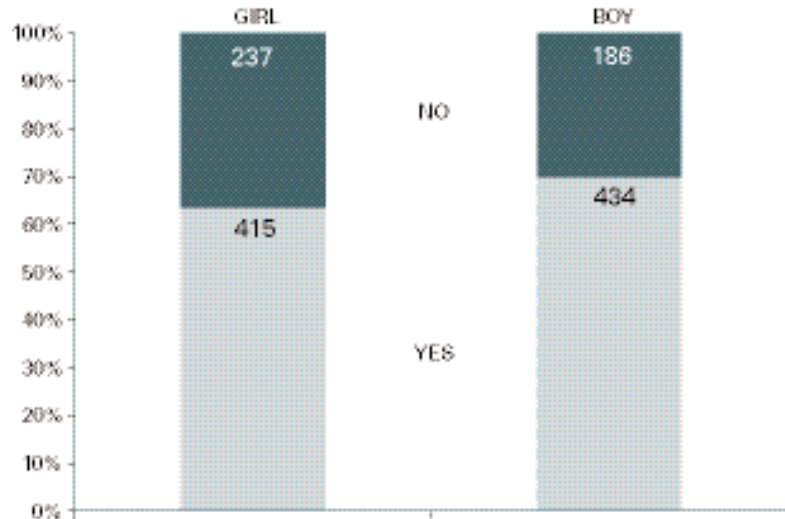
However, children understood peer support - to "be united among the class and help each other". Another suggestion was "the smart students need to help to teach the weak students".

One group of children said "Some teachers have a good attitude, others bad. As students we need to tell the school director and ask him to help to solve the problems".

Alternatively, the suggestion was to "tell the parents, ask to change the teacher or change the student to another classroom". Finally, "Ask the parents to write a letter to the school director". The school director would then "provide education and give instructions to the bad teacher to know what is right and what is wrong".

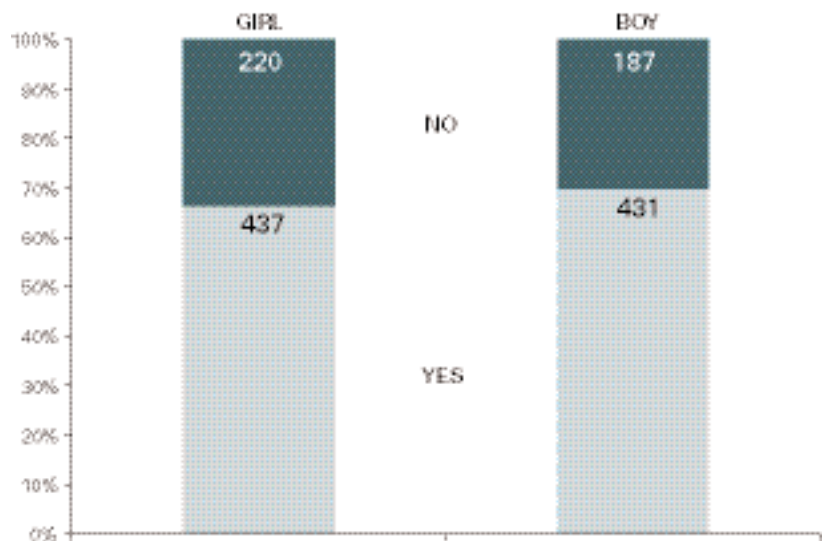
Results of the Questionnaire Survey:

1. Have you heard of teachers beating children?

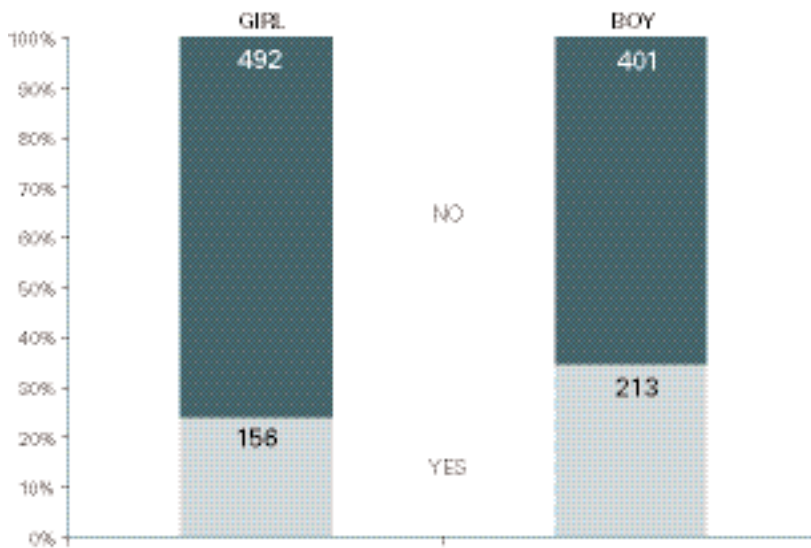


2. Have you ever seen other children beaten by a teacher?

Again this question was asked later in the survey when children may have been more relaxed and prepared to answer honestly, which could explain the slight difference between heard and seen.

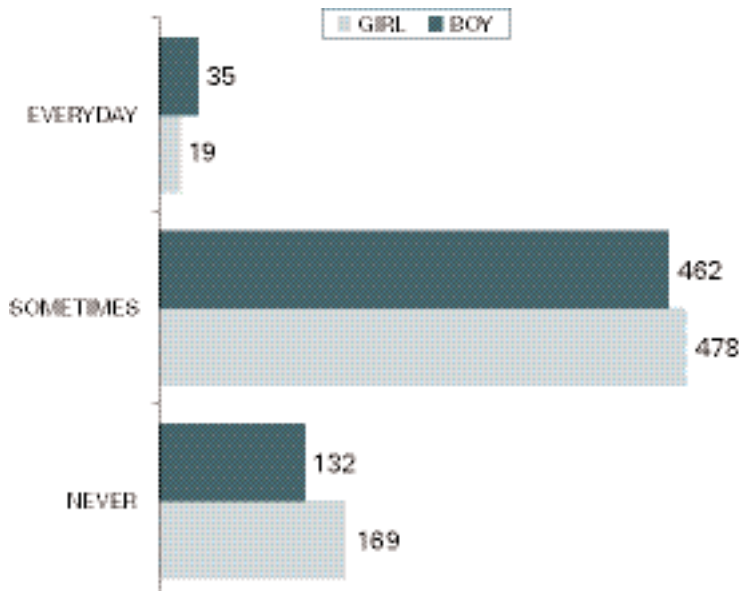


3. Have you ever been beaten by your teacher?



Thirty four percent of girls and 41% of boys is a significant number of children that have been beaten by their teacher. This is especially significant because the memorandums from the Ministry of Education suggest that violence against children is forbidden.

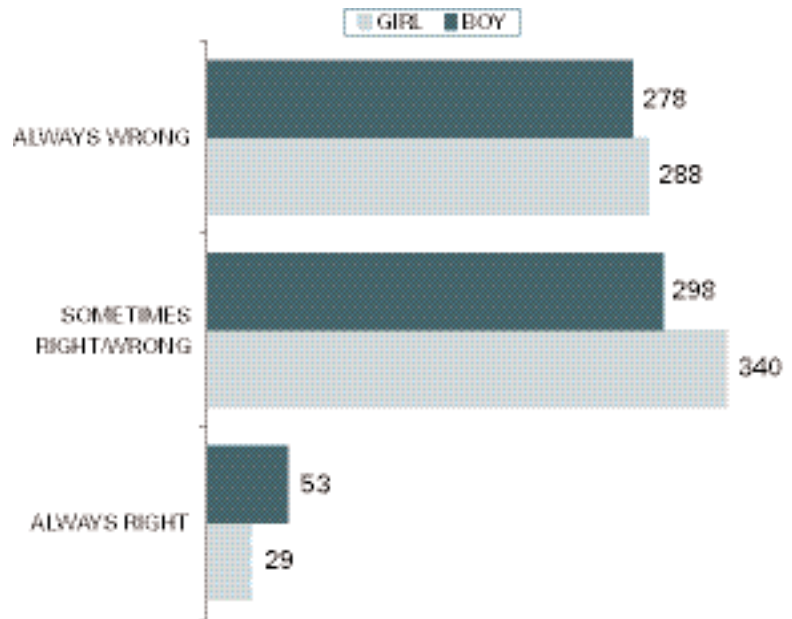
4. How frequently do teachers beat children?



The frequency is significant too. For 73% of children teachers beat children, not everyday but 'sometimes'.

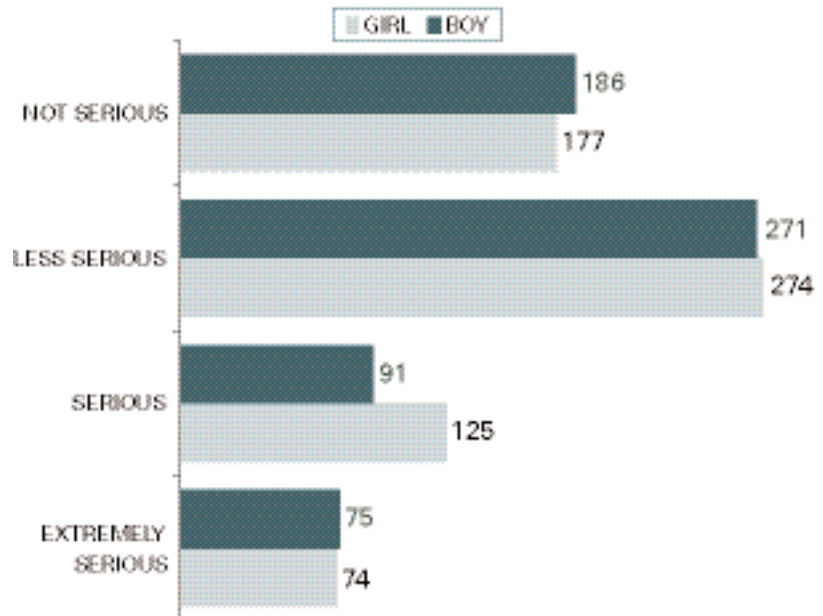
5. Do you think beating a child is...?

Once again children's opinion as to whether beating is right or wrong this time in school is mixed. The differences in gender are similar. 50% say sometimes / right wrong, 44% say always wrong. Only 6.4% say always right.



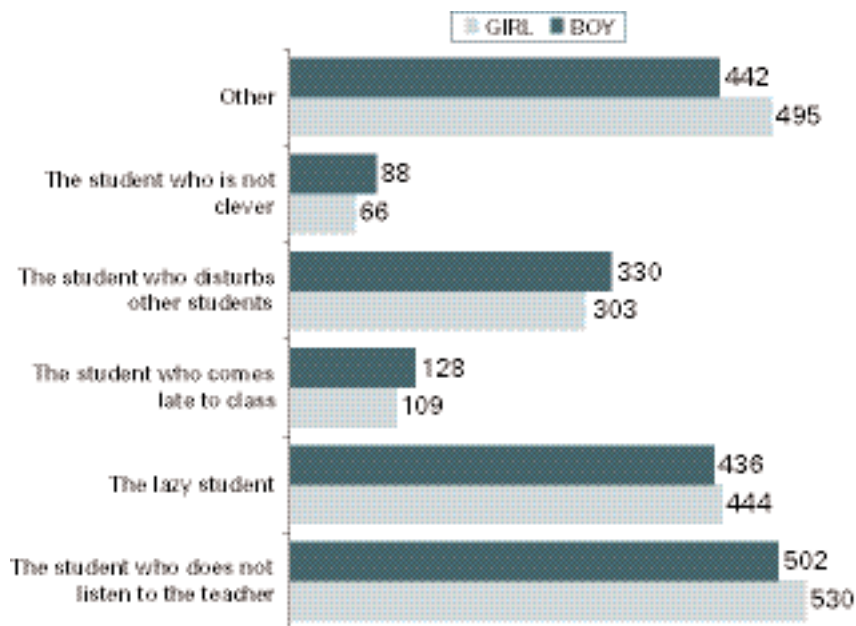
6. How serious is it for a teacher to beat a child?

In terms of seriousness of beating by the teacher this also varied from 28% not serious to 12% extremely serious.



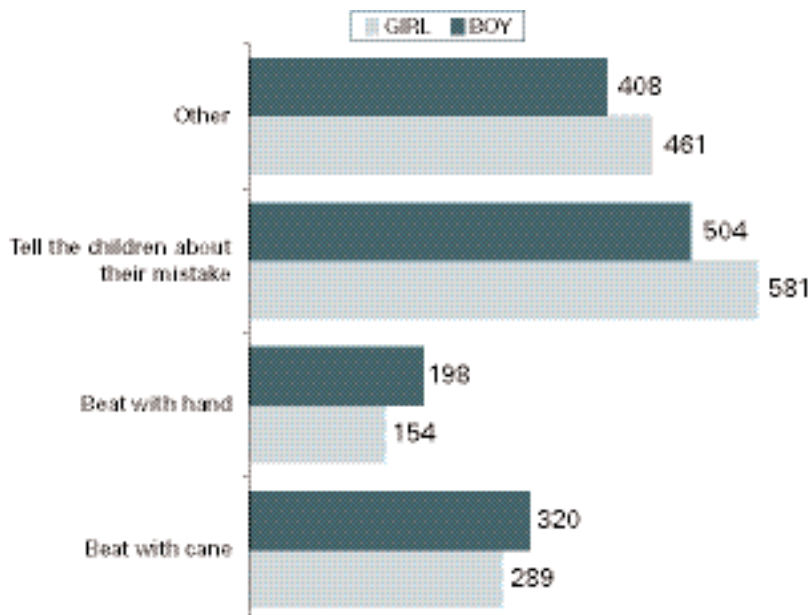
7. In which case do you think the teacher should beat a child?

(Children could choose more than one response)



It was of concern in the focus groups that teachers did not appear to be discriminatory in physical discipline between a student who was not clever and those who were disruptive. However, this table appears to indicate that teachers used most corporal punishment with students who did not listen (40.8%) or the lazy students (34.8%) and were a little more lenient on the students who disturbed other students (25.5%) and more so with those late for class (9.3%) or who were not clever (6.1%).

8. Normally, what kind of punishments does the teacher use?

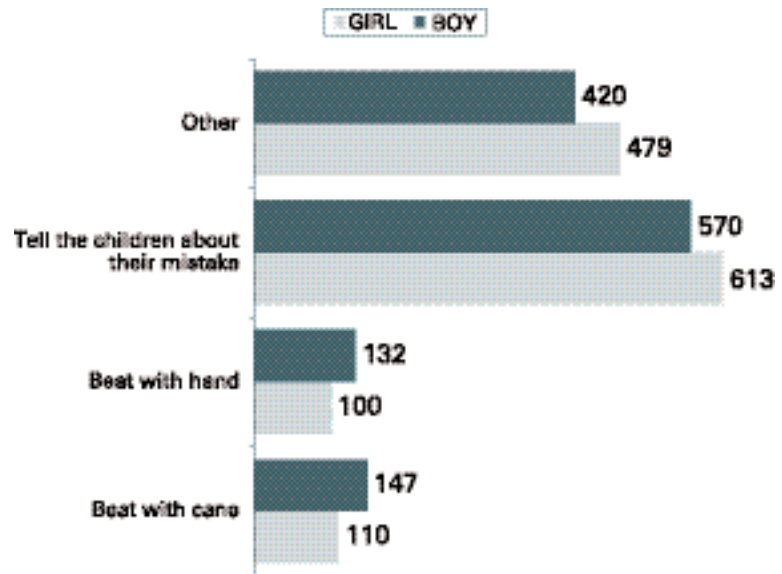


It is significant that children admit that teachers primarily use verbal advice when disciplining children. However, it is of concern that children appear to be saying that teachers use a cane more than they use a hand when beating the children.

It is interesting to compare what children say teachers do use with what they think they should use. This is in the table below. The majority of children say that teachers should use verbal advice but still around 20% think children should be beaten with hands and/or sticks.

9. What types of punishment should the teacher use?

In this question the children are given the possible responses. In the following question they are left to respond themselves. In the following question only 2.6% suggest physical punishment compared to 19.8% suggesting a cane and 17.9% suggesting the hand in the question above.



10. How can teachers correct a disobedient student?

Positive advice: Study hard/ behave well/ realize mistake/ provide example (86.9%)

"By advising the disobedient student to realize their misbehaviour, and for them to respect the rules and regulations of that school".

"By advising the disobedient students to know between right and wrong, not to use violence again, and for them to do the right thing".

Punish by doing something: Cleaning toilet, cleaning classroom, stand out in the sun / run around the class etc. (9.3%)

"By disciplining the disobedient student to do chores in the school".

Inform parent/guardian about their children (9.1%)

"By informing the parents to meet the teacher to resolve the disobedient student's misbehaviour".

Motivation: School work / household work / provide love and understanding (6.7%)

"Teachers can help their students by encouraging them and giving them advice".

Punish physical contact: beat with stick, hand, feet / pulling ear / kneel. (2.6%)

"By disciplining the disobedient students with a stick to behave well in the class".

Punish by scolding / expel from school (2.5%)

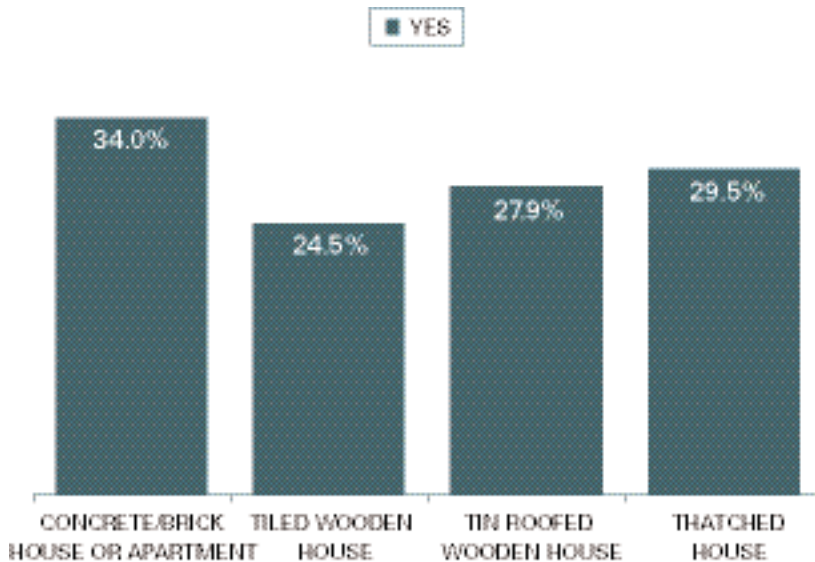
"Teachers can help disobedient students by giving them a verbal warning for their first mistake. Use extreme discipline with them if necessary. If they continue to do bad things, expel them from school"

Create and / or enforce the school rules / law for disobedient children to behave (1.4%)

"Teachers can help disobedient students by telling them about the school's disciplinary rules. Advise them to respect (daily) the rules. Encourage them to follow the ways of the good students. Tell them about the value of studying".

"By advising the disobedient students to know between right and wrong, not to use violence again, and for them to do the right thing".

11. Have you ever been beaten by your teacher? By socio-economic status (housing)

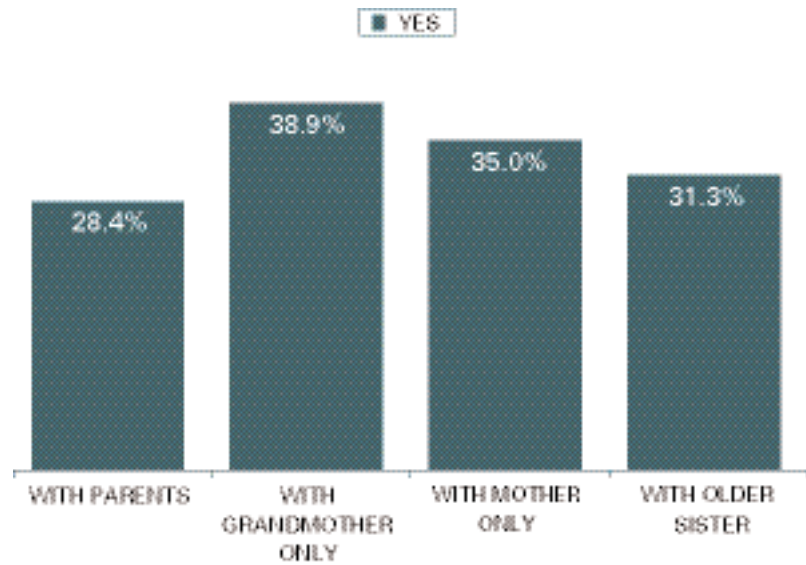


The differences between social status again do not appear to be very large except that children in wealthier families seem to be more likely to experience beating at school. Are more demands made on them?

12. Have you ever been beaten by your teacher?

By family status

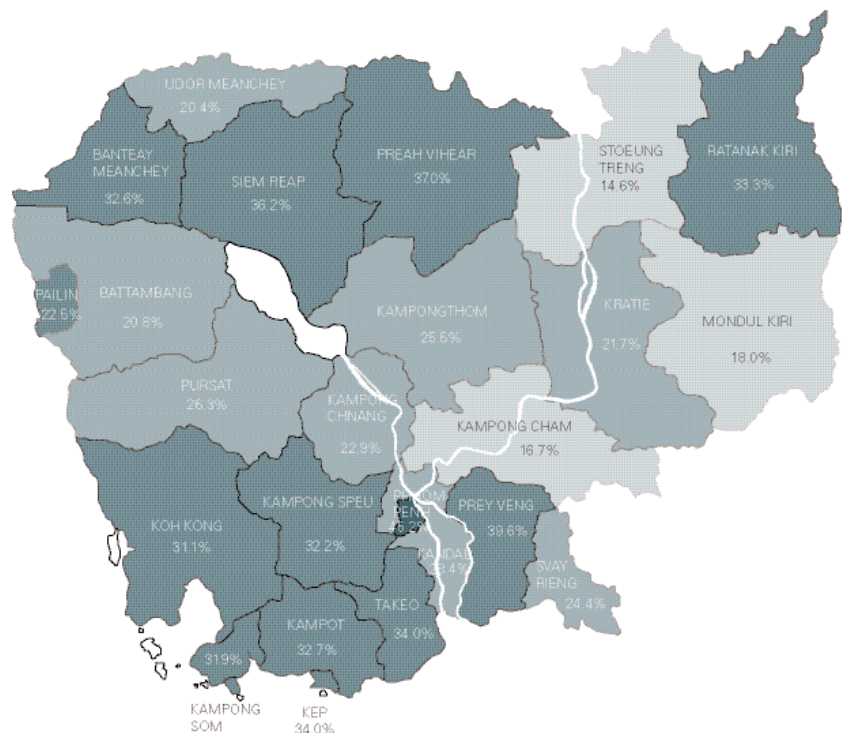
Children who are not living with both parents appear to be more vulnerable to being beaten at school, perhaps because they are more likely to have additional stresses at home, which makes them more likely to be vulnerable at school.



13. Have you ever been beaten by your teacher?

By Province

More research is needed to compare differences between provinces but once again the number of children who reported having been beaten by their teachers in Phnom Penh is higher than in any other province. Could this be a higher willingness to report or increased demands on teachers? Could other differences be explained by the amount of support and training teachers receive?



CONCLUSION

& RECOMMENDATIONS:





CONCLUSION

& Recommendations:



The findings indicate that violence and sexual abuse of children in Cambodia is normal for the majority of children and requires immediate attention.

Even for those who are still sceptical about the results, it does show that fear of violence and rape is very real for children.

Children were often fatalistic in their beliefs. They felt that they should try to avoid the situation from occurring but that if it happened they were powerless to do anything. However they were optimistic that in situations of violence advocates, e.g. police, teachers, village leaders and relatives, would intervene. This puts the responsibility clearly onto adults to justify their confidence in us.

The evidence so far suggests that children's views give a disturbing picture of the power differential between children and adults, where children are passive victims that struggle to articulate their concerns at an individual level with the people who commit violence against them, as well as the decision makers.

How can children be empowered to protect themselves and how can we put in place policies and provide education to protect them against adults that can and do act violently towards them? Is it too much responsibility to expect them to be actors in the process? Alternatively are we as adults disempowering them by saying that we need to act on their behalf?

Some General Recommendations regarding violence and rape of children

- Adults and children need to explore alternative non-violent ways of conflict resolution if the 'cycle of violence' is to be reduced.

- Adults must take their responsibilities seriously and do what is necessary to educate and protect children and then holistically care for the victims from a local level to a Government level.
- Children themselves emphasized that adults must take their responsibilities seriously. They also emphasised the importance of education of the potential and actual perpetrators. Children often had tremendous faith in the police and village chiefs which needs to be justified.
- Adults (and children) must see children who are raped as victims whose lives are not destroyed - there will be emotional scarring but there is a future.
- There needs to be more focus on boys as victims as well as perpetrators.
- Children must be challenged that they are not victims of circumstances but that change is possible.

- Children must be helped to find ways to challenge their elders if adults are being abusive towards them, their peers or others.

Some Recommendations to the Government

- The Ministries of Justice and Interior in collaboration with IOs and NGOs must strengthen and implement laws regarding rape and violence against children. Focus must be on seriously dealing with the perpetrators and preventing them from re-offending through seriously dealing with complaints and prosecution of offenders.
- The Ministries of Justice and Interior must treat rape as a criminal not a civil matter. Rape must not be resolved through purely financial negotiation as is sometimes the case but perpetrators must be jailed.
- The Ministry of Interior must continue to provide in-service training for police including women trained in dealing with girl victims.
- The Ministries of Education, Women's Affairs and Social Affairs in collaboration with Non-Government Organisations and International Organizations must facilitate training programmes for children, taking into consideration their perceptions and misconceptions.
- The Ministry of Education must identify teachers who can be trained in each school whom children can trust and talk to about issues surrounding their concerns about violence and rape.
- The Ministry of Education must implement national and local Child Protection Policies to protect children from physical and sexual abuse by staff as well as training of teachers in alternative effective non-violent forms of discipline. Corporal punishment must be addressed in the new Education Law.
- The Ministry of Health must include rape and domestic violence in their list of public health concerns.
- The Ministry of Health must provide in-service training for all health sector professionals, including medical staff and traditional health practitioners, in recording reported cases and in the referral and treatment of victims of violence and rape.
- The Ministry of Health must actively promote public information materials and improve communication between health, legal women's groups and other service providers.
- The Domestic Violence Law must not leave 'discipline' as a loop hole for abusers.

Some Recommendations to Non-Government Organizations, International Organizations and policy makers

- Every NGO and IO must have a Child Protection Policy that is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure children are not at risk of violence or sexual abuse whilst in contact with the adults in the organization.
- More psychological support and counselling services must be provided for victims of rape and domestic violence.
- The needs of boys who are sexually abused must be considered. At present very few NGOs have the resources to deal with boys who have been sexually abused or exploited, but this survey illustrates that boys are as much in need of support as girls.

- Prevention strategies must include educating the perpetrators and the potential perpetrators as well as the victims.
- Child rape must not be seen to be a taboo topic with children when so many are exposed to it in different forms. Topics must be addressed in a language that children understand and using methods that are appropriate.
- Children must receive non-violent self protection training including how to identify and inform a safe adult.
- Parent classes must include awareness of the dangers of using excessive violence and non-violent, non-abusive alternatives of discipline.

Some Recommendations to researchers / practitioners

- Children must be given the chance to make a contribution to policy and planning.
- Some researchers suggest questionnaire surveys with children are not useful but this survey has demonstrated that much useful data can be obtained especially when used in collaboration with qualitative methods.
- This survey could be used in other countries in the region and beyond to determine prevalence and perceptions.
- The use of drama is a positive and fun way of exploring children's perceptions and a tool to encourage dialogue.
- More exploration is needed to explore whether drama can be used in developing children's resilience to situations and drawing out their optimism and ideas of moving forward after abuse has occurred.
- More child friendly research methodologies are needed. Children are looking for a world that is free of rape and violence and those of us in positions of authority need to explore ways in which this can be achieved, by taking our responsibilities seriously and involving children in the process.

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APPENDIX:

CHILDREN'S POINT OF VIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

We would like to thank all children who help us by filling out this questionnaire. This is not a test, but we really want to know your point of view.

We hope that this survey will be helpful for adults who wish to help children. We will keep your answer confidential and we will not divulge any of this to your teachers or parents.

Please fill out this questionnaire with the best of your abilities and tick the appropriate box or write down the answer you think is right.

Part I:

1. Are you a boy or a girl? Boy Girl



13

14

2. How old are you? 12 13 14 15

3. What kind of family are you from? (Please choose only one answer)



With Parents with Mother only with Grandma only with older sister

Please specify if you live with other people who are not mentioned in the above pictures:

4. What is your religion? (Please choose only one answer)



Buddhism Islam (Cham) Christian/Catholic Chinese religion

Please specify if you believe in another religion not mentioned above: _____

5. Which kind of house do you live in? (Please choose only one answer)



Thatched house Tin roofed wooden house Tiled wooden house Tile concrete house with wooden 1st floor

Please write or draw if you live in other kinds of house that are not shown in the pictures:

A. Children are being bullied by children



1. Have you heard of children being bullied by other children at your school?
- Yes No
2. How frequently are children bullied by other children at your school or community?
(Please choose only one answer)
- a). Never happens b). Sometimes happens c). Happens everyday
3. What other reasons are the children bullied by other children? (You can choose more than one answer)
- a). Disable b). Poor c). Gender d). Ethnicity e). Religion
- f). Other, please specify _____

4. Do you think bullying is...? (Please choose only one answer)

- a). Always right b). Sometimes right/ Sometimes wrong c). Always Wrong

5. Who can help the child who has been bullied? (You can choose more than one answer)

- a). Parents b). Neighbor c). Village leader d). Religious leader

- e). Relatives f). Teachers g). Friends h). Other, please specify _____

6. How can they help those children?

7. Who can correct children who bully or mistreat other children? (You can choose more than one answer)

- a). Parents b). Neighbors c). Village Chief d). Police

- e). Head of Religion f). Teachers g). Relatives h.) Friends

- i). Other, please specify _____

8. How can they help those children?

9. What should the school or community do to put an end to these kinds of bullying of children?

B. Teacher is beating a student



1. Have you heard a child being beaten by teachers at school? Yes No
2. Normally, what kind of punishments does teacher use and how? (You can choose more than one answer)
 - a). Beat with stick
 - b). Beat with hand
 - c). Make error and give advice
 - d). Other punishments, please specify _____
3. How frequently does beating of students happen in your school? (Please choose only one answer)
 - a). Never happens
 - b). Sometimes happens
 - c). Happens every day

4. Do you think the beating a child is ...? (Please choose only one answer)
- a). Always right b). Sometimes right/ Sometimes wrong c). Always wrong
5. What kind of punishment should the teacher use? (You can choose more than one answer)
- a). Beat with stick b). Beat with hand c). Make the error known and give advice d). Other punishments, please specify _____

6. If you think that teachers should beat a child in which cases?
- a). When students are not obedient Yes No
- b). When students are lazy Yes No
- c). When students is late Yes No
- d). When students disturbs teachers Yes No
- e). When students is not clever Yes No
- f). Others, please specify:-----

7. How can teachers correct their disobedient students?
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

C. The drunken father is beating his children



1. Have you heard of parents beating their children in your community?
Yes No
2. How frequently do parents beat their children in your community? (Please choose only one answer).
a). Never b). Sometimes c). Every day
3. Do you think beating a child is...? (Please choose only one answer)
a). Always right b). Sometimes right/ sometimes wrong c). Always wrong
4. Who should stop this action? (You can choose more than one answer)
a). Parents b). Relatives c). Neighbors d). Police
e). Village Leader f). Religious leader g). Friends
h). Others, please specify _____

5. After that who else can help the child? (You can choose more than one answer)

a). Parents b). Relatives c). Neighbors d). Police

e). Village Leader f). Teacher g). Religious leader h). Friends

i). Others, please specify _____

6. How can they help the children?

7. After that who can help the parent? (You can choose more than one answer)

a). Mother/Father b). Relatives c). Neighbor d). Police

e). Village Leader f). Religious leader g). Friends

h). others, please specify _____

8. How can they help the parent?

Additional questions

1. a). Have you ever seen other children teased or mistreated? Yes No

b). Have you ever been bullied by other children because you were different? Yes No

2. a). Have you ever seen other children being beaten by their teacher? Yes No

b). Have you ever been beaten by your teacher? Yes No

3. a). Have you ever seen other children being beaten by their parent? Yes No

4. b). Have you very been beaten by your parents? Yes No

Part II:

D. Child trafficking



1. Have you seen or heard of children being sold in your community? Yes No
2. How frequently does this happen in your community? (Please choose only one answer)
a). Never happens b). Sometimes happens c). Happens every day
3. Do you think child being sold is ...? (Please choose only one answer)
a). Always right b). Sometimes right/Sometimes wrong c). Always wrong
4. Why are children being sold?
.....
.....
.....

5. Who should help children who are sold? (You can choose more than one answer)
- a). Parents b). Relative c). Neighbors d). Police e). Village leader
- f). Head of Religion g). Friends h). Others, please specify _____

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6. How can they help children being sold?

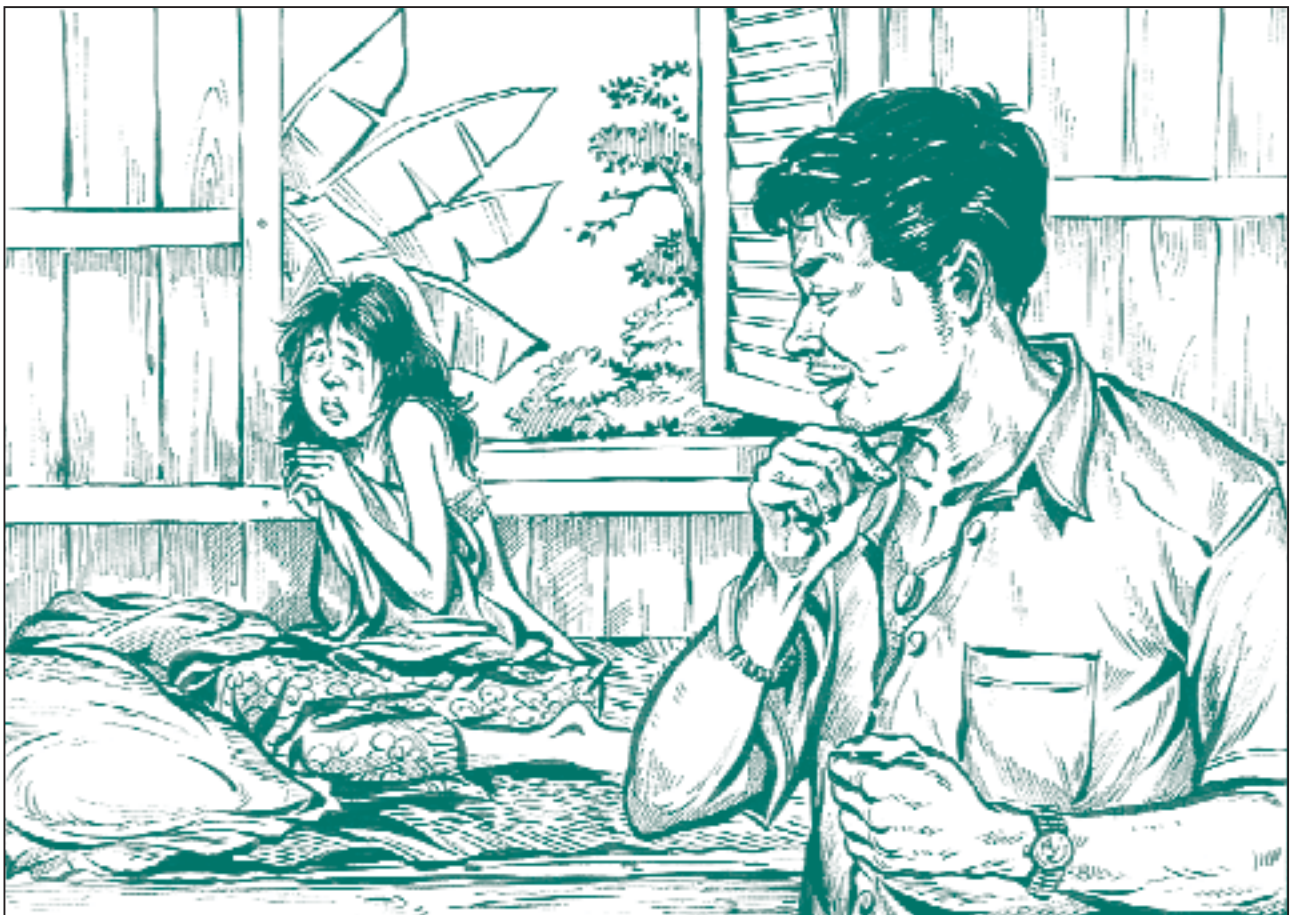
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E. Sexual abuse on children at domicile



1. Have you heard about children being rape in your community? Yes No
2. What kind of children who are raped by the adult?
 - a). Girl b). Boy c). Both boy and girl
3. How frequently does rape of children by adults happen in your community? (Please choose only one answer)
 - a). Never happens b). Sometimes happens c). Happens every day
4. Do you think the rape of children by adult...? (Please choose only one answer)
 - a). Always right b). Sometimes right/ Sometimes wrong c). Sometime wrong
5. What happens to a children's situation after they have been raped?

6. Who can help the children after they have been raped? (You can choose more than one answer)
 - a). Parents b). Neighbors c). Police d). Village leader
7.
 - e). Doctors f). Friends g).Religious leader h).Relatives
 - i). Others:-----

8. How can they help?

9. Who can help to change adults who have committed child rape? (You can choose more than one answer)
 - a). Parents b). Neighbors c). Police d). Village leader
 - e). Doctors f). Friends g).Religious leader h).Relatives
 - i). Others:-----

10. Can a child who has been raped ever get married? Yes No

11. How can rape be prevented?

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F. A teenager robs a woman



1. Have you heard of robberies of adults by teenagers using violence in your community? Yes No
2. How frequently does this happen in your community? (Please choose only one answer)
- a). Never happens b). Sometimes happens c). Happens every day

3. Do you think a robbery by teenage gangs is...? (Please choose only one answer)
- a). Always right b). Sometimes right/ Sometimes wrong c). Always wrong

4. Why do teenagers do robbery of adult with violence?

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5. Who can correct those teenagers? (You can choose more than one answer)

- a). Parents b). Neighbors c). Police d). Village leader e). Doctors
- f). Friends g). Religious leader h). Relatives
- i). Others:.....

6. How can they help those teenagers?

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7. Who can help the victims? (You can choose more than one answer)

- a). Relative b). Neighbors c). Police d). Village leader
- e). Religious leader f). Friends g). Others, please specify

Additional questions:

1. a). Do you know a child who have been sold? Yes No
- b). Have you ever been sold by an adult? Yes No
- a). Do you know any children who have been rape by an adult? Yes No
- b). Have you ever witnesses a rape of another child by an adult? Yes No

- c). Have you ever been raped by an adult? Yes No
- d). Have you ever been sexually touch by an adult on the genitals? Yes No
- (i). Before aged 9 years Yes No
- (ii). After 9 years Yes No
- a). Have you ever seen an adult being robbed with violence? Yes No
- b). Have you ever robbed an adult at gunpoint? Yes No

2. In your opinion how serious are these types of violence? (Please choose only one answer)

A. Child being bullied by other children

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

B. Teacher beating the child

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

C. parent beating child

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

D. Children being trafficked

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

E. Sexual abuse of the children

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

F. Teenager using violence against adult in robbery

- 1). Extremely serious 2). Serious 3). Less serious Not serious

3. If you have more time draw a picture another kind of violence against children not mentioned above then explain your picture.

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