

# The Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project

A Chab Dai study on (Re-)integration: Researching the lifecycle of sexual exploitation & trafficking in Cambodia

End of Year Progress Report 2012

Authors: Siobhan Miles, Heang Sophal, Lim Vanntheary, Orng Long Heng, Julia Smith-Brake & Dane So

Edited by: Julia Smith-Brake



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A Chab Dai Study on (Re-)integration  
Researching the Lifecycle of Survivors of Sexual  
Exploitation and Trafficking

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**Chab Dai Coalition**

*Christians Working Together to End Sexual Abuse and Trafficking*

December 2012

Colleagues,

My gratitude goes to our Butterfly research team who have worked tirelessly and travelled to remote villages throughout the year to gather primary data, but who also act as a support structure to these survivors that they have come to know over the past three years.

The results of this years butterfly research report have further opened our eyes to the issues facing survivors not just in respect of their healing and reintegration experiences but also of the deeper cultural, community and family issues.

These factors highlighted in this report are constant issues that have contributed to their original vulnerability factors before exploitation and trafficking, as well as to their journey of rehabilitation and now in their quest for acceptance back into their families and communities which are still struggling with the same vulnerability factors as previously.

I truly believe this research will not only help us understand many of the challenges of reintegration but will also contribute to a deeper understanding of many of the vulnerability factors facing the communities, families and survivors. These factors impact not only the reintegration but can help us develop appropriate prevention strategies from a greater understanding of the life cycle of the survivors who have graciously given us a window onto their lives.

This research is not only dedicated to these survivors facing constant challenges but also to the amazing staff within our partner organisations who have committed their lives to supporting and walking this journey with them. Without their perseverance and passion there would be little hope.

Sincerely

Helen Sworn  
Founder and International Director  
Chab Dai





December 10, 2012

On this Human Rights Day, I wanted to address the importance of producing knowledge that is useful for the anti-slavery community. Although there are 20-27 million slaves in the world today, very little is still known in terms of what causes slavery, let alone what happens to those survivors who are liberated from human trafficking. To that end, I am very grateful to have begun a partnership with Chab Dai's Butterfly Project—a longitudinal study of survivors in Cambodia.

Last summer, I visited Chab Dai for three weeks and had a series of productive meetings with the Butterfly Project research team, led by Siobhan Miles under the leadership of Helen Sworne. I was impressed not only with the collegiality and professionalism at Chab Dai, but also the academic rigor with which the Butterfly Project team is developing and implementing its research design.

Starting next year, I will contribute to the Butterfly Project by helping the team interpret the inferential statistics from the novel dataset they are constructing on survivorship amongst over one hundred participants. This is information that we will seek to present at the 2013 University of Nebraska Human Trafficking Symposium in the United States and then later submit for publication with the journal *Human Rights Quarterly*. I anticipate that, as more data comes in next year and the year after, the Butterfly Project team and I will have disseminate additional academic publications that will inform scholars and practitioners more on the lives of survivors over time.

Sincerely,

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	5
Table of contents .....	8
List of Figures .....	9
Acronyms & Abbreviations .....	10
Executive Summary.....	11
Discourse Regarding Definitions .....	15
Introduction .....	17
Paradigm Shift in Cambodian Policy .....	20
Methodology & Design.....	21
Main Findings and Discussion.....	28
Assistance Programs .....	32
Relationships & Family.....	43
Physical & Emotional Integrity .....	61
Economic Reintegration.....	86
Culture & Religion.....	100
Recommendations.....	111
References.....	113
Appendices .....	118

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2: Participants by Age .....	29
Figure 3: Participants' Ethnicity .....	29
Figure 3: Sexual Partner Activity .....	67
Figure 4: Condom Use among Sexually Active Participants .....	68
Figure 5: Income Earning Participants' Main Job .....	90
Chart 1: Participants' Current Residence .....	31
Chart 2: Participants by Type of Assistance Program .....	32
Chart 3: What place (residential setting) having you lived in the past four months? .....	33
Chart 4: Types of Assistance Support .....	34
Chart 5: Who have you felt you could trust over the past year? .....	44
Chart 7: I feel generally support emotionally by my close relationships .....	45
Chart 6: Who do you feel you can trust the most? .....	45
Chart 8: I felt generally supported emotionally by my close relationships over the past year .....	46
Chart 9: What were your main responsibilities in the past year? .....	58
Chart 10: Physical Health of Participants Compared to Last Year .....	61
Chart 11: Emotional well-being comparison over time .....	62
Chart 12: Sexual Preference among Participants .....	65
Chart 13: Pressure to Have Sex .....	66
Chart 14: Participants' Knowledge of STIs .....	67
Chart 15: STI Testing and Treatment among Participants .....	68
Chart 16: Methods of contraception among females .....	71
Chart 17: Number of pregnancies among females .....	72
Chart 18: Number of live births among females .....	72
Chart 19: Number of living children among females .....	72
Chart 20: Experiences of Sexual Harassment .....	78
Chart 21: Experiences of Cigarette Use among Participants .....	81
Chart 22: People Who Encouraged Participants to Smoke .....	82
Chart 23: Exposure to Cigarette Use among Participants .....	82
Chart 24: Experience of Drug Use among Participants .....	83
Chart 25: Exposure for Drug Use among Participants .....	83
Chart 26: Experience of Alcohol Abuse among Participants .....	85
Chart 27: Formal Education of Participants .....	86
Chart 28: Desire for Further Education among Participants .....	87
Chart 29: Participants' Knowledge of and Access to Training Opportunities .....	88
Chart 30: Participants' Current Employment .....	89
Chart 31: Job Satisfaction among Income Earning Participants .....	91
Chart 32: Participants' Perception of Exploitation in Current Employment .....	92
Chart 33: Perceptions of Relations in the Community .....	103
Chart 34: Perception of Acceptance in the Community .....	103
Picture 1: Activities in the Shelter .....	37
Picture 2: Activities in the Shelter .....	37
Picture 3: Emotional support from close relationships .....	47
Picture 4: Family Visits .....	53
Picture 5: Family Visits .....	54
Ranking Chart 1: What are qualities in a person you can trust? .....	43
Ranking Chart 2: Ways Children Under 12 Can Support Their Families .....	57
Ranking Chart 3: Ways Children Over 12 Can Support Their Families .....	57
Ranking Chart 4: Reasons for Incurring Debt .....	98
Ranking Chart 5: Perceptions of Chbab Srey .....	100
Ranking Chart 6: Perceptions of Values in Cambodia Society .....	102
Table 1: Number of Study Participants Over 3 Field Visits in 2012 .....	28
Table 2: Perceptions of Family Financial Responsibility .....	55

## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AP	Assistance Programs (In general: residential or community based)
CP	Community Program
DA	Declined Assistance
FGD	Focus group discussion
IDI	In-depth Interviews
MoSAVY	Ministry of of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RP	Residential Program
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Please note: *Italics* used throughout the report are done for researcher's emphasis only.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the third end of year progress report for the Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project, a Chab Dai Study on (Re-)integration: Researching the Lifecycle of Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking in Cambodia. The purpose of this report is to communicate progress and findings for 2012. Recruitment of participants was closed in December 2011 and the sample size has been set at 128 participants. An average of 107 participants attended each of the three field visits conducted throughout the year.

During 2012, because the sample size was large enough, and remained stable across the research time frame, more significant statistical analysis was possible than the previous year. Although the majority of study participants were still in their respective assistance programs (APs), whether residential (RP) or community programs (CPs), a larger number have also begun the reintegration process, and 5% have completed reintegration; that is, they are no longer part of any assistance program.

The overriding objective of the Butterfly Longitudinal Research is to better understand, from the participants' perspectives, what the (re-)integration process is like for them over a ten-year period. Our purpose is to understand what makes them more resilient and what makes them more vulnerable, yet at this early point in the longitudinal study such conclusions are not yet possible. We have used a mixed methods approach to enquire about the participants' current perceptions, views and experiences, and about their expectations for the futures. A small number of participants voluntarily described some of their experiences before their sexual exploitation.

## PARADIGM SHIFT

In 2011, Cambodia's Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation published the Prakas on Procedures to Implement the Policy on Alternative Care for Children as a follow-up to the 2006 Policy on Alternative Care for Children. The Prakas "provides detailed guidance on identification of vulnerable children, not only children at risk of separation but also other vulnerabilities, so that they can be referred to relevant services at sub-national level; assessment of the situation of children and their families in order to preserve or reunify families; provision of appropriate services of alternative care as a temporary solution, and permanency planning including domestic adoption and inter-country adoption; and follow-up on cases" (p. 3). The Prakas gives each level of government and society roles and responsibilities to effectively implement alternative care programs: commune councils, district offices and provincial departments of social affairs, district and provincial councils with the women and children consultative committees, and the child welfare department of MoSAVY. It stresses the importance of family preservation; allows family separation only as last resort; and, when separation occurs, prioritizing reunification.

This shift from residential to community-based care will affect residential facilities in that they are strongly encouraged to move towards reintegrating their residents back into their families and communities. The shift also entails a move away from long-term residential care, and seeks to enforce community-based solutions to vulnerability.

## PARTICIPANT PROFILES & CONTEXT

Study participants vary in age, gender, ethnicity, and their situational context. By the end of 2012, 50 percent of the participants were 18 years and older and 50 percent were children (under 18 years); 83 percent were females and 17 percent were males. Though the number of males is comparatively low (and therefore may not be representative), we still feel it important to include them as we believe there will be an increase in research and programs working with this group in the future. In addition, we believe the number of male participants is sufficiently high enough to make some comparisons between males and females.

Unexpectedly, participants' stated ethnicity changed from last year to this year. The number of participants' stating they were ethnic Cambodians increased from 65 percent to 69 percent. Other significant changes were "Vietnamese" ethnicity increased from 10% to 13%, "Khmer and Chinese" decreased from 10% to 4%, and "Khmer and Cham" increased from 1% to 4%. Other ethnicities remained stable from the previous year. Questions around ethnicity will remain open to change in the future, as it is now thought that participants may be more honest about their true ethnicity as the research team gains and maintains their trust, and as participants' confidence around their identity increases. Most participants were in residential programs (RPs) in 2012, although the number decreased from 2011 and as the year progressed. Because most participating RPs, as well as training and transition home programs, are in the capital city and main provincial towns, the majority of participants have resided in these geographic areas of the country over the past year.

## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **Assistance Programs**

There were 12 different types of assistance support named by the participants; the largest percentage (45%) responded they were in a shelter program.

Participants described a variety of differing perceptions and expectations of their respective assistance support. Many participants in shelter programs expressed their experiences and expectations for security, emotional support, and access to education and skills training. Overall, a main theme that emerged in the experience of participants was that of balancing the opportunities afforded them by assistance programs with the frustrations of certain aspects of assistance programs and of being away from family. An observation was that shelter programs did not realize to what extent this balance was difficult for residents; both the pain of missing family terribly and the stress of thinking about their family's struggles. Some participants expressed their preference to live with their families, but that they chose stay in shelters, or were encouraged to remain in the shelter by their parents, for the sake of access to education.

Participants in residential programs spoke positively of many aspects of shelter life, including opportunities for study and training, and adequate food and shelter. One of the frustrations expressed by participants was the institutional aspect of their assistance program experience. There was also an observed dichotomy between freedom and responsibility. Despite the desire for and enjoyment of increased freedom, some participants stated they did not like the increased responsibilities that came with more autonomy.

Participants' views on reintegration assistance ranged widely; some felt they were enabled to do well while others were very disappointed by the assistance, or lack thereof, provided them during their reintegration process. Participants appeared to express either great satisfaction or great dissatisfaction with the reintegration assistance they were receiving. In the experience of some participants, the shelter out of which they were transitioning provided more holistic and individualized reintegration assistance, which took into account the needs of their family, their livelihood and their education.

### **Relationships & Family**

Many participants had both positive and negative things to say about their relationships with different people in their lives. The complexity of relationships and how these relationships were navigated and balanced seemed to cause anxiety in many participants. The overarching theme in talking about relationships was trust. It was a major issue of sadness and anxiety for participants to find someone in their lives they could trust, particularly someone they could trust enough to disclose their past involvement in sex work. Participants were also asked extensively about their emotional support networks, and generally stated they felt emotionally supported.

Relationships with peers at school tended to be the most tumultuous for many of the participants still attending school. Relationships in shelter settings were both positive and negative. Many participants either spoke about liking the shelter setting because of the positive relationships with shelter staff, teachers, and other residents; or, that they did not like the shelter setting due to conflicts with their peers and staff.

Generally, it was observed that most intimate relationships, whether married or unmarried, in which participants were involved were unhealthy, fluid, and often traumatic. In general, the women participants who were not in relationships were doing better emotionally and psychologically than those in relationships. A major issue impacting relationships negatively is unfaithfulness, usually on the part of the husband. Past experiences, and observing peers in harmful intimate relationships, play a big part in female participants' view on their own relational future.

The participants' family relationships are enormously complex, probably more so than other relationships. Participants miss their families immensely when they are in residential assistance programs and they long to return home. On the other hand, families sometimes were involved in trafficking participants. Whether or not families were involved in trafficking participants, talking about family often elicits conflicted emotions and responses. Participants mostly had strong opinions about family, and their family relationships played largely into their emotional well-being. Participants had conflicting views on responsibilities towards family, and often contradicted themselves when stating an opinion as opposed to how they act in reality. Overwhelmingly, participants agreed that the best way to support one's family in to obey one's parents.

Relationship issues are important to the reintegration process, and participants often find themselves navigating difficult, and sometimes very risky, relational situations when they re-enter the community. Communities are often unprepared to receive a survivor back home, and participants often feel alone and marginalised away from assistance programs.

### **Emotional & Physical Integrity**

There was a high incidence of illness reported among participants throughout the year; female participants reported a higher incidence of illness than males. Ill health and lack of access to health care are major sources of stress and worry for participants, particularly those in the community or reintegrating into their family. They described its negative impact on family resources and the family's ability to earn money.

Perceptions and experiences of sexuality is a difficult issue to discuss with survivors of sexual exploitation. While some did not wish to speak of it at all, others were open about their experiences. Twenty six percent (26%) of female participants reported having been sexually active in the past year, and most stated they had not felt pressured to have sex. Participants had a generally low level of knowledge on STIs and how to prevent STIs and the majority of sexually active participants reported never using a condom. On the other hand, a majority of sexually active females stated always using some form of contraception to avoid getting pregnant. Pregnancy affected participants' intimate relationships and was viewed in different lights, often because of good or bad intimate relationships.

From each visit to the next during the year, the incidence of physical and emotional violence experienced by participants decreased, especially for males. This may be explained because between the first and second field visit, many male participants began the reintegration process back into their families and communities, and many of the boys who left the shelter were the ones who were bullying the others. Participants were asked to describe *who* had been emotionally violent towards them over the past year and their answers were very diverse, including shelter staff and shelter or transition home peers, peers at school, family, relatives, coworkers and fellow churchgoers.

The incidence of sexual harassment was low throughout the year; interestingly, incidences of sexual harassment increased in female participants with age. Most sexual harassment was reported to have happened at the participants' place of work.

Participants were asked about their use of various substances, including cigarettes, illicit drugs, and alcohol. Most participants stated they had been encouraged by peers to use such substances, although most participants stated they had not encouraged their peers to use such substances. Consistently, female participants also stated Karaoke lounge customers encouraged them to use such substances.

### **Economic Reintegration**

During the 2012 research year, issues of economic well-being, potential, and reintegration were major themes and concerns among most participants, particularly those who began the reintegration process. Cross-cutting themes already mentioned in the above findings include participants' concern for their family's economic situation, trying to stay in school or a training program to be able to provide for themselves and family later in life, and links between economic survival and past involvement or re-entry into sexual exploitation.

Participants were at varying levels of education and vocational training, and continuing on in their education and training was a concern. One of the critiques of institutional care is the skills training available in residential settings do not prepare survivors for the real job market, and do not offer a wide variety of skills training, leaving survivors with few options for what they can study in the present or where they can work in the future. Some of the barriers to further education included lack of knowledge and access to training opportunities, lack of monetary resources, and ill health.

The majority of participants who worked did so within an assistance program. Job satisfaction was relatively high. Migration for employment opportunities was a common occurrence, and often participants' family members migrated for work even if they knew the risks involved. Many participants also spoke of starting their own business. Supporting one's family financially is a major concern and source of anxiety for participants. When participants spoke of where they would like to be and what work they would like to do in the future, family considerations were a major contributing factor.

Most participants in the process of reintegration are reintegrating into situations of poverty, sometimes extreme poverty. Money, debt, and supporting themselves and their families are a constant source of anxiety and preoccupation for participants. Participants' perceptions and experiences of poverty vary but some common themes

which emerged include how low-paid unskilled work perpetuates poverty, and how children reared in poverty are exposed to greater risks and fewer basic opportunities.

## **Culture & Religion**

Issues discussed with participants on culture and religion included explorations of the Chbab Srey code of conduct for women, perceptions of cultural expectations, perceptions and consequences of class division in Cambodian society, stigma and discrimination against participants, and spirituality and religion.

Participants were asked to consider how their views on Chbab Srey pertained to them personally in their contexts. Many younger participants did not seem overly concerned with following the codes of Chbab Srey. Many of the older female participants felt they had lost their chance to truly be Chbab Srey women because of their past, but still wanted the code to be applied to their own female children.

Participants were asked to reflect on Cambodian cultural values and discrimination in their society. Reasons for why they discriminated against included their past sexual exploitation, personality conflicts, background of poverty, sexual orientation, and physical disability. Participants also reported they felt discriminated against when they were not perceived to adhere to appropriate cultural conduct, such as a young woman going out at night.

Some participants described feeling shunned and excluded by fellow classmates and teachers because they were considered poor. Among those who felt discriminated against because of their poverty, the majority felt anger and disgust toward their wealthier classmates. Participants described their intentionality to seek out peers similar to their economic level and to generally avoid the wealthy children in their schools. Political affiliation was also linked to class discrimination, as participants who stated economic differences also referred to political differences.

## **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

The purpose of this study is to ultimately understand more about the lives of people who have been sexually exploited in the long-term, long after they have left their respective assistance programs. Therefore, we feel privileged and excited to follow the lives of the participants in our study, starting from their time in APs and through their (Re-)integration back into Cambodian society and beyond. We are certain this longitudinal approach will provide useful data about (re-)integration that can be of use to APs and all interested stakeholders who seek to help improve the lives of those who have been sexually exploited in Cambodia.

We have now completed the third year of this longitudinal study. The first year was preliminary and was primarily about introducing the concept to stakeholders, and developing the overall design and questionnaire survey instrument through focus group work. The second year was primarily about establishing relationships and agreements with APs in order to have access to potential participants. As of December 2012 we had signed Memorandums of Understanding with 13 APs, and we now have a sample of 128 participants. Although the sample is small, it will still provide rich insight into the experiences of survivors as they reintegrate. In the coming years we will work hard to maintain this sample, however we realize this might be a challenge. Over the coming years we expect to adapt this research to relevant issues as they arise and develop.

Our approach is to understand the participants' views and experiences from three angles. First, we plan to evaluate and monitor participants' present circumstances and views. Second, we plan to ask participants to look back and reflect upon their experiences and previous views. Third, we plan to examine what participants anticipate, expect, and hope for the future.

# DISCOURSE REGARDING DEFINITIONS

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Defined by the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (UN Trafficking Protocol):

“...the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum. The exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”<sup>1</sup>

## TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN

According to the UN Trafficking Protocol, trafficking of children, unlike that of adults, does not require force, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power, or vulnerability. Any recruitment or movement of a child into exploitation is considered “trafficking in person.” A child is defined as being a person under 18 years of age. This distinction is based on the principle that children cannot be equated with adults (Lim 1998).

## SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

“Child sexual exploitation” is when a child (under the age of 18) is involved in a situation or a relationship where they are being used sexually, and the child, or a third party, receives a reimbursement for this activity (money, gifts, affection or favors – e.g. alcohol, food or shelter). There are thought to be three main forms of sexual exploitation: prostitution, pornography, and trafficking for sexual exploitation. In this research we are interested in trafficking for the purposes of prostitution, the movement of children from one place to another, within a country or across a border, for the purposes of prostitution, and the exploitation of children through prostitution.

## (RE-)INTEGRATION

There is no universally accepted definition(s) of “integration” or “reintegration” (COMMIT 2010); the discussion on a common definition of (Re-)integration has evolved over time within various contexts:

In “Monitoring Anti-Trafficking Re/Integration Programs: A Manual” (Surtees 2010), successful (re-)integration is defined in the *Trafficking Victims Re/Integration Programme* (TVRP) as:

Recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience. This includes settlement in a stable and safe environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical wellbeing, and opportunities for personal, social and economic development, and access to a social and emotional support. It may involve returning to one’s family and/or community of origin; it may also involve integration in a new community and even in a new country. TVRP criteria for determining if an individual has been successfully (Re-)integration includes: 1) safe and affordable accommodation, 2) legal status, 3) professional and employment opportunities, 4) education and training opportunities, 5) security and safety, 6) healthy social environment (including anti-discrimination and anti-marginalization), 7) social wellbeing and positive interpersonal relations, 8) economic wellbeing/viability, 9) physical wellbeing, 10) mental wellbeing, 11) access to services and opportunities, 12) motivation and commitment to (Re-)integration [process, 13) legal issues and court proceedings, and 14) wellbeing of secondary beneficiaries.

## (RE-)INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE

The provision of comprehensive programs designed to (re-)integrate victims of trafficking into society. This includes actively preventing stigmatization; providing job training; legal assistance and health care; and, by taking measures to

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<sup>1</sup> A number of scholars take issue with conflating prostitution and trafficking (Andrijasevic and Anderson, 2009; Agustin, 2002; Barry, 1979, 1995; Jeness, 1990; Kempadoo, 1998). The issue which concerns them involves the wider feminist abolitionist debates on those pros and opposed to prostitution/sex work. This debate involves issues to do with consent/ coercion/ agency and migration and general view of female sexuality and male dominion. For the sake of this report the feminist debate is acknowledged but not directly addressed, as the purpose is to focus on reintegration experiences of out participants.



cooperate with NGOs provide for the social, medical, and psychological care of victims and survivors (Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, Task Force on Trafficking in Human Beings, 2001). *From our research findings we would add a provision to ensure adequate education continues in the community after leaving the assistance program.*

## **TYPES OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND DECLINED ASSISTANCE**

An objective of this research is to understand the progress and experiences of participants from different types of assistance programs as they (re-) integrate. The initial groupings in 2011 included: "residential," "community," and "declined assistance." This year, in 2012, additional groupings were added to more clearly describe the types of assistance participants are receiving.

"Reintegration Assistance" refers to any level of ongoing support after a participant has left the assistance program (usually residential). "Shelter" refers to assistance a participant receives whilst residing in the shelter. "Community Program" refers to assistance in the form of employment and, possibly, additional psychosocial support, spiritual support, and further training. "Transition Home" and "Family Group Home" refers to assistance at some level in group accommodation; it usually follows up after those who have been in shelter programs. "Training Program" refers to any participant who is undergoing a type of skills training. The participant can be out in the community or in any type of residential program while receiving this training. "Declined assistance" designates participants who originally refused to enrol in any assistance program, and may or may not currently be receiving assistance.

# INTRODUCTION

This report represents the third end-of-year progress account of the findings for the Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project, A Chab Dai Study in (Re-)integration: Researching the Lifecycle of Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking in Cambodia.

## HISTORY

During the study's first year (2010), relationships with potential assistance programs and stakeholders were explored, and the initial survey instruments were designed through a number of focus groups with consenting participants.

During the second year (2011), formal Memorandums of Understanding were agreed upon and signed between the Butterfly Research Project and 13 assistance programs. From January until December of the second year, the survey instruments were piloted and recruitment remained open for 12 months in order to establish a reasonable cohort that fit the inclusion criteria. Though the sample size grew throughout the year, baseline data was obtained and that year was similar to a cross-sectional piece of research.

During the third year (2012), the official cohort has been 128 participants and the focus of in-depth interviews has been on capturing the initial reintegration experiences of those who left their programs this past year. It is anticipated that, as the years progress, comparisons, trends, and themes will yet emerge.

## DESIGN

The design and approach of the Butterfly project is unique in that participants in the study are survivors themselves, describing their perceptions and experiences of reintegration in real time. According to Bosworth (2011), there are few qualitative academic studies of victim/survivor experiences of trafficking telling their account of their own experiences. Rather, the research about trafficking and sexual exploitation focuses on legal, policy, or theoretical issues (Dozema, 2002; Gozdziaik & Collett, 2005; Lee, 2007, 2011; Munro, 2006), or on estimating numbers of victims (Tyldum, 2005). This study about reintegration post-sexual exploitation is unique in the fact that it is longitudinal and prospective in its approach.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to communicate our progress and findings for 2012.

## BACKGROUND

Chab Dai, which means "joining hands" in Khmer (Cambodian), was founded in 2005 with the aim of bringing an end to trafficking and sexual exploitation through coalition building, community prevention, advocacy, and research. For over 10 years Chab Dai coalition members, local and international government bodies, local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other national networks have been working to address sexual exploitation and trafficking in Cambodia. Among existing assessment and assistance programs there has been a desire to find out what becomes of victims and survivors in the long term, as they (re-) integrate and what is the purpose of increasing knowledge and raising the capacity of caregivers addressing issues of sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking. The Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project is part of this exploration.

## CHANGING CONTEXT

The Cambodian Government has committed to a paradigm shift in how government ministries and service providers should implement alternative care for children. Notably, there is a move away from residential care and toward promoting community-based care for children. This will potentially impact the Butterfly research, as the majority of the participants are currently in, or have very recently transitioned out of, residential care facilities. For more on this significant change of context for the care of underage survivors of trafficking, see the next chapter, "Paradigm Shift in Cambodian Policy."

## OBJECTIVES

Overall this research seeks to:

- Explore and describe the prospective (Re-)integration experiences of participating survivors using a mixed-methods approach.

- Look *forward* in order to understand what participants expect and hope for their futures; look *back* to explore what participants did and did not find helpful in their (Re-)integration process; and to explore what participants' lives are like in the *present*.

### Key Questions

- How do participants define successful (Re-)integration? How do perceptions of success change over time?
- What are the perceptions and attitudes of survivors after they return back to their community?
- What are the challenges of survivors of sexual trafficking and exploitation over time? How do they solve those problems?
- What types of discrimination and "glass ceilings" can we understand based on demographics?
- What are the positives and negatives of program assistance?
- What is the communication level between participants and their community after reintegration?
- What is the impact of the participant's physical health after sexual exploitation?
- What effect does Christian intervention have on the identity of survivors in a Buddhist society?

### DISSEMINATION AND IMPACT OF RESEARCH

One of Chab Dai's core values is knowledge for sharing. We are committed to working together and providing opportunities for learning. One of the primary goals of carrying out specific research studies is to make recommendations at both program and advocacy levels. The Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project is committed to disseminating its findings on every level possible and to engaging in dialogue on the issues at play, as well as recommending policy and program level change based on these findings. It is our hope that this research fosters discussion on how better to serve survivors of trafficking; challenges government to take more and better action; promotes and enables further academic research into trafficking issues; and, contributes to a coordinated and collaborative effort to end sexual exploitation and trafficking once and for all. Thus far, the Butterfly research project has been disseminated and has had an impact on several levels of stakeholders.

#### Grassroots Level

It is an integral objective of the project to use, as much as possible, words directly spoken by survivors of sexual exploitation and trafficking. We believe that each and every person has intrinsic value and dignity, and that survivors are agents of their own stories. Qualitative research methods are extensively used in this research project because we want to give survivors space and opportunity to use their own voice and say what they want to say.

#### Coalition Level

There are 13 organisations involved in this study and the research is continually shared with them, mainly through Chab Dai's Aftercare Forum, in order to help them better serve the survivors in their care. The participating organisations have communicated their ongoing support and appreciation for the impact this research will have on their work.

**"In working with survivors of sex trafficking, one of the most critical questions Transitions has asked is, 'How effective are we?' While there are many factors defining success, one of the most vital are the voices of the survivors themselves. While our program does a large amount of follow-up and continued contact with survivors, the Butterfly Research Project is the first of its kind; looking at a 10-year trajectory to help all of us understand the long-term impact of the work we are doing today. Each year, the insights from this program assist us in evaluating how we will work with girls in treatment tomorrow and beyond." – James Pond, MA, CEO, Transitions**

**"The Butterfly research provides great insight into the needs, beliefs, thoughts, and values of the clients we work with. This valuable information helps us to tailor our interventions and care model to truly reflect the needs of our clients. The Butterfly Research is an invaluable tool for all organisations working within the field of trafficking and sexual exploitation in Cambodia." – Management, Citipointe She Rescue Home**

The coalition as a whole is also kept up to date with the research as each progress report is delivered and can work better together with the up-to-date information on survivors' experiences. A new feature in this year's report is certain recommendations are made to the coalition (as opposed to only to the assistance programs involved in the study); the research team offers suggestions to the coalition on how the network can work together on certain bigger picture issues.

### **Government Level**

Chab Dai leadership sits on, and co-chairs, the National Committee for the Protection, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration of Survivors of Human Trafficking. Chab Dai can thus network with many high level officials and has disseminated the Butterfly findings at a government level. The U.S. State Department, which produces the annual Trafficking in Persons report, has also recognized Chab Dai's contribution to anti-trafficking research. It has been recognized that the Butterfly research is the only longitudinal research of this scale in the world.

### **Regional Level**

UNIAP produces the SIREN newsletter on research in Southeast Asia and has reported on the Butterfly research in this publication. In addition, Dr. Rebecca Surtees is conducting a research study on the experiences of survivors of labour and sex trafficking in several countries in Southeast Asia; she has coordinated with Chab Dai and has not researched in Cambodia, as the goal her research is very similar to the Butterfly project's. Surtees' research and the Butterfly research will be very complimentary and, together, will provide a comprehensive picture of survivors' experiences in all of Southeast Asia.

### **Global & Academic Level**

The Butterfly research has been shared in various academic settings around the world. For instance, findings from the study were shared on a webinar entitled "Going Home: How Do Children Feel About, and What Are the Experiences of Children, Going Home?" The webinar was offered by The Child Recovery and Reintegration Network, based in the United Kingdom. Chab Dai has presented the Butterfly research findings for the last two years at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln's annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Human Trafficking. The project has also connected with Dr. Monti Datta, of the University of Richmond, Virginia, who has provided much useful expertise on statistical analysis and will be further collaborating with Chab Dai to more broadly disseminate the Butterfly findings.

# PARADIGM SHIFT IN CAMBODIAN POLICY

In 2006, the Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSAVY) introduced a new Policy on Alternative Care for Children. The policy divided “alternative care” into two categories: institutional/residential care (e.g. orphanages and shelters) and non-institutional/non-residential care (e.g. foster care, kinship care). It outlined a change in priority, away from institutional forms of care for children, which have been a primary response, especially by international NGOs, for caring for vulnerable children.<sup>2</sup> The policy states, “several studies have shown that the placement of children in long term institutional care can have a negative impact in terms of development and expose them to discrimination, exploitation, etc. [sic], thus highlighting the need to promote non-residential care” (p.12). The policy also clearly states family and community-based care are the best option for alternative care and that residential care should be both a last resort and a temporary solution; the responsibility of protecting and caring for children should rest primarily with their family. The main components of the policy include the constraints, opportunities, and strategies of alternative care for children; general and specific objectives of different forms of alternative care and for children with particular needs (e.g. children affected by HIV/AIDS); responsibilities of government and alternative care providers; and, definitions and issues related to particular types of vulnerability (e.g. orphaned children, sexually exploited children).

In 2008, follow-up documents were published by MoSAVY, including the Prakas on Minimum Standards on Residential Care for Children and the Prakas Minimum Standards Applicable to Alternative Care for Children in the Community. These documents provided guidelines on how best to care for children in alternative care settings. In the last five years, more research was done into the impact of residential care and, in 2011, UNICEF published an influential study called *With the Best Intentions: A Study of Attitudes towards Residential Care in Cambodia*. The study found between 2005 and 2010, the number of children in residential care in Cambodia increased by more than 90% and states this increase does not comply with Cambodia’s Policy on Alternative Care, nor with the principles set out at the Stockholm conference on Children and Residential Care, the 2010 UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF 2001, p. 12-13). The UNICEF study was a lead up to more rigorous implementation of the 2006 Policy on Alternative Care of Children.

In 2011, MoSAVY published the Prakas on Procedures to Implement the Policy on Alternative Care for Children, which “provides detailed guidance on identification of vulnerable children, not only children at risk of separation but also other vulnerabilities, so that they can be referred to relevant services at sub-national level; assessment of the situation of children and their families in order to preserve or reunify families; provision of appropriate services of alternative care as a temporary solution, and permanency planning including domestic adoption and inter-country adoption; and follow-up on cases” (p. 3). The Prakas gives each level of government and society roles and responsibilities to effectively implement alternative care programs: commune councils, district offices and provincial departments of social affairs, district and provincial councils with the women and children consultative committees, and the child welfare department of MoSAVY. It stresses the importance of family preservation; allows family separation only as last resort; and, when separation occurs, prioritizing reunification.

This shift from residential to community-based care will affect residential facilities in that they are strongly encouraged to move towards reintegrating their residents back into their families and communities.

With this establishment of new policies and plans for implementation, MoSAVY has placed residential “recovery centers” for trafficked persons and other survivors under a unifying policy and set of minimum standards (previously only reserved for programs such as orphanages). These standards require all such residential care, regardless of purpose, to be short-term<sup>3</sup> while their residential caregivers search for community-based alternatives. As the implementation plan for this shift in policy has only been publicly released to the civil sector over the past few years, many NGOs addressing human trafficking are either unfamiliar with policy changes or have yet to implement them within their programs, and are therefore non-compliant with changes to RGC policy (DoCarmo 2012, p. 11).

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<sup>2</sup> The policy includes the following as children coming from situations of vulnerability: orphans, abandoned children, children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, abused children whether sexually, physically or emotionally, street children, children in conflict with the law, children victims of exploitation whether sexually or any forms of harmful labour, children with disabilities, children addicted to drugs, and children whose basic physical needs are not being met.

<sup>3</sup> While a clear definition of “short term” has not yet been explicitly defined by the RGC, some policy documents, such as the Alternative Care Implementation Plan refer to “short term” periods between three and six months.



As shelter organisations move forward, they will need to consider the shift in policy and how it will affect their rehabilitation and reintegration efforts.

## METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

### PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

During 2012, the Butterfly Research Project continued to operate under the 12 Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) signed during the study's second year (2011). In addition, another MOU was signed with an additional organization. This became necessary, as three participants transferred into this organization's assistance program during the year and for part of the year we were unable to access them because we did not have this MOU. This issue is now resolved thanks to the MOU. Access to victims of trafficking whilst in assistance programs is discussed in the literature as one of the major challenges facing researchers wanting to interview people directly (Bosworth 2011). We are fortunate in this study as organizations are generally very cooperative and supportive of the research.

### PARTICIPANTS

The sample size is a total of 128 participants. Participant recruitment closed and the number was set in December 2011, at the close of the study's second year.

#### Inclusion Criteria

To participate in the study, participants must:

- Have experiences of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking for sexual purposes, regardless of whether the participant also has any additional experiences of exploitation, trafficking for labour, sexual assault and abuse, domestic violence, etc.
- Be reintegrating within Cambodia borders to any province.<sup>4</sup> If participants migrate outside of Cambodia after reintegrating from their assistance programs, the research team will maintain contact where possible and will communicate to participant that they are welcome to return to the study when they return to Cambodia.

### METHODOLOGY

The research used a mixed-methods approach, utilizing quantitative and qualitative instruments with the intent to understand as much as possible about participants' lives as they reintegrate. Throughout the year, the various methods used included surveys, in-depth interviews (IDI), informal interviews (II), focus-group discussions (FDG), the 10 Seed Technique, and activities such as drawing and games.

#### “What” Questions: Surveys

The overall descriptive “what” questions are addressed in a three-part survey questionnaire administered over three sessions per year. The surveys are broad and cover such areas as socio-economic, education/training, employment, psychosocial, spiritual, health, and relationship issues, including stigma and discrimination.

#### “Why/How” Questions: IDI, II & FDG

In-depth Interviews were conducted with 12 participants at various times during the year. The primary focus was on those who had reintegrated during 2012 to learn about their initial experiences and perceptions of reintegration.

In the early months of 2012, 50 participants took part in semi-structured informal interviews and drawing activities. These focused on their perceptions of the highlights and challenges of their previous year and their hopes and goals for the coming year.

Throughout the year the research team conducted focus-group discussions with 40 participants from various case backgrounds including the community-based programs, the residential programs, those who declined assistance. The topics of discussion included, “What does Cambodian society value in and about people,” “What is Chbab Srey,” and “What are ways children aged under 12 years and over 12 years can help support their families?”

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<sup>4</sup> It became apparent during 2012 the research methodology needed to be more responsive and accessible to all participants, therefore the decision was made to expand the original geographic area from the 14 provinces surrounding the Tonle Sap to the whole of Cambodia.

The Butterfly Research Project has decided to use FGD sparingly in residential contexts based on the previous year's experiences of noting that peers in certain residential settings were potentially hindered from expressing themselves openly and freely. Interestingly, this experience, and resulting decision, contrasts with the MoSVY and UNICEF 2012 report, "With the Best Intentions: A Study of Attitudes towards Residential Care in Cambodia", which favoured using FGD with children in residential care because they felt peers in these setting would be more open and less restricted in their discussion and responses.

### **Ranking Questions: the 10 Seeds Technique**

The 10 Seeds Technique was used to discuss priorities and preferences among participants. Ten Seeds is a modified Participatory Learning and Action exercise, and can be implemented at a grassroots level because of its ease of use (Jayakaran 2002, p. 5). The technique consists of having a number of options to choose from and, as a group, the participants must come to a consensus on which options are most important, which are more important than others, and the reasons for agreement or disagreement among participants regarding their choices.<sup>5</sup>

### **Schedule**

The field visits with participants were conducted three times per year. Meeting participants this frequently, while decreasing the potential for attrition, has the inherent potential limitation of the interviewer's interaction affecting the interviewee's responses, raising the risk of bias (Rice and Ezzy 1999). Though aware of this potential limitation, it is felt by the research team the frequent contact over time is actually building trust with participants, which allows for more honest and open responses.

### **Data Management Programs**

SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) has been used to analyse quantitative data, and themed coding of the qualitative data is combined with grounded theory analysis (Strauss and Corbin 1990). In 2013, the research team will also utilize Atlas Ti. as a means by which to store and assist with the qualitative data.

## **NATURE AND CHALLENGES OF LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH DESIGN**

This section of the literature review will briefly review the reasons Chab Dai decided to conduct a longitudinal study on reintegration. It will define and describe longitudinal approaches, as well as highlight some of the challenges and advantages. Lastly it will comment on related longitudinal reintegration research of child soldiers in Africa.

### **Why Chab Dai Decided to Conduct a Longitudinal Study on Reintegration**

Although there are many excellent studies on reintegration of people who have been sexually exploited globally and in Cambodia, the research thus far has largely been cross-sectional or retrospective in design (DEDACE 2008; Derks 1998; Reimer 2007; Velazco 2011). In fact, it is recognized globally and in Cambodia there is a paucity of *longitudinal* studies specifically examining the reintegration experiences of people who have been sexually exploited and trafficked for sexual exploitation. There has been recommendation for such research to be done in Cambodia (Derks et al. 2006; Reimer 2007).

Chab Dai coalition members, donors and other bodies have increasingly expressed a desire for more evidenced-based information about the long-term reintegration experiences and perspectives of people leaving their programs. Such programs have wanted this information in order to inform, develop, and improve programs, with the ultimate aim to help survivors "successfully" reintegrate back into Cambodian society. Therefore, in order to gain this long-term perspective, a longitudinal design and approach was intentionally chosen for the Butterfly Research Project.

### **The Nature of Longitudinal Research Design**

In order to define what is encompassed in longitudinal design, it must first be distinguished from cross-sectional research. Cross-sectional research design entails "the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time in order to collect a body of quantifiable data in connection with two or more variables, which are then examined to detect patterns of association" (Bryman 2008). Because the data is collected at just one point in time, a major weakness with cross-sectional is poor understanding of causal processes that occur over time (Bryman 2008; Rajulton 2001).

According to Menard (2002), longitudinal design "is research in which (a) data are collected for each item or variable

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<sup>5</sup> The 10 Seeds Technique was developed by Dr. Ravi Jayakaran of World Vision International China. For more information of this technique, see Jayakaran, R. (2002). The Ten Seeds Technique. World Vision China.

for two or more distinct time periods; (b) the subjects or cases analyzed are the same or at least comparable from one period to the next; and (c) the analysis involves some comparison of data between or among periods". Rajulton (2001) also describes a major virtue of longitudinal design for social science concerns in its inherently socio-psychic dynamic. He also advises that variation that cannot be controlled prior to observation must then be recognised as variation which is due to chance. He recommends that during analysis of such data there is a need to take into account "indeterminisation" in the individual and social behaviour. He states that social science longitudinal research allows for the opportunity to examine this indeterminisation that characterises much of human behaviour (Rajulton 2001). This being said, it still must be acknowledged from the outset that "conclusive proof" of causality through longitudinal designs is impossible. However, the strength of longitudinal design over cross-sectional design remains, in that over time there is the potential possibility for stronger conclusions concerning causal relationships among variables (Taris 2003).

### **Prospective Panel Design**

According to Mendes, longitudinal research has a number of different designs. In the Butterfly research we are using a prospective panel longitudinal approach. In essence, a panel study examines the same set of people each time (Babbie 2007) and generates data on changes over time. In the Butterfly research we have established a sample set of 128 people who have consented to partake in the study. While we feel this longitudinal panel design is most appropriate for our study, we recognize such prospective panel designs have special problems and challenges as outlined below (Babbie 2007).

#### Panel Attrition

A particular and fundamental challenge and limitation of panel studies is "panel attrition" (Babbie 2007). Panel attrition simply means participants leaving our study for any multitude of reasons. "Over long periods of time, attrition of the sample definitely occurs, and thus it can then become difficult to state precisely the comparability of the initial and following samples" (Rajulton 2001).

#### Maintaining Contact

Maintaining contact with the participants and sustaining their motivation is difficult and costly (Rajulton 2001). This has been the case with some participants in the Butterfly research. Some reasons for challenges in maintaining contact with participants include: phones getting lost, sold or stolen; incompatible work schedules, weddings and funerals, frequent relocations and household moves, migrating outside of Cambodia, and even imprisonment or being "on the run from the law". In order to maintain the database the team is available by phone 24/7, and the team keeps abreast of participants' and their key close contacts' current phone numbers<sup>6</sup>. We also arrange to meet each participant every four months to collect the data. We feel meeting them less frequently may endanger even more attrition through loss of contact. In our analysis it will be useful to evaluate which participants drop out and why, whilst appreciating the practical difficulties we will face in trying to follow up with people who have left and have not left behind accurate contact details.

#### Causal Relationships

Regarding longitudinal studies providing an increased possibility linking "causal relationships," Rajulton (2001), while agreeing theoretically, in practice, he disputes this. His concerns have to do with basic questions such as: "What is the optimal length of time between interviews? How many interviews (or waves) are necessary to achieve the research objectives? How long should observation continue before a change is observed or a causal mechanism is identified, and so on" (Rajulton 2001). He claims, "It would be foolhardy to imagine that causal mechanisms can be clearly established with three or four waves. Social processes are characterized both by stability and change" (Rajulton 2001).

#### Measurement Error

Related to Rajulton's concerns about "causal relationships" is that of measurement error. All research methods have the potential of measurement error; particularly, for longitudinal research, is the unsolved problem "of how many times and when to measure the variables of interest to capture the change in process under study. It is possible to obtain measures that suggest change when actually there was no change at all or measures that suggest no change when actually there was change" (Rajulton 2001). It is hoped that by a doing mixed-methods approach of both qualitative and quantitative, the quantitative will be strengthened and that data generated will make more sense.

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<sup>6</sup> Participants provide the phone numbers of key people they consider and can act as backup contacts such as family members.

Related to measurement error are potential changes to the survey instrument as the years progress. “In studies that carry even for a few years, new hypotheses will arise either from the study itself or from general advances in the relevant fields of social research” (Rajulton 2001). The government’s paradigm shift regarding residential care is anticipated to affect the wider context of Cambodia. Though the Butterfly research has standardized the survey instruments, and these instruments are broad and varied, it is anticipated the hypotheses and theory will likely change with the passage of time. Therefore it is anticipated the framing of the survey questions will change accordingly. It is anticipated that new knowledge will create challenges since relevant data were not collected in the previous waves and thus have the potential to diminish the value of what has already been done (Rajulton 2001).

#### Panel Conditioning

Panel conditioning poses a threat to the validity of the longitudinal information gathered. This is because over time the potential for participants to answer questions in a way to which they have grown accustomed will potentially increase. Also, the longer the participants participate in the study, the greater the possibility they are less likely to report “socially unacceptable” situations (Rajulton 2001). For example, participants who end up returning to sex work may not want to disclose this to researchers as they may fear the latter will disapprove. Alternatively it must be recognized that as time passes and participants feel we are trustworthy and continue to be interested in their lives, greater trust between us will actually enhance our relationships so that we will hear more honest accounts.

In light of these concerns and tensions the Butterfly research team makes every attempt to be nonjudgmental and accepting of each participant. During each field visit, in addition to the survey interview, a variety of qualitative activities such as in-depth interviews, informal interviews, focus group discussions, art activities, and participant observation of their living environments is conducted as well. All this helps to give a fuller picture of the participants and helps to validate the survey responses.

#### **Longitudinal Reintegration Research of Former Child Soldiers**

As mentioned earlier, there are no longitudinal reintegration research regarding sexual exploitation and trafficking; however, there has been research done on the reintegration of child soldiers. This section focuses on reviewing two studies about the reintegration of former child soldiers.

Betancourt et al (2012) investigated the longitudinal course of internalizing and externalizing problems and adaptive/pro-social behaviours among former child soldiers in Sierra Leone. They sought to understand whether post-conflict factors contribute to adverse or resilient mental health outcomes upon reintegration. Methodologically, male and female former child soldiers (N=260, ages 10-17 at baseline) were recruited from the roster of an NGO-run Interim Care Center in Kono District and then interviewed in 2002, 2004 and 2008. The retention rate was 69%. They found that the long-term mental health of former child soldiers was associated with war experiences and post-conflict risk factors, which were partly mitigated by post-conflict protective factors.

Boothby et al (2006) conducted longitudinal research on 39 former child soldiers in Mozambique and followed them from the time they entered the six-month rehabilitation center through their reintegration for 16 years. In the rehabilitation center they found interventions focused on rehabilitating the children both psychologically and physically, and that reintegration assistance was provided for 2 years thereafter to support their return to families and communities. Over the 16 years the research focused on their psychological, social and economic functioning. The study included qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to obtain adult well-being outcomes and was also designed to identify interventions that enabled these child soldiers to re-enter civilian life and lead relatively productive lives. Their research findings show that former child soldiers who are provided rehabilitative services and accepted back into their families and communities are able to become productive, responsible and caring adults.

In conclusion, the primary purpose of the Butterfly research is to understanding over time the impact of sexual exploitation, and the effect of rehabilitation on participants as they reintegrate through using a prospective panel longitudinal approach. This approach, while appropriate to this context, has its particular challenges and limitations of which we are aware at the outset and will make every effort to address.

#### **ETHICS**

There are certain challenges in getting information from victims of sexual trafficking and exploited to find out about their past life experiences, while maintaining high ethical standards. As cited in Harrison (2006), it is the ethical responsibility of all researchers to identify and respond to the risk associated with any research project, and researchers should be fully accountable for this process. The avoidance of harm to the participants in a research study should be the overriding ethical concern (Bond, 2004, p.12).

Ennew and Plateau (2004) write about the eight ethical rules of research:

1. All research participation must be voluntary
2. Protect research participants from harm
3. Ensure safety of researchers
4. Respect cultural traditions, knowledge and customs
5. Create as much equality as possible
6. Avoid raising unrealistic expectation
7. Respect privacy
8. Ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

In addition, CP MERG (2012) describe ethical guidelines in research with children, including issues relating to privacy and confidentiality, child protection, dissemination of information, findings following the completion of the research project training, and welfare of members of the research team. The ethical concerns related to doing research with victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation must be dealt with up front.

The vulnerability of the participants is appreciated and every effort has been made to abide by high ethical standards, as found in *Ethical Guidelines for Reaching Children and Vulnerable People* (Ennew 2010) and *Human Rights Counter Trafficking Research and Programming* (UNIAP 2008).

The National Ethics Committee of the Royal Government of Cambodia Ministry of Health has granted annual approval in October 2012 for 2013 (see Appendix). Resources useful to participants continue to be compiled and distributed as needed to participants in their respective geographic areas.

### **Informed Consent/Assent**

Participants were reminded upon each encounter during 2012 about the voluntary nature of this research and their right to leave the study for any length of time and their right to return. Upon request by participants, the aims, methods/processes, topics, and intended purposes of the data and findings was reviewed.

### **Memorandums of Understanding**

The Memorandums of Understanding between the Butterfly research team and the participating organizations established at the outset of the research have been upheld and maintained. MOUs contain the following information:

- The relationship is not a formal legal entity.
- Neither the partner nor Chab Dai Coalition has any authority to act as an agent on behalf of the other (nor is either liable for the acts or omissions of the others, and the employees of one shall not be deemed to be employees of the other for any purposes).
- The partnership is based on mutual respect and information sharing, and is not taken for granted.
- Chab Dai agrees to: Provide an annual report and specific feedback to each partner as needed, and to conduct the research ethically and safely.
- Partners agree to: Permit access to information related to their clients, to permit access to participants, and to inform the research team when a participant leaves their program.
- Child Protection: If in the course of the research, Chab Dai is informed by a participating client of a possible breach of Chab Dai's and/or the assistant program's Child Protection Policy. Chab Dai will inform partner managers, and the partner will be responsible to investigate the concerns raised by Chab Dai according to the partner's Child Protection Policy.

### **Building Trust**

Trauma destroys the trust relationship of victims with themselves and the world. This creates an inordinate amount of stress on the mental, emotional, and physical capacities of the victim whose coping behaviours and belief structures have been shattered by trauma. The victim no longer knows how to act or what to expect from the world to survive (Whitmer, 2001; cited in Harrison, 2006).

One difficulty in doing research with survivors of sexual exploitation is getting accurate information from survivors. In some ways, participants share only the surface story about themselves because they do not fully trust the research teams and because they are afraid to tell others about their past. In addition, some participants are very young. When asked specific questions, their answers are often unclear and change from visit to visit. Survivors sometimes also have issues of trust with their own caregivers and may feel they are not at liberty to express themselves when in the presence of someone other than the researcher whom they do not trust. Ennew and Plateau (2004) wrote about the



problem of doing research on physical punishment and its effect on young children “who may not be able to express their opinion or talk about their experiences and are seldom outside the supervision of caretaker.”

Those working directly with survivors often say the information survivors are willing to share is like an onion: it contains many layers, and as the relationship deepens over time, the depth of information also becomes deeper and richer. Often as the relationship with the researcher deepens, especially in a longitudinal study, research participants feel more at liberty to share their story and experiences (Miles and Miles, 2012). Doing research with these survivors requires flexibility and more time to establish trust. Trust can be gained from all participants once researchers have a relationship with them. Building trust with survivors of trafficking also must be done in the context of proper training and with a concern for keeping relationships built with research participants in an appropriate and ethical framework.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Practical Logistics of Field Visits and Increasing Geographic Area**

Maintaining contact with participants who are geographically located across Cambodia is obviously critical to this study and it was anticipated it would require much effort to maintain an accurate database with each participant's current contact details. Communication with assistance programs has been challenging at times regarding their keeping the research team informed when participants leave their services. While three field visits per year have been beneficial to maintaining contact with participants, the increasing distances, time in the field, and the travel expenses incurred have risen. The costs of transportation will need to be reviewed to find more economical ways to travel across the country. The two research assistants have been available 24/7 by phone which helps to maintain contact and keeps the team informed of issues participants are facing in between visits.

### **Ongoing Need to Provide Referral Resources**

While some participants face many challenges, some lack knowledge of resources available to them in their geographic areas. The research team has attempted to keep up to date about resources available in the different geographic regions and to share this information with those participants who ask for this information.

### **Challenges of Data Management**

#### Data Management Programs

In 2013 the team will use Atlas Ti. as a group; it is anticipated training will be needed early 2013 to prepare the research team to effectively utilize this program. In 2012, SPSS was used and the surveys were double entered and cleaned for accuracy. Appropriate Dummy tables were designed and will be of use in years to come. Mr. Dane So's contribution to training and increasing the research team's capacity in this area has been much appreciated.

#### Stated Age of Participants

It was understood this year that a number of participants did not actually know their real ages, or they felt the need to continually change them at each field visit. Upon discovering this phenomenon, the assistance programs were contacted and asked to provide their official records of participant ages. Going forward, the recorded age of each participant is therefore based on these records. Ethnicity of participants will remain open because it keeps changing as confidence and trust increases, and as participants increasingly relate positively with their ethnic identity.

# MAIN FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

## PARTICIPANT SAMPLE

Whereas in 2011 the total number of participants increased throughout the year as more APs joined the study, in 2012 the total number of participants was set at 128. The number of participants who attended each of the field visits fluctuated a little throughout the year, but was much more stable than last year. The table below indicates the number of participants, both men and women, who attended the three field visits in 2012. In 2011, the average number of participants over the four field visits was approximately 73 per visit, and the number of total participants increased from 51 to 125 throughout the year as MOUs were signed and consent was given by participants. During the first field visit in 2011, 100% of participants attended the session; by the fourth field visit, the attendance rate was at 73%. This year, with the total number being set at 128, the average attendance has increased to 107 participants per visit. The attendance rate was consistent at approximately 84% across all three visits, thus more consistent than last year. It is assumed that numbers will now remain stable, as no more participants will be added to the study in the future.

(See Methodology & Design: Participants)

Sex	Field Visit 1	Field Visit 2	Field Visit 3
Male	20	19	18
Female	86	89	90
Total	106	108	108

**Table 1: Number of Study Participants Over 3 Field Visits in 2012**

At each field visit in 2012, there were between 20 and 22 missing participants; see Appendix for specific information on the missing participants. Reasons for participants missing one or multiple field visit meetings range from visiting relatives out of town to having been reported escaped from a residential facility. Twelve participants missed one field visit, six missed two, and 12 missed all three visits. During the first field visit of the year, some participants were missing from the research session because they had recently transitioned from one assistance program to another, and the MOU with the new organization had not yet been finalized, therefore making these participants inaccessible to the research team. The MOU was finalized before Field Visit 2 and the participants could join the study again.

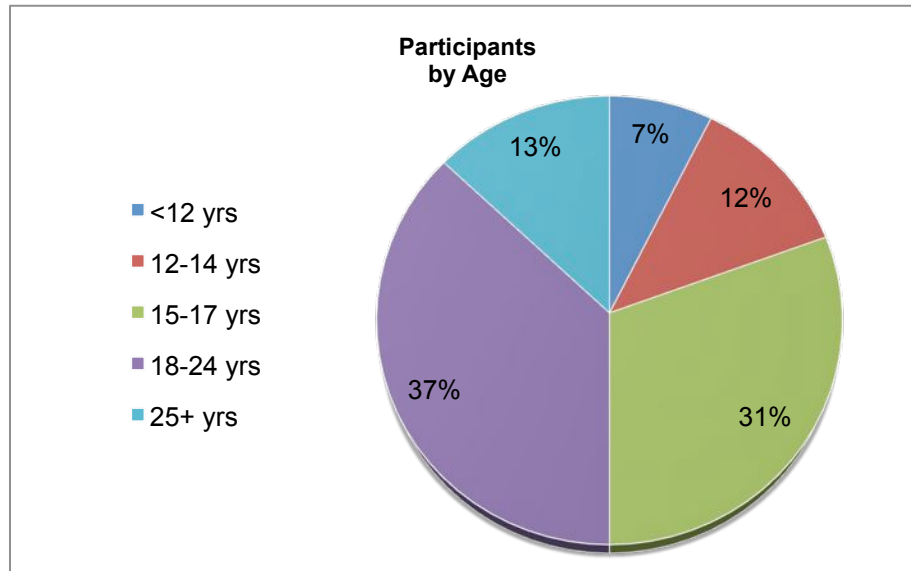
## PARTICIPANT PROFILES

### Gender

The total sample size has been set at 128 participants. There were 108 females (83%) and 20 males (17%) in the study. During the last field visit of 2012, the participant cohort was representative of the overall proportion of males to females, with 90 females (83%) and 18 males (17%). During the last field visit of the previous year, females made up 80% and males made 20% of the cohort.

### Age

The participants' ages were determined by asking each participant their age, which was confirmed with their respective assistance programs' records. Figure 2 shows the participant sample by age group. At the end of 2012, 50% of participants were over the age of 18 and 50% were under the age of 18.

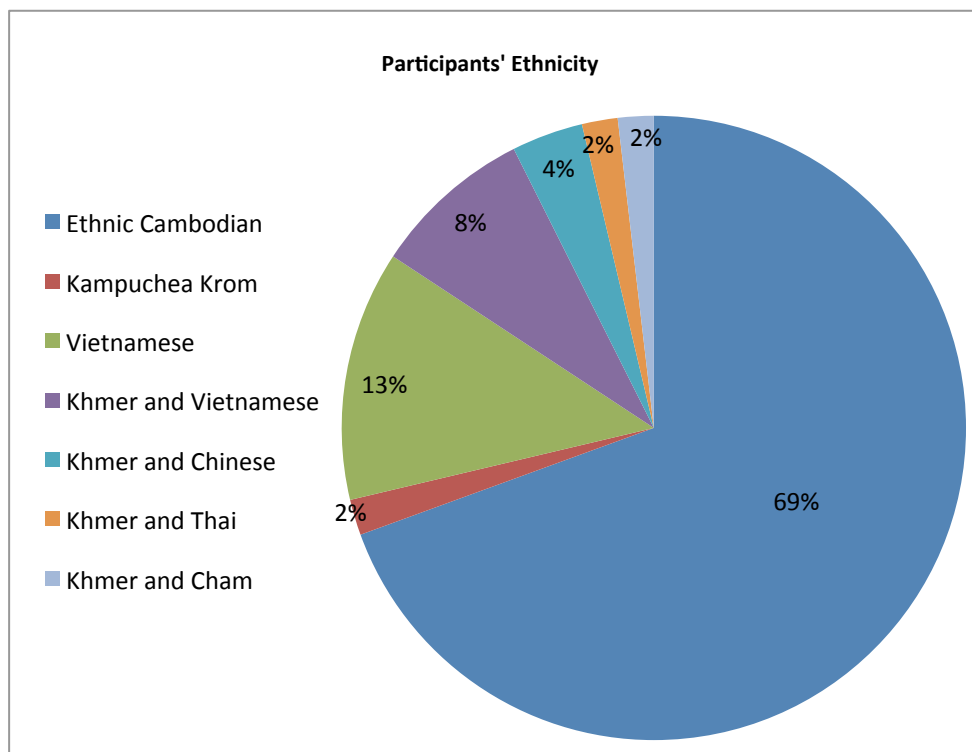


**Figure 1: Participants by Age**  
*n = 108 surveyed participants at Field Visit #3*

Across multiple field visits, it was observed that participants were changing their stated age from one visit to the next; after cross-checking stated ages with assistance program records, the ages on record at this time will remain the baseline from now on. The reasons for participants changing their stated age remain unclear; in some cases, participants may not know their actual birth day, and in other cases, participants may change their stated age as they either gain or lose trust in the person to whom they are disclosing their age.

### Ethnicity

The figure below shows the participants' profiles by stated ethnicity.



**Figure 2: Participants' Ethnicity**  
*n = 108 surveyed participants at Field Visit #3*

It was expected and assumed stated “ethnicity” would be a stable identifying feature of participants; however, this year’s data shows this is not the case. Unexpectedly, participants changed their stated ethnicity from last year to this. In 2011, “Ethnic Cambodian” was 65% and in 2012 it increased to 69%; “Kampuchea Krom” went from 3% in 2011 to 2% in 2012; “Vietnamese” ethnicity increased from 10% to 13%; “Khmer and Chinese” decreased from 10% to 4%; “Khmer and Thai” decreased from 3% to 2%; and, “Khmer and Cham” increased from 1% to 4%. “Khmer Vietnamese” remained the same at 8% in 2011 and 2012. No participants described themselves as from an ethnic tribal group.

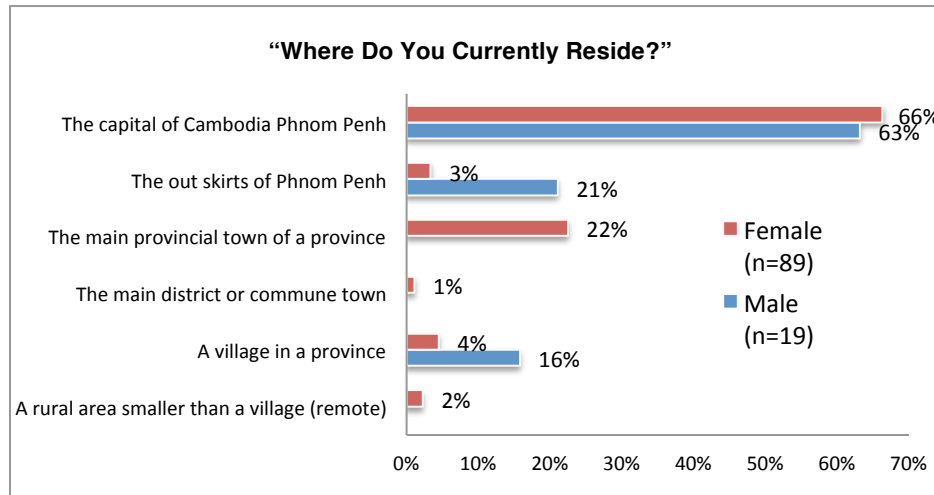
The reasons for changing their stated ethnicity ranged, but were partially attributed to participants’ increased trust in the research team members. Whereas age has been set for coming years, it has been decided to allow questions around ethnicity to remain open to change in the future, as it is now thought that participants may be more honest about their true ethnicity as the research team gains and maintains their trust, and as participants’ confidence around their identity increases.

For more on the reason behind the seeming fluidity of stated ethnicity, see Culture & Religion: Stigma & Discrimination.



## Residency

The majority of participants were based in Phnom Penh in 2012, males at 63% and females at 66%. In 2011 (n=71) 94% of males and 56% of females lived in Phnom Penh. In 2011, no males lived in the village or province, whereas in 2012 16% did. In 2011, 5.6% of males were living on the outskirts of Phnom Penh as opposed to 21% in 2012. In 2011, 37.7% of females lived in “the main provincial town of a province” and 1.9% lived in “the main district commune town”; in 2012, these were down to 22% and 1%, respectively.



**Chart 1: Participants' Current Residence**

*n = 108 surveyed participants at Field Visit #2, by gender*

Further information and discussion of participants' residence and types of assistance they received is provided in the next section, Assistance Programs.

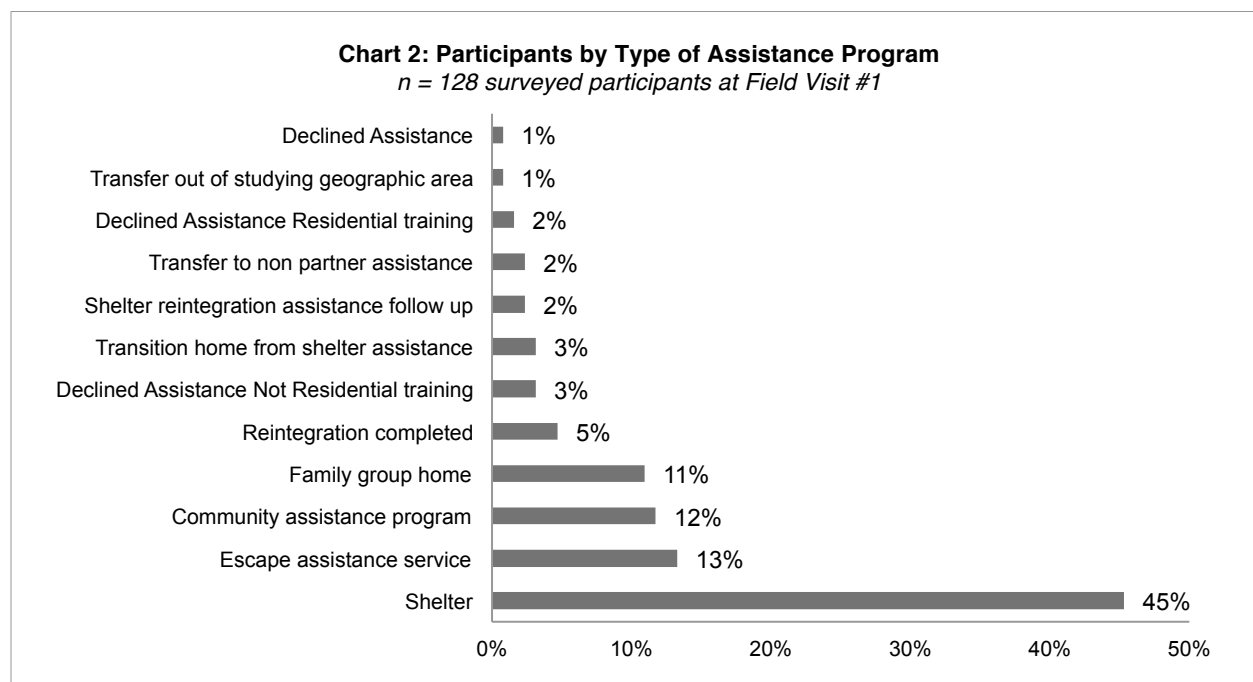
# ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

This section will discuss the main findings about participants' perspectives on the assistance programs they are or were involved with prior to, during, and after reintegration.

## TYPE OF ASSISTANCE SUPPORT

First, in order to understand the context from which participants view their lives and circumstances, it is important to outline what types of assistance programs participants are involved with, where participants resided during the research period, and how many participants have indeed begun the reintegration process. The chart below outlines what type of assistance program with which participants were involved at the first field visit of 2012. Whereas in 2011, the types of assistance programs were divided into three categories (residential care, community care, and declined assistance), these categories were expanded in 2012 to include the following categories or circumstances:

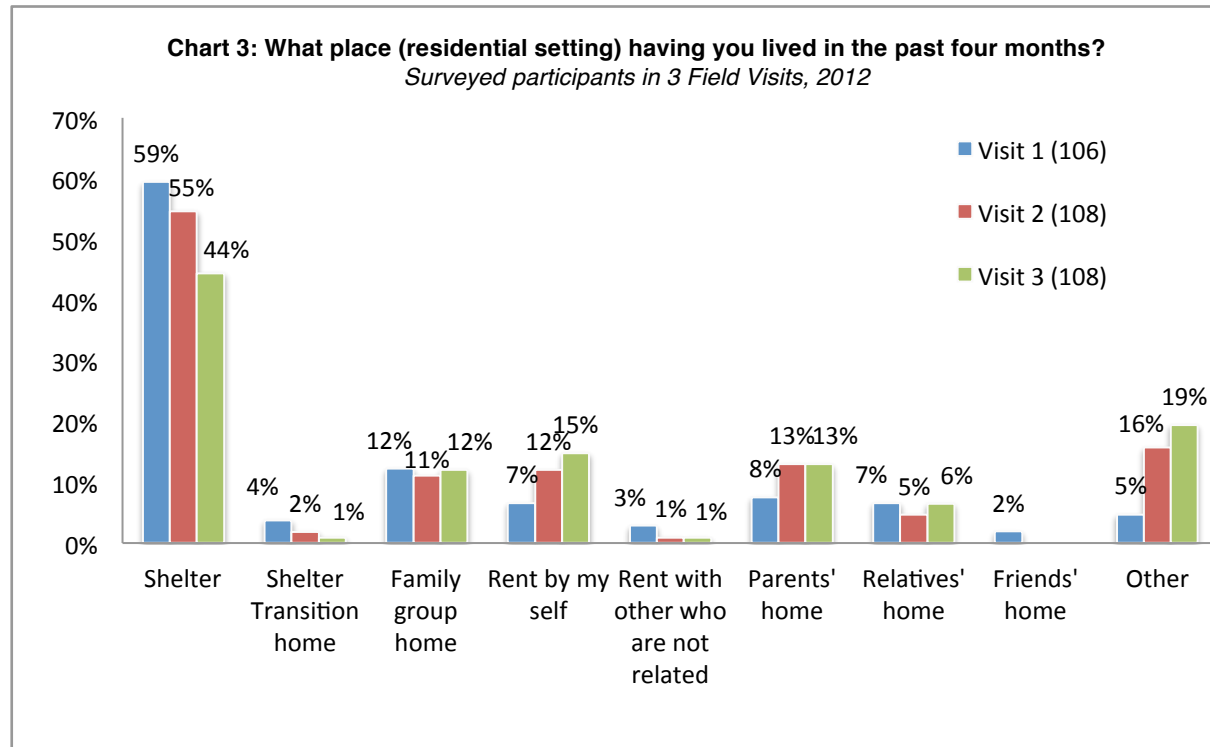
- Declined Assistance: were assessed after exiting exploitation, but refused placement in a program
- Transfer out of Geographic Area: moved out of study's defined area, e.g. Thailand
- Declined Assistance Residential Training: had previously declined assistance, now in RP
- Transfer to Non-Partner Assistance: receiving assistance with AP with which study did not have MOU
- Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-Up: were previously in a shelter, now receiving reintegration assistance from shelter
- Transition Home from Shelter Assistance: were previously in a shelter, now in a Transition home
- Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training: had previously declined assistance, now in a training program
- Reintegration Completed: no longer receiving assistance of any kind
- Family Group Home: previously in a shelter, now in a Family group home
- Community Assistance Program: receiving community-based assistance, chose to enter AP
- Escape Assistance Service: reported escaped by AP
- Shelter: living in shelter AP



Based on the case classification of all 128 participants originally consenting to be in the study, there was a wider variety of types of assistance contexts and experiences than previously anticipated. There was also transition between types of assistance programs for a portion of the participants. Some of the participants, who were in the "Declined Assistance" category in 2011, had moved into residential and community training programs in 2012. Forty five percent of participants were in shelter programs, with 2% of participants classified as receiving some form of reintegration assistance follow up from shelter programs. A significant number of participants were either in a family

group home or other community assistance program (11% and 12%, respectively), and 3% percent of participants were in a Transition homes. One percent of participants were reported to have transferred outside of the study's geographic area (i.e. Thailand), and 2% percent of participants at Field Visit #1 had transferred to a non-participating Shelter (which became a participating Shelter by the next field visit). Thirteen percent of participants were reported by programs to have “escaped” and 5% participants were reported by Assistance programs to have completed their reintegration; that is, they were no longer receiving any assistance or support from any program. See Appendix for a detailed chart on missing participants at each field visit.

In order to track participants' places of residence throughout the year, they were asked at each field visit where they had resided in the last four months. The figure below charts the answers across the three field visits of 2012; totals for each visit exceed 100% because participants were not limited to one answer per visit.



Shelter, Shelter transition, and Family style homes are linked progressively for participants in these programs because, as participants age and mature they progress from the shelter context to the transition and family style homes in which they have more autonomy and responsibility. Across the three field visits, participants living in shelter accommodations dropped from 59% to 44%. By Field Visit #3, 19% of participants reported living in “other” accommodation settings. Participants reporting living in Family style homes and with their relatives was stable compared to shelter accommodations, which decreased, and living with parents, renting by oneself, and “other” accommodations, which all increased. The three former categories were mostly chosen by participants who were out of direct assistance programs and into reintegration assistance or reintegration follow-up.

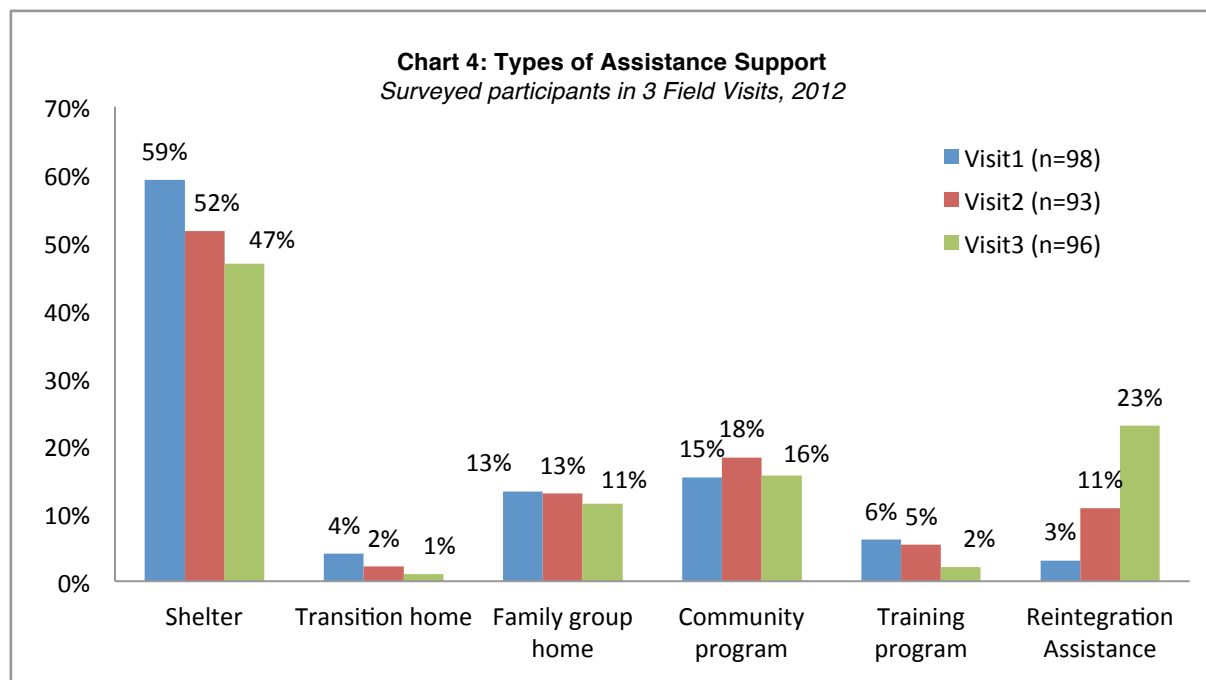
Participants who responded “Other” listed a variety of settings, including family members of friends, siblings or sibling's children, the home of a shelter staff member, and other places, depending on the circumstances of the participant.

**“On the military base, because my father is in the military.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance follow-up**

**“I live in the church and the pastor looks after me because my mother is in prison.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance follow-up, Male**

**“I live in Karaoke parlor since I reintegrated.” – Shelter Reintegration Completed, Female**

Participants were asked at each field visit what types of assistance they received in Assistance programs. As seen in the chart below, the number of participants receiving Shelter support decreased from 59% at Field Visit #1 to 47% at Field Visit #3 and Reintegration Assistance increased from 3% to 23% over the course of the year. Family group home and Community program assistance remained stable throughout the year; Transition home and Training program assistance declined slightly over the three field visits (4% to 1% and 6% to 2%, respectively).



These findings point to a common trend of participants moving out of residential assistance programs and into reintegration assistance. Many of the perspectives of participants, as seen in the thematic sections below, relate to this transition from residential care to autonomy in reintegration.

## PERSPECTIVES ON ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Participants described a variety of differing perceptions and expectations of their respective assistance support. Many participants in shelter programs expressed their experiences and expectations for security, emotional support, and access to education and skills training.

### Security & Emotional Support

Participants expressed their expectation for security and emotional support from assistance programs and, in general, spoke of positive relationships with assistance program staff. Some participants described the shelter as a place which provided for their security either from perpetrators until their case was completed or security from home situations, which put them at risk.

**“I left the shelter and then returned to another shelter because the bad man who hurt me before moved to near my family home and he told my family he will hurt me [again].” – Shelter, Female**

**“I will not be allowed to visit my family because my mother drinks too much alcohol and has beaten me many times. She trafficked me and the case is not finished in the courts.” -Shelter, Female**

Participants in both Training and Community programs, apart from speaking generally about appreciating their skills training, that learning a skill would enable them to earn a respectable living in the future, spoke about their appreciation of the informal emotional support they felt from training staff.

**“I learn a good skill here but I also learn about myself. The staff help us to feel better about ourselves and that we can have a better life.” – Training Program, Female**

**“The community program staff always speaks motivational words to me. My trust builds towards them and in myself. They help me deal with my past experience, which helps me feel relieved.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

One participant expressed how she had built her character thanks to the community assistance program and how she perceived she had improved since becoming involved with the program and her hope for the future.

**“I want to develop myself. I just hope I have a good house and good children. I hope I can have a good job. Now I learn a lot from the community program so when I leave here I will find a good job. The program educates me about the behaviour and characteristic. The program wants me to be a good person. Before I wore a sexy cloth so then the Community program needs me to wear a simple cloth.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants spoke both positively and negatively about relationships with staff; in some instances, these relationships were deemed supportive and, in others, unsupportive. Participants sometimes felt staff treated residents unequally, some getting more attention than others, and that the treatment felt unfair.

**“Generally speaking, living in the shelter is good. But sometime I feel unhappy with some shelter staff because they speak not kindly to me.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I don’t like the shelter to accept girls with disabilities because the shelter staff spend more time with them than the rest of us. Most girls are mean to the girl with disability.” – Shelter, Female**

Formal counseling was also appreciated by a lot of participants, and they generally spoke about the value and support they felt from the counseling staff. One participant spoke about how it has helped her to express herself, and she wants all the women to get counseling, while another participant, in a shelter, described how a counselor helped him improve his behaviour towards others.

**“The counselor helps me a lot to look at my past and understand it. I feel better about myself and I have more hope my life will get better.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“When I work at the community program, I have changed. My life is different from the past. When I work at the community program, they counsel and love me. They have never done unhappy thing to me. The Community program is a place that helps the victims. I feel happy. I am confident now. I change my life gradually from month to month. I hope I will have a good future.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Yes, I want the counselor to open those women’s (fellow peers in the community program) hearts. Some women don’t want to speak about their difficulties, and that’s why they feel stress. They get irritated with others. For me, I don’t want to hide my experience. I want to speak out. Everyone did bad things to me, I will speak out. I don’t want to keep it in my heart. When I told someone about my difficulty I felt good. I think if the listener cannot help me 100%, but they can help me 50%. So I feel good.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“The counselor is very kind at the shelter and has helped me to stop stealing from the other boys. The counselor never shouted at me, but helped me in a gentle way to stop stealing. This makes me feel better.” – Shelter, Male**

In contrast, some participants who were originally classified in the “Declined Assistance” in 2011 decided to leave their training programs in 2012 because of various reasons, among which were conflicts with the staff.

**“I stopped the training program because I didn’t like the staff.” – Declined Assistance in non-residential training program**

**“I stopped going to the training program because I wanted to live with my boyfriend but the staff said this was wrong. I was angry with them so I quit.” – Declined Assistance in non-residential training program**

For more on emotional support, see Physical & Emotional Integrity: Emotional Well-Being.

### **Access to Opportunities vs. Cost of Institutionalization**

Overall, a main theme that emerged in the experience of participants was that of balancing the opportunities afforded them by assistance programs with the frustrations of certain aspects of assistance programs and of being away from family.

#### Appreciation for Access and Opportunities

Many participants expressed appreciation toward shelters for providing opportunities they did not have at home such as adequate food and education. Apart from enjoyment for leisure activities, outings and parties, participants also appreciated soft skills and awareness they received while in the shelter.

**“I feel happy to live in the shelter because I have enough clothes to wear, food to eat and I can study.”  
– Shelter, Female**

**“I really like the personal development workshops in the shelter. I think about my own feelings and this helps me to feel motivated to try hard. I also learn about advocacy and public speaking. We also learned about male/female relationships. This is very helpful to me” – Shelter, Female**

**“The shelter did a workshop on how to prevent bad things from happening to us. Now I feel confident no one can hurt or traffic me again like when I was younger. I know not to go with strangers or, if I know them well but they ask me to do something I don’t want to do I have the right not to follow them, and I should tell another adult about this. ” – Shelter, Male**

During informal interviews participants were asked to reflect on the previous year and draw or speak about whatever they felt were their highlights. A number of participants drew pictures and spoke about the activities they enjoyed while in the shelter from the previous year.



**Picture 1: Activities in the Shelter**

"I really like and want to plant flowers in the shelter.

It is fun and peaceful to plant flowers  
with my friends and shelter staff." – Shelter, Female



**Picture 2: Activities in the Shelter**

"In the shelter we go for walks together outside.

We went to the river and to a mountain.

The sun shows we had a good day.

The shelter takes us to beautiful places." – Shelter, Female

### Shelter and Family

A primary tension, especially for participants residing in shelters, was noted between appreciation for the services and opportunities provided by the program and the desire to be with and worry for the wellbeing of family members back home. An observation was that shelter programs did not realize to what extent this was difficult for residents; both the pain of missing family terribly and the stress of thinking about their family's struggles. Some participants expressed their preference to live with their families, but that they chose stay in shelters, or were encouraged to remain in the shelter by their parents, for the sake of access to education.

**"I prefer to live at home with my family but my family asked me to stay longer in the shelter so I can go to school." – Shelter, Female**

**"I miss my family but I stay here [in the shelter] so I can go to school." – Shelter, Male**

**"My mother wanted me to live in the shelter for security from the perpetrators until my court case is finished and so I can get an education." – Shelter, Female**

Another issue of tension for participants living away from their families was the sense of responsibility they felt toward their family, sometimes bordering on guilt for being able to access education and having all their needs taken care of while their families were living in poverty. Survivor guilt is linked with, and often defined as a symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is common diagnosis (whether formal or informal) of survivors of human trafficking. There is much evidence linking survivor guilt and PTSD, particularly among war veterans and survivors of war or trauma (Wilson, Harel & Kahana 1988; Hendin 1991; Kubany 1994; Okulate & Jones 2008); however, the concept of survivor guilt has also been applied to young people who have "made it" out of poverty or have surpassed their parents or family, often leaving family behind in some sense. Piorkowski (1983) studied this phenomenon among low-income first generation university students in the United States, who she found felt "guilty about being spared the psychological casualties among family members" (Abstract), resulting in both emotional and academic vulnerability. Berzoff, Melano Flanagan & Hertz (1996) also explored the case of a woman who achieved a successful medical career, but had a generalized anxiety disorder and suffered from survivor's guilt about escaping her family's cycle of poverty and leaving many family members behind.

For more on PTSD, see Physical & Emotional Integrity: Emotional Well-Being.

In the case of survivors of human trafficking in many residential settings, young people are both survivors of their exploitation and, as residents of aftercare facilities, survivors in that they are residing, at least temporarily, outside the poverty and vulnerability in which their families often still live. Indeed, in "Social Inclusion of Child Survivors of Human Trafficking in Cambodia," Tsugami (2012) found that one of the major psychosocial concerns for children living residential setting was "they worry about the financial situation of their family, deprived of income while a girl is in a shelter" (p. 7). Many participants expressed both gratitude for their present circumstances and concern for their families' welfare regarding issues to do with adequate food, money, and health issues.

**"Living in the shelter is happy and unhappy. Sometime, I miss home. When I ate a delicious food, I always remember my parents who I knew did not have enough to eat." – Shelter Reintegration follow-up, Female**

**"When I live in the shelter I worry about my family all the time because they are so poor and have nothing to eat." – Shelter, Female**

**"When I phoned my mother I learned that she is really sick, and my grandmother is sick and they do not have enough food or medicine. This makes me feel worried and helpless. How can I help them?" – Shelter, Female**

It was particularly difficult for participants whose parents were not supportive of furthering their education. One participant spoke about her distress because her parents were pressuring her to stop the training in order to help them earn money in another way.



**“I really like my training program. The staff cares about us and helps us to learn this skill and hopefully I will get a good job. My parents don’t understand and every week tells me to stop this training. If I stop I will have not a way to improve myself or a way to get a good job in the future.” – Training Program, Female**

This tension sometimes results in participants leaving a shelter or training, foregoing furthering their education in order to earn money right away for their family.

**I wanted to study motorcycle repair when I reintegrated but now I must wait because of my family’s big debt.” – Shelter Reintegration Follow-up, Male**

For more on participants’ perspectives on family, see Relationships & Family: Family.

For more on participants’ perspectives on debt, see Economic Reintegration: Poverty & Debt.

**RECOMMENDATION TO APs IN RECONCILING SHELTER/FAMILY TENSION:**

WHERE POSSIBLE, SHELTERS AND OTHER RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS SHOULD PROMOTE AND ORGANIZE INCREASED CONTACT, COMMUNICATION, AND VISITATION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS WHILE RESIDENTS ARE UNDER THE CARE OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.

Institutionalization and Agency

Participants in residential programs spoke positively of many aspects of shelter life, including opportunities for study and training, and adequate food and shelter. One of the frustrations expressed by participants was the institutional aspect of their assistance program experience. One participant complained about the institutional rules within shelters, that the mistake of another girl impacted them with long meetings about rules and discipline.

**“Sometime new clients in the shelter are mean when they first come. Some older girls speak in an inappropriate way to the younger girls. Some girls (clients) do whatever they like. Maybe they think that this shelter is their house. When one girl does a mistake in the shelter, then the shelter will arrange meeting for all the girls including me. So I am bored when have meeting these meetings about other girls mistakes.” – Shelter, Female**

Another impact of institutionalization is residents often have restricted access to anything outside the shelter or home. Some participants expressed their frustration with the shelter because they felt their freedom of movement was limited.

**“One day when my phone ran out of money, I wanted to go outside to buy card but the shelter staff didn’t want me to go outside even though, according to their rules, I was allowed to do this. The staff told me that if I wanted to go somewhere, I must tell them in advance. I didn’t know my phone card was nearly out.” - Shelter, Female**

**“I don’t like living in the shelter because when I wanted to go outside, the shelter staff didn’t let me to go outside the shelter for first six months.” –Shelter, Female**

Many of the above mentioned issues contribute to residents’ desire for autonomy or to leave the residential assistance program. In her findings about children in residential care settings, Tsugami (2012) found, “Children often express a desire to return home or just run away from residential care settings. As reasons for their dissatisfaction with a shelter or orphanage, children often mention abuse from other children in the center, boredom as a result of absence of meaningful occupation, strictness, and lack of freedom to move outside the center” (p.6).

In contrast to the frustrations expressed about institutional aspects of shelter care, participants in community programs, who are all over 18 years of age, spoke about choosing to enter the program of their own volition (and can therefore leave anytime).

**“I decided to join the community organization because I wanted to change my life and leave Karaoke. I like my colleagues and all the staff.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Frost, Mills & Stein (1999) found institutionalization had adverse effects on children's well-being:

Another key problem of institutional care in Cambodia is the fact that the establishments are isolated from the community in many aspects. Excessive protection results in the establishment of centers that resemble prisons rather than children's homes. ... The location is also particularly important because any living arrangement which falls outside the dominant image of “the family” arouses fear and suspicion (p.42).

Moreover, such arrangements may also “contribute to discrimination and stigmatization of the children and add to the perception of them as socially excluded, troubled children” (Tsugami 2012, p. 5).

For more on institutionalization and other cross-cutting themes, see Relationships & Family: Peer Relationships and Economic Reintegration: Vocational Training.

### **Freedom vs. Responsibility**

A desire for increased freedom and independence were mentioned by numerous participants. Some spoke of it when discussing moving from shelter settings to more autonomous programs, like Transition and Family Group homes. Others spoke of independence and doing things for themselves when discussing experiences of and hopes for reintegration.

**“When I reintegrated, I am now totally responsible on my own. I can control myself even I am happy or unhappy. I must serve myself.” – Shelter, Female**

**“Regarding my feeling, I like living outside. I want to be independent. I don't want others to think that I am still young girl. I want to show them I am old and can think deeply. I want to be in control of myself and be self-reliant for my future.” – Shelter, Female**

**“So far, I just want to work in a suitable workplace. I want to save money ... If I want to run a business, I want to depend on myself. I don't want to borrow money from others. I am not 50 years old yet, I still young so I have time to earn a living.” – Shelter, Female**

A main trend was the difference between autonomy experiences by participants who had move to a Transition of Family group home. Participants in Transition homes and Family Group homes were all previously in Shelter programs, and spoke about their experiences of increased autonomy and responsibility. Participants generally expressed appreciation of the increased freedom in these settings compared to the shelter.

**“I like living in the family group home because I have more freedom and many friends.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**“I like my family group home because we all have more freedom than we had in the shelter to look after ourselves like a family. We all like each other and get along.” – Family Group Home, Male**

Despite the desire for and enjoyment of increased freedom, some stated they did not like the increased responsibilities that came with more autonomy. Some participants spoke about liking their resident peers because everyone was kind and helpful, while others stated they did not like resident conflicts and arguments about running the home.

**“The Transition home allows us more freedom and more responsibility. I like being more in control of taking care of myself. I like cooking and cleaning but sometimes I don’t like having to pay towards my living expenses.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**“I don’t like living in the home when we argue and there are conflicts between us.” – Family Group Home, Male**

**“We had a small disagreement in the group home and now no one is speaking to each other.” – Transition Home, Female**

Whereas many participants in the shelter setting long for more freedom and autonomy, and appreciate it once they are in a setting that allows them more freedom, they are sometimes ill-prepared or do not like the responsibility that comes with more autonomy. As seen in the previous quotes about increased freedom and responsibility, relationships are also a major factor in how participants view their situation, be they relationships with assistance program staff, program or school peers, co-workers, or family. This is elaborated in the following section, Relationships & Family.

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO APs IN PREPARING PARTICIPANTS FOR AUTONOMY:**

**MORE ATTENTION COULD BE GIVEN TO SOFT SKILLS TRAINING, AS WELL AS INCREASING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RESIDENTS WITHIN SHELTER PROGRAMS AS THEY PREPARE TO TRANSITION OUT OF THE SHELTER AND INTO A MORE AUTONOMOUS SETTING.**

## **PERSPECTIVES ON REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE**

Participants’ views on reintegration assistance ranged widely; some felt they were enabled to do well while others were very disappointed by the assistance, or lack thereof, provided them during their reintegration process. Participants appeared to express either great satisfaction or great dissatisfaction with the reintegration assistance they were receiving. In the experience of some participants, the shelter out of which they were transitioning provided more holistic and individualized reintegration assistance, which took into account the needs of their family, their livelihood and their education.

**“I would like to say thank to the shelter that provide bicycle, rice, helped fix our broken house, and gave school supplies to my mother and me. When I reintegrated the shelter helped my mother and me a lot. They were kind to me when I lived in the shelter, too, and I miss them.” – Shelter Reintegration follow up, Female**

Some participants expressed distress and dissatisfaction with their reintegration experience. They explained their primary concern was not being able to finish their education because their reintegration assistance package did not provide sufficient support. They also spoke about their disappointment with the shelter staff who had “promised” their studies would not be badly affected by reintegration. They felt the reality of their reintegration was not happening how they had been lead to believe when they were in the shelter.

**“When I was in the shelter, the staff said they would help me to finish high school and then go to my university. But now they reintegrated me. They don’t give me enough money to survive so I think I won’t finish high school and I am even more hopeless about going to university. They made false promises to me. They only give me 20.00 USD per month and a bicycle. This is not enough. Also they should have prepared the community before I returned by speaking to my family and the local commune and village authorities. This would have helped me to fit in better after being away three years.” – Shelter Reintegration Follow-up, Female**

**“I felt angry. I didn’t want to reintegrate. When I reintegrated, I cried. I didn’t know what to do, they wanted me to leave the shelter, and I had to leave. Now the reintegration assistance support is not enough. Twenty USD a month and a bicycle is not enough money for me to continue studying. The shelter social workers only come for less than ten minutes every few months so they do not know my difficulty.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

Finding opportunities and continuing one's education are incredibly difficult once participants leave an assistance program. One participant told the research team about her veiled threats to the shelter, as a way to gain re-admittance to the shelter in order to finish high school.

**"I used to talk about it with the shelter staff. I told them when I reintegrate if I meet the same experience (past sexual exploitation experience), can I come back to the shelter? I asked her like this but she didn't answer." – Shelter Reintegration Follow-up, Female**

One participant in fact did return to Karaoke after her reintegration because she felt the reintegration assistance was inadequate.

**"After they reintegrated me I could not live on their support. They promised to help me start a sewing business but then never helped me. So I now work in Karaoke with my sister." – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**RECOMMENDATION TO APs IN REINTEGRATION PROCESS:**

IT IS CRITICAL TO PROVIDE HOLISTIC ASSISTANCE DURING THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS, INCLUDING PRE-REINTEGRATION ASSESSMENT OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT, AND ONGOING SUPPORT DURING AND AFTER REINTEGRATION.

## RELATIONSHIPS & FAMILY

This section deals with participants' perspectives on the relationships in their lives: relationships with peers, coworkers, intimate partners, boyfriends, spouses, parents, and other family members. The main observation in the analysis of participants' responses to most issues throughout the year is the enormous complexity of their relationships.

Many participants had both positive and negative things to say about their relationships with different people in their lives. The complexity of relationships and how these relationships were navigated and balanced seemed to cause anxiety in many participants. In this section, we will attempt to rightly portray the complex nature of participants' interactions with and feelings towards the people around them.

### TRUST

The overarching theme in talking about relationships was trust. It was a major issue of sadness and anxiety for participants to find someone in their lives they could trust, particularly someone they could trust enough to disclose their past involvement in sex work. Keeping their "secret" was a source of stress in relationships. In order to better define what was meant by "trusting relationships," participants were asked to rank trustworthy qualities in a person. Using the Ten Seeds Technique, as seen in the picture below, participants ranked "Honesty and Integrity" and "Does not spread or speak about other people's business" equally high, and put equal low weight on "Does not speak ill of others" and "Good behaviour."



**Ranking Chart 1: What are qualities in a person you can trust?**

Surveyed participants at Field Visit # (n = )

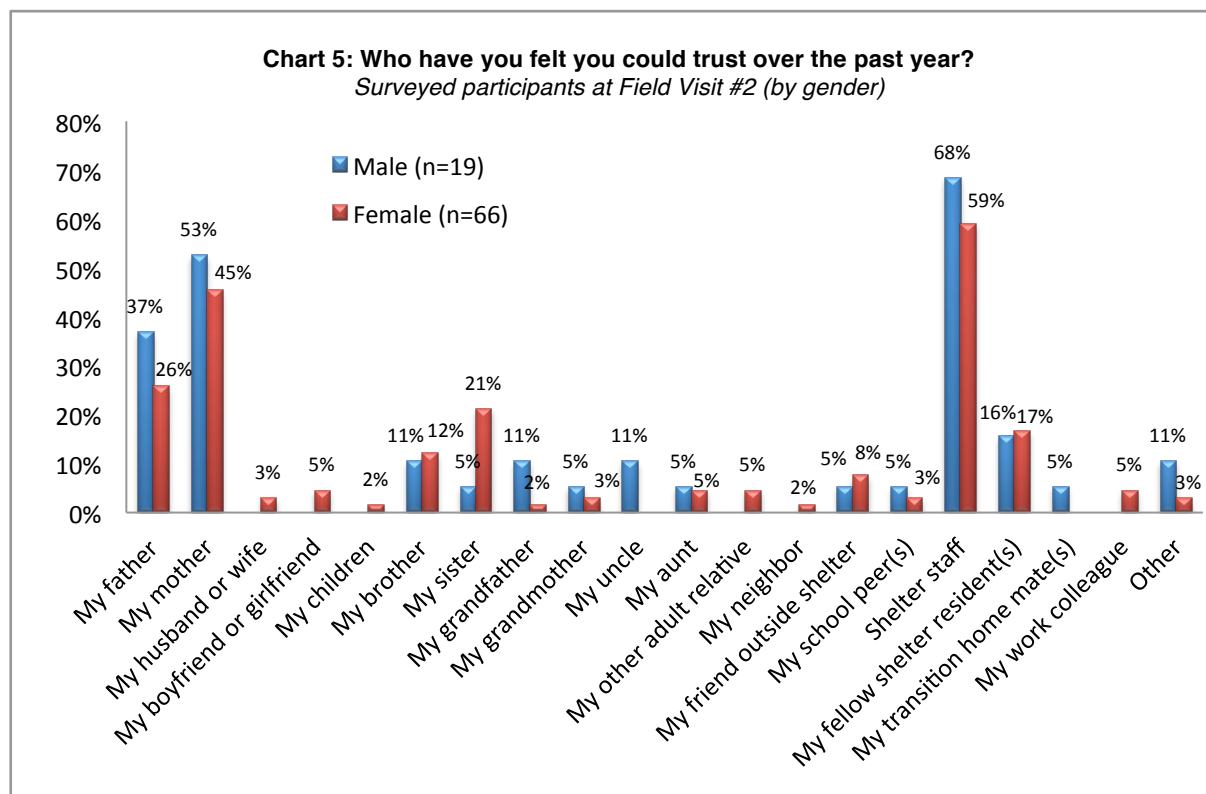
Legend:

1. Honesty & integrity
2. Does not speak ill of others
3. Good behaviour
4. Does not spread or speak about other people's business

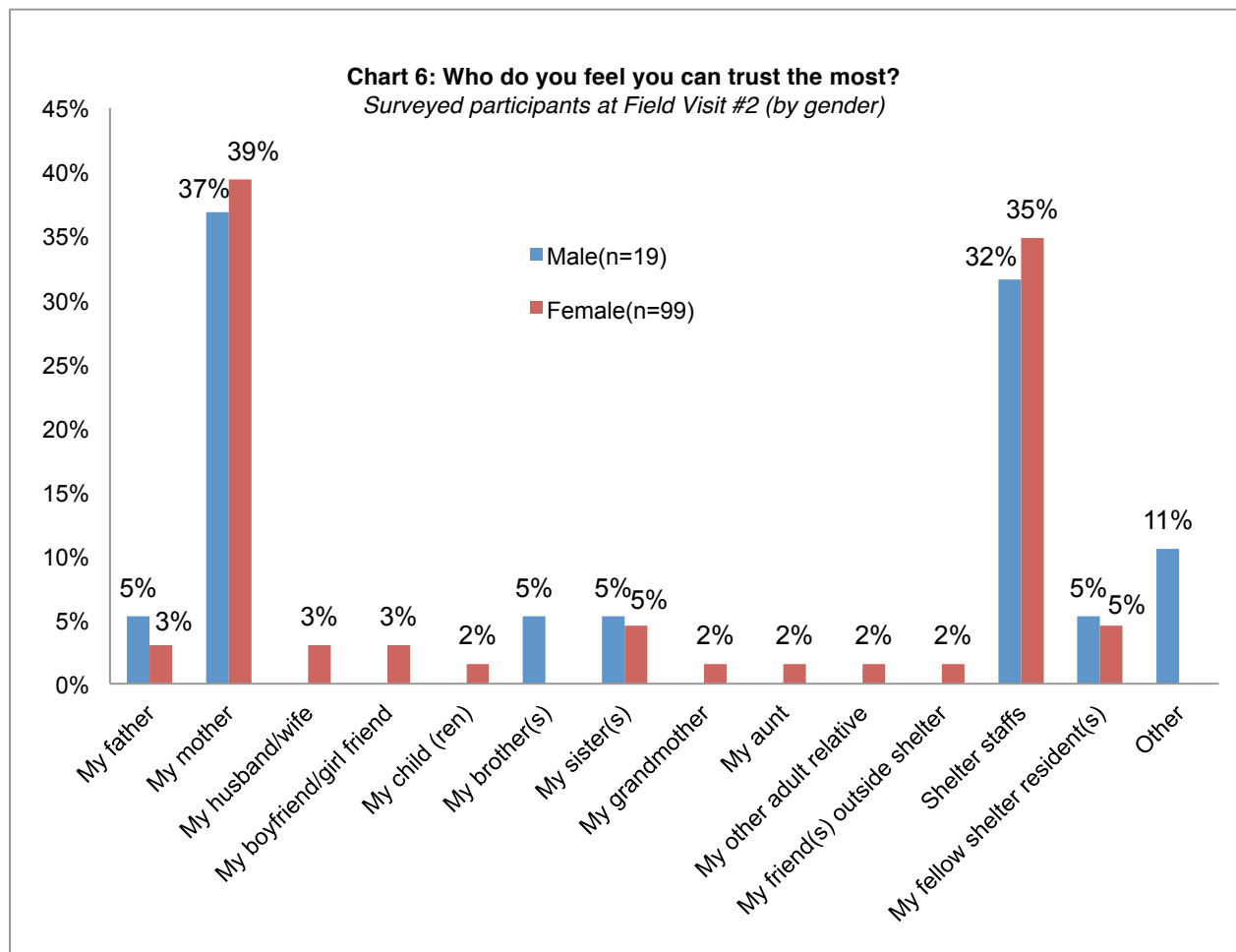
Participants were asked, "Have you trusted anyone over the past year?" One hundred percent of males and 74% of females responded affirmatively. This signifies an increase for males (from 94.4%) and a decrease for females (from 86.8%) from the previous year. Trust was a major factor for participants in choosing and keeping friends, boyfriends and other intimate partners. One participant spoke about not having any emotionally supportive relationships.

**"I need someone in my life who knows my mind and who I can trust. So far I have no one." – Shelter, Female**

The figure below charts the responses to the open-ended question, "Who have you felt you could trust over the past year?" Of the participants who initially responded that they had trusted a person or people in the past year, females listed 18 types of trusting relationships and males listed 14 types of relationships. Both males (n=19) and females (n=66) ranked "Shelter staff" highest at 68% for males and 59% for females, followed by their mothers at 53% for males and 45% for females, and fathers at 37% for males and 25% for females. Females ranked their siblings higher than males.

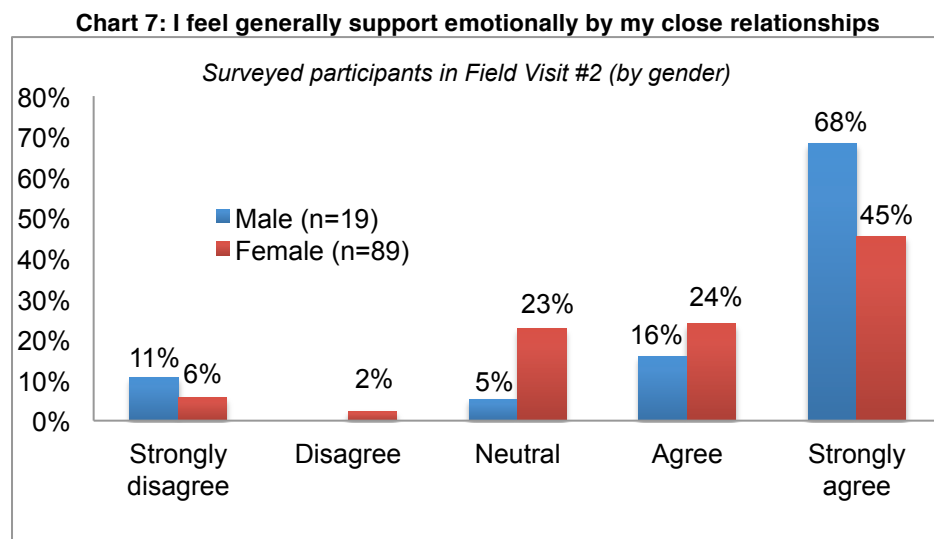


Interestingly, even though more participants said they could trust shelter staff than parents, the chart below shows that participants mostly chose their mother for who they could trust *the most*, followed closely by shelter staff. Even though a large *number* of participants said they could have trusted their fathers in the last year, most did not say they could trust their fathers *the most*.

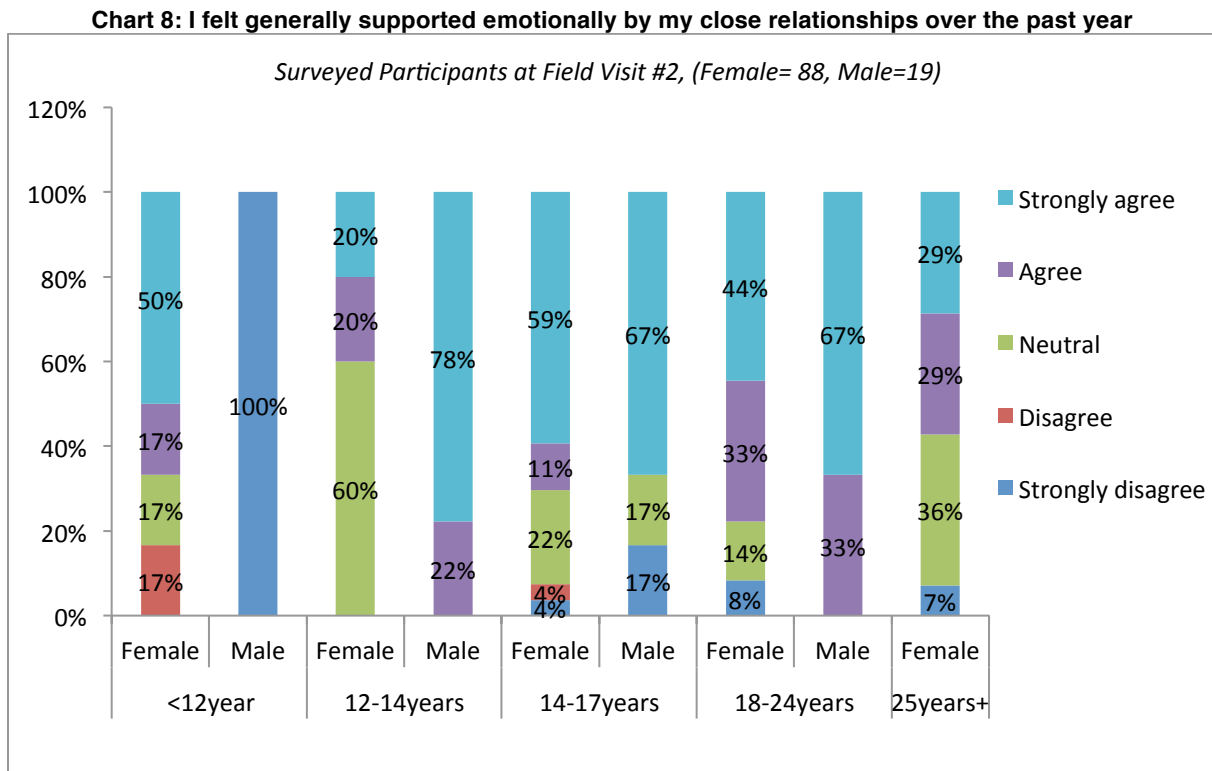


## EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Closely related to issues of trust in relationships was the emotional support provided by, or lacking from, close relationships. Participants were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: "I feel generally supported emotionally by my close relationships." The chart below displays the results.



Noteworthy is the comparison between these results and the results of the trust questions outlined above. Although 100% of males said they had someone they could trust in the past year, 84% said they felt emotionally supported by their close relationships; and, whereas 74% of females said they had someone they could trust in the past year, and 69% said they felt emotionally supported by their close relationships. Therefore, even if participants had someone they could trust, they did not always feel emotionally supported in those relationships. Participants were also asked if they had felt emotionally supported over the past year. The results were quite different across age groups, as shown in the chart below.



The perceptions of emotional support varied by the gender and age of the participants. In general, the majority of females felt emotionally supported in the past year, except for 12-14 year old girls, who agreed or strongly agreed at only 40%, with the remaining 60% choosing to remain neutral on the subject. The age group with the highest percentage of disagreement with the statement were girls under the age of 12, with 17% disagreeing. All female age groups over 15 years old disagreed at 7-8%. It should be noted that the chart indicates 100% of males under the age of 12 strongly disagreed with the statement; however, there was only one participant in that category and it is possible this child was too young to understand the questions to do with trust and emotionally supportive relationships. In participant observation, the research team noted he appeared at ease, generally happy and active through the year. In informal interviews and qualitative data gathering, he never spoke about relationship difficulties with staff, peers or his family. Other than this anomalous result, the only other male group to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement were between 15 and 17 years old. Overall, a larger proportion of both males and females said that felt emotionally supported by close relationships over the past year.



In fact, in informal interviews at the beginning of 2012, participants were asked to think about the highlight events of the previous year. Many participants described and drew about how they felt emotional support from their relationships.



Picture 3: Emotional support from close relationships

**“My friends always encourage me when I was sad.” – Shelter, Female**

Participants described a range of examples of how emotionally supportive relationships have positively impacted them.

**“Some shelter girls are jealous of me because I get good grades so they say mean and untrue things about me, like I cheated. But my close and good friend in the shelter always tells me to ignore them. She is a great support to me.” – Shelter, Female**

**“My close friend always encourages me when I am sad. Sometime I faced many problems but they spoke with me and motivated my feeling then I felt relieve.” – Community program, Female**

**“My close friends and I play football together and this makes us feel solidarity with each other.” – Shelter, Male**

For more on emotional violence and harassment, see Physical and Emotional Integrity: Violence.

## PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Some participants described their “ideal” friend, and many brought up characteristics related to those described above, trustworthiness and emotional support. Views on friendship also revolved around loyalty and the ability to keep secrets.

**“A good and close friend to me must be a person who is kind, helpful, encouraging and trustworthy towards me.” – Family Group Home, Male**

**“All my friends are good. But I have only one close friend I really trust. She knows my mind and I know her mind.” – Declined Assistance Not Residential Program, Female**

**“When we want to make friend with someone, we must know they are a kind and loyal person for us to trust them.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Relationships with peers at school tended to be the most tumultuous for many of the participants still attending school. As seen in the charts above, only 5% of males and 3% of females listed peers at school as people they could trust in the past year, and none stated peers at school were the group they could trust the most. School peers were among the groups participants felt ostracized by because of their past sexual exploitation or because they were from poor backgrounds.

**“Some rich kids in school treat me badly because I am poor. They think they are better than poor children. I told the teacher but she is powerless against the rich. Rich children have rich parents who don’t have to follow any rules.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

**“Some school friends discriminate against me because they are rich and I am poor. My neighbour also discriminated me because they said I follow the party in opposition to the government.” – Shelter Reintegration Follow up, Female**

**“I avoid the richer kids at school because they exclude me. I prefer kids that are poor like me.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

**“Peers at school threaten at me and use impolite words to hurt me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on class division and discrimination, see Culture & Religion: Class Division and Stigma & Discrimination.

Many participants, in informal and in-depth interviews, either spoke about liking the shelter setting because of the positive relationships with shelter staff, teachers, and other residents; or, that they did not like the shelter setting due to conflicts with their peers and staff. Most participants spoke about their disdain for the arguments and physical

**“I like the shelter overall because I have good friends here.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I feel happy living in the shelter because I can go to school, but I am unhappy with some children living here who cause fights and arguments with each other.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I don’t like it when we fight and argue with each other.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I really wish my shelter friends would stop fighting all the time” – Shelter, Male**

fights between their resident peers.

Another peer relationship spoken of was with coworkers or community program colleagues. Several participants spoke positively of these relationships.

**“I have a lot of friends at the community program. If my total number of friends is 100, then there is one or two that don’t like me. The other 98 or 99 people like me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I like all my workplace’s friends. They are all like me as well. I have never done bad things to them. Some old staffs ignore some new comers. The old staff said this or that about the new comers. But for me, I feel normal. I have no problem with the new comers. I build trust among them. So we are friendly and they dare to speak with me. I never make any arguments with someone in the shelter. Even someone cursed me, I didn’t curse them back.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

## **INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Relationship Status**

Similarly to 2011, the majority of participants still reported being single in 2012. All males responded they were “single,” as opposed to 76% of the females.<sup>7</sup> Among females, 11% responded they were in “partnerships, not married” compared to 8% who responded they were “married [legal].” Two percent of females reported being “separated” and none reported being “divorced [legal].”

Women in “partnerships, not married” appeared to refer to themselves as “married” figuratively rather than in a legal sense, in order to signify the more permanent nature of their relationship at the time. Likewise, if this “partnership, not married” relationship broke down or ended they referred to being “divorced” figuratively instead of in the legal sense.

### **Disclosure in Intimate Relationships**

While some participants stated they had not disclosed to their own families, all participants with intimate relationships stated they had disclosed their former and/or current sex work to their partners. Participants rarely disclosed their past or current involvement in sex work to their partner’s family. One participant described disclosing to her intimate relationships about her past and current sex work.

**“My husband knew that I was a Karaoke girl. He and I created relationship during the time we rented houses near each other. He wanted me to give up this kind of work. But I didn’t so after a while we broke up after we had a son together and I was pregnant with second baby. Now I am in a new relationship and he knows my past and accepts me.” – Declined Assistance Not-Residential Program, Female**

### **Relationship Health**

Generally, it was observed that most intimate relationships, whether married or unmarried, in which participants were involved were unhealthy, fluid, and often traumatic. In general, the women participants who were not in relationships were doing better emotionally and psychologically than those in relationships. Those who spoke of positive experiences in their relationships focused on how they felt validated by their significant other. One participant described in an informal interview how being married to a supportive husband and having a new born baby in the past year had been a very positive experience for both of them. She described how having a child to support has helped her and her husband to focus and share in their responsibility to provide and be a loving parents.

**“I married my good friend who accepts me and knows I used to work in Karaoke. Now we have a new baby girl and I feel more purpose in my life to give her a better life than mine. My husband feels the same as I do.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

<sup>7</sup> In 2012 all males were 18 years and younger, while the females’ ages ranged from seven years to 36 years old.

One participant was in a good partnership and positively described how she and her partner negotiate their decision making as a couple.

**“I always discuss everything with my partner. Most of the time, he agrees with my idea. He says that it was up to me. If both our ideas are good, sometime I follow his idea and sometime he follows my idea. But most of the time, we follow my idea.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Unfortunately, though, most participants spoke of negative experiences with their spouse, partner, or boyfriend. One participant describes her former marriage, and then divorce, and the impact on her children because of the custody dispute.

**“My husband and I didn’t love from heart to heart. He used to have wife; I am his second wife. First, my husband and I just were just friends. He always told me what he met difficulties in his life. He tried to overcome it. So that’s the reason that I fell in love him. In fact, I didn’t love him, I just pitied him. At that time, my mother told me, Please don’t accept that man, you will tear later,” but I didn’t listen to my mother’s words. And now I see the result. When he argues with me, he blames me and looks down on me. I feel hurt. I have separated from him and we fight over our daughter a lot. We both want her. Now I am worried about my child, I am afraid that my former husband will steal my child.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Article 115 of the Cambodian Law on Marriage and Family stipulates that men and women have equal rights regarding parental authority, but many women do not know what their own rights are. Men and women also have equal rights to request a divorce and, even if one parent wins custody of children, the other parent has visitation and contact rights to the child. In general, female participants exhibited a lack of knowledge for their legal relationship rights, and conveyed a sense of fatalism with regards to their partners or partners’ families deciding their fate or the fate of their children.

A major issue impacting relationships negatively is unfaithfulness, usually on the part of the husband. One participant spoke negatively about her former husband’s multiple sexual relationships.

**“Then my husband had another girlfriend. Our happiness went away. Finally, we divorced because we couldn’t live together anymore.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Two other participants described, in informal interviews, their partnerships of three years, and their desire to marry. They both decided to undergo abortions when their partners refused to marry them, and were not monogamous.

**“I am pregnant and my boyfriend loves another girl. He breaks my heart; it’s like having a big mountain on my chest.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on the impact of pregnancy on intimate relationships, see Health: Reproductive Health.

Another issue in intimate relationships is the threat of violence and the high rates of domestic abuse. One participant described how she felt she was experiencing emotional violence by her husband and his mother.

**“My husband never gave money to me while we were married. But he told his mother he gave money to me every month. He spent all our money on drugs because he was a drug addict. I tried to raise our child but it was impossible with him, so we divorced. I can raise this child. He doesn’t have the ability to raise this child. He was angry with me about the divorce and threatened to burn down our house. My mother-in-law didn’t balance the right or wrong. You know, she blamed me for leaving him. I said please stop blaming me. I cannot hold my anger anymore; I blame my ex-husband and my mother-in law because they are against me all the time.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on participants' experiences of violence, see Emotional & Physical Integrity: Violence.

### **Internal and External Obstacles to Marriage**

There were a variety of reasons given by participants of why they did or did not want to get married, and what was impeding their desire to get married. During informal interviews, some participants described their desires to marry legally in the future but stated they anticipated and experienced various barriers. One anticipated obstacle to marrying legally was not being able to afford the costs involved in a wedding ceremony.

**"I hope we can get married but for now we don't have enough money to have the ceremony." – Declined Assistance in non Residential training, Female**

Other participants anticipated or actually experienced opposition to their marriage by their in-laws or their partners. Often their partner's family rejected them based on their lower social status. One participant in a "partnership," who stated she had hoped to marry this partner, found that when she became pregnant in 2012 her partner's family refused to allow them to marry. She stated their opposition to her was not due to her prior sex work, because she had never disclosed to them; rather she felt it was due to their difference in social status. They rejected her because she was from a poor family. Her partner's parents have since arranged for her ex-boyfriend to marry another woman, and they have taken custody of the participant's newborn baby, denying her all access to the child. She states she is frustrated and angry at the way she has been treated but states they are a powerful family and she does not have the resources to oppose them.

**"My in-laws will not accept me to marry their son because I am poor. They have chosen a rich girl for him to marry. He follows his parents "wishes." – Declined Assistance in Residential Training, Female**

**"My boyfriend's parents won't agree to our relationship. So, we have to separate from each other, even though I am pregnant. Now I stay with my parents and my sister. ... His family is rich and I am poor. My boyfriend's parents have chosen another daughter in-law already and my boyfriend agrees to follow their wishes. ... They don't know about my past sex work; they don't accept me because my family is poor." – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

Other participants, not in serious relationships or partnerships, spoke of being cautious in approaching intimate relationships. One participant described her specific pragmatic criteria for considering remarrying. Others stated they would reconsider getting married altogether, because of the hardship they see it causing for their peers and other women in their lives. One participant spoke about her views on intimate relationships, monogamy, and divorce. In her family, her father had left her mother and their family for another woman, which had impoverished them economically. Based on her experiences of poverty as a result of divorce, she stated she is reticent of intimate relationships and opposed to divorce even if the husband is not monogamous.

**"I want to have a new husband but I must consider that man first. Will he be good and not? Is he dependable or not? Can he help my family or not? If he can, I shall marry him." -Community Assistance Program, Female**

**"I don't have a boyfriend yet. I think I don't see the advantage of having a boyfriend. I don't know why everyone wants to have a boyfriend or a husband. I have seen many girls cry when they have argued with their boyfriend or husband. When we have boyfriend, we are happy at first but later on, we will face many problems because he will not be faithful. When we get married the wife still faces so many problems because he will still have many other girlfriends. But I think differently from others, if I have a husband in the future. I won't make trouble with him. If he wants to have other girls, I will let him do that. When my husband wants to have sex outside, he can, but he cannot leave me. My father had other girls and he made trouble with my mother. My mother told him to not have other girlfriends so he left our family. He showed he didn't care about any of us. Because of this experience I hate divorce, because the wife and children cannot survive, they become too poor." – Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female**

Among female participants, there was a general feeling that “men will be men” (i.e. they will not be faithful to their wives or partners), and women either live with it or not. The belief is men cannot change, and it’s up to the woman to decide if she wants to deal with it or not. One participant described her negative views about the men in her neighbourhood.

**“You know, one woman recommended I marry a young husband. I answered that I didn’t want to marry. In my neighbourhood most women support the men. I have lost confidence in men. All the men are bad. I saw many men get drunk, use illegal drugs and then hit their wives. Some husbands force their underage children to work outside. If those children cannot find 20,000 or 30,000 Riel, their fathers will hit them. These men force the underage children to earn a living.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on gender relations and inequality, see Culture & Religion: Stigma & Discrimination.

**RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON PREPARING SURVIVORS FOR INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS:**

INCREASING THE SOFT AND RELATIONAL SKILLS OF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN MAY PROMOTE HEALTHIER INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS WHEN THEY ARE OLDER. SURVIVORS SHOULD ALSO BE MADE AWARE OF THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS IN RELATIONSHIPS, SO THEY KNOW THEIR AVENUES OF RECOURSE SHOULD THEY BE TREATED UNJUSTLY.

## **FAMILY**

Family relationships are enormously complex, probably more so than other relationships. For example, participants miss their families immensely when they are in residential assistance programs and they long to return home. On the other hand, families sometimes were involved in trafficking participants. Participants deeply love their families, and this love and concern for their families’ well-being often had something to do with their involvement in sex work or vulnerability leading to their sexual exploitation. Also, even though participants miss their family and long to go home to them while they are in residential care, once they are home it is not always easy to reintegrate back into the family and participants then miss their shelter family and friends. Family relationships directly and indirectly influence much in the participants’ lives, including education and employment decisions, beliefs and religious practices, and marriage options. According to Derks (1998), “Victims of trafficking have been cut off from their families ties. This is not only difficult for the woman or child but also for their family members.” Both participants and family members long for a reconnection with one another and to re-establish those severed ties.

For more on the role of family honour in life decisions, specifically for women, see Culture & Religion: Chbab Srei.

### **Involvement of Family Members in Trafficking**

One participant spoke of her family’s involvement in trafficking her.

**“My biological grandmother sent me to the non-biological grandmother. Then she sold me. My biological grandmother and I didn’t know she sold me. My biological grandmother passed away at her hometown. The non-biological grandmother lived at Borey Keyla building. I was young and pretty. I didn’t know they plotted against me. I was maybe 13 or 14 years old. I worked in prostitution for 5 years and had sex with many customers. If I didn’t have sex with the customers, they hit me. There were a lot of women at my workplace.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Unfortunately, adults are sometimes involved in trafficking members of their family. Sometimes it involves directly selling a young girl to a trafficker or brothel, and other times it involves indirectly looking the other way when their child gets a suspicious job in the city. Parents may tell their children not to enter sex work for the family’s benefit, but will take the money earned from this work anyway. Hagar (2005) found traffickers often use local people in a community or village to find young women and children, and target families who are poor and vulnerable. In some situations, family members sell children to middlemen or traffickers. In Anders, Lisborg & Plambeck’s overview of

returned trafficking victims to Thailand and the Philippines (2009) confirms that family relationships played a complex, sometimes contradictory and central role, for nearly all the women in the study before, during and after their migration abroad.

In cases where family members were not directly involved in trafficking, family relationships are often a push factor in young people's involvement in sexual exploitation. Bjerkan (2005), in interviews with victims of sexual exploitation, found these "often come from broken or dysfunctional homes and/or families where domestic violence is a problem." She found a strong connection between family problems and women's vulnerability of being trafficked, and the family situation of the victims who previously lived in broken families was always connected with serious difficulties and problems, even in the cases where the family relationships were described as normal. The common feature of the victims in Bjerkan's study was that the victims' decisions to leave home were directly connected to bad family relationships, domestic violence, and/or other traumatic events. Thus, victims usually left their family/home before being trafficked, and this contributed to their vulnerability (Lise Bjerkan, 2005).

Therefore, whether family is directly or indirectly connected to the trafficking of the participant, any involvement contributes to the complexity of family relationships and the difficulty of reintegration.

#### Positive Perceptions of Family: Family Visits

Whether or not families were involved in trafficking participants, talking about family often elicits conflicted emotions and family relationships played largely into participants were asked to describe or any participants in residential programs visit." Many participants expressed its also spoke about their desire for from this activity.

**"I have a house and I have to memorize what it looks like because I don't live there with my family. I live in the shelter. I am the third daughter of five children. I miss my parents. I live in the shelter and so do my two younger sisters. We miss our parents." – Shelter, Female**





**Picture 5: Family Visits**

A picture drawn by a participant expressing her desire to visit her family.

As stated in the section on Assistance Programs, participants in residential programs were very appreciative and grateful for the educational opportunities open to them while in residential care. However, what came out in interviews, and was confirmed in the activities around the highlight of their year, was their deep desire to be with their families. During informal interviews some participants in residential care spoke about their choice to remain in such contexts solely to have access to education and skills training, which they felt they did not have in their home settings. Some spoke about how, as small children, and prior to their sexual exploitation, they had left education in order to help contribute to family finances and survival.

**“I want to be with my family and live at home with them but my parents want me to stay in the shelter to get enough food and education.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I wanted to go home before now but my mother says it is better if I stay longer in shelter to get the education.” – Shelter, Male**

**“I prefer to live with my family but I stay longer in the shelter to get my education.” – Shelter, Female**

**“My mother wants me to stay in the shelter even though I wanted to go home. She wants me to study.” – Shelter, Male**

Activities in residential facilities were generally described in a positive light, and participants mentioned enjoying several things besides the education to which they had access, such as birthdays, parties, training, self-reflection workshops, friendships with other residents, and counseling. This is in constant tension with the desire for freedom, to live with family, and worrying about their parents and siblings living in poverty.



## Family Responsibilities

### Financial Responsibility toward Family

One of the issues discussed around family with participants was their perceptions of financial responsibilities towards family. A number of questions were asked of participants on various aspects of responsibility towards family; the results are in the table below. For each statement, participants had to respond whether they agreed or disagreed and to what extent.

**Table 2: Perceptions of Family Financial Responsibility**

Surveyed participants at Field Visit # , by gender (male=20, female=86)

What do you think about the following statements? How much do you agree or disagree?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree/ Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't know
Parents should be responsible to financially support their children (under the age of 18 years.)	-	-	8%	7%	81%	5%
Children under 18 years of age should be responsible to support their families.	77%	5%	7%	1%	2%	8%
Adults over 18 years of age should be responsible to help support their families.	3%	-	17%	9%	63%	8%
Children under the age of 18 years should be responsible to financially support their families to repay debt.	59%	3%	12%	2%	7%	17%
Girls under 18 years should be more responsible than boys under 18 years, to support their families.	69%	5%	3%	4%	8%	11%
Women over 18 years should be more responsible than men over 18 years, to support their families.	38%	4%	22%	5%	21%	11%
Boys under 18 years should be more responsible than girls under 18 years, to support their families.	60%	4%	11%	7%	7%	11%
Men over 18 years should be more responsible than women over 18 years to support their families.	5%	2%	19%	8%	58%	8%
Parents who are in debt should expect their children to work in prostitution if necessary.	90%	2%	1%	-	1%	7%
Children will incur the debt of their parents if the parents die or leave.	28%	6%	9%	4%	40%	13%
There is a greater likelihood children will have debt –incurring behaviors as the next generation, if their parents were in debt.(They will become like their parents)	71%	2%	4%	2%	11%	10%

Responses from male and female participants were overall very similar, except on a couple issues. Notably, there was a difference in response about the responsibilities of male and female children, both under and over the age of 18, have toward their family. In response to the statement, “Boys under 18 years should be more responsible than girls under 18 years, to support their families,” 62.8% of females strongly disagreed and 50% of males strongly disagreed; 4.7% of females strongly agreed and 15% of males strongly agreed. This indicates that some boys seem to think they should be more responsible for supporting their families than girls should, whereas females did not think

boys under 18 should be more responsible than girls under 18 for their families. On the other hand, many females did agree that men over 18 should be more responsible to support their families than women over 18, with 55.8% of females strongly agreeing with that statement; and males strongly agreed with this statement at 70%.

Another difference in opinion by males and females were the views on inheriting debt. In response to the statement, "Children will incur the debt of their parents if the parents die or leave," 50% of males, but only 23.3% of females, strongly disagreed; and, 30% of males and 41.9% of females strongly agreed. This may indicate ignorance about the laws governing inheritance and debt; often lack of knowledge can lead to the uninformed being taken advantage of or abused by loan sharks. Another interesting result was to the statement, "There is a greater likelihood children will have debt-incurring behaviour as the next generation, if their parents were in debt" (i.e. they will become like their parents). The majority of both males and females strongly agreed, but with males at 90% and females at 66.3%.

The most notable thing about the responses to many of the statements in the above chart is that, when asked directly, most participants agreed that children under 18 should not be financially responsible for their parents or families, nor repay their families' debts, and that parents should be responsible for their children. In practice, though, many of the youth under 18 years came to be sexually exploited because they felt it was their only option for supporting their family in need. This sense of responsibility also relates to the reintegration process, as they feel they need to contribute financially to their family upon reintegrating into the community. These feelings were even verbalized during interviews about debt repayment.

#### **Why do you feel responsible to repay debt?**

**"My family are in debt so I think because they are my parents I must help them," – Shelter, Female**

**"My family needs money for farming so I borrowed from others to help them." – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**"My mother is sick and my uncle needs to collect money from all our relatives to celebrate a religious ceremony." – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants also worry a lot about their families' poverty and debt and taking on that debt increases their anxiety. One participant expressed feeling she couldn't go to extended family for financial help and that she had to take on the responsibility on her own.

**"My relatives blame me when I ask for financial help. I feel worried about finding money to repay debt." – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on debt and reintegration, see Economic Reintegration: Poverty & Debt.

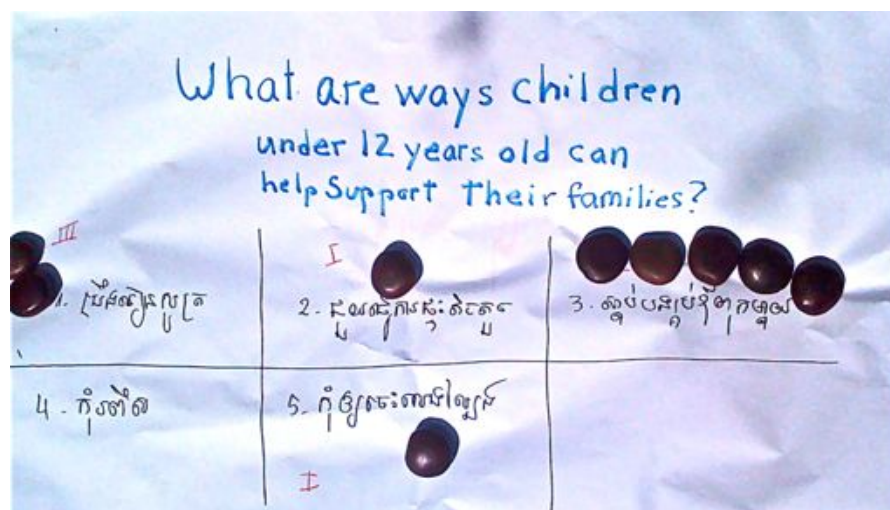
One participant also spoke of her sense of responsibility toward her family while being exploited in sex work. She was miserable but, like many young people trapped in sexual exploitation, thought it was the only way to help support her family financially.

**"At that time, I didn't have hope in my life. I just worked today for eating today. I thought if I die one day, please die. I didn't think much. At that time, I earned a lot of money and sent it to my old parents. I spent a lot on alcohol and makeup. I had no savings." – Community Assistance Program, Female**

#### Non-Financial Responsibilities toward Family

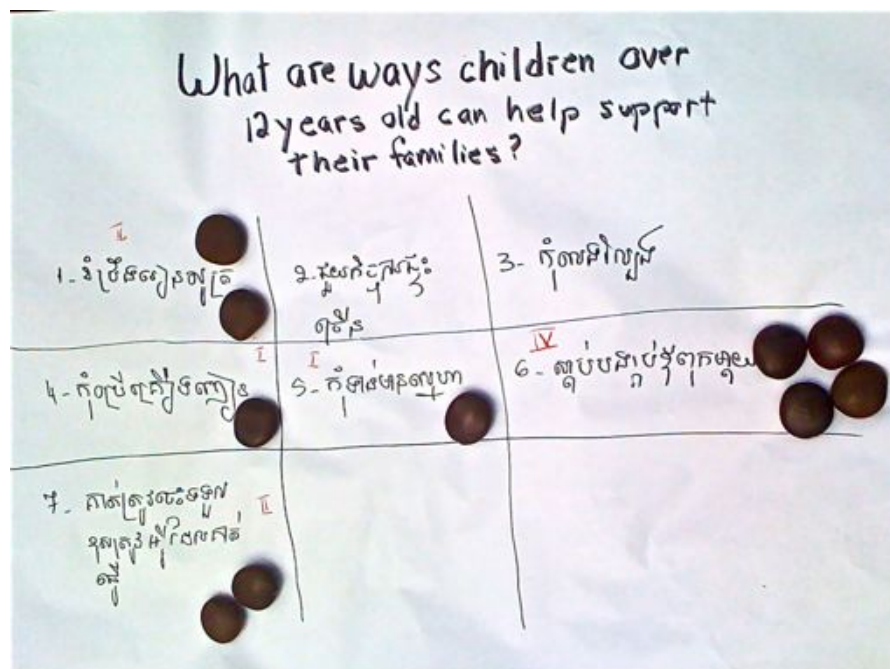
Participants also spoke of non-financial ways they could support their families. Participants were asked to discuss in Focus Groups, with the use of the Ten Seeds Technique, their perceptions of children's responsibilities toward their families both ideally and in reality. Overwhelmingly, general obedience toward parents was ranked highest. In the discussion, they largely agreed children should focus on their education. They felt pursuing education was a way by which to honour the family by achieving success through access to employment and being able to support their

families in the future. Others discussed the importance of being attentive and helpful to their parents and families as issues and chores arose, such as helping with household chores and helping with childcare. The ranking charts below display the results of the focus group discussions on ways children under and over the age of 12 can help support their families.



**Ranking Chart 2: Ways Children Under 12 Can Support Their Families**  
Surveyed participants at Field Visit #

- Legend:
1. Try to study hard
  2. Help with household chores
  3. Obey the parents
  4. Do not do pranks
  5. Do not play gambling



**Ranking Chart 3: Ways Children Over 12 Can Support Their Families**  
Surveyed participants at Field Visit #

- Legend:
1. Try to study
  2. Do the household chores
  3. Do not play gambling
  4. Do not use illegal drugs
  5. Do not have love/sexual relationships when young
  6. Obey the parents' advice
  7. Be responsible

Participants largely spoke about how, through responsibility, helping their parents, and avoiding illegal behaviour, children would be prepared for adult life.

**“Children should help their parents’ household. When they are away from their parents, they will know how to cook and prepare things for their living. Children used to working hard will find it easy when they live far away from their family.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For both children under and over the age of 12, it was consensually decided that obeying parents is the most important way to help support the family (five out of 10 seeds for children under 12 and four out of 10 seeds for children over 12). Both groups gave two seeds out of ten to studying as a way to support the family.

**“The parents will be happy when they heard their children are outstanding students. They still have power even they don’t eat rice. On the other hand, children should obey their parents. When they know this role, they for sure will become good children.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

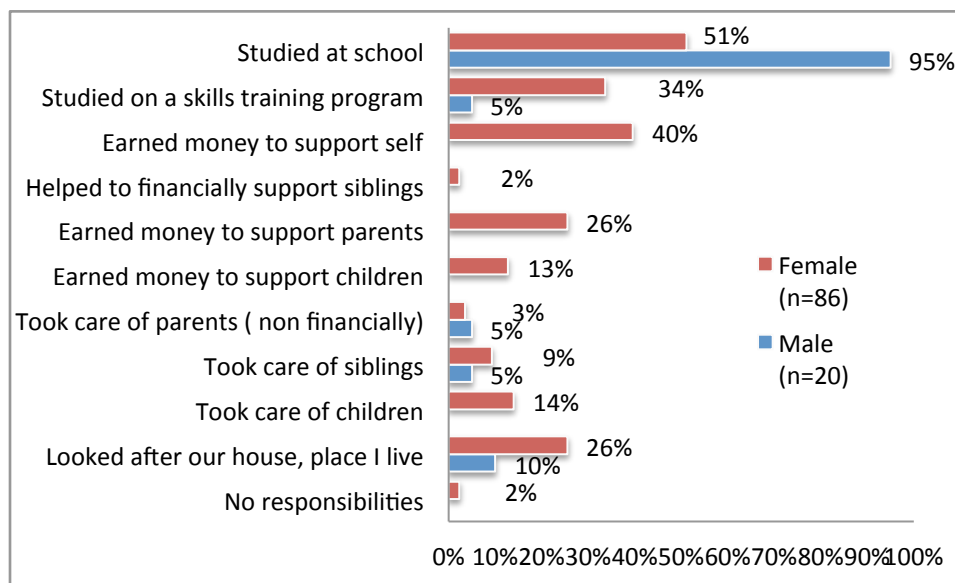
For younger children, other responsibilities given weight were helping with household chores and not playing gambling games. For older children, responsibilities given weight were not using illegal drugs, not having sexual relations too young, and generally being responsible. Participants in the community program declined assistance programs also spoke about their concerns for, and warnings to Cambodian children who have been exposed to and involved in illegal drug use and early romantic relationships.

**Chart 9: What were your main responsibilities in the past year?**  
Survived participants at Field Visit #1, by gender

**“Today, children create love very fast. They should be responsible for their actions. ... Children over 12 years old mustn’t make love fast. We know children around 15 or 16 years old who want to have love. When they have love, they will forget their studying. Moreover, they won’t obey their parents. It is complicated.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“The children over 12 years old easily use illegal drug. This is the reason that they don’t obey their parents’ advice. So parents must educate their children to avoid using illegal drug.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Following the discussions on how children over and under the age of 12 *should* help to support their families; participants answered a survey on what their responsibilities *actually were* over the course of the past year. Participants were instructed to choose as many responsibilities as they felt applied to themselves. The results are



below.

Ninety five percent of males reported “Studied at school” as one of their main responsibilities in the past year, nearly twice that of females, at 51%. This likely reflects that all males were of school age and, at the time the question was asked, were largely in the residential program, which offered education as a part of its program. Though lower than males, just over half the female participants still ranked education highest their highest responsibility followed by “earning money to support self” at 40%, and “looking after place of residence” and “earning money to support

parents”, both at 26%. This is likely reflective of the older female participants in the study who were working and living in a community setting, and those participants who had completed or were in the process of reintegration.

As can be seen in the graph, the total percentage attributed by females is much higher than that attributed by males; this points both to the fact that there is an older contingent of female participants and female participants had more responsibilities than did males over the past year.

## REINTEGRATION PERSPECTIVES

There are many pros and cons to reintegration from the survivor’s perspective. For example, on the one hand, reintegration often means freedom to be with their family; on the other, participants often miss their shelter friends, good relationships they have established with staff members and counsellors, and other aspects of residential life.

Communities are not always prepared for a survivor to return, and sometimes react in various negative ways. One participant went back to the issue of trust and how there is no one in her life in the community she can talk to.

**“Since I reintegrated I don’t trust anybody in my family. When I am sad about something, I go for a walk in the forest behind my house. I have no one who understands my story.” – Shelter, Female**

There are a number of issues at play in how a survivor is viewed upon reintegration, depending on the level of disclosure and how much is assumed about the survivor when she or he returns.

For more on cultural stereotypes and fear of disclosure, see Culture & Religion: Perceptions of Cultural Expectations.

One major issue is the family’s needs often override survivors’ desires for further education or skills training. Once reintegrated, there is pressure to quit their training program in order to contribute financially to the family. Arranged or early marriage can also impede the reintegration process, especially for survivors still in an educational or training program, as they are often pressured to quit in order to take care of their husband and household.

Another vulnerability for reintegrated participants is the risk of being re-trafficked, especially in cases where a member of the family was involved in trafficking the participant. Girls who have once been trafficked by their family members are at a higher risk to be trafficked again when they are reintegrated with these family members. This is partly dependent on the economic situation, but also on relations within the family and perceptions on the economic value of children or on the moral value of certain kind of work (Derks, 1998).

Another issue at play is the reality that many families into which survivors are reintegrating are reconstituted families and participants noted that step-parents do not see their step-children as their own, but often treat them like servants in their own homes. One participant stated she felt generally sadder than she had in the previous year because of a bad relationship with her step-mother.

**“My home is like prison because my step mother considers me as her slave.” – Reintegration Assistance , Female**

Both assistance programs and families may underestimate how difficult the transition may be from residential care to family life for the survivor.

### RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON SURVIVOR REINTEGRATION:

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SHOULD SPEND SIGNIFICANT TIME WITH THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OF SURVIVORS, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER THE REINTEGRATION PROCESS BEGINS, TO ASSESS REINTEGRATION READINESS OF BOTH PARTIES.

### RECOMMENDATION TO COALITION ON SURVIVOR REINTEGRATION:

DEVELOP AN ASSESSMENT TOOL TO GAGE THE RISKS AND NEEDS REINTEGRATING SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.  
DEVELOP A TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR COMMUNITIES TO REDUCE STIGMA SURVIVORS MAY FEEL UPON REINTEGRATION.



# PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL INTEGRITY

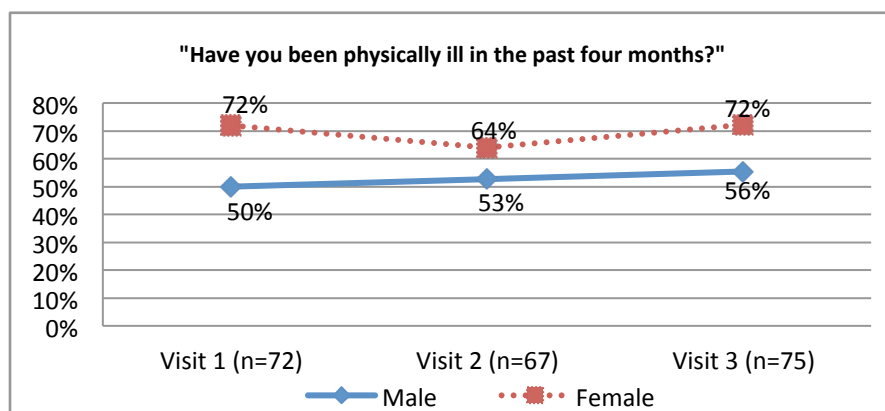
This section deals with perceptions, experiences, and opinions of participants of issues pertaining to their physical and emotional integrity. There are many issues that cross-cut with the physical and, more so, emotional well-being of participants, some of which include links between physical health and poverty, friendship and emotional health, even relationships and abortion. This section covers issues of physical and emotional well-being, sexuality and sexually transmitted illnesses, reproductive health, violence, and substance abuse.

## PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

### Physical Well-Being

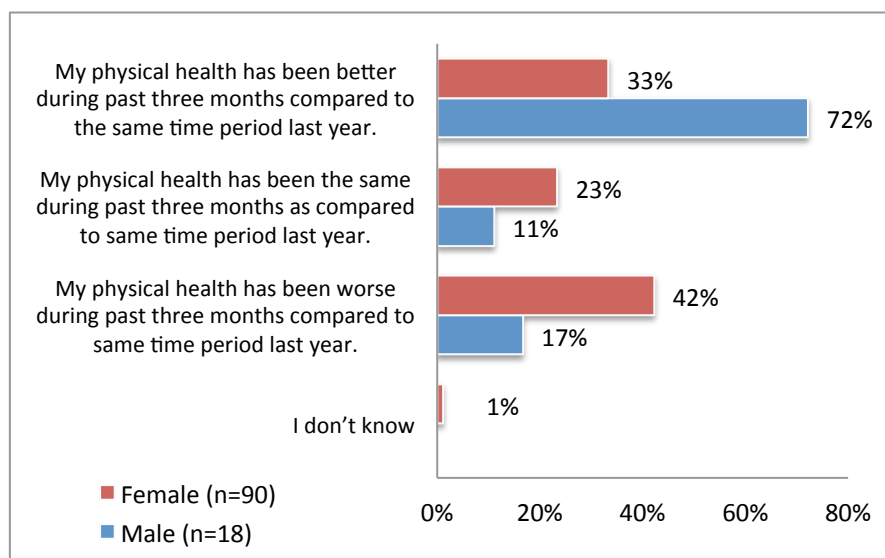
Participants were surveyed about their general physical health in the previous year, and to compare that to the year before. As seen in the figures below, females reported higher incidence of illness than males. Females also reported having to take medication on a regular basis at a much higher rate than males.

Participants were asked to disclose whether they had been ill in the past four months at each field visit during the year. Both male and females responded they had been ill at various percentages over the past four months, females ranking higher at all three visits than males, as well as overall.



**Graph 1: Physical Health of Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at each Field Visit, by gender*

Participants were also asked to compare their health at one point to the same period in the previous year.



**Chart 10: Physical Health of Participants Compared to Last Year**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

As seen above, males rate their health better as compared to last year at 72% while only 33% of females rated it better. Females rank their health worse at 42% and males at 17%. Proportionally, more males would have been in residential care and thus likely to access health care more easily than females in their variety of settings.

There was a vast difference between females and males when it comes to taking medication on a regular basis. More females (40%) compared to males (11%) required medicine at some point during the past year to cure an illness. This figure also includes those who take regular medicine for chronic incurable illnesses.

Ill health and lack of access to health care are major sources of stress and worry for participants, particularly those in the community or reintegrating into their family. Participants expressed their anxiety about ill health. They described its negative impact on family resources and the family's ability to earn money. Those in the community described foregoing medical care when they felt ill in the past year as they did not have the funds to cover these costs. Others in residential programs expressed their anxiety about future lack of access to affordable health care when they would leave the program.

**"Now I have changed in my body. Last time, four months ago, I was not so thin but now I am thinner than before. I don't know why I am losing weight. I cannot eat well and I always have a headache, but I haven't gone to hospital or the doctor because I am afraid to spend a lot of money." – Declined Assistance, Female**

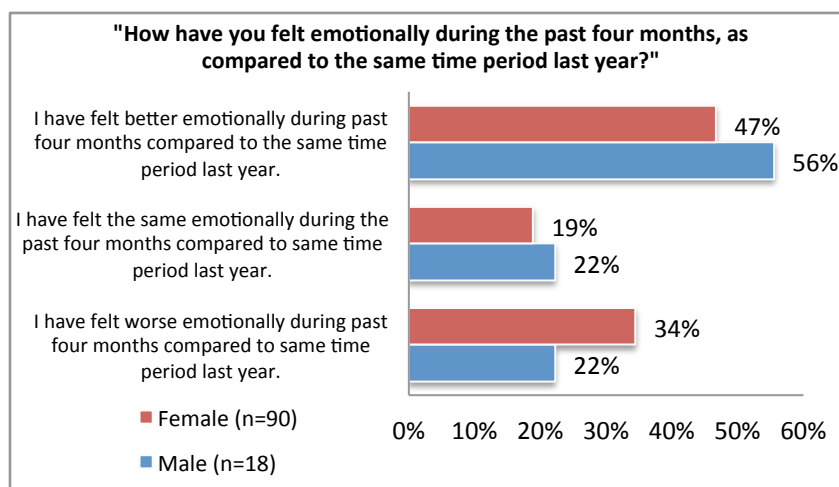
On the other hand, several participants who were pregnant described receiving free antenatal and termination services.

**"I can get free health check up for my pregnancy." – Declined Assistance, Female**

For more on the link between physical health and poverty, see Economic Reintegration: Poverty & Debt.

### Emotional Well-Being

Emotional well-being relates to a large number of other issues. These cross-cutting issues are exemplified in the responses given in answer to the question, "How have you felt emotionally during the past four months, as compared to the same period last year?" A little under half of females and a little over half of males reported feeling better emotionally than during the same period in the previous year; over a third of females reported feeling worse.



**Chart 11: Emotional well-being comparison over time**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*



Participants were also asked to elaborate on the reasons they chose the answer they did in the above question. A variety of different subjects were broached on why they felt happier, neutral or mixed, or sadder than they had the previous year. The 47% of females and 56% of males who responded they were happier stated reasons having to do with good relationships, being able to go home to their families, and access to education and employment opportunities, among others.

**Family Reunion:**

**"I can live with my parents and grandparents since I reintegrated." – Shelter, Female**

**"I am happy when I can visit with my family." – Shelter, Female**

**Resolved Debt:**

**"I am happy because my family has less debt so my parents never ask me to pay off the debt even though I have a good job." – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**Increased freedom/agency:**

**"I can do what I want since I reintegrated." – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**Positive/peaceable relationships:**

**"I am happy because there are many people who play with me in the shelter." – Shelter, Female**

**"I am happy because I have no conflict with my friends." – Shelter, Female**

**"My friends and the staff make me happy." – Shelter, Female**

**"I have a lot of new friends that I can play with at school." – Shelter, Female**

**Resolution of past sexual exploitation:**

**"Don't have the sorrow thing to worry." – Shelter, Female**

**"I have close friends, a counselor, and family who always encourage me. And they help me to get over my past sexual exploitation problem." – Family Group Home, Female**

**Access to educational /skills training opportunities:**

**"I have time to go to school when I live in the shelter." – Shelter, Female**

**"I am happy when I do my skills training." – Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-up, Female**

**Leisure and basic living experiences:**

**"I have time to go for a walk, celebrate birthdays, and enough food." – Shelter, Female**

**"I feel good because there is enough food in the shelter." – Shelter, Female**

**Better health of child:**

**"I think I am happy this year if I compare to last year. Last year, my child was sick a lot and now her health is good. I have freedom more than last year." – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Those who responded they felt worse emotionally than during the same period last year stated similar reasons, particularly family and relationship tensions and economic instability.

**Unemployment:**

**“I feel stressed because I can’t find a job.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**Lack of freedom/agency:**

**“My home is like prison because my step mother considers me as her slave.” – Reintegration Assistance, Female**

**Relationships:**

**“I worry because I will change schools, and I don’t know if I can make new friends.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I feel unhappy because my boyfriend rejected me and I am pregnant.” – Declined Assistance Residential Training**

**“I usually cry because of my friend and we often have argument.” – Shelter, Female**

**Family tensions:**

**“But I just know that I faced many problems last year. My husband has some problem with my parents. My husband and my parents always accuse each other. Everything my husband does, my parents always complain. Generally, my parents don’t like my husband. But I am the middle person in this conflict.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**Lack of adequate resources:**

**“I feel stress because I have no money to raise my baby and my husband goes away a lot.” – Reintegration completed, Female**

**Ill Health:**

**“My mother and younger sister are both sick so I worry.” – Shelter, Female**

Nineteen (19) percent of females and 22% of males reported feeling the same as they had last year. This could mean they were either as sad, as happy, or a mix of both, as the previous year. The reasons given mainly pointed to a mix of happy and sad feelings.

**“I am happy because I have counselor to support me. I am unhappy because I am bored in the shelter and I miss my home.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I am worry because my mother is a gambler so my father feels sad and then he drinks alcohol every day. I am happy sometimes when I play the shelter friends and the shelter mother encourages me.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I worry about the debt that only I am only responsible for. I have some conflict with the house owner as well. So I am unhappy. But I am happy when my church has a trip.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I have the shelter staff’s encouragement. So I am happy. I am unhappy because my older brother passed away.” – Shelter, Female**

In addition, 17% of males and 23% of females reported having “other feelings” since the previous year; that is, new experiences that gave them feelings they previously had not had. Some “other” feelings described include fear of disclosure, anxiety about the future, and being in love with a new partner.

**Emotional Well-Being and Reintegration**

Although the present study does not measure rates of post-traumatic stress disorder in its participants, there are many emotional health issues to take into consideration in the reintegration process of survivors of sexual

exploitation. In Aresen & Quinn (2005), specific psychological health issues addressed in reintegration programs include: stress, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicide (p. 24). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is characterized by “an emergence of specific emotional, mental, somatic, and behavioural symptoms in a distinctive combination and with a serious intensity and duration” (CSD 2008, 76-79). By the time the person exposed to trauma is suffering the three-fold burden of continuing high levels of stress arousal, intrusive re-experiencing of the trauma, and attempts to avoid being reminded of, or thinking about, the trauma, they are well on the way to developing PTSD. If these three produced symptoms interfere with ordinary life, and the symptoms persist over time, then they will need the criteria for such a diagnosis (Cairns, 2002, p. 105-106).

Charlotte (2012) identified 19 studies which reported on trafficked women and girls only, focusing primarily on trafficking for sexual exploitation. Findings showed a high prevalence of mental health problems among women who had been trafficked. The studies reviewed found high levels of anxiety (48%-98%), depression (55%-100%) and PTSD (20-77%) (Evans, 2012). Another study shows trafficked persons, and trafficked women in particular, are likely to suffer from abuse, stress, depression, and somatic consequences similar to those experienced by female victims of violence (Zimmerman, 2003). In a study on the relationship of trauma to mental disorders among trafficked and sexually exploited girls and women, it was found that injuries and sexual violence during trafficking were associated with higher levels of PTSD, depression, and anxiety (Hossain et al., 2010, p. 2442).

The many women and children who are reintegration are still dealing with mental health problems that are related to the fact that they were victims of trafficking. An assessment by Bolton et al. (2008) recommended that “mental health interventions should consist of treatments found to be effective in other populations and which are likely to be feasible and acceptable locally.” In other words, as reintegration begins and progresses, it is important to address participants’ mental health issues sensitively and contextually.

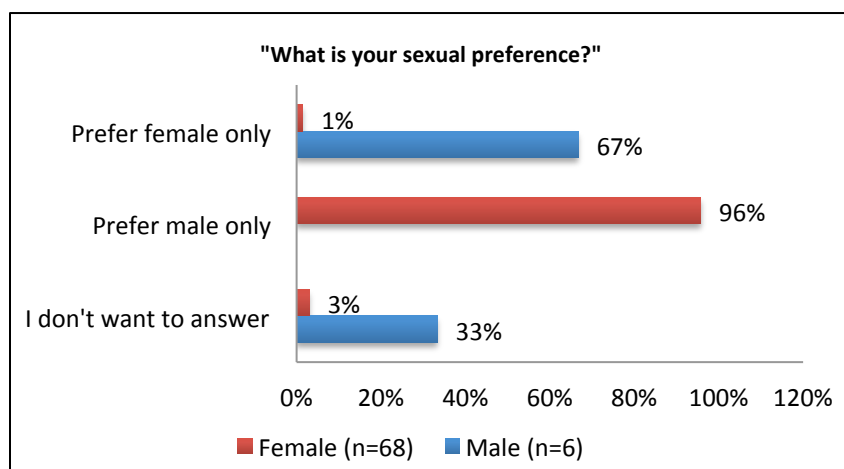
## SEXUALITY & SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED ILLNESSES

Perceptions and experiences of sexuality is a difficult issue to discuss with survivors of sexual exploitation. While some did not wish to speak of it at all, others were open about their experience of exploitation and shared their stories with the research team. Due to the sensitive nature of the questions regarding sexuality and sexual behaviours, the option “I don’t want to answer” was included for all questions pertaining to these topics. Different aspects covered in this section are sexual preference and current sexual activity, experiences of sexual exploitation and harassment, and sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

### Sexual Activity

#### Sexual Preference

During the third field visit, participants were asked to state their sexual preference. Of those participants who answered this question, most females and males considered themselves of heterosexual orientation.



**Chart 12: Sexual Preference among Participants**  
Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender

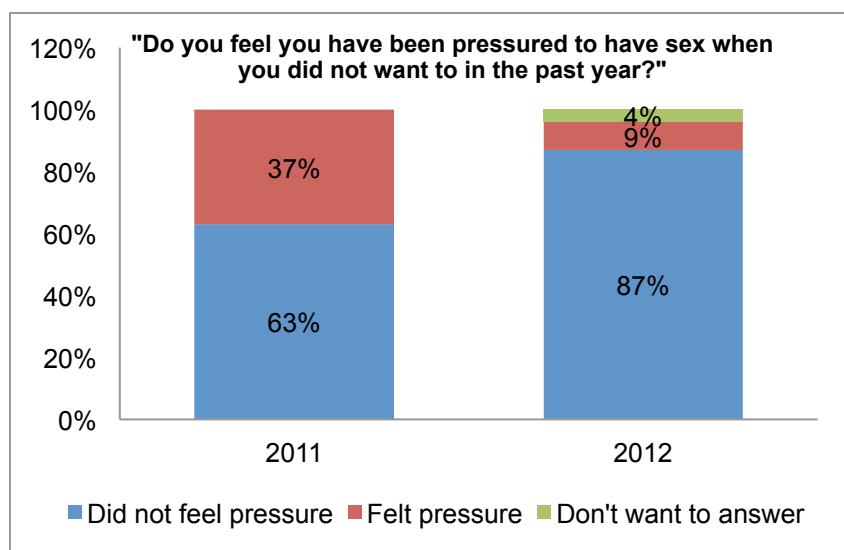
No males and only one female stated being openly homosexual, while 67% of males and 96% of females stated being heterosexual. While only 3% of females chose not to answer the question, 33% of males opted not to answer.

In Heather Montgomery's research on prostituted children in Baan Nua, Thailand, she found a high incidence of lesbianism or lesbian activities among pubescent girls. She says this orientation is not necessarily a fixed or even long term part of the "gay scene," but rather she felt they were experimenting with lesbianism as a way to develop an independent sexuality apart from paid sex with foreign men (Montgomery 2001). The questions posed on sexuality this year focused on sexual preference, not sexual experimentation, and could perhaps be expanded to include these issues, especially as they relate to how participants cope with and overcome their exploitation during reintegration.

#### Sexual Activity in the Past Year

Only females reported having had sexual activity in the past year. Of the 90 female participants surveyed, 23 females, or 26%, reported sexual activity in the past year. This is a slight change from the previous year, when 33% reported having had sexual activity in the past year. The questions asked following this question were only asked of the 23 female participants who reported sexual activity.

Participant were asked if they had felt pressure to have sex when they did not want to; only two (2) participants, or 9%, responded they had. This is an improvement from the year before, as shown below.



**Chart 13: Pressure to Have Sex**  
 Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (2011: n=30; 2012: n=23)

Those who stated in 2012 they felt pressure to have sex explained why they felt they had been pressured.

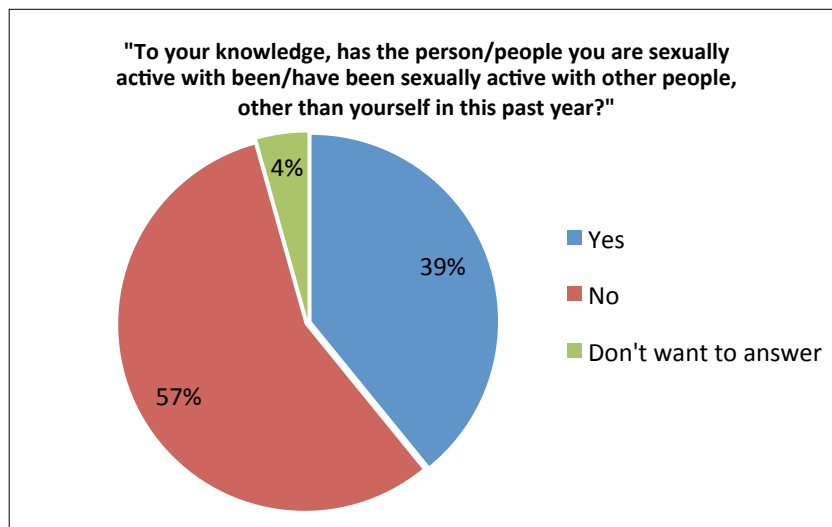
**"My boyfriend always has sexual desired but I don't. I just have to agree with him or he will get angry with me." – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**"The boss forced me to have sex with customers when I did not want to." – Shelter, Female**

#### Sexual Partners

Females having reported sexual activity in the past year were also asked if they had been active with more than one person in the past year. Two (2) participants responded they had, and the number of sexual partners was two (2) for both of them. This question may have been interpreted as being sexually active with those they considered as more committed partners rather than customers, reflecting the low affirmative response rate and the informal knowledge that more than two participants were still or had been in the past year involved in casual sexual encounters via Karaoke and sex work. In future years, this question will be adapted to include all types of sexual encounters.

Participants were asked whether, to their knowledge, their sexual partners had been sexually active with others in the past year, and whether their partners had been sexually active with sexually exploited persons in the past year. The majority of respondents stated their sexual partners were not sexually active with others, but over a third responded their partners were sexually active with others. Four (4) percent declined to answer.



**Figure 3: Sexual Partner Activity**  
 Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=23)

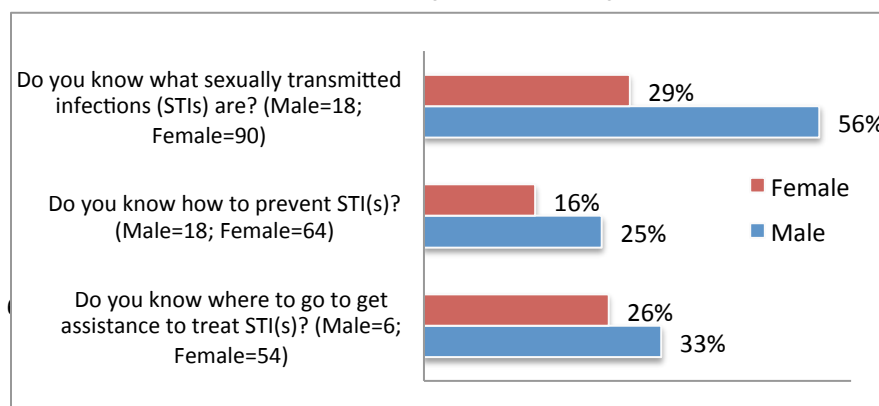
Of the 39% of participants who responded their sexual partners were sexually active with others, it was asked if, to their knowledge, their sexual partners' sexual activity was with sexually exploited persons. The vast majority responded affirmatively, with 78% stating their partners had been sexually active with sexually exploited persons and 22% responding their partners had not. This data is very interesting, particularly in relation to the next section on condom use in the past year.

## STIs & HIV

### Knowledge of STIs

Males responded generally higher than females to knowing what sexually transmitted infections are, where to get treatment for STIs, and how to prevent these illnesses. Over half of male participants responded they knew what STIs are, whereas under a third of female participants did.

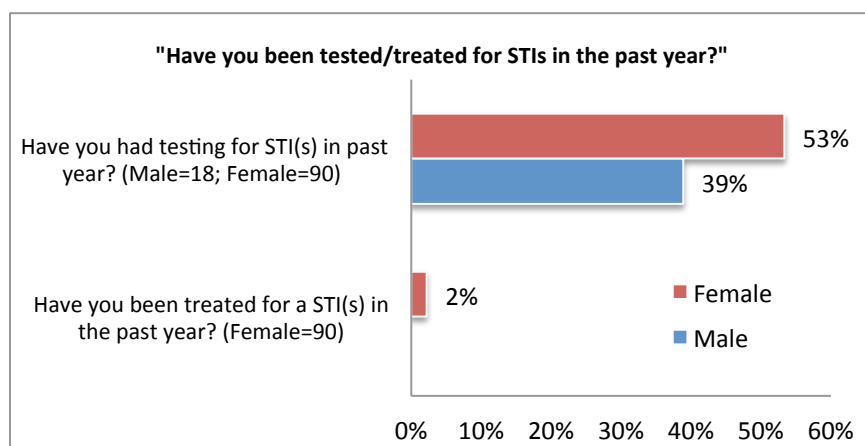
Participants' general knowledge of sexually transmitted infections, and how to prevent and treat STIs decreased from last year. The research team suspected, after last year's survey was executed, even when participants stated they knew what STIs were, the terms were not defined and understanding was very shallow. This year, more qualitative discussion preceded the survey, which led participants to realise, in larger numbers than last year; they actually did not know what STIs are. The results on general knowledge on STIs are below.



**Chart 14: Participants' Knowledge of STIs**  
 Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender

The majority of participants who knew what STIs are responded that STIs, HIV, and liver diseases were transmitted through sexual intercourse and blood. Condoms, monogamy, and not sharing intravenous needles were listed important as ways to prevent these illnesses. Some said while it is important to have only one sexual partner, they would still wear a condom because they could not ensure their sexual partner was monogamous.

Participants were also asked whether they had gotten testing and treatment for STIs in the past year. More males than females responded they had STI testing in the past year; and only 2% females responded they had treatment for an STI in the past year.

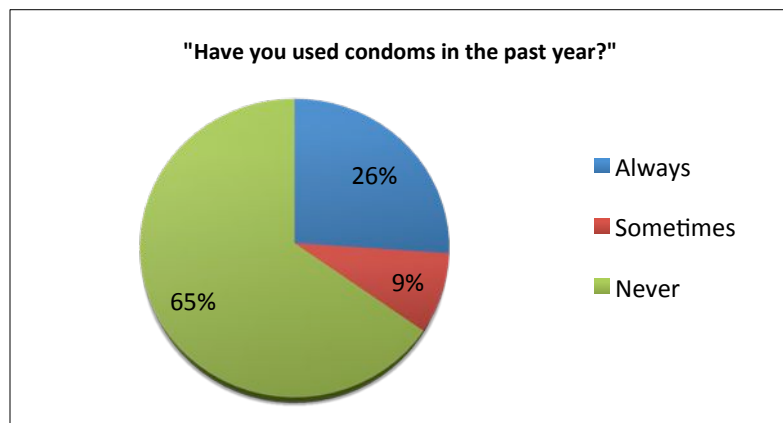


**Chart 15: STI Testing and Treatment among Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

With regards to how to treat STIs and HIV, most participants spoke of going to a medical facility for diagnoses and treatment. One participant described the government's free HIV treatment.

#### Condom Use

The female participants who responded they were sexually active in the past year were asked about their experiences of condom use. Only 26% of sexually active females reported using condoms "always;" the remaining 74% used condoms "sometimes" or "never."



**Figure 4: Condom Use among Sexually Active Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=23)*

These results are alarming, considering 39% of these participants stated knowing their partner had sexual relations with others, and 78% of those had partners who had sexual relations with other sexually exploited persons. Kim et al. (2005) conducted a study on HIV and STIs among indirect sex workers<sup>8</sup> in Cambodia and found the HIV prevalence was 26%, the STI prevalence was 14%, and the consistent condom was reported at 39%. The study concluded that indirect sex workers in Cambodia showed high sexual risk, a finding confirmed by the present study's findings on women having been exploited in direct and indirect sex work.

Participants were asked to expand on their perceptions and experiences of condom use. Reasons for not using condoms included partner objections and complete trust in a partner; reasons for using condoms had to do with lack of trust for the partner and not wanting to get pregnant or contract an STI. Misinformation about condoms was also observed in qualitative interviews.

**Does Not Use Condoms:**

**"My partner doesn't want/like to use the condom, so we don't."** – Community Assistance Program, Female; Reintegration Completed, Female

**"I have never used condom with my husband because I trust in him."** – Reintegration Completed, Female

**"The couple must trust each other so don't need to wear condoms."** – Shelter, Female; Community Assistance Program, Female

**"I trust him because we had blood test together, so we don't use condoms."** – Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female

**"I trust my husband, so we don't use condoms."** – Declined Assistance Not Residential Training, Female; Community Assistance Program, Female

**Does Use Condoms:**

**"I do use condoms in order to prevent other diseases and pregnancy."** – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female

**"I don't trust my husband. He works far from me so I use a condom."** – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female; Community Assistance Program, Female

**"I use condom because my health is not good with the medication for my incurable disease."** – Community Assistance Program, Female

**"I don't want to have any more babies so I use a condom."** – Community Assistance Program, Female

**Misinformation on Condoms:**

**"My husband doesn't know how to use a condom."** – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female

**"I am afraid the condom may affect my uterus."** – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female

Some participants spoke about their former Karaoke experiences and about their vulnerability to HIV and STIs. Participants described their inability to be able to insist on using condoms with customers when "sex" occurred off the karaoke premises. Sex or sexual services off the premises allowed customers greater control over the sexual encounter. One participant relates this lack of control to how she acquired HIV.

**"I am HIV positive because when I had sex I didn't protect myself. Some customers drank alcohol so they didn't wear a condom while having sex with me. I wanted to use the condom but customers didn't allow me to use it. I had no right. I had to do what they wanted. We had sex off the premises so I could only do what they wanted."** – Community Assistance Program, Female

She also shared her initial reaction to learning she was HIV positive.

<sup>8</sup> Kim et al. (2005) define indirect sex workers as "non-brothel based such as beer promoters, karaoke lounge signers, bar girls, and massage parlour women" (p. 745). Most of Cambodia's sex work has moved towards indirect services in the past years.

**“When I went to the hospital and had the blood test, the doctor said that I was HIV positive. At that time, I felt very shocked. I didn’t tell the pimp. I just kept it secret. I thought if I still have sex with the customers, I will die soon.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Another participant was concerned she had contracted HIV because she also could not demand condom use from her clients. She tested negative and was also treated and cured from another STI.

**“If I didn’t use condom, I may have HIV/AIDS in my body. Now I am fine. I used to have a woman’s disease but the Community program helped to cure me so I am fine now. I stopped having sex with the customers so my disease is recovered rapidly.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

The relatively low proportion of sexually active participants who do not use condoms, the inconsistency of knowledge and ability to use condoms, along with some false beliefs about the effects of condom use, point to a lack of education and to a larger problem of women’s rights to demand condom use of their sexual partners.

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON SEX EDUCATION:**

GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN COULD BENEFIT FROM INCREASED KNOWLEDGE ON SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND STI PREVENTION METHODS, INCLUDING CORRECT CONDOM USE AND DISPELLING MYTHS ON CONDOM USE.

For more on participants’ experience of sexual exploitation and sexual harassment, see the below section on Violence.

## **REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

Questions around reproductive health were only asked of female participants and included whether they had started their menses, methods of contraception, perceptions of pregnancy, and experiences of abortion. The first question was, “Have you started having your period?” Of the 90 female participants who responded, 83 participants (92%) responded they had started their period; only seven participants (8%) responded they had not.

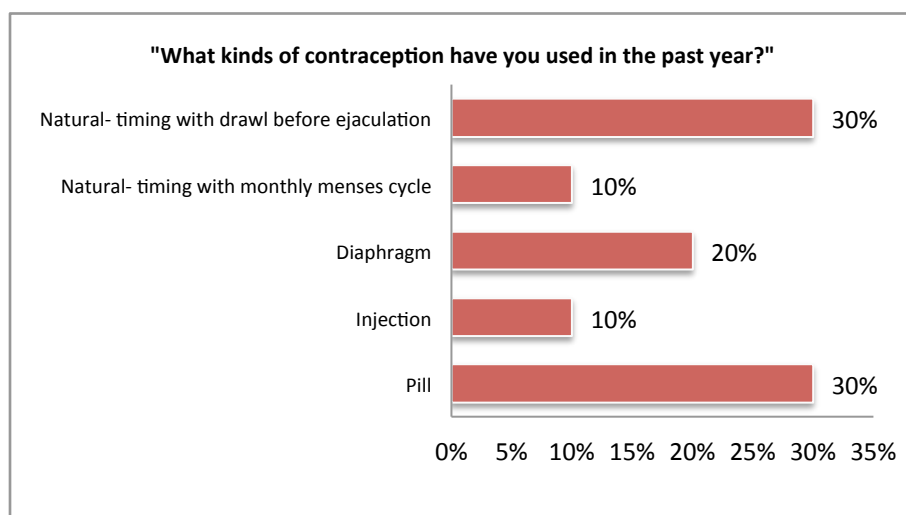
### **Contraception**

All female participants were asked about their knowledge of contraceptives and their contraceptive use in the past year. Approximately two thirds (63%) of respondents confirmed knowing how to prevent pregnancy, while one third (37%) did not.

It should be noted that the question was asked only of female participants who responded they had started their period, but regardless of age or reported sexual activity. However, as all participants had been sexually exploited, it can be surprising that not more were aware of contraceptive measures. In addition, as seen above, only 16% of females responded knowing how to prevent getting a sexually transmitted infection, and only 26% of sexually active females said they always used condoms. The much higher percentage of female participants stating they know how to prevent getting pregnant indicates a knowledge, or perception of knowledge, of other methods of contraception besides condoms. However, the inconsistency of knowledge around sexual relations indicates a need for more awareness of these issues among participants.

Only sexually active female participants were then asked what kinds of contraceptives they used in the past year and how often they used them. Thirty (30) percent responded they used the pill and 30% responded they implemented natural-timing with withdrawal before ejaculation as a means of contraception over the past year; other methods were natural-timing with monthly menstrual cycle, diaphragm, and injection (progesterone).





**Chart 16: Methods of contraception among females**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=10)*

One participant explained her understanding of how “the natural method of contraception” worked, and how she had come to this understanding without any instruction.

**“The natural way is a must to know for everybody. No one told me. I have never read any books or watched television or something like that. I knew by myself. I don’t know why I knew how to prevent birth naturally. I believe that when I use condoms, they will badly affect my uterus. I believe that if I take the contraceptive pill, this can affect my baby in the future. I also believe that when I use Nuvaring [the hormonal vaginal contraceptive ring], it will also badly affect my uterus. So I stay with the natural method which means my partner pulls out in time.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

These participants were also asked how often they used these methods of contraception during the past year. The majority of respondents (70%) said they always used them, and 30%, still a significant amount, responded they used them sometimes.

According to the OECD’s Social Institutions & Gender Index, women in Cambodia “have the legal right to access contraception and information about reproductive health and family planning, but cost and geographical location often limit access (OECD Development Center 2012)”. They report that in 2010, 51% of married women were using a contraceptive method, 35% using a modern method and 16% using a traditional method (Ibid).

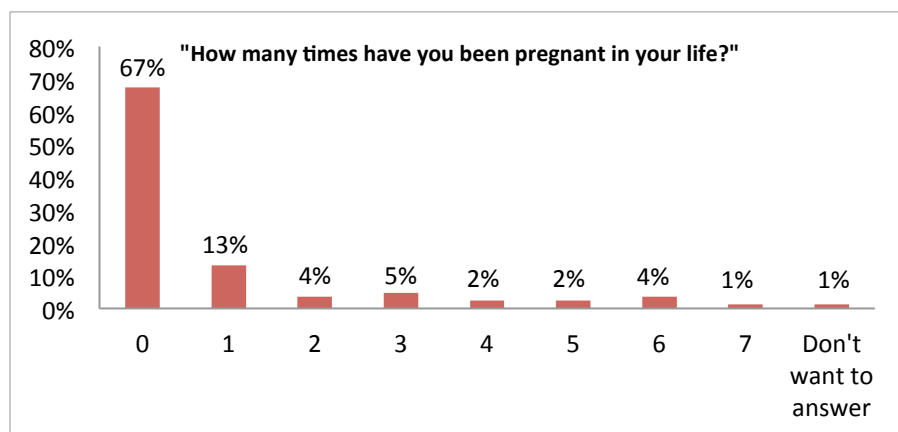
#### **RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON CONTRACEPTION EDUCATION:**

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS SHOULD INCLUDE CONTRACEPTIVE EDUCATION IN THEIR LIFE SKILLS WORKSHOPS AND PREPARE MEN AND WOMEN FOR FUTURE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS. APs COULD ALSO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES TO SURVIVORS IN REINTEGRATION PROCESS.

## **Pregnancy**

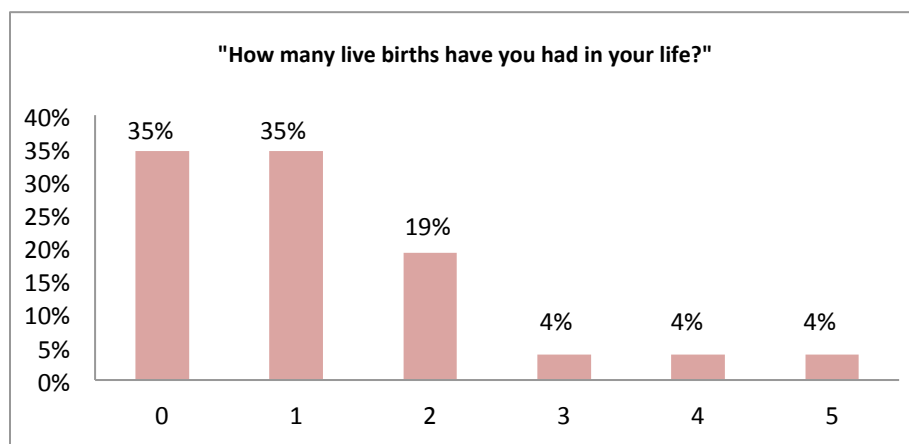
### Pregnancy and Birth Rates

Perceptions and experiences of pregnancy varied widely depending on the circumstances in which women were living. Often the stability and health of an intimate relationship influenced how a woman dealt with a pregnancy. The chart below shows the number of times female participants have been pregnant. Again, the question was asked of all female participants who had already started their period.



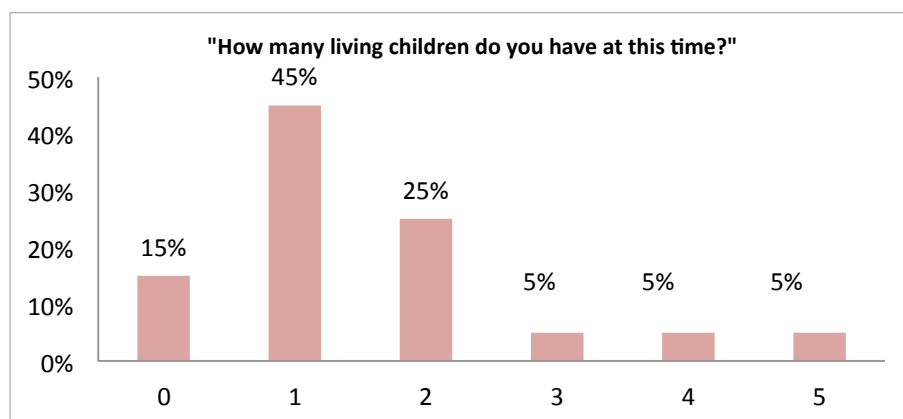
**Chart 17: Number of pregnancies among females**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=83)*

Fifty six (56) of the 83 participants responded “none,” or 67% of respondents. One participant responded she did not want to answer the question. Cumulatively, 26 participants reported a total of 72 pregnancies. The chart below shows the number of live births among the 26 women who reported having been pregnant.



**Chart 18: Number of live births among females**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=26)*

Of the 26 participants who responded about live births, there are a total of 31 live births. In addition, of the 26 participants who responded having been pregnant, 17 actually had live births, with a total of 31 between them. The other pregnancies were either terminated or miscarried. The participants were then asked how many living children they have. As seen below, of the 20 participants who responded, the total number of living children is also 31.



**Chart 19: Number of living children among females**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female (n=20)*

### Plans for Pregnancy

During informal interviews, participants shared their expectations and plans for pregnancy in the coming year. The reasons stated for wanting to get pregnant often centered on the desire to be cared for in old age, and wanting a secure partner first before having a baby.

**“If my boyfriend is willing to live with me, I for sure want to have a baby because I wanted to have baby already.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**“I want to have baby next year because I think that when I am old I won’t have someone take care me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I want to have baby next year because I think that when I am old I won’t have someone take care me. I want my child to believe in God.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I want to have baby but I want to have a real husband first.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I want to have a daughter.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Reasons for planning not to get pregnant in the coming year centered on feeling unprepared to have a baby, issues of trust, and not wanting children or more children at the time.

#### **Not Ready Yet:**

**“I’m too young.” – Shelter, Female; Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female; Reintegration Follow-up, Female**

**“In two years more, I will plan to marry and start a family.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**“I want to wait three more years after reintegrating.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I want to study more/finish school.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I want to work first.” – Shelter, Female**

#### **No Desire to Have Children:**

**“I want to be alone.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**“I don’t want to have a family.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

**“I don’t want to get pregnant.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-up, Female**

**“I don’t want to have a baby.” – Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female**

#### **Lack of Trust in Men:**

**“I hate boys so I have no plan to get marriage. I will adopt one child.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I don’t trust any men so I don’t to have baby.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

#### **Already Pregnant or Have a Baby:**

**“I am pregnant now so I don’t need another baby this year.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**“My baby is small so I don’t want more.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

**“Now I am 4 months pregnancy. I want to have one more baby 5 years after this one.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

**“I recently had baby so I don’t want more.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

#### **Lack of Economic Resources:**

**“I do not have a job so I don’t want a baby next year.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I want to find a job and save enough money before deciding to have a baby.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-up, Female**

**“I don’t want to have baby because I want to help my parents first.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

### Impact of Pregnancy on Relationships

Pregnancy affected participants' intimate relationships and was viewed in different lights, often because of good or bad intimate relationships. There were varying perceptions on the impact of pregnancy on intimate and close relationships. Often participants felt pregnancy had a negative impact on relationships, either with the intimate partner or with members of their family. Some participants spoke of negative experiences about having no legal recourse for assistance from partners who leave them pregnant or with small children.

**“My boyfriend’s parents won’t agree to our relationship. So, we have to separate from each other, even though I am pregnant. Now I stay with my parents and my sister. ... His family is rich and I am poor. My boyfriend’s parents have chosen another daughter-in-law already and my boyfriend agrees to follow their wishes.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

**“Now I am pregnant, my partner will not legally marry me. Now he has a new girl friend.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

**“Now both sisters don’t help me. Both feel angry me when they hear I am having other baby. They don’t want to speak with me. Both my sisters don’t want me to have more babies because I do not have a legal husband.” – Declined Assistance Not Residential Training, Female**

One participant, who was just beginning a new relationship in 2012, found she was expecting a baby from the previous “partner.” She initially attempted to abort the baby but missed the appointment so carried on with the pregnancy. Her new relationship, with the man who became her new “partner,” accepted her regardless of her pregnancy and having a child from a former partner.

**“I have known this new boyfriend for 7 months now. When he fell in love me this year, he didn’t know I was already pregnant from my previous boyfriend. After we decided to live as a husband and wife (but not get legally married), he knew I was already pregnant from the first boyfriend. He said it was ‘okay’. He loves my kid as well. Even though I wanted an abortion, I missed the appointment so did not have it. Now I have new baby girl.” – Declined Assistance Not Residential Training, Female**

### **Abortion**

Abortion rates among female participants were not quantified, but as only 31 of the 72 cumulative pregnancies among female participants resulted in live births, it can be assumed that a number of participants sought abortions. Participants were asked, however, why they decided to seek an abortion, if they had. The majority of reasons given were about the lack of “ability” to raise a child, either on the part of the participant or, more often, on the part of the participant’s partner. Other reasons had to do with lack of economic resources to raise a child or a partner leaving upon hearing of the pregnancy.

**Lack of Trust in Partner:**

**“My boyfriend wasn't responsible for us to have a baby together.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**“My mother needed me to abort because my boyfriend was young. He didn't have the ability to provide for our baby.” -Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“My boyfriend wasn't responsible and he didn't care about me because I was poor.” -Community Assistance Program, Female**

**Health Problems:**

**“I had health problems so had an abortion.” – Declined Assistance Residential training, Female**

**“My uterus burned so I could not keep the pregnancy.” – Shelter, Female**

**Relationship Problems:**

**“My sweetheart broke my heart.” – Declined Assistance Residential training, Female**

**“My husband never cared about me. I have no one that I could depend upon.” – Reintegration completed, Female**

**“I didn't have the ability to raise my baby. My parents-in-law don't like me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**Lack of Economic Resources:**

**“My husband did not have a job, so we didn't have money for the delivery.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Because I still had a little kid and we didn't have enough ability to raise more babies.” – Community Assistance Program, Female -**

**“I didn't have stable job so I decided to abort.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I needed to abort because I have to work to pay off the debt so I cannot keep this baby.” – Declined Assistance Program, Female**

**“I didn't have money to raise them when they grow up.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

One participant spoke of being unable to decide whether or not to abort and feeling much pressure from both her family and her boyfriend's family to seek an abortion.

**“My boyfriend's family is not responsible for my pregnancy and they want me to abort. I don't know what to do. I pity my baby. My father will hit me if he knows I am pregnant. It causes shame to my family.”**

**– Reintegration Completed, Female**

Another participant spoke of being unable to access an abortion because she didn't have enough money, and feeling pressured from different people in her life to abort or not to abort.

**“I felt sad. I was angry with my older sisters. At that time, I didn't want to keep my baby. I wanted to abort. I didn't have money and it was difficult to earn money so I decided to abort my second baby. But later on, I didn't abort because I didn't have money to pay for the abortion service. So that's why I kept this baby until now. My husband [boyfriend] also wanted me to keep this baby because he wanted to have a daughter. First I wanted to abort because I felt pressured from my older sister and I didn't have money to raise the baby. But now I need to have one more kid.” – Declined Assistance Not Residential Training, Female**

It is unknown whether participants were able to access safe abortions, whether non-abortion options were viable, given their economic, relational, and other circumstances, or even if other options were offered. A new global study will be conducted in the coming years by University of California, San Francisco's Advancing New Standards in Reproductive Health research group on tracking women's experiences of abortion, and comparing experiences of women who were able to access an abortion with those who were not. This “Global Turnaway Study,” which has chosen Cambodia as one of its subject countries, will lead to a better understanding of these issues.

#### RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON FAMILY PLANNING EDUCATION:

PARTICIPANTS OF CHILD-BEARING AGE COULD BENEFIT FROM MORE INFORMATION ON FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES, AND INCREASED REFERRAL MECHANISMS TO THESE TYPES OF SERVICES, AS WELL AS FAMILY PLANNING COUNSELING SO THEIR PLANS FOR PREGNANCY, CHILD-BEARING, AND RAISING CHILDREN ARE BETTER INFORMED. MEN AS WELL AS WOMEN COULD BENEFIT FROM SOFT SKILLS WORKSHOPS ON INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF STARTING A FAMILY.

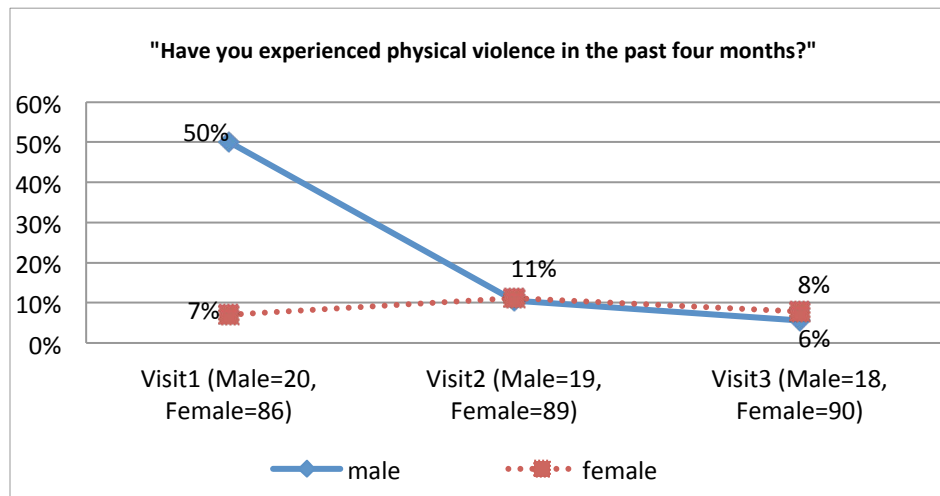
## VIOLENCE

Generally, participants stated a desire for peaceful, non-conflictive relationships in whatever setting in which they live. Having described a number of different violent experiences and relationships, it is unsurprising that participants desire nonviolence in their relationships in the shelter, at home, in the family, at church, and elsewhere.

### Experience of Violence

#### Physical Violence

At each field visit, participants were asked if they had experienced physical violence in the past four months. The results are graphed below.



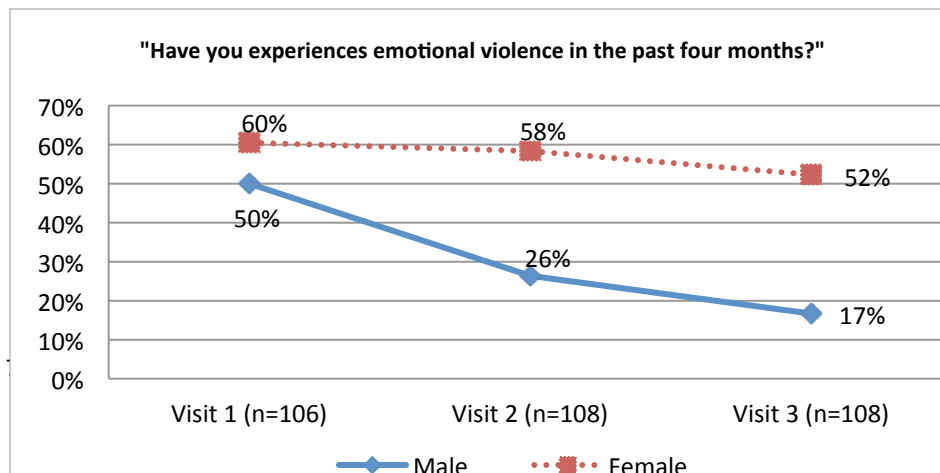
**Graph 2: Experiences of Physical Violence**

Surveyed participants at each Field Visit, by gender

Male participants reported experiencing far more violence during the first field visit than females overall, and males at the second and third field visits. This may be explained because between the first and second field visit, many male participants began the reintegration process back into their families and communities, and many of the boys who left the shelter were the ones who were bullying the others.

#### Emotional Violence

The same event could also explain the dip in reported emotional violence among male participants between the first and second field visits. Female participants, on the other hand, reported much higher incidences of emotional



**Graph 3: Experiences of Emotional Violence**

Surveyed participants at each Field Visit, by gender

Females experienced more emotional violence than males over the three visits, yet for both males and females, the level and rate of emotional violence decreased over the course of the year, though to a greater degree for males. There was a 33% reduction in emotional violence for males and an 8% reduction in emotional violence for females.

Participants were asked to describe their feelings about witnessing or experiencing emotional violence. Responses pertaining to experiencing emotional violence included fear, anger, deep unhappiness, shame, and not knowing what to do. If they had witnessed someone else experiencing emotional violence, participants expressed not knowing how to advise victims of violence, having pity for the victims, and feeling relief that they were not the ones experiencing the emotional violence.

**“I hear my neighbours having loud arguments with each other. This makes me feel bad and scared. It is difficult to live near them.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“My uncle gets drunk and talks loudly and insults his wife and children and this makes me feel bad for them.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants were asked to describe *who* had been emotionally violent towards them over the past year and their answers were very diverse, including shelter staff and shelter or transition home peers, peers at school, family, relatives, coworkers and fellow churchgoers. They were also asked to describe more about situations in which they experienced this emotional violence and their answers mainly had to do with personality conflicts with others, such as their peers, colleagues, and those with whom they live in the shelters. A number of the males stated that by the second and third visits they were experiencing less emotional violence because the boys who had been bullying them had left the shelter. Some spoke about how staff in their work setting or assistance program displayed favoritism to some people and not others, and this they felt was discriminatory. They also spoke about how some people, such as family or neighbours, treated them in rude and impolite ways, which made them feel embarrassed and ashamed. Some spoke about intimate relationships they considered emotionally abusive largely because their partners were not monogamous, making them feel vulnerable that the relationship would not last.

**“Peers at school threaten me and use impolite words to hurt me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I cried because they hit me and farted on my head. I told the shelter mothers and they helped, but the boys did other bad things to me and other little boys.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Male**

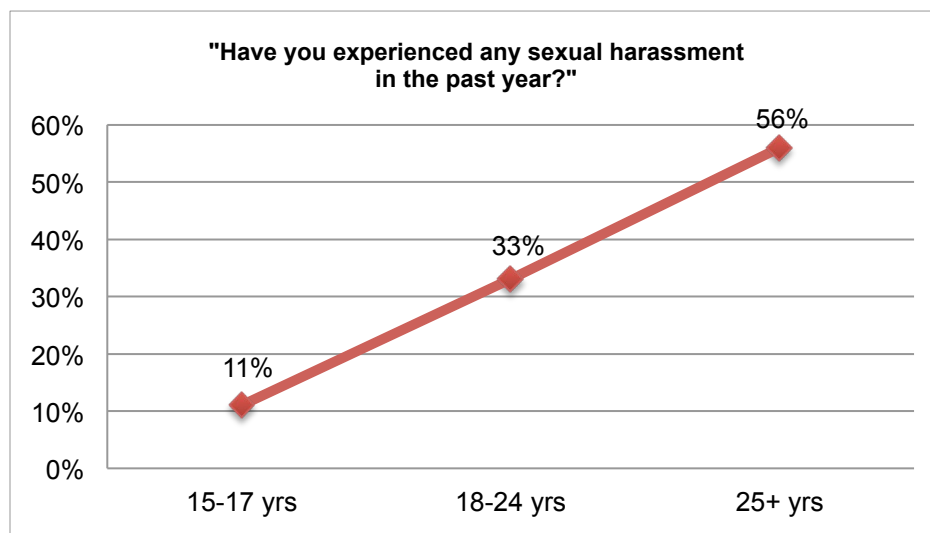
One participant spoke about experiencing emotional and physical violence in the shelter. She did not tell the staff but rather learned how to fight back.

**“Last year some girls bullied me, and now I can fight them back. Also so if any little girls disrespect me I beat them.” – Shelter, Female**

For more on peer bullying and participants’ experiences of emotional violence, see Culture & Religion: Stigma & Discrimination.

## Sexual Harassment

Participants were asked whether they had experienced any sexual harassment in the past year. No male participants and 10% of female participants stated they had experienced sexual harassment. Although no males reported sexual harassment when asked directly, during qualitative interviews, some males did disclose they felt they had been sexually harassed by their peers. Nine females responded they had been sexually harassed in the past year. The chart below shows the age distribution of the female participants who reported having experienced sexual harassment.



**Chart 20: Experiences of Sexual Harassment**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, female, by age (n=9)*

As seen above, only female participants aged 15 years and over reported experiencing sexual harassment, and the majority were over the age of 25. This is perhaps because the older the participant, the more likely she has a job and sexual harassment often occurs in the workplace. These participants were asked to explain what they meant by "experiencing sexual harassment."

**"Some male colleagues at my workplace sometime pretend to kiss me and I told them not to do this again."**  
– Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female

**"A lesbian hugged me and said that she loves me but I told her that I don't need love like this."**  
– Reintegration Completed, Female

**"The karaoke guests hug me and if I don't agree to let him do this, the boss will blame me."** – Reintegration Completed, Female

**"The Karaoke customers touch me everywhere on my body."** – Reintegration Completed, Female

**"Someone tried to rape me but I kicked him and I got away."** – Reintegration Completed, Female

**"Some customers want me to have sex with them but I don't agree."** – Declined Assistance, Female

Sexual harassment is prohibited under Cambodian labour legislation, but no penalties are specified. Sexual harassment is reported to be a problem in Cambodia by several women's groups. For example, one study found that one in ten garment workers had experienced sexual harassment (OECD 2012).

### **RECOMMENDATION TO COALITION ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION:**

THE COALITION COULD USE ITS INFLUENCE TO ADVOCATE TO THE GOVERNMENT TO TIGHTEN LEGISLATION ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE AND TO MAKE THE JOB MARKET A SAFER PLACE FOR WOMEN.



## Sexual Exploitation

Participants shared various aspects of their experiences of sexual exploitation, mainly on an informal basis. Different reasons participants gave for how they first came to be sexually exploited. Many participants got into sex work “voluntarily,” only to become trapped and exploited once they were involved in some form of sex service. Some of the reasons they gave for how they first started included following peers who were doing Karaoke, preferring Karaoke work to the hard labour in the fields, realizing that extra “tips” could be made by going with customers off premises once they had already started working in a Karaoke lounge or beer garden, and actual forced sex. One participant stated that her boyfriend broke her heart and entered the sex industry, since she was no longer a virgin and felt she had already failed in society’s eyes.

Female participants having stated they had been sexually active in the past year were asked if they had been sexually exploited in the past year. Two (2) participants, or 9%, stated they had been sexually exploited; two (2) participants also responded they had been paid or had received something in exchange for sex in the past year. These participants were asked to explain why they had felt sexually exploited.

**“They gave less money for sex so I needed to escape.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**“There were some brokers who invited me to meet some men to have sex; I didn’t agree, but I had to go.”  
– Community Assistance Program, Female**

Some participants spoke openly about their past experiences of sexual exploitation. One participant described her experiences of being exploited in a brothel-like setting in Thailand.

**“When I worked in Karaoke there was a mountain. And at the back, there was a river, and the sea. It is very big. So I couldn’t escape that place. If I wanted to escape, I surely could not swim across the sea. It is very big. But if I could escape, I will meet other places that force the girls to serve the customers. There are a lot of men that loved me and wanted to bail me out. But I didn’t want to follow them. Firstly, I didn’t know those men well. Where are their hometowns? What are their names? I didn’t know if they loved me from their deep heart or not. I was afraid, the men may bail me out for 20,000 or 30,000 Baht, but he could resell me to other places for about 50,000 Baht. So I was afraid I would have the same problem. That is why I didn’t want to follow any men. There were 4 or 5 men that wanted to bail me out. But I was afraid so I didn’t dare to go with them.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

Another participant described her lack of freedom to leave the brothel due to being unable to repay her debt bond. She was able to escape when she acquired an incurable illness.

**“I worked from 2003 to 2007. I stopped working as a sex worker in 2007 due to my incurable illness. At that time, I was so tired. But the pimp forced me to serve the customer without thinking of my health. I lost hope from day to day. I wanted to escape from the brothel but I didn’t know how. I could never pay off my debt bond. One day some Motodop drivers who took pity on me because they knew I was near death and helped me to escape.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

The threat of violence is a constant anxiety for sexually exploited persons. Participants spoke of violence by customers and pimps, and also between the girls in the brothel or Karaoke lounge.

**“When I was a sex worker, my life met a lot of problems. If I didn’t have sex with the customers, the pimp will harm me. When the customers brought me to have sex outside, if I didn’t ask permission from the pimp, they would for sure hit me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“One of my friends worked in Karaoke in the north. She escaped from her workplace. When the guards knew about this, they shot her but their bullets missed. She escaped safely.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

**“I worked at Karaoke for 2 years. Working in Karaoke was very difficult. Sometime the Karaoke girls fought each other to get the customers. At that time, my mind was brutal, not like today. I used to fight with other Karaoke girls. Sometime I threw the plates to other girls and made them bleed from their head. I am small but my words weren’t small. I didn’t fight often, sometimes someone helped me to calm down and sort out my arguments with others. Sometime the customers did bad things to me. I drank beer. I had sex with customers even when I didn’t agree. The customers forced me to have sex with them. Normally, when the customers were intoxicated they forced me to have sex with them. I needed their money so I decided to have sex with them. My feelings were affected because some customers didn’t give enough money after having sex with me. Sometime I worked like this outside as well. But when I worked like this outside, most of my clients were old men.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

### **Coercion & “Choice”**

A number of participants voluntarily spoke about their prior experiences of sexual exploitation. Their descriptions varied as to whether they had felt they were trafficked and coerced, or whether, within their context, they felt they had chosen to do sex work. Some spoke about deciding to enter sex work after their marriage had ended while others “chose” to enter sex work after breaking up with their boyfriend.

Participants over the age of 30 referred to their experiences in brothels, as opposed to younger participants who referred to work in Karaoke lounges and massage parlours. Among those who described brothel experiences, most described coercion and that they had incurred initial debt, usually for the sake of their families, and leading them to long-term bondage. They were unable to leave until it was determined they had repaid their debt, often for a period of many years. They described this context as demeaning, and that it eliminated their freedom of movement and agency. One participant had contemplated suicide as a means by which to escape from the brothel.

Those who described Karaoke experiences in the past and present, described their sex work experiences as more indirect. The base salary in Karaoke is very low and participants described slowly coming to terms with the incentive to earn an adequate wage through extra tips, which entailed having sex with a customer, usually off premises. Most spoke about using alcohol on the job as way of coping with their exploitation. A number of participants described how they had experienced violence from brothel owners, Karaoke owners, customers, and fellow sex workers.

One woman described aspects of her past experiences of being sexually exploited, including why she “chose” to do sex work, what the work was like in terms of violence, and her lack of agency to protect herself against sexually transmitted infections. Another participant described the reasons for her “choice” to start doing sex work, stating mainly poverty, a lack of any skills or means by which to make money, and the desire to support her parents.

The concept of “choice” in the Cambodian context is a deeply complicated issue. In Sandy’s (2007) article, “Just Choices: Representations of Choice and Coercion in Sex Work in Cambodia,” she explores the ideologies of “victim” versus “agent,” and suggests there is “an uncertainty and permeability between boundaries of forced and voluntary participation in sex work” (p. 203). She concludes that the perception that women are “defiled” or “duped” is perhaps an oversimplification; rather, we must understand “women’s choices are constrained by hierarchal structures such as gender, class and socio-cultural obligations and poor employment opportunities” (p. 194).

**“My parents are poor but they didn’t want any of their children to work as sex workers. But they knew I became a sex worker. I used to have a husband so I can do sex work because I am not a virgin anymore. If I was single and still a virgin, they would never allow me to do like this. My parents are poor but they love me and so I did sex work for them to survive. Their living situation was poor and they were too old to keep labouring in the hot sun and in the fields. They could not make enough money to survive. So after I divorced I asked them to let me find a sex worker job because this way I could make enough money. I had no other skills which could pay enough for us to survive. After I told them this they let me do as I wished.”**

– Community Assistance Program, Female

**“When I worked in the provinces, sometimes I needed to have sex with customers in exchange for money. My family thought I was just a waitress in a restaurant but in fact I was not. I didn’t want to do sex work, but I didn’t have money to spend on my most basic daily needs so I had no choice. I sent money to my mother four times each month. I did not want my mother to suffer from no money. The biggest obstacle in my family was that we didn’t have enough money to live. This is the reason I chose to lose my virginity to sex work. I don’t regret I did this because this was the way I helped my family. I am not disappointed I lost my virginity to help my family survive.”** – Shelter, Female

**“Before I entered this kind of work, I received their money first. Every sex worker needs to receive money from the pimp first. They (sex workers) received \$300 to \$400. So we must do this kind of work to repay our debt. I worked until I was seriously ill.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

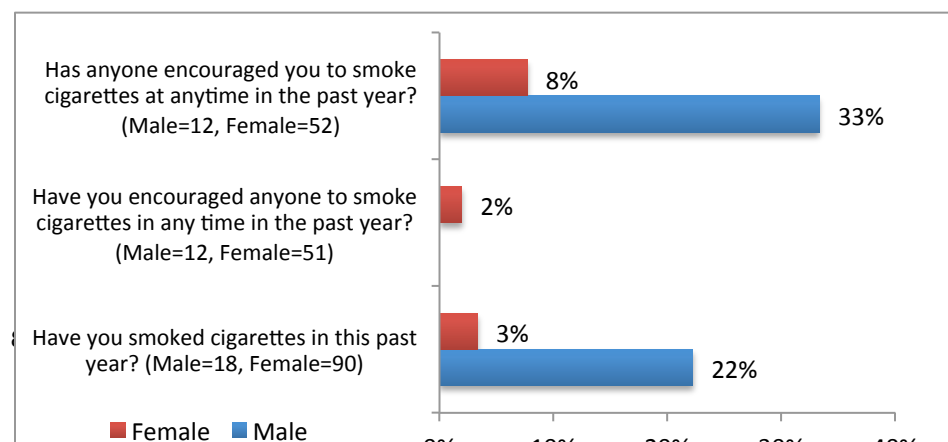
**“One week later he [a policeman] came back and asked the pimp, he wanted to buy me out of slavery. He said, “How much for that girl?” The pimp said \$400. At that time, \$400 was a lot. I worked for [the pimp] several years, why they still need \$400 from me? The pimp said that if he didn’t give \$400 to her, she will not allow me to live with him. That police man gave money to the pimp and he went out with me.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Participants were asked about their use of various substances, including cigarettes, illicit drugs, and alcohol. In future, research could also include explorations into the links between substance abuse and emotional well-being; that is, pursuing the reasons for substance abuse and the further impact of substance abuse on emotional health and relationships.

### Cigarette Use

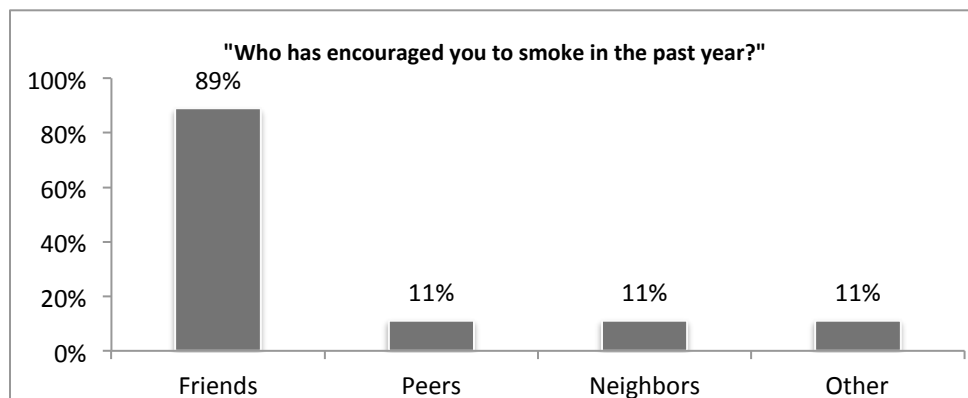
Participants were asked a number of questions about their exposure to and experience of cigarette use. Overall, only 3% of females and 22% of males reported having smoked cigarettes in the past year. Other questions had to do with being encouraged to smoke and encouraging others to smoke. Proportionally more males than females have been encouraged to smoke and have actually smoked in the past year. Interestingly, no males report they had encouraged others to smoke in the past year, even though most male participants lived together in the shelter throughout the year.



**Chart 21: Experiences of Cigarette Use among Participants**

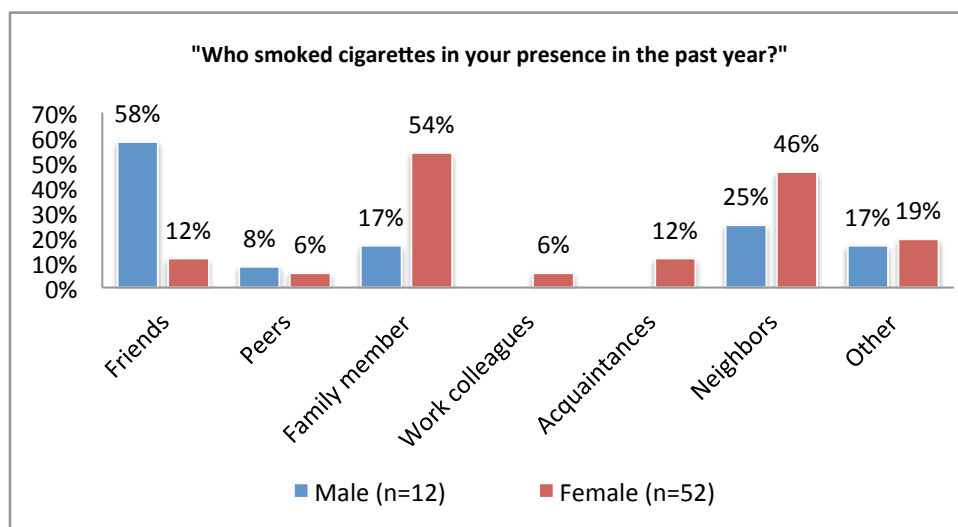
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

When asked who had encouraged them to smoke in the past year, 89% of participants who stated feeling encouraged to smoke said it was friends who had. Other people who had encouraged participants to smoke included peers, neighbours, and “Others,” who females reported being “Karaoke customers.”



**Chart 22: People Who Encouraged Participants to Smoke**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, (n=9)*

Participants were also asked about their exposure to smoking among those in their environment. Sixty seven (67) percent of males and 58% of females responded they knew a peer or another person had smoked in their presence in the past year. Male participants stated it was mostly friends who had smoked in their presence in the past year, whereas female participants stated it was mainly family members and neighbours. This could be indicative of more female participants being based in the community, whereas most males were still living in the shelter during the year. The chart below outlines all participant responses.

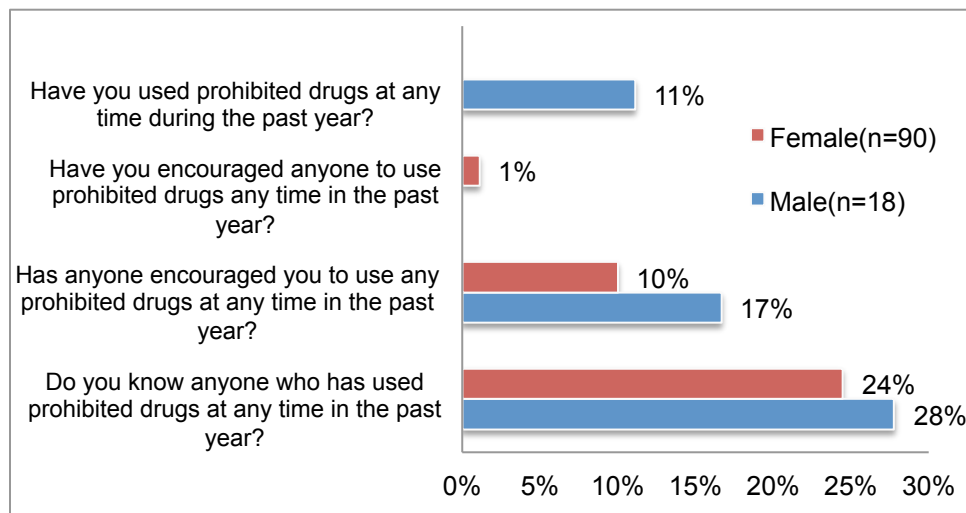


**Chart 23: Exposure to Cigarette Use among Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

When asked what was meant by “Others” who exposed them to cigarette use, females responded “Karaoke customers.” All participants who smoke responded that they want to quit smoking. However, one participant says it is not possible for her to do so because her Karaoke customers insist that she smoke with them.

## Drug Use

Drug use among participants was relatively low, with 11% of males and no females reporting having used prohibited drugs in the past year. Females reported feeling encouraged to use prohibited drugs only slightly more than they felt encouraged to smoke cigarettes; males reported feeling encouraged to use drugs significantly less than they felt encouraged to smoke. Around a quarter of both males and females reported knowing someone who used drugs in the past year. These questions are charted below.



**Chart 24: Experience of Drug Use among Participants**

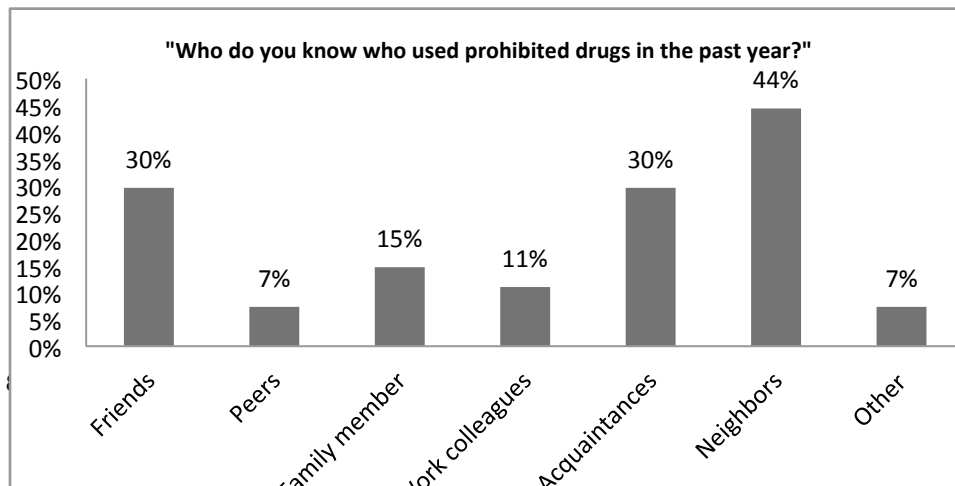
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

One participant described her experiences of how she got involved in drugs in the past, the effect it had on her education, and how she connected it to her commercial sexual exploitation.

**“My friends all did drugs at school so I wanted to be like them. I became addicted quickly and I kept this a secret from my parents. I never told my parents when I stopped going to school or when I started doing sex work at Karaoke to pay for drugs. Eventually I moved away to the capital and didn’t see my parents for several years. All that time I worked at Karaoke to keep using drugs. My parents did not know what happened to me until I came to this shelter. Now I hope to stay away from drugs but I am afraid I will start again because I don’t feel strong” – Shelter, Female**

According to shelter records, this particular was participant later described as “escaped.” The research team phoned her contact phone number and spoke with participant’s father, who informed the team that he believed, from his last conversation with her, that she was doing drugs and working in a Karaoke lounge. He had no knowledge of her current whereabouts.

Despite the low incidence of drug use among participants in the past year, a number of participants knew someone who used drugs, and some also reported feeling encouraged to use drugs. When asked, to their knowledge, which people in their environment had used drugs, the highest percentage replied neighbours, followed by friends and acquaintances. Similarly to the responses about cigarette use, females responding “Other” stated those were “Karaoke customers.”



**Chart 25: Exposure for Drug Use among Participants**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, (n=27)*

The names of prohibited drugs participants stated they were exposed to by people around them were marijuana and ice methamphetamine. One participant spoke of her son's involvement with drugs.

**“My son sniffs glue and hit others. He is like a big brother [gangster]. He has a lot of bad friends in our neighbourhood. Everyone knows him. When he is drunk, he wants to chop people. His friends got him to use illegal drugs.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants who responded they felt encouraged to use drugs stated, like with cigarette use, it was mostly friends who had encouraged them take prohibited drugs. Eighty three percent (83%) stated their friends encouraged them to use drugs, 17% said it was neighbours, and 17% said it was “others.” “Others” again included “Karaoke customers” for female participants.

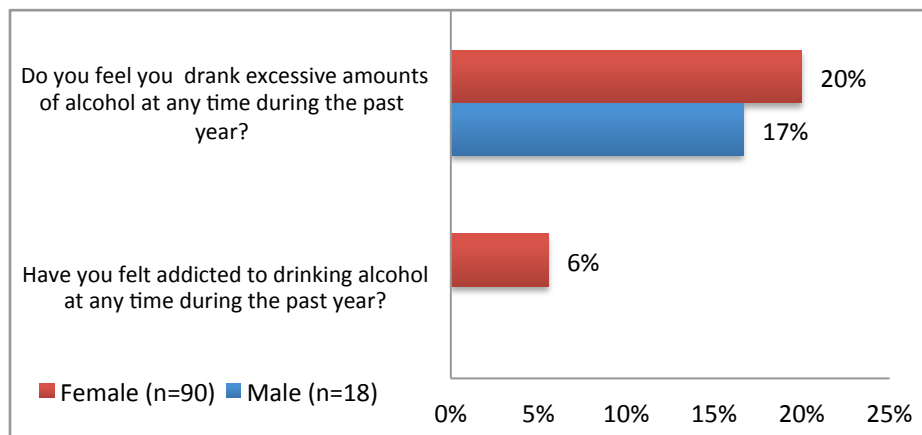
Two participants responded that Karaoke customers encouraged them to use ice methamphetamines. One female participant responded that she had encouraged someone to use ice methamphetamines in this past year. One male responded he felt addicted to illegal drugs during the past year and that he knew where and how to get assistance to quit and that this had been effective in helping him quit.

**RECOMMENDATION TO COALITION ON DRUG TREATMENT:**

SURVIVORS ARE SOMETIMES ADDICTED TO PROHIBITED DRUGS AND COULD BENEFIT FROM A STRONG REFERRAL MECHANISM TO DRUG TREATMENT PROGRAMS THAT CAN ALSO MEET THEIR NEEDS AS SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION.

## Alcohol Abuse

Participants were asked questions about alcohol abuse. More females than males responded they felt they drank excessive amounts of alcohol in the past year; 6% of females, while no males, reported feeling addicted to alcohol.



**Chart 26: Experience of Alcohol Abuse among Participants**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #3, by gender*

Four participants described how Karaoke customers encouraged them to drink excessive amounts of alcohol and that it was also a coping mechanism.

**“When I worked in Karaoke, I always drank beer to remove my stress when I had sex with customers.”**  
– Community Assistance Program, Female

In future years, more qualitative data will be gathered on exploring the reasons and circumstances for using harmful substances, abusing alcohol, and smoking cigarettes.

# ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION

During the 2012 research year, issues of economic well-being, potential, and reintegration were major themes and concerns among most participants, particularly those who began the reintegration process. Cross-cutting themes already mentioned in the above findings include participants' concern for their family's economic situation, trying to stay in school or a training program to be able to provide for themselves and family later in life, and links between economic survival and past involvement or re-entry into sexual exploitation.

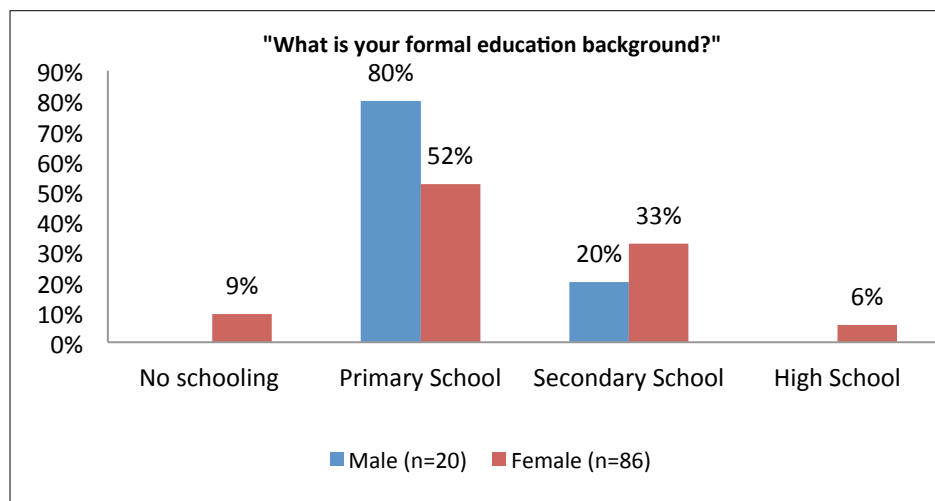
This chapter deals with participants' perceptions and experiences of various aspects of financial and economic integrity, including education and training, employment, migration, poverty, and debt. It was found that most participants in a family or community setting are living in varying levels of poverty, and cannot access viable employment opportunities.

## EDUCATION & TRAINING

Often the findings relating to education and training of participants is differentiated by age group, as younger participants often return to school when they live in a shelter or residential setting, whereas older participants often pursue vocational or job skills training if they are too far behind in their formal schooling.

### Formal Education and Vocational Training

The majority of participants responded their highest level of formal education attained was primary school. This was especially the case for male participants, with 80% fitting this category. All males had some education. Over half of female participants responded they had completed primary education. Twenty (20) percent of males and 33% of females responded they had completed secondary school, and a smaller percentage of females had either completed high school, or had no schooling whatsoever.



**Chart 27: Formal Education of Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, by gender*

As mentioned in the previous section on Assistance Programs, participants' main reason for staying in an assistance program is to gain access to education. Many participants spoke about how the importance of obtaining an education overrode their desire to return to their families. They expressed their willingness to remain in residential care despite their desire to return to their families, solely for access to education, which they lacked in their home settings. A number of participants stated how their parents encouraged them to remain in the shelters for as long as possible, solely for the sake of acquiring an education or a skills training.

**"I prefer to live with my family but I stay longer in the shelter to get my education." – Shelter, Female**

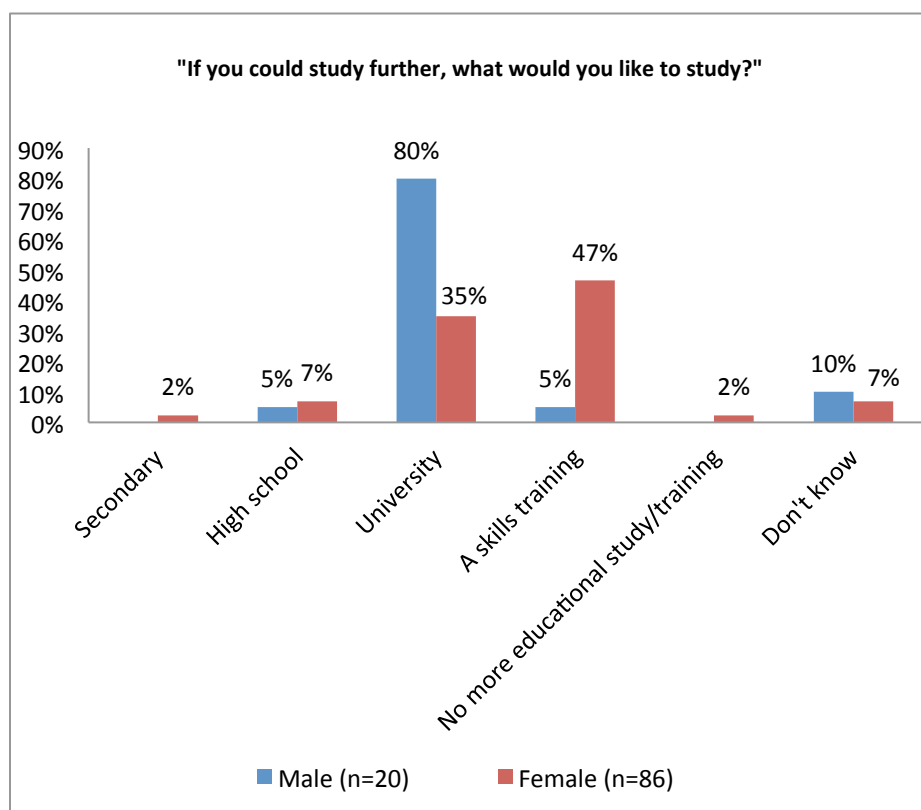
**"My mother wants me to stay in the shelter even though I wanted to go home. She wants to study." – Shelter, Male**



Participants were also asked if they had done any vocational training, to which 5% of males and 24% of females responded they had. The higher percentage of females having done vocational training could again be an indicator or the older age range of female participants compared to males. Overall, participants involved in vocational training stated their self-esteem had increased due to job skills training and counseling offered by vocational programs. Types of vocational training programs with which participants stated they were involved included cooking, baking, and café skills, tailoring, beauty salon skills, craft making such as jewelry and basket weaving, motorcycle repair, and computer skills. Participants generally described skills training as having value and a positive impact on their lives in the present and potentially for their future.

**“I have changed. I learned the beauty salon and I know how to do make-up. I can earn a living with this kind of training. It is important for me. I want to win all my friends. I must continue to try hard to study this training.” – Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female**

Participants were asked, if they could study further, what studies they desired to pursue. Responses are charted below.



**Chart 28: Desire for Further Education among Participants**  
Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, by gender

Eighty (80) percent of males and 35% of females stated a desire to pursue university education. Forty seven (47) percent of females stated wanting to pursue a skills training.

### Appropriate Vocational Training

As seen above, some participants having already participated in a vocational training program stated wanting to pursue other skills training.

**“I want to learn Computer and English language. Beauty salon skill is not enough for me, I want to learn more. If I don’t know how to use computers and English, it will difficult to find a good job in the future. I don’t have a choice so that’s why I learn beauty salon now, but then I want to learn IT and English.” – Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female**

One of the critiques of institutional care is the skills training available in residential settings do not prepare survivors for the real job market, and do not offer a wide variety of skills training, leaving survivors with few options for what they can study in the present or where they can work in the future.

Indeed, Jadavpur University's School of Women's Studies did a study on perceptions and experiences of reintegration of children in West Bengal and Jharkhand, India; the study found several problems with vocational training in shelter programs, including the lack of "individual plans for survivors and no "career counseling" to help girls think about what they want in the future" (Jadavpur University 2012, p.9).

USAID (2007) also warns against inappropriate vocational training in its paper, "The Rehabilitation of Victims of Trafficking in Group Residential Facilities in Foreign Countries," and that vocational training should be mindful of the reintegration context of each survivor. It states, for example, it "may not be appropriate to train a young woman to be a hairdresser if she is then sent back to a village where people can only afford to get their hair cut twice a year," and it also "may not be appropriate to if training in [computer and bookkeeping] skills is provided in a market where the victims will be competing with more highly educated peers" (p.18).

#### RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING:

AS STATED IN THE USAID (2007) REPORT ON THE REHABILITATION OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS, "VOCATIONAL TRAINING MUST BE BASED ON A REALISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE MARKET AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT BOTH THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE ENVIRONMENT" (P.27); APs COULD BENEFIT FROM INCREASED PARTNERSHIPS WITH ORGANISATIONS WHO HAVE A PROVEN EXPERTISE AND TRACK RECORD WITH VOCATIONAL TRAINING AMONG VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

### Challenges and Barriers to Education and Training

Participants' overall knowledge of training opportunities was good, though their knowledge of opportunities outweighed their access to opportunities, in most cases. As seen below, in all age groups except 12-14 years, 67% or more participants reported having knowledge of training opportunities, but access to those opportunities was reported by a much lower percentage.



**Chart 29: Participants' Knowledge of and Access to Training Opportunities**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, by age group (n=106)*

These generally high scores for both knowing about and how to access training opportunities may be reflective of the fact that many of the participants are still in or being sponsored by assistance programs. How this changes over time and with age will be interesting to follow. Participants were not asked specifically if training opportunities of which they

were aware were programs that specifically interested them or would be useful to them after reintegration. This information would also be helpful in guiding reintegration training programs.

Participants were asked to explain what they felt would hinder anyone wanting to pursue further education or training. Many participants answered a lack of monetary resources and/or ill health. They also described hindering factors such as people who want to study further but lack the correct or adequate qualifications, or simply because the person lacks the needed intellect or ambition.

Participants spoke about “family poverty” and “lack of family monetary resources” as well as family ill health as important issues, which hindered their education even prior to their sexual exploitation.

**“Before I lived in the shelter I had never studied in school. We were too poor so I could not go. While I lived in the shelter for one year I got up to grade 3 and I got number 4 in my class.” – Shelter, Female**

Some participants who reintegrated in 2012 described their frustration and stress at the lack of assessment and financial support in their reintegration packages, which then meant they found it difficult to stay in school or training upon leaving the shelter. They often found themselves in the same impoverished circumstances they were in prior to their sexual exploitation, and the ongoing education of participants was found to be often compromised during the reintegration process.

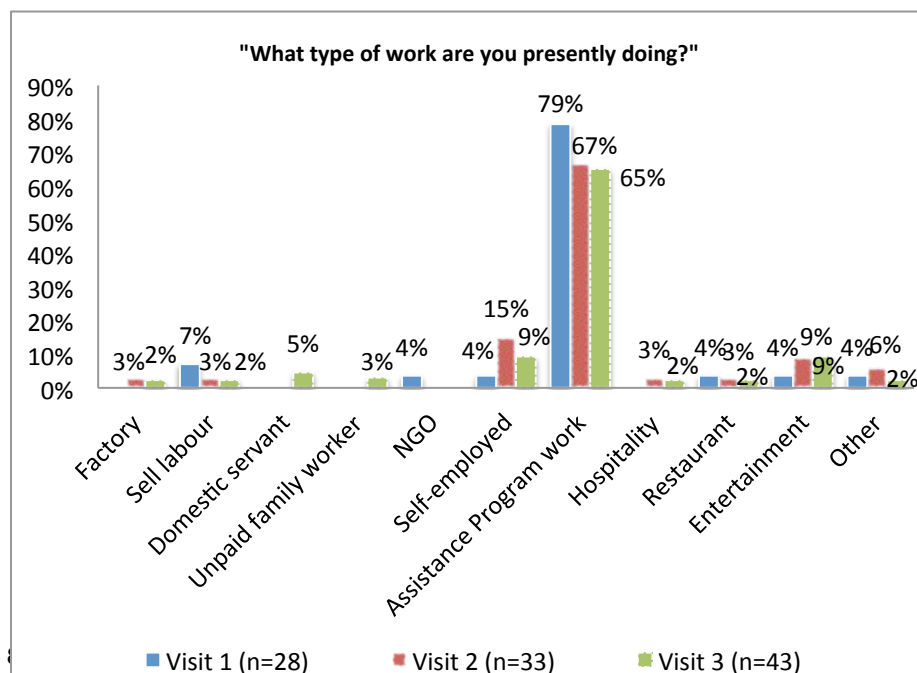
**“The reintegration assistance support is not enough. Twenty USD a month and a bicycle is not enough money for me to continue studying. The shelter social workers only come for less than ten minutes every few months so they do not know my difficulty.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-up, Female**

The lack of support post-reintegration was also confirmed in Javadpur University’s findings that children were often “unable to complete training courses that they had started in the shelter homes, because they had to return home when told to” (Javadpur University 2012, p.9).

## EMPLOYMENT & MIGRATION

### Employment Experiences

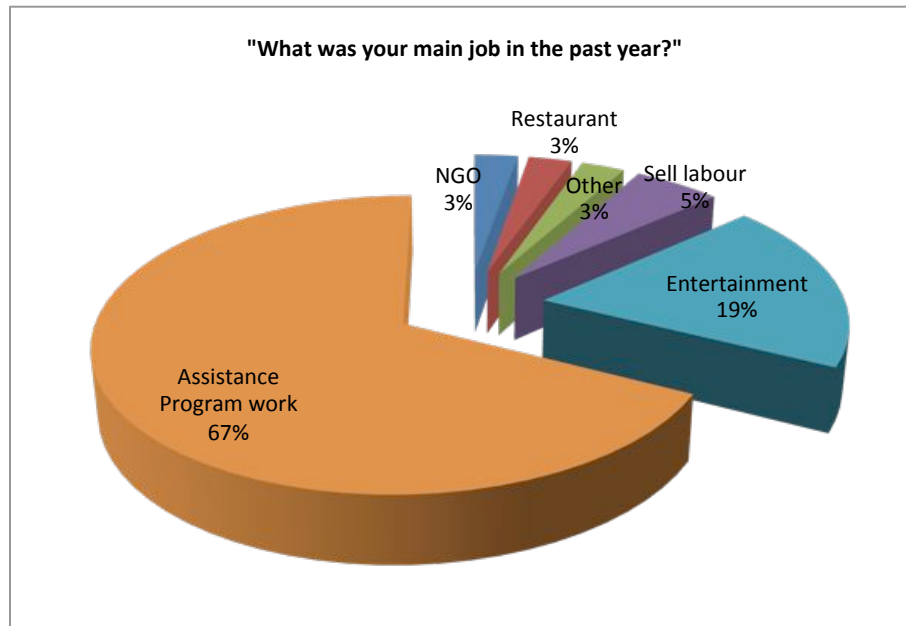
In order to better understand the employment experiences of participants, they were asked at each field visit what types of work with which they were currently involved. As seen in the chart below, the majority of participants were involved in assistance program work, although these numbers diminished over the course of the year, as more participants began the reintegration process.



**Chart 30: Participants' Current Employment**  
Surveyed participants at each Field Visit

Throughout the year, the percentage of participants working in assistance programs went from 79% to 65%; likely this type of work included various organisation-based income generation activities. Such work did not necessarily mean a paid a wage; this is reflected in the following charts in which only 37 female participants claimed an earned income.

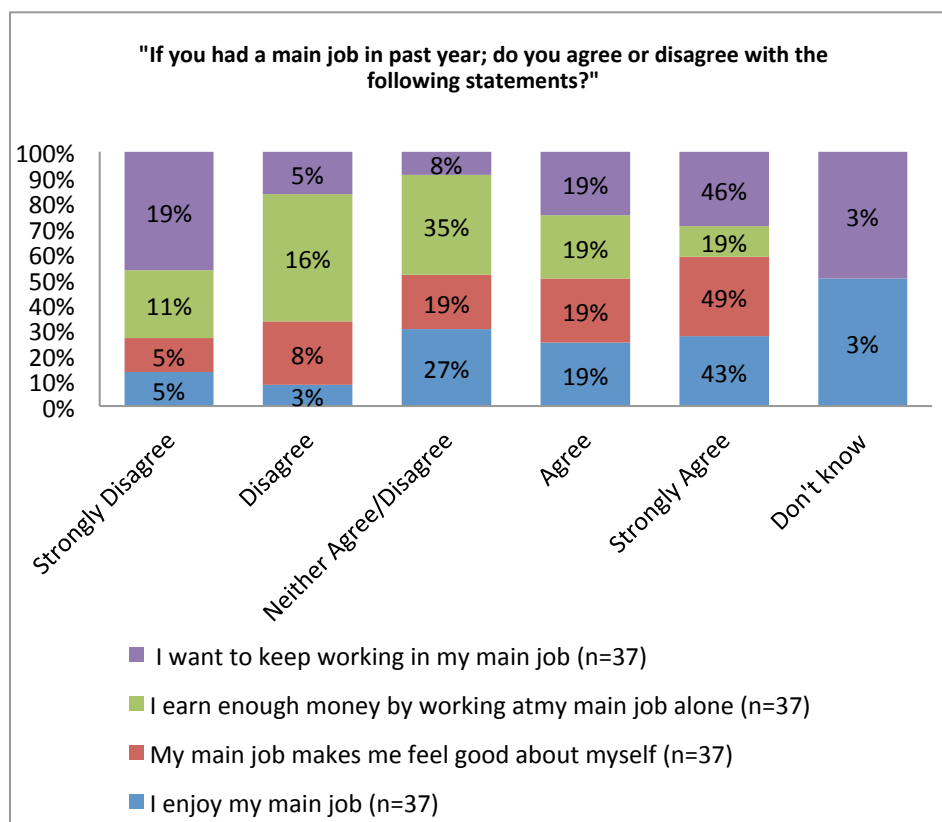
Participants who claimed earning an income were also asked what their main job was in the past year. The majority's response was still assistance program work, at 67%, followed by "entertainment," at 19%.



**Figure 5: Income Earning Participants' Main Job**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, female (n=37)*

Participants were not asked in what type of entertainment work they specifically were involved, but this term covers the whole industry, which includes hotels, guesthouses, Karaoke lounges, massage parlors, and more. Within the community-based program, participants earned a salary onsite in one of the program's businesses. This group may continue such work for longer as it is unlikely they will move away or leave the community program.

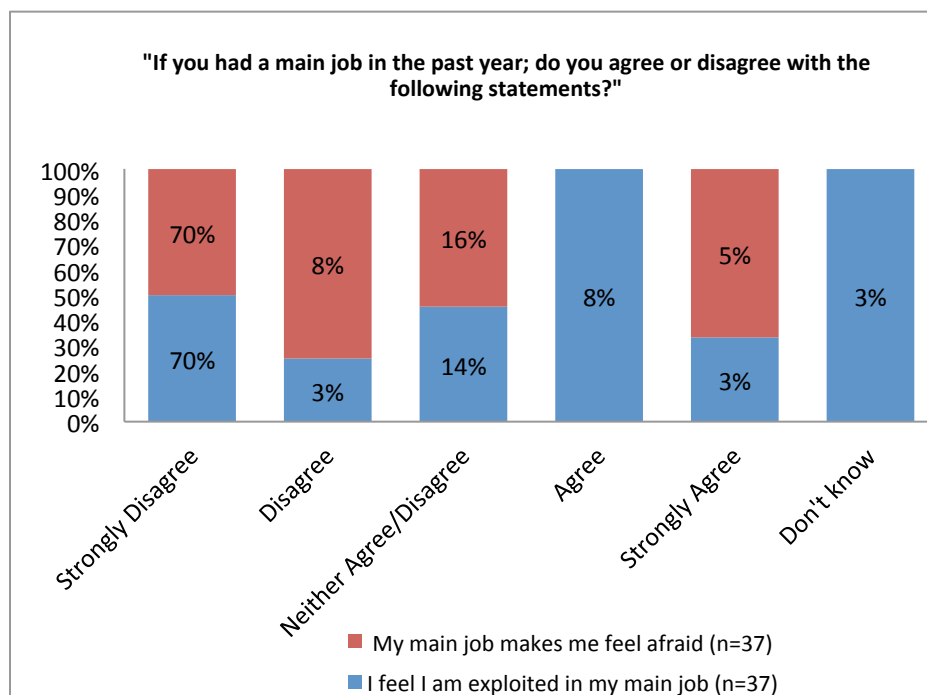
Of the 37 income earning participants, various questions on job satisfaction were asked. In general, participants expressed fair job satisfaction, except with that which related to income earned from their main job.



**Chart 31: Job Satisfaction among Income Earning Participants**  
*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, female (n=37)*

Almost half of the female participants “strongly agreed” that their main job made them feel good about themselves, and 46% “strongly agreed” that they wanted to keep working at their current job. Interestingly, they showed ambivalence regarding whether this main job paid them adequately, ranking “neither agree/disagree” highest at 35%.

Participants in income earning job were also surveyed on whether they felt they were in exploitative work. For the most part, the female participants asked these questions did not feel afraid or exploited in their current work, with 70% “strongly disagreeing” to both feeling afraid in their main job and feeling exploited in their main job.



**Chart 32: Participants' Perception of Exploitation in Current Employment**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #1, female (n=37)*

Five (5) percent of participants “strongly agreed” that their main job made them feel afraid and 11% either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they felt exploited in their main job. In future, more qualitative data could be gathered to determine in what types of work participants who feel afraid or exploited are involved.

### Future Hopes and Expectations

During informal interviews, participants were asked to share what they saw themselves doing post-reintegration. We asked participants to describe what type of work they would like to be doing in five years time and their answers varied from skills-based work such as cooking, baking, sewing, beauty salon, and motorcycle repair; to a few who described their hope to do more professional work such as teaching, law, and medicine. Among those who described the more skills-based work, many spoke about desiring to go into business or to open their own shop.

**“I hope that in the next five years, I can own a small business so that I can raise my child and my child can go to school.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

**“I cannot see my future. There is no one who helps me. I help myself. My parents have no ability to help me because they hardly can earn a living. I have a lot of ideas for running a business, but I don’t have enough money to start. I don’t want to work in the community organization forever. I want to have my own business. I want to sell clothes at the market one day.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I hope in the future I will meet a good man or rich man that can help my family. This good man knows my heart. He and I will join hand walk across a bridge to the happiness place. Another hope is that I will have another job for my future after leaving the community program. I want to learn other skills like chef skills so I can open my small restaurant to earn a living. On the other hand, I can work as a cook at someone’s house if they give me a good salary.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“So far, I just want to work in a suitable workplace. I want to save money. When I have saved a lot of money, I can dismantle one store in front of my house and then I can sell groceries. I want to have such a life in the future. I can live peacefully with my family. That’s what I like. My hometown is in the district but near the car station. There are a lot of people to and from Phnom Penh. My mother wants me to sell food there but I am not interested in this kind of small business. If I want to run a business, I want to depend on myself. I don’t want to borrow money from others. I am not 50 years old yet, I am still young so I have time to earn a living.” – Shelter, Female**

## **NGOs and Business**

With the majority of income-earning participants working mainly in assistance program work, it is clear that many assistance programs are involved in some form of business endeavour. Assistance program income-generating activities include various services, handicraft and food production and sale, and custom items made to order. The question remains whether assistance programs, particularly shelter and residential programs are equipped to prepare survivors of human trafficking for the job market outside the assistance program. With the findings this year on the desperation of many participants to find a job after reintegration, and the poverty many reintegrated participants are experiencing, it may benefit assistance programs and partnering organisations to better understand the economic environment and needs of survivors in the reintegration process.

Javadpur University (2012) interviewed both survivors and practitioners on various aspects of reintegration. Practitioners stated some main challenges of organisations attempting to train and employ their clients included a lack of understanding of the market, a lack of sustainability within the programs, and trainings being based on the organisation’s capacity rather than the survivor’s needs or the market’s demands (p. 9-10). Survivors having gone through a vocational training program stated some difficulties both in training and in subsequently using their training included shelters’ lack of adequate or enough equipment, forgetting or losing confidence in skills upon returning home, and a lack of material resources to make and sell their products once they reintegrated (p. 9).

Dongelmans et al. (2006) also found social mission NGOs “have a very limited track record in sustainable business development” (p. 23) and lack in many areas when it comes to involving their clients in business endeavours:

- Because their staff come mainly from a social work background, social mission NGOs often lack management capability and their business managers are often inexperienced and unable to grow a business profitably;
- As their facilities are set up as housing and care places, they lack the proper infrastructure to start and run a business;
- NGO businesses are set up to train and employ beneficiaries, not to respond to a market opportunity, and therefore cannot truly compete in the market (p. 16).

Because of these difficulties, NGOs often cannot adequately prepare their clients to compete in the real market, be it in starting a business or applying for a well-paying job. Dongelmans et al. found social mission NGOs to be the weakest of any type of grassroots business organisation (p. 16).

In an external evaluation of economic rehabilitation services for trafficking survivors in India, Ruben (2006) found economic rehabilitation was hindered by number of factors. One factor was the short timeframe of economic

rehabilitation projects, wherein programs only gave survivors one year of support. Another difficulty, particularly relating to survivors training to start their own businesses, was programs challenging “beneficiaries to undergo entrepreneurship and business-specific technical training at the same time that they are recovering from the multiple psychological and medical traumas associated with trafficking” (p. 16). Ruben also attributed business failures of survivors largely to the fact NGOs were inexperienced in economic development and micro-finance, did not reinforce loan repayment consistently, and were slow to allow survivors to take over leadership of businesses (p. 17).

**RECOMMENDATION TO APS ON ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION OF SURVIVORS:**

IF BUSINESS OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS NOT THE AREA OF EXPERTISE OF THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, INCREASED PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING COULD BENEFIT APS IN EQUIPPING THEIR CLIENTS FOR THE JOB MARKET. INVOLVING SURVIVORS IN MARKET RESEARCH AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WILL ALSO EMPOWER AND BETTER PREPARE THEM.

**RECOMMENDATION TO COALITION ON ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION OF SURVIVORS:**

APS COULD BENEFIT FROM A NETWORK OF MAINSTREAM BUSINESSES THAT ARE WILLING TO EMPLOY AND CARE FOR REINTEGRATED SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING. SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR THESE BUSINESSES WOULD ALSO HELP REDUCE STIGMA AND INSENSITIVITY IN THE WORKPLACE.

## Migration

This year, the research team observed a larger number of participants or members of participants’ families migrating to find work outside Cambodia. Desperate for work and to support their families, many prefer to find a livelihood abroad, even if they know it is unsafe migration and increases their vulnerability of being exploited. A few participants who have reintegrated or have been reported “escaped” from residential programs have reportedly migrated to find work within Cambodia and Thailand. The research team was able to keep in contact with some participants by phone through their previous shelter programs and by their personal phones. One woman who “escaped” her residential program migrated illegally to Thailand and is presently working on a construction site. She maintains phone contact with the research team. She has since married and finds the life and work in Thailand very difficult and she hopes to return to Cambodia.

Another participant who reintegrated to a rural part of Cambodia introduced the research team to her parents, extended family, and neighbours in her village.<sup>9</sup> The research team was told by the villagers that almost every family in the village had children and grandchildren working illegally in Thailand on construction sites. They stated their family members had gone illegally because the legal route costs approximately 2,000USD and there was a waiting period of up to two years. Most families expressed great concern about their children’s and grandchildren’s welfare but relied on the money they sent back for their own survival.

One participant spoke about being away from her family for nearly two years because she was “trapped” in a Thai brothel. She eventually returned to Cambodia and expressed how she valued her freedom and she preferred city life to rural.

**“My mother cried, my grandparents cried, my relatives cried because they missed me. They asked why I had disappeared so long. They didn’t allow me to stay in Phnom Penh anymore; they wanted me to live in my community. In fact after I reintegrated and returned home, I just stayed with my family for 3 days and then I came to Phnom Penh to find a job and stayed in my uncle’s house. I don’t like to stay at home because I am used to having a lot of friends and I like my freedom. I just want to occasionally visit my family and I need to find work so I must move back to the city.” – Reintegration Completed, Female**

The Government of Cambodia Ministry of Planning (2012) published a report confirming that there is a currently a boom in rural to urban migration in Cambodia and that the largest population migrating from the countryside to cities, particularly Phnom Penh, are young people in their 20s (p. 89-90).

<sup>9</sup> The team was invited by the participant to meet her family and village neighbours and has been careful not to disclose her identity in order to maintain her confidentiality by posing as friends rather than as researchers. The team was able to distribute the “Referral Directory for Returned Migrants and Trafficking Survivors” booklet.



One participant reflected back over her illegal migration experience to Thailand before she got involved in the sex industry. She describes being pressured to marry for security and the marriage was not a happy one.

**“I went to Thailand illegally to work on a construction site because there was no work in Cambodia and I heard that my neighbours found work there. I worked as a construction worker, which was very hard. Working in Thailand was very brutal because some men will rape the women. When the men saw the women, they wanted to rape those women. It was dangerous but no one harmed me in Thailand because I married [not legally] my husband there and he was a Big Brother (gangster) and so no men could hurt me. I didn’t love him. He forced me to love him. He wasn’t a good person. – Community Assistance program, Female**

Participants also described how family members migrated to find work.

**“Now my mother is living in Thailand. She is a labourer on a fruit plantation.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training, Female**

**“My brother-in-law travelled first. My brother-in-law and his wife have worked in South Korea for 4 months and they haven’t told me some of the information yet. So I don’t know what the job is. I just heard from others that Cambodian workers will work in the factory.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I don’t want my son to work in South Korea. I want him to live near me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Because many participants or participants’ family members are migrating for work, often unsafely, participants and their close ones could benefit from a better understanding of the issues involved in migrating for work and resources they can access to ensure safer migration.

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON SAFE MIGRATION:**

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS COULD PROVIDE TRAINING AND ACCESSIBLE RESOURCES (E.G. TARGETED TO LOW-LITERACY POPULATIONS) TO PARTICIPANTS UPON REINTEGRATION SO PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES PRACTICE SAFE MIGRATION.

### **Employment and Family Responsibilities**

As stated several times in the above findings, supporting one’s family financially is a major concern and source of anxiety for participants. When participants spoke of where they would like to be and what work they would like to do in the future, family considerations were a major contributing factor.

**“I lack money to support my family. When I leave the community program I want to be a chef so I for sure can help my family out. My parents need money. It is urgent for me. I hope one day I can learn how to cook. I have hope.” – Declined Assistance Not Residential Training, Female**

**“My future life depends on my child. I have hope in her.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

One participant spoke about her desire to return to her family and to earn money; even though she was unskilled, she saw earning money in the present as more desirable than remaining in a shelter solely for education and skills training.

**“When I stayed in the shelter, I felt frustrated because I didn’t want to stay. They wanted me to study a skill, but I didn’t want to study because I wanted to work outside to earn money so I could send some salary to my house (parents) every month. If I studied in the shelter for 3 or 4 months like they wanted me to, I would have no money to send to my parents. And my parents needed money.” – Reintegration completed, Female**

Even though many participants stated they desire to start a business upon reintegration, this may not be realistic, depending on their family circumstances. As Dongelmans et al. (2006) puts it,

Setting up a micro-business in Cambodia means setting up a family business. A functional family or a social network is the key social capital needed for small business. Many women who have been trafficked or sexually exploited come from a dysfunctional family or lack a social network, making it very difficult for them to start and run a micro-business (p. 22).

The section below will explore more on the dynamics of family responsibility and issues of poverty and debt.

## **POVERTY & DEBT**

### **Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty**

Most participants in the process of reintegration are reintegrating into situations of poverty, sometimes extreme poverty. Money, debt, and supporting themselves and their families are a constant source of anxiety and preoccupation for participants. As stated by Beesey (2003), “Many women and girls face returning to circumstances from which they had escaped, often being difficult situations associated with poverty or other circumstances. This includes families who have no land of their own for farming, accrued sizable debts, and experienced internal quarrel, separation and sometimes violence. It would not be uncommon for all these factors to occur in one family over time” (p. 81).

During interviews, participants were asked to share their experiences and perceptions of poverty. Essentially, all participants in this study originate from poor backgrounds. Most participants who have reintegrated find themselves once again in situations of poverty.

**“I feel being poor is complicated. I cannot find enough money to support my living right now.” – Declined Assistance Non-Residential, Female**

Participants’ perceptions and experiences of this poverty vary but some common themes which emerged include how low-paid unskilled work perpetuates poverty, and how children reared in poverty are exposed to greater risks and fewer basic opportunities.

**“I used to cut sugarcane and plant cassava. It was very hard. I must cut from 13 to 15 sugarcanes and they gave me only 1 [Thai] Baht, which equals 100 Riel [\$0.025]. So each day, I cut around 500 sugarcanes to receive 500 Baht [\$12.50]. My hand was just paralyzed and my face was black. I burned the sugarcane’s leaf so when I went out my face was very black and hard to recognize. Other people’s faces were black as well. It was very difficult for me.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“For the poor like us, our children didn’t have intelligent games to play. The poor children just played outside and then go to collect the recycling items [scavenging]. Then they become friends with bad friend so their lives are terrible.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Some participants spoke about the class divides between the poor and the rich in Cambodian society. One participant spoke of poverty affecting her friendships.

**“My hometown friends are rich. So their relatives didn’t allow them to talk with me. So we lose friendship gradually. I think that I was poor so I have no ability to stay near them.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

For more on perspectives on class divisions in Cambodia, see Culture & Religion: Class Divisions.

### **Poverty and Ill Health**

A major theme relating to poverty is the negative impact poverty has on ill health and vice versa. It often turns into a vicious cycle, stripping a family of any savings and setting them back financially.

**“My family is poor and we lack food for eating. My father is sick and I also have woman’s illness. I cannot find the money for our needs, it is difficult to survive.” – Shelter, Female**

**“When one of our family members gets sick, the finances in our family will go down. In particular, if the head of the family gets sick, this is a terrible situation. The family loses one person that is useful for earning a living.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

**“When one family member gets sick, the whole family will worry about his/her sickness. Some family will loan money to others to cure their family member’s sickness.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

Ill health and poverty often perpetuate poverty because families will borrow amounts of money to pay for hospital and clinic visits, medication, and basic living costs lost because of the ill family member being unable to work.

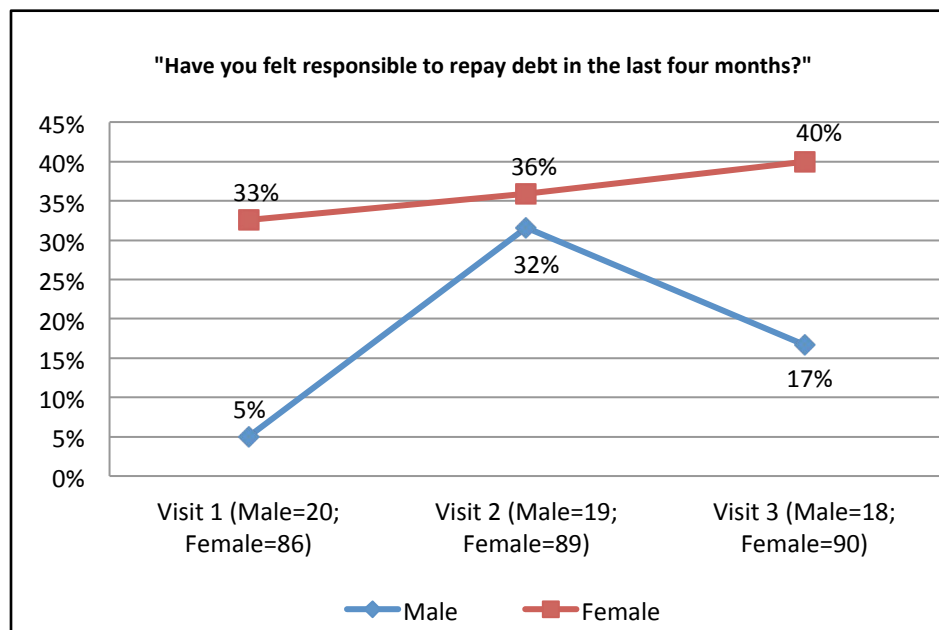
### Experiences and Perceptions of Debt

One participant described how health care costs created debt, which she herself paid off because she didn’t want her mother to bear the full responsibility.

**“My mother spent 500\$ for a surgery and the hospital bed. At that time, I was also hospitalized one week. Now I have paid off the debt completely. In fact, my mother told me that she would pay off a debt but I didn’t listen to her because I knew she could not pay it herself. I just did what I wanted. I cared about her. I paid off a debt by myself through tips I made in Karaoke. So now I paid a debt already.” – Shelter, Female**

As demonstrated in the statement above, debt is often a leading factor in making participants vulnerable to being sexually exploited.

At each field visit in 2012, participants were asked, “Have you felt responsible to repay debt in the last four months?” The percentage of females responding affirmatively was consistently higher than males; however, the number of males responding affirmatively spiked from Field Visit #1 to Field Visit #2; interestingly, many of the male participants began their reintegration into their families and communities between those two visits. This indicates that going home and being in the family made them take on, or feel they had to take on, more financial responsibility for the family, even though they are all under the age of 18.



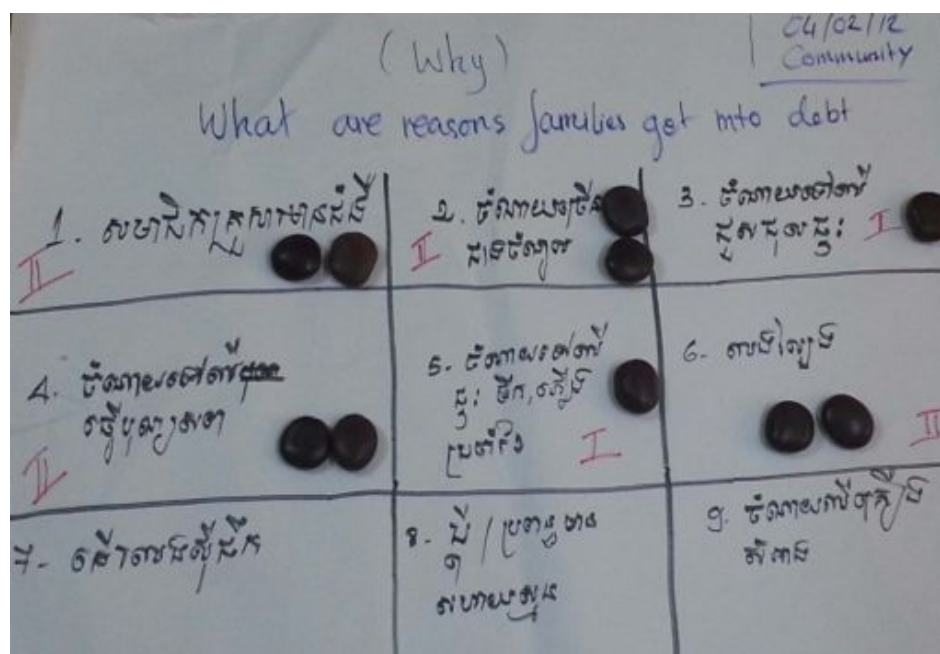
**Graph 4: Participants' Perception of Responsibility to Pay Debt**

*Surveyed participants at each Field Visit, by gender*

One participant described how debt was an obstacle to further skills training after he reintegrated.

**“I think a lot how my family will pay off their debt. My family borrowed money from others, around 500,000 Riel (\$125) and took a loan for 400,000 Riel (\$100). My brother had severe traffic accident. I am afraid my family cannot find enough money to pay off their debt. My family cannot afford to earn money. My father is disabled and my mother is too old. I will help them pay off debt before I do any more skills training. I wanted to study motorcycle repair when I reintegrated but now I must wait because of my family’s big debt.”**  
– Shelter Reintegration Follow up, Male

Participants were asked to reflect on and discuss in a Focus Group Discussion about their perceptions of why or how families get in to debt and what could be done to rectify or prevent such situations. They listed a number of causes of debt, some included behaviours they could control, such as better budgeting of the family finances; others reasons included behaviours they were less able to control, such as the behaviours of family members who drained resources through gambling, drinking, drugs, as well as partners who spent family resources on sex services. Other situations which incurred debt included lack of employment or low income. Participants from rural backgrounds spoke about crop failures and losing their land. The ranking chart below summarizes one of the Focus Groups’ results to the question, “What are reasons families get into debt?”



**Ranking Chart 4:**  
**Reasons for Incurring Debt**  
Surveyed participants

Legend:  
1. Family member's sickness  
2. Expenses are more than income  
3. Home repairs  
4. Funeral expenses  
5. Household utilities  
6. Gambling  
7. Eating out  
8. Adulteress/Adulteress (sex services)  
9. Make-up

In the Focus Group results above, participants did not pinpoint one main reason for families incurring debt, but rather agreed on a wide range of reasons.

In interviews, participants also gave a wide variety of perspectives on debt, some on how to avoid debt, some on justifying going into debt.

**“First, all family members must try to work hard; second, repay step by step; third, minimize spending; fourth, must try to work by yourself; fifth, stop borrowing after repaying all of the money; sixth, must save money; seventh, avoid borrowing a lot of money.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

**“... The second important thing is family members don’t have jobs. So their expenses are more than income. The third most important is that the head family doesn’t have a plan for their family. They do work without purpose. When they find money, they don’t know how much they will spend on food or clothing or their children’s education, etc.” – Declined Assistance, Female**

**“I think we should borrow money from others to run a new business. When we don’t have job, we must borrow money to create our business. If we don’t borrow, we still don’t have job and money.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“When I didn’t have baby, I never borrowed money from others. But when I gave birth, I borrowed a lot. I need to borrow money every month.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**RECOMMENDATION TO APs ON PREVENTING DEBT IN REINTEGRATION:**

**SOFT SKILLS SHOULD INCLUDE FINANCIAL EDUCATION, INCLUDING DISCUSSIONS ON REVENUES AND EXPENSES, BUDGETING, AND SAVINGS PLANS.**

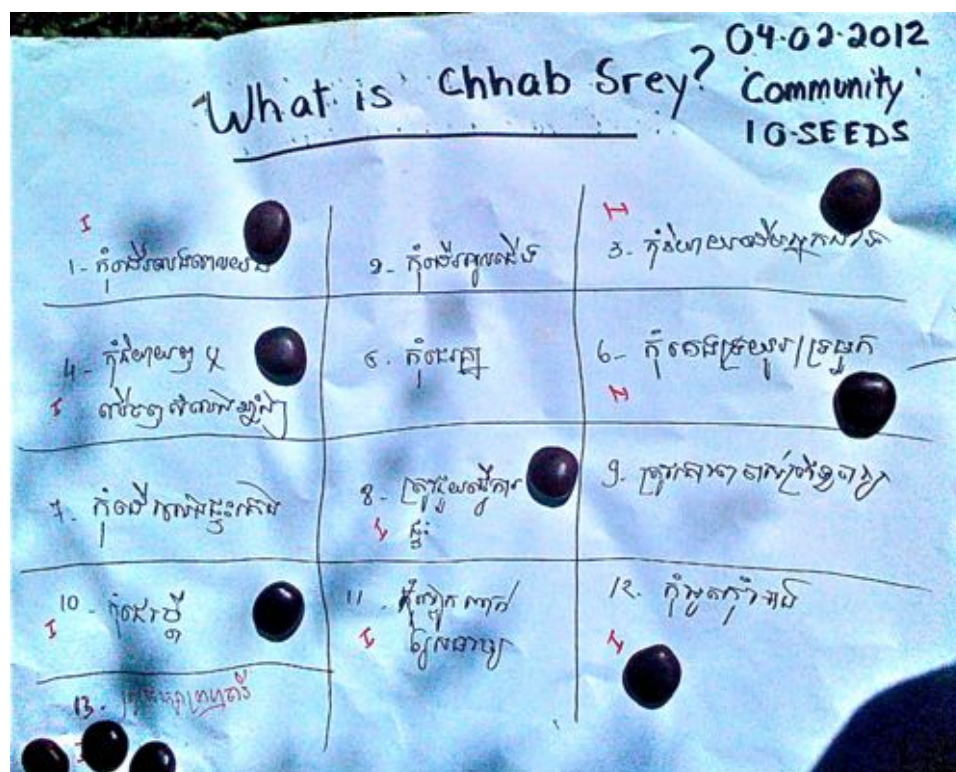
## CULTURE & RELIGION

It is well-documented that culture and religion play deeply into how a person develops and sees themselves and the world around them. Cultural and religious self-identity cut across many of the different issues with which the research participants were dealing. Issues discussed with participants on culture and religion included explorations of the Chbab Srey code of conduct for women, perceptions of cultural expectations, perceptions and consequences of class division in Cambodian society, stigma and discrimination against participants, and spirituality and religion.

### CHBAB SREI

Chbab Srei, or “The Rules of the Lady,” is a widely-known and traditionally followed code of conduct for Cambodian women. It touches on many aspects of what a “respectable” women looks like, including how to dress, how to act, how to speak, what work she should or should not do, how she should address and respond to others.

Participants in the community program were asked to discuss in Focus Groups their understanding of Chbab Srei and how it related to them in Cambodia today. They generally described Chbab Srei as a code of correct conduct for women and girls. They said it was important because it brought honour to one’s husband, family, and society in general. They described many types of behaviour such as the importance of respecting and obeying one’s husband in all circumstances, even if he is in the wrong. They spoke about the importance for girls and women to maintain their virginity until marriage and then to be monogamous thereafter, regardless of their husband’s sexual practices. They spoke about the woman’s responsibility to manage the household and ensure that it runs smoothly, to refrain from drawing attention to themselves by loud behaviour or by expressing strong opinions, to restrict their movements by remaining at home and not spending unnecessary time away from the household, and by not going out at night, not sleeping heavily in order to always be ready to serve one’s husband and family, and to avoid slandering and gossiping about others. In the Ten Seeds activity, participants ranked what they thought were the most important tenants of Chbab Srey.



**Ranking Chart 5:**  
**Perceptions of Chbab Srey**  
*Surveyed participants in Community Program, female*

- Legend:
1. Do not go out at night
  2. Do not walk loudly
  3. Do not speak ill of others
  4. Do not speak or laugh loudly
  5. Do not curse others
  6. Do not sleep like a log
  7. Do not play long hours at another's house
  8. Help with the household chores
  9. Respect older people
  10. Do not curse husband
  11. Wear suitable clothing
  12. Do not be arrogant
  13. Save your virginity

All aspects of Chbab Srey given weight were considered equally important, except for the code about saving one’s virginity (presumably until marriage), which was given three seeds, when all other options were only given one seed each. This perception was seconded by personal reflections around past sexual exploitation. One participant spoke of

her unhappy marriage and, upon divorcing, stated, since she was divorced and no longer was a virgin, sex work was a “better option” to earn more money than hard labor in the fields or construction.

**My husband had a lot of girlfriends because he was handsome. There were a lot of beautiful girls who came to meet him. Those girls were more beautiful than me. ... I had one daughter with him and when our daughter was three months he left me for a second wife and would not return to me. I knew he had another wife so I asked him to separate from me but he would not. He made me so stressed and mentally unwell. I couldn't live with him anymore so I decided to live separate from him. After this I went to work in Karaoke because I was “divorced” and not longer a virgin.” – Community Assistance program, Female**

Participants were asked to consider how their views on Chbab Srey pertained to them personally in their contexts. Many younger participants did not seem overly concerned with following the codes of Chbab Srey, and had very vague knowledge about the specifics of the code. Older participants answered they hoped their own children would abide by this code so as to bring honour to their own families. Many of the older female participants felt they had lost their chance to truly be Chbab Srey women because of their past, but still wanted the code to be applied to their own female children.

In line with the finding that older women were more concerned with the guidelines promoted by Chbab Srei than were the younger female participants, Andersson (2010) explored how traditional behaviours promoted by Chbab Srei are being challenged and changed by young, unmarried Cambodian women, particularly in urban settings.

Every time they contest notions of “tradition” and “culture” they put themselves, their family, their community, their culture, and their nationality at stake, and themselves in danger of being blamed and devalued to a less favoured position. Even though my informants are safeguarding their personal (and family's) life and cultural norms, they are also adopting and longing for “modern” attributes and behaviours (Andersson, 2012, p.38).

Participants were asked to comment on what Chbab Srey meant to them. Overall, participants described different tenants of the code. Primarily they discussed how women are to maintain the honour of their family and Cambodian culture through this code of conduct for women. In the future, questions could explore more personal perceptions on how they view themselves within the Chbab Srey framework.

**“Don't bring outside flames (problems) into the house and then burn it. The inside flame, if you are not careful, will burn outside [refers to not taking internal problems to people outside].” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“The woman should become a good housewife. You must know how to manage the finances well. Don't keep things complicated otherwise you will lose it.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Don't speak ill and gossip about others.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Don't speak loudly. You should speak good words to husband and others. You should serve your husband well and don't make him feel sad about you. And you must keep gratitude toward your parents.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Don't blame each other. Don't be the enemy. You should calm down your anger.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Woman should cut her hair appropriately, not messy like bird's nest. The woman cannot comb her hair in public because people may think she is trying to attract a man.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“Everything depends on a good housewife. If the housewife is careless with their duty, every property will lose and the children will walk on the wrong road. So the head of the family is very important.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Some participants did speak about how they had dealt with discrimination or chastising based on Chbab Srey values.



“Don’t laugh loudly. Don’t walk loudly. You know, my mother cursed me that if you have a big stomach that is why I laughed loudly like this. My mother cursed me like this when she heard my laughing. Even my finger nail, I must cut short and didn’t decorate on it.” – Community Assistance Program, Female

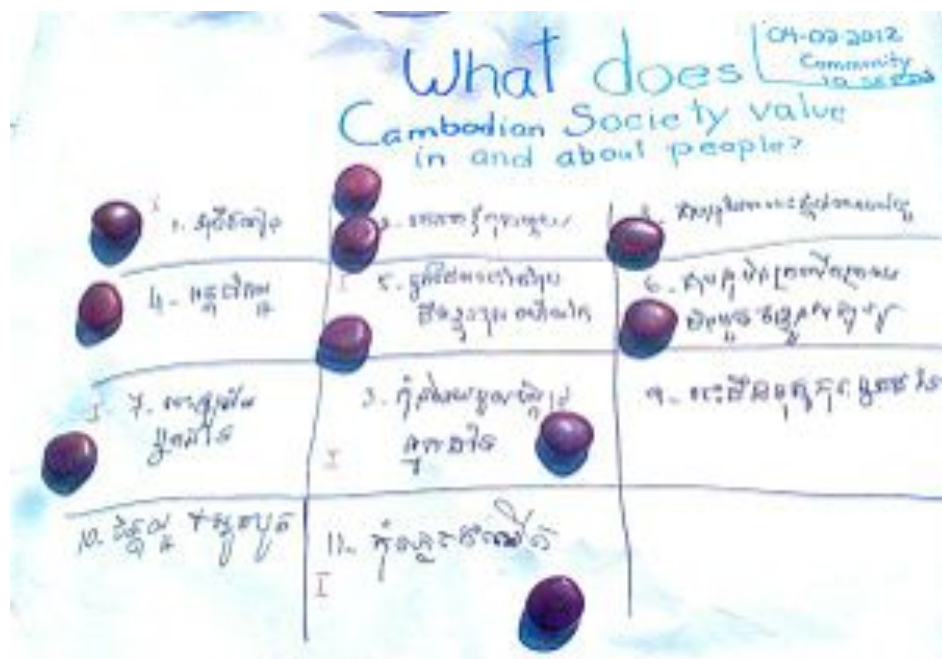
“Woman must wear appropriate clothes, not sexy clothes. When I was young, I wore a thin t-shirt. My father said that I show my body to someone.” – Community Assistance Program, Female

“My brother-in-law doesn’t like me and discriminates against me because I usually go out for a walk at night.” – Community Assistance program, Female

## STIGMA & DISCRIMINATION

### Perceptions on Cultural and Community Expectations

Participants were asked to discuss in Focus Groups their perceptions of what they thought Cambodian society valued regarding how Cambodian people should behave and conduct themselves. Their responses ranged, with an emphasis on the importance of showing respect towards the elders of society and to one’s parents, and the importance of obedience and heading their advice. They also spoke about the importance of being a person who was adaptable to whatever situations should arise. They spoke about how society values people who are able to control their emotions and in particular not display anger or rage. They spoke about the importance of being reliable, being honest, and owning up to mistakes. They spoke about how society values women who are physically pretty but does not value women who are sex workers.



**Ranking Chart 6:**  
Perceptions of Values  
in Cambodia Society  
Surveyed participants

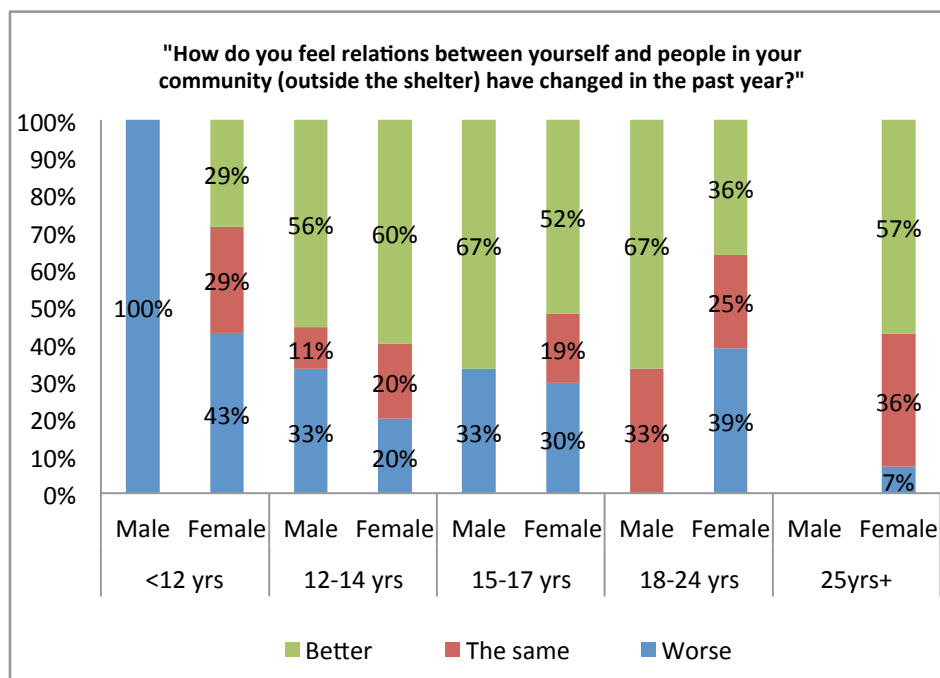
#### Legend:

1. Try to study hard
2. Respect for parents
3. Give good advice
4. Have a good attitude
5. Correct yourself when you do something wrong
6. Do not be arrogant
7. Value other people
8. Don't speak badly of others
9. Help others
10. Be polite and kind to others
11. Do not forget the past

As seen in the ranking chart above, most options were given equal weight, except “Respect for parents,” which participants felt was valued higher than other things in Cambodian culture. This further confirms the importance of respecting and obeying parents, found in the questions in the above section on how children can support their families.

Research questions also focused on participants’ perceptions of their relations with the wider community. Specifically, participants were asked whether they felt relations between themselves and people in their community (outside the residential program) had changed in the past year. The charts below display the results by age group.





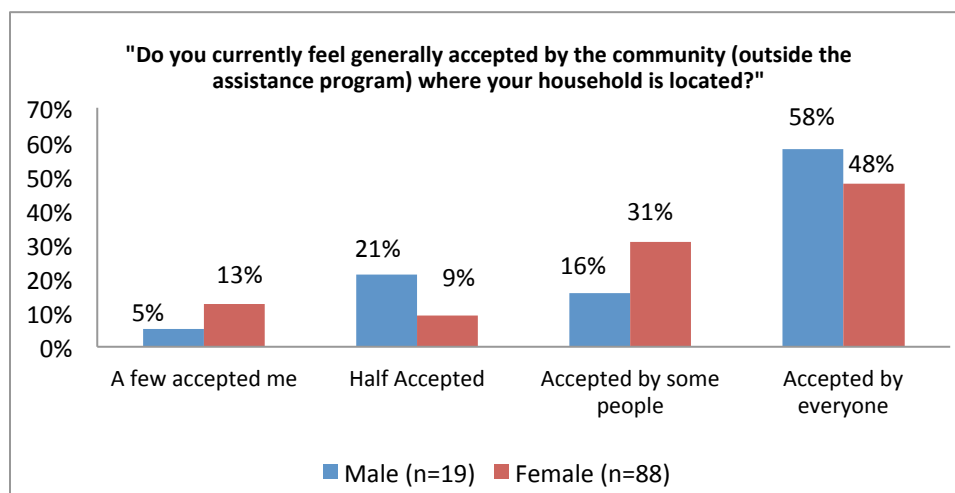
**Chart 33: Perceptions of Relations in the Community**

Surveyed participants at Field Visit #2, by gender (male: n=19; female: n=89)

Generally, both younger males and females ranked relations between themselves and people in the community outside the shelter as “worse” compared to the previous year as opposed to older males and female who ranked their relationship as “better” than the previous year.

### Perceptions of Discrimination

Participants were asked if they felt generally accepted by people in the neighbourhood where they resided. Males appeared to rank “feeling accepted by everyone in the community” higher than females, though this category was the highest ranked for both males and females, with males at 58% and females at 48%.



**Chart 34: Perception of Acceptance in the Community**

Surveyed participants at Field Visit #2, by gender (n=107)

Participants were also asked specifically whether they had experienced discrimination in the past year. All participants present at the Field Visit (n=108) responded, with 55% of females and 37% of males answering they had experienced discrimination in the past year.

Participants were asked to explain more about who they felt had discriminated against them in the past year. Their answers varied from shelter staff, shelter peers or friends, and peers or friends at school to work colleagues, neighbours, and relatives. They were asked to explain, in their opinion, why and how this discrimination took place

against them. Participants spoke about personality conflicts with shelter and school staff, peer, and friends. They spoke about neighbours, family, school peers and teachers ostracizing them because of their past sexual exploitation, or because they were from poor backgrounds. One spoke about feeling disliked and discriminated against by her peers because of her physical disability. One participant spoke about feeling ostracized by fellow shelter peers because she was openly lesbian. Others who worked or went out at night regularly felt disapproval from their neighbours who they said gossiped that they must be sex workers. A number of participants answered that they did not know why they were discriminated against. Participants described feeling and being excluded, or gossiped about, or sometimes insulted verbally by those they felt were discriminating against them.

**“But sometime I didn’t want to stay in the shelter at all. I didn’t want to meet one troublemaker. When I saw her face, I felt strange immediately and not good. I hate when someone gossips. For me, I don’t engage in shelter or workplace gossip. She gossiped me so that’s why I had a problem with her when I lived in the shelter. In this way she discriminated against me.” – Shelter, Female**

**“Some teachers treat me rudely, maybe because I am poor or because they think about my past story.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

**“The girls in the shelter hate me and discriminate against me because my physical disability makes me different from them.” – Shelter, Female**

**“My relatives and everyone in my village don’t believe that I can find a job because I am like a little girl. My relatives said that the beauty salon woman is white and beautiful. At that time, I was black because I worked outside the shelter. They gossiped about me. They said that my family and I don’t have enough ability to support my beauty salon training. They said an old man must support me. But in fact, I tried by myself. My mother told them the community [program] helps me but they still didn’t believe. I don’t care what they said. I just focus on my training and working. I believe in God so I must overcome my difficult problem. We have a good relationship outside our mind but inside our mind we think different.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants were asked, as a follow-up to the previous question, “How did the experience of being discriminated against make you feel?” Feelings expressed ranged from fear, sadness, and disappointment, to anger at themselves and others. Some said they didn’t give it any consideration or let it bother them.

**“OK, because I didn’t care about their discrimination and didn’t let it bother me.” – Shelter, Female; Declined Assistance Residential Training, Female; Declined Assistance, Female; Reintegration completed, Female**

**“I felt unhappy, worried, and I dwelt on it.” – Shelter, Female; Family Group Home, Female; Reintegration Completed, Female; Community Assistance Program, Female; Declined Assistance Residential Training**

**“I felt ashamed and I think of myself as not a good person.” – Shelter, Female; Declined Assistance Non-Residential Training; Family Group Home, Female**

**“I felt disappointed/sad with them for treating me this way.” – Shelter, Female; Family Group Home, Female; Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“I felt angry at them and/or angry at myself.” – Shelter Reintegration Follow-up, Female-Shelter, Female**

**“I felt frightened.” – Shelter, Female**

**“I felt angry and sad.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

## **Ethnicity**

As described in the above section on participants’ profiles, an unexpected finding was participants changed their stated ethnicity from one year to the next. When participants were questioned about these differences in ethnicity,

some explained they felt more secure and proud of their ethnic identities than the previous year and thus wanted to be identified as such.

**“I want to study Vietnamese language this year because my father is Vietnamese. It is important to me to learn my language because this is my family background. Before now I did care so much to learn my father’s language but now I do.”**

**Shelter, Female**

This phenomenon was explored in Phinney and Chavira’s (1992) study among different ethnic groups in the United States. Results of the longitudinal exploratory study with adolescents from three ethnic groups (Asian American, Black, and Hispanic) showed a significant change to higher stages of ethnic identity over the study’s three-year period. Self-esteem and ethnic identity were significantly related to each other at each time period and across the three-year time span.

Other participants explained that they felt they could be more honest about their ethnic identities as their sense of trust towards the research team and that this information would not be used against them. Because of these reasons, and assuming participants will continue to gain confidence in themselves and trust in the research team, ethnicity questions will remain open in future years.

### **Class Division**

Research has shown that social class impacts every aspect of a person’s life (Liu et al., 2004). Participants often referred to their social status in link with challenges with friends, peers, and intimate partners. They stated lower economic status as the cause for being discriminated against. Lower social status was also stated as a reason for an intimate partner’s family opposing the relationship.

Some participants described feeling shunned and excluded by fellow classmates and teachers because they were considered poor. Among those who felt discriminated against because of their poverty, the majority felt anger and disgust toward their wealthier classmates. Participants described their intentionality to seek out peers similar to their economic level and to generally avoid the wealthy children in their schools. Political affiliation was also linked to class discrimination, as participants who stated economic differences also referred to political differences.

**“Most of the wealthy kids are above the rules of the school. So when these kids blame and say mean things about me, the teacher can do nothing when I tell her. Those kids are too powerful. I don’t want to be around them. I think they are only lucky to have rich parents and I was unlucky to have poor parents.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

**“Some school friends discriminate against me because they are rich and I am poor. My neighbour also discriminated me because they said I follow the party in opposition to the government.” – Shelter Reintegration Follow up, Female**

**“Some rich kids in school treat me badly because I am poor. They think they are better than poor children. I told the teacher but she is powerless against the rich. Rich children have rich parents who don’t have to follow any rules.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

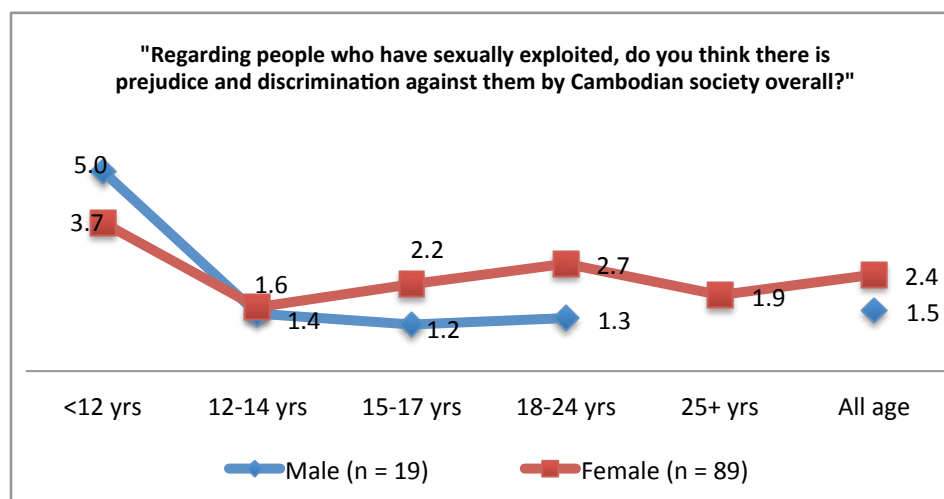
**“The village chief discriminates against my family and I because my family is pro-Government opposition party.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

The findings on class division among our research participants are confirmed through other general research on social status divisions. People classified as being of lower social class have been found to consider themselves to be inferior to those classified as being of higher social class (McMullin & Cairney, 2004); individuals considered to be of high social class distance themselves cognitively, institutionally and interpersonally from people considered as being of low social class (Lott, 2002). The links between social and economic status and stigma and discrimination were further exemplified in participants’ statements about their past sexual exploitation.

### **Stigma and Sexual Exploitation**

Participants were asked if they thought there was prejudice and discrimination against sexually exploited persons in Cambodian society. Participants from each age group ranked their response from zero (0) to five (5): zero indicating no prejudice at all and five indicating the most extreme amount of prejudice. Female participants averaged a

response of 2.4 out of 5 and male participants averaged 1.5 out of 5.



**Graph 5: Perceptions of Prejudice against Sexually Exploited Persons**

*Surveyed participants at Field Visit #2, by gender and age (n=107)*

Females ranked prejudice higher than males overall, and for both males and females, younger participants ranked prejudice higher than older females. In fact, the largest percentage in youngest female group ranked prejudice the highest, with 57% of females under the age of 12 ranking prejudice at a 5; whereas the largest percentage in the oldest female group ranked prejudice the lowest, with 57% of females over the age of 25 ranking prejudice at a 0. For males, most groups averaged around 1.3 out of 5, with the exception of the one male participant under the age of 12, who ranked prejudice at a 5.<sup>10</sup> Overall, the scores seem relatively low, indicating participants do not think there is an extreme amount of prejudice and discrimination against sexually exploited persons.

However, when asked to state reasons for which participants thought they were being discriminated against, a number stated their past sexual exploitation.

#### **Why do you feel you experienced this discrimination?**

**"Because I used to work at Karaoke." – Reintegration completed, Female**

**"Because some people look down on the survivor of sexual exploitation. Some say you have a baby, but no husband." – Shelter, Female**

**"Most of people I know discriminate against me because I have a bad past experience in sexual exploitation." – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Participants also spoke about how, after leaving sex work, time and counselling was needed to "change behaviour," to become acceptable in Khmer society. Some community participants spoke about how they felt their neighbours no longer looked down upon them because they are now involved in respectable work, and overall they described a positive change. Brunovski and Surtees (2008) also look at how beneficiaries "need" to change behaviour to what is more acceptable. Whereas Brunovski and Surtees found this "need to change behaviour" a particular point of contention among survivors of sexual exploitation in Eastern Europe, as it puts the responsibility onto the survivor instead of the perpetrator, female participants in the present study spoke of "changing behaviour" in a positive and hopeful way.

<sup>10</sup> It is possible this child was too young to understand the questions to do with trust and emotionally supportive relationships. In participant observation, the research team noted he appeared at ease, generally happy and active through the year. He never spoke about relationship difficulties with staff, peers, or his family.

Participants spoke about the importance of gaining an education, and or gaining economic wealth, to be able to support their families, decreasing stigma and increasing societal acceptance. Many participants took it on themselves to change society's views of them for having been exploited in the past.

**“I believe I can change my village neighbours’ bad ideas about me by studying hard and finding a good job. This will stop their negative gossip about me, about my past sexual exploitation.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

Participants spoke about gaining their neighbours respect by doing “respectable” work, such as using the skills they were learning and doing in the community program instead of their previous “sex work.” They also spoke about the importance of not going out at night as this was perceived negatively in their neighbourhoods. Others spoke about the importance of gaining material wealth and less about how they obtained it.

**“Now my neighbours don’t look down on me like before when I worked nights at Karaoke. I hear my neighbours gossip that now I have a respectable job in the community program.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

Another major issue was participants avoiding disclosing their sexual exploitation in order avoid being stigmatized. Some participants described keeping their past, or even present sex work “a secret” as way to avoid potential discrimination. A number of participants were keeping their past sexual exploitation secret from their in-laws and work colleagues. They spoke about the tension of knowing whom to trust with their “secret” and the fear of exposure either on purpose or by accident. In contrast some participants had disclosed their experience in sex work with spouses, partners, in-laws and family.

**“I worry about who I can really trust. If I tell her my secret about my past sex work she may tell others if we get angry at each other. If others know they will gossip and push me away. So far I don’t know who I can really trust.” – Shelter, Female**

Getting a respectable and high paying job or marrying a wealthy man were cited as the two ways sexually exploited women could escape from the stigma attached to their past. Attaining a higher social and economic status, therefore, is perceived as the only way to break away from being discriminated against and gossiped about for having been sexually exploited.

### **Gender Inequality**

The Chbab Srey values described by female participants on what is expected of women in Cambodian society, the general distrust of men and expectation, oftentimes acceptance, of male partners’ sexual infidelity, as well as the lack of legal knowledge and recourse having to do with divorce and child custody, all point to a pattern of gender inequality.

According to the OECD’s Social Institution and Gender Index (SIGI) (2012), Cambodia ranked 13 out of 86 in 2012 for gender equality, which is an improvement from 2009, when Cambodia ranked 27 out of 102. The SIGI is based on five measures: Discriminatory Family Code, Restricted Physical Integrity, Son Bias, Restricted Resources and Entitlements and Restricted Civil Liberties. On the SIGI, Cambodia outranks all its direct neighbours (Thailand ranks 25<sup>th</sup>, Vietnam ranks 42<sup>nd</sup>, and Lao PDR ranks 49<sup>th</sup>).

On the other hand, the new Gender Inequality Index (GII), which measures the loss of achievement due to gender inequality, using the dimensions of reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market participation, measured Cambodia gender inequality at 0.551 (0 being perfectly equal and 1 being perfectly unequal); this score ranked Cambodia 95<sup>th</sup> out of 138 countries (UNDP 2012). In addition, Cambodia is ranked 92<sup>nd</sup> out of 113 countries on the Women’s Economic Opportunity Index (WEO) (Butt 2010). These indices, as well as the difference between the SIGI and both the GII and the WEO, speak to the probability that the Cambodian government is aligning policies and laws with internationally accepted equality measures, but society and culture has a ways to go to becoming equal.



## SPIRITUALITY & RELIGION

Participants were asked a number of survey questions regarding spirituality and religion and to expand on their answers during qualitative interviews. When asked, “Did you regard yourself as having any particular spiritual beliefs in this past year?” 94% of participants responded yes and only 6% responded they had not. Participants who had responded “yes” to the previous question were also asked which spiritual beliefs or practices best applied to them, and they were given a number of options, which were ancestor worship, Animist, atheist, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, and “Other.” Respondents only chose two options, Christian and Buddhist, with 75% responding they were Christian and 25% responding they were Buddhist.

During informal interviews, participants shared their views on their spiritual practices and their experiences of spirituality within assistance programs.<sup>11</sup> One participant shared how her interest in Christianity began. Others spoke more generally on how conversion to Christianity had been a positive change in their lives.

**“After I worked in the Community program organization, I felt I have value. I had never thought I had a value before. But now I have value. The Community program provides counseling to me and discusses everything with me. They teach me how to forgive others. They introduced me to know God. I felt happy and cooled off anger. After that I felt I have value and I don’t want to die. I have changed my previous thought. I am very happy with what I have now. When I believe in God, God healed my thoughts a lot. When I didn’t believe him in the past, I want to die when I felt difficulty. I am proud of myself. I think maybe God gives power to me. God gives opportunity to me. I am proud of myself for what I am like today. Now I am a skilled tailor.”**  
– Community Assistance Program, Female

**“Our life is short so we should forgive each other. We for sure will separate or live far away one day, so we should forgive others a lot.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

**“I lived with my parents. I have 4 or 5 siblings. My father was drunk every day. He always hit my mother and his children. My family faced many difficulties at that time. But my father has changed. He stopped drinking alcohol. When I work at the community program, I always prayed to the God, please stop my father drinking alcohol. You know, my father stop drinking alcohol now. He said that someone who drinks alcohol is the same as the dog.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

**“When I was a sex worker, I used to go to the church. I saw many people sang songs. I felt happy. Church looks like a happy place. When I work at the Community program, this organization is also a Christian. I want to know the God. I believe in God. I started singing. I obey the words of God. In my past life, I thought I haven’t got value but now I have value. When I went to the church, I felt happy and have hope in the future.”**  
– Community Assistance Program, Female

Others spoke of their exposure and subsequent conversions to Christianity while in assistance programs.

**“I changed religious from Buddhist to Christian. Jesus makes me strong and happy.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

**“Before I didn’t believe in any religion but now I believe in Jesus.”** – Shelter, Female

**“First, my parents were sick every month but when I believed in God, I always pray to the God. Now I see the result, my parents recover from their illness and they are sick only 2 times per year. These results make me believe in God. I truly believe in God. In the past, I believe in Buddhism. I always do many Buddhist ceremonies and offer money but it cannot help me, even the Buddha wise man. They have no motivating ideas and didn’t advise me. When I gave 20 Baht to the wise man, he said it was a little, how I can do with 20 Baht. I was unhappy. When I worked in the Community program, I went to the church and the people there encouraged me and helped me. Now my living condition is better because the people in the church helped me. I obeyed the entire Community program’s regulation. I go to the church every Sunday. I feel more comfortable and I think I have value.”** – Community Assistance Program, Female

<sup>11</sup> It should be noted that all but one assistance programs involved in the Butterfly Project are Christian organizations.

Several participants who had converted while in assistance programs also spoke about the lack of pressure to go to Christian church while in the shelter, though they did not speak of alternative options, such as Buddhist practices. One participant spoke about feeling pressured by the housemother to attend church with the other girls even though she did not want to go.

**“The shelter staff never said I must believe in Jesus, I feel I chose when I learned about Him.” – Shelter, Male**

Some participants spoke of feeling isolated because they could not easily practice their Christian faith in their communities, while others felt they had to go back to practicing Buddhist traditions when they reintegrated. Some others felt they could maintain their Christian practices, and even felt support from their non-Christian family.

**“I haven’t changed my belief. My belief in the shelter is the same in my house. I still have Christian beliefs since I reintegrated. My family is Buddhist and my village is Buddhist but I have one friend in my village. She is young. I am happy because she has the same faith as me.” – Shelter, Female**

**“My Vietnamese friend invited me to her church years before I lived in the shelter. I have been a Christian for many years. My parents are Buddhists but they have always let me to believe and practice Christianity.” – Shelter, Female**

**“For non-Christians, they seem to feel uncomfortable with me. They said I sing, pray and dance, it is meaningless. That God cannot help me. Sometimes, some people wanted to throw me away from their house. I think they hate Jesus. But I don’t get angry with them because I used to have such feeling before. Even though my cousin-in-law always complains to me every day about God.” – Community Assistance Program, Female**

**“When I left the shelter, I have no chance to believe in God. I cannot go to the church.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance Follow-up, Female**

**“Before I was a Christian but now I am a Buddhist. My father pressured me to burn the incense and hasn’t allowed me to go to the church.” – Shelter Reintegration Assistance, Female**

Some other participants were undecided about which religion they would chose to practice, or practices a combination of both.

**“I believe in both Buddhism and Christianity. I believe in both based on my circumstances.” – Transition Home from Shelter Assistance, Female**

**“When staying in the shelter I believed in Jesus but at home I believe in Buddhism.” – Shelter, Female**

**“In the past, I didn’t believe in any religion, I just went with the old people to the pagoda, but now I follow the Christian God and I go to the church. But I still don’t know which religious I should believe.” – Shelter, Female**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section are found the compiled recommendations from the previous chapters in Main Findings and Discussion.

## **Recommendation to APs in Reconciling Shelter/Family Tension:**

Where possible, shelters and other residential programs should promote and organize increased contact, communication, and visitation between residents and family members while residents are under the care of assistance programs.

## **Recommendation to APs in Preparing Participants for Autonomy:**

More attention could be given to soft skills training, as well as increasing responsibilities for residents within shelter programs as they prepare to transition out of the shelter and into a more autonomous setting.

## **Recommendation to APs in Reintegration Process:**

It is critical to provide holistic assistance during the reintegration process, including pre-reintegration assessment of family and community context, and ongoing support during and after reintegration.

## **Recommendation to APs on Preparing Survivors for Intimate Relationships:**

Increasing the soft and relational skills of young men and women may promote healthier intimate relationships when they are older. Survivors should also be made aware of their legal rights in relationships, so they know their avenues of recourse should they be treated unjustly.

## **Recommendation to APs on Survivor Reintegration:**

Assistance Programs should spend significant time with the family and community of survivors, both before and after the reintegration process begins, to assess reintegration readiness of both parties.

## **Recommendation to Coalition on Survivor Reintegration:**

Develop an assessment tool to gauge the risks and needs reintegrating survivors of human trafficking.

Develop a training curriculum for communities to reduce stigma survivors may feel upon reintegration.

## **Recommendation to APs on Sex Education:**

Girls and young women could benefit from increased knowledge on sexually transmitted diseases and STI prevention methods, including correct condom use and dispelling myths on condom use.

## **Recommendation to APs on Contraception Education:**

Assistance Programs should include contraceptive education in their life skills workshops and prepare men and women for future sexual relationships. APs could also provide information on family planning services to survivors in reintegration process.

## **Recommendation to APs on Family Planning Education:**

Participants of child-bearing age could benefit from more information on family planning services, and increased referral mechanisms to these types of services, as well as family planning counseling so their plans for pregnancy, child-bearing, and raising children are better informed. Men as well as women could benefit from soft skills workshops on intimate relationships and the responsibilities of starting a family.

**Recommendation to Coalition on Sexual Harassment Prevention:**

The coalition could use its influence to advocate to the government to tighten legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace and to make the job market a safer place for women.

**Recommendation to Coalition on Drug Treatment:**

Survivors are sometimes addicted to prohibited drugs and could benefit from a strong referral mechanism to drug treatment programs that can also meet their needs as survivors of sexual exploitation.

**Recommendation to APs on Vocational Training:**

As stated in the USAID (2007) report on the rehabilitation of trafficking victims, “Vocational training must be based on a realistic analysis of the market and take into account both the individual and the environment” (p.27); APs could benefit from increased partnerships with organisations who have a proven expertise and track record with vocational training among vulnerable populations.

**Recommendation to APs on Economic Reintegration of Survivors:**

If business or economic development is not the area of expertise of the assistance program, increased partnerships and training could benefit APs in equipping their clients for the job market. Involving survivors in market research and business development will also empower and better prepare them.

**Recommendation to Coalition on Economic Reintegration of Survivors:**

APs could benefit from a network of mainstream businesses that are willing to employ and care for reintegrated survivors of human trafficking. Specific training for these businesses would also help reduce stigma and insensitivity in the workplace.

**Recommendation to APs on Safe Migration:**

Assistance Programs could provide training and accessible resources (e.g. targeted to low-literacy populations) to participants upon reintegration so participants and their families practice safe migration.

**Recommendation to APs on Preventing Debt in Reintegration:**

Soft skills should include financial education, including discussions on revenues and expenses, budgeting, and savings plans.

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# APPENDICES

## ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

  
**ក្រសួងសុខាភិបាល**  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
គណៈកម្មាធិការជាតិរៀបចំការស្រាវជ្រាវ  
ស្រាវជ្រាវសុខាភិបាល  
National Ethics Committee for Health Research  
ព្រះនរោត្តម ៣១ មិថុនា ២០១២

**ព្រះរាជាណាចក្រកម្ពុជា**  
KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA  
ជាតិ សាសនា ព្រះមហាក្សត្រ  
NATION RELIGION KING  
ព្រះនរោត្តម ៣១ មិថុនា ២០១២

រាជធានីភ្នំពេញ, ថ្ងៃទី ៣០ ខែ ១០ ឆ្នាំ២០១២

**Mrs. Siobhan Miles**

**Project:** Request for continuing of study protocol entitled "The Butterfly longitudinal research project". Version N° 2, dated 04<sup>th</sup> October, 2012"

**Reference:** 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 NECHR meeting minute

Dear Mrs. Siobhan Miles,

I am pleased to inform you that your request for continuing of your study protocol entitled "The Butterfly longitudinal research project". Version N° 2, dated 04<sup>th</sup> October, 2012" has been approved by National Ethic Committee for Health Research (NECHR) in the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2012. This approval is valid for twelve months after the approval date.

The Principal Investigator of the project shall submit following document to the committee's secretariat at the National Institute of Public Health at #2 Kim Il Sung Blvd, Khan Tuol Kok, Phnom Penh. (Tel: 855-23-880345, Fax: 855-23-881949):

- Annual progress report
- Final scientific report
- Patient/participant feedback (if any)
- Analyzing serious adverse events report (if applicable)

The Principal Investigator should be aware that there might be site monitoring visits at any time from NECHR team during the project implementation and should provide full cooperation to the team.

Regards,

Chairman

  
Prof. ENG HUOT

លេខ ៣ មហាវិថី គីម ឈីល ស៊ុន, ភ្នំពេញ, កម្ពុជា  
# 2 Blvd KIM YIL SUNG, Khan Tuol Kerk, Phnom Penh. Tel : (855-23) 880 345, Mobile phone : (855-12) 280 790, (855-12) 842 442



## CHBAB SREY (DIRECT TRANSLATION)

Chbap (law) Srey (woman),

Phouchhong leelia! (A kind of melody)

This is Phouchhong Leelia and we made it into the rule for girls

When (name of the princess) went away with her husband whose name was  
"bongyaksa" (yaksa = giant/powerful person)

Queen Vithmolia" who is the mother said "My dear daughter"

You will go with your husband to the Dragon World

You should remember to serve your husband

Don't make him unsatisfied

Don't look down on the owner of the head (means don't touch your husband's head)

My dearest daughter, no matter how poor you are, follow the woman's rules

Don't be so mean to the neighbour and relative

Good position and happiness come from women

Being a woman, no matter what you say, don't be (leh'lah!) talking not serious, not gentle

(Cambodian women are not supposed to talk very much and be shy)

Taking a seat in the wrong place is not suitable for a woman (if you sit in the wrong place you do not deserve to be a woman in Cambodia)

If you don't feel afraid of your husband's feeling and let the other man look down on your husband

We call you a woman who is lack of good characteristic

You should try to do the work like weaving or knitting

Don't delay the work

Before you weave the silk you have to make things ready and then do it

Don't go for a walk at other people's house

Try to work hard and protect yourself since you are a virgin

Because when you have a husband you are busy with your children who are crying, you have never time to do things

Don't keep things complicated otherwise you will lose it

My Dear Daughter remember, don't forget

Please study woman's rule; be respectful to your husband

Serve him well, and keep the three flames

You have to keep the fire burning regularly

Otherwise it will burn you

Don't bring the outside flame into the house and then burn it (refers to not bringing outside problems into the house)

The inside flame, if you are not careful, you will burn it outside (refers to not taking internal problems to people outside)

You have to control your spirit and protect the three flames

This flame will benefit you the best

One flame is to keep the gratitude toward your parents

You have to walk on the way that was paved by your parents and serve your parents well

Try to protect it, give it food as desired (give the parents what they want)

If you are hungry don't keep food to yourself give your parents delicious food regularly

Your words must be polite and any duty must be done regularly and very well

Another flame is your husband who you stay with forever

You should serve well don't make him disappointed

Forgive him in the name of woman; don't speak in the way that you consider him as equal

No matter what happen we have to wait to listen with the bad word (even if he say something bad you have to listen)

Though your husband speaks inappropriately you shouldn't let the mother know

Or your husband will get angry if he hears the bad word from the mother

You are not quiet but chatting so the problem happen everlasting

Confront without stop so no more happiness

Complaining/nagging until everyone in district know the problem so no happiness

This is what we call the three flames that the mother tell the daughter to keep

My dear, no matter what your husband did wrong, I tell you  
To be patient, don't say anything without the husband present  
Don't curse, don't be the enemy, no matter how poor or stupid you don't look down on him  
Though poor or stupid you should advise or say something with good words  
No matter what the husband says, angry and cursing, using strong word without ending  
Complaining and cursing because husband not pleased  
You should be patient with him and calm down your anger  
Don't be angry and react bad to the one who is your husband  
You get angry without thinking about yourself as a woman  
You have to consider yourself as a girl before you use bad words or appear angry  
Deny with rude word will ignite the anger (if you use bad words you will make husband angrier)  
Stubborn, staring and want to quarrel  
Cursing dog and cat, insulting indirectly to hurt the husband feeling (curse the  
dog or cat because you are afraid to insult him directly - as a way of insulting him  
vicariously through the cat)  
Throwing things (without thinking) and then it break,  
Trying to do things to make the husband lose (surrender/give in)  
Then feel satisfied  
We call this woman the woman who ruin the prestige of the family

My Dear Daughter don't do like them they are very wrong  
Even though your husband curse, you go to sleep and consider  
And you come back with gentle words and solve that problem  
What your husband advises you bear in mind (keep in your heart)  
Don't forget the husband's word or you may do something wrong because already told  
If you don't listen to the order it always creates the quarrelling and then bad reputation and never ending quarrelling  
happen  
We don't consider this as a woman but as useless  
This woman use your mouth to suppress the husband by letting other people know that she is better than him  
(meaning you talk and complain a lot so people will know and not respect your husband)  
Because she doesn't use, doesn't let to walk, laugh at  
Even though your husband ask you to do things don't be lazy to go  
Don't wait regardless near or far distance, get up and go don't let your husband curse you  
Don't stay at other people's house long, free or busy, be quick back home

My Dear Daughter it is rarely for the woman  
No matter how good physically you are they won't select you if you don't know all the things  
You will not be respected; you will be only with bad luck  
You are only beautiful but if you know what to do you will be appreciated  
One thing you are beautiful that can't be compared to but even a single rule you don't know  
You are beautiful but have no idea  
Though you are black if you are polite  
You know all the good characteristics  
It is traditionally called (Kalyan neh) perfect

My Dear Daughter, I want to tell you about the bad luck  
If you check your husband's head for lice without doing "sampeah" (the hand palms together)  
The monk will consider you as a "sak cock" (big white bird) that perches in the house and this is a symbol that you will  
lose the property  
It is not appropriated to step over your husband, just because you want to be quick  
The woman is the same as the small bird that fly away  
And then this bird brings about the bad luck, fly in and fly out of the door  
Consider it as when you light the fire so that the thief can see your location and take your property - you show the  
way to the thief

Another kind of girl laughs loudly (so that neighbours of the neighbours can hear you)  
If you are this girl we consider you as the bird - sak cho:chat (this kind of bird is different but also brings bad luck  
when it flies into the village)

Another kind of girl, when she sleeps she turn her back to her husband  
This one we consider as a bad snake and it shouldn't be let into the house  
It bring bad luck and the couple will separate

The kind of woman who has long hair  
She combs her hair at the top/mouth of the well like the executioner and the cat who hides its claws  
She is the worst and cannot be compared to anyone (traditionally the woman cannot comb her hair in public because people will think she is trying to attract the man) this woman can comb her hair for one hour (usually it takes short time)

The other kind of woman kicking something loudly  
When she walk very loudly they consider her step like a lightening sound so that her samput (skirt) it torn apart  
She walks very loudly  
So that the houses tremble  
The other woman see something on the ground and then she move forward without picking it up (as in tidying it)  
In the future she cannot get organized  
Then her property will be lost  
Even at the meal time she eats in a messy way

My Dear Daughter you have to listen, these are the 10 bad lucks  
That you should avoid seven times  
That is the Buddha

