

CSHL NEWSLETTER

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Violence Against Women in Cambodia

Violence Against Women (VAW) refers to any acts of gender-based violence which were not only appear in form of physical abuse but also in form of sexual, psychological and economical abuse. In Cambodia, VAM happened in anywhere such as home, workplace and community where the two most popular are domestic violence and sexual.[1]

According to the National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences, 32% of partnered women are violated by their partner while 14% of non-partner women face violence against them by the others.[2] Among these 14.4% of economic violence, 15% of physical violence and 10% of sexual violence happened on partnered women whereas 4% of non-partnered women are experienced sexual violence.[3]

VAW is rooted deeply in Cambodia community where the reasons behind are causing from: Disabilities, Traditional Gender Norms and Gender Inequality; etc.[4] In this regard, 25% of Disabled women had physical abused by the household member; Traditional Gender Norms and Customs: "Chhab Srey" is firmly ingrained in Cambodian Culture from one generation to another that reinforce gender stereotypes. Whereby, women would have to bear with VAW while sticking to the code; and Gender Inequality: Over 1/3 local authority believed that husband is justified in using extreme forms of violence on women if they are not respected or obeyed. Moreover, Cambodia Laws itself are significantly weak in protection measures and equality guarantees for women. For instance, Laws on Domestic Violence, Marriage, Rape, Human trafficking are on forms of exploitation and discrimination against women.[5]

Most concerning consequences of VAW to women are: Health Consequences, Social and Economic Cost and Impact on Children.[6] VAW bring women a short- or long-term physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health issue. As well as, women who experienced VAW may suffer isolation, inability to work, wage loss, lack of engagement in regular activities, and decreased ability to care for themselves and their children. In additionally, not only women who is effect from VAW, but also children who is living and growing up in the violent families may exhibit a variety of behavioral and emotional problems. It would also link to later in life perpetrating, greater rate of death and morbidity in infants and children.

To respond to VAW issue in Cambodia, the government issue policies called National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women which support and cooperate with both local and international communities on the purpose of providing legal protection to the victims of VAW.[7] Beside this, the victims of VAW in Cambodia are also protected by both national laws, policies, regulations and international laws, covenants regarding the violation on them.[8]

[1] Ministry of Women's Affairs, National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2019-2023, Page 4.

[2] UNICEF, Ending Violence Against Women and Children In Cambodia, Page 8.

https://www.unicef.org/eap/media/8631/file/Ending_Violence_against_Women_and_Children_in_Cambodia.pdf

[3] Ibid.

[4] Neary Rattanak 4- Violence Against Women And Girls, Cambodia Gender Assessment, 2014.

[5] Violence Against Women: How Cambodian Laws Discrimination Against Women, A Cambow Report, November 2007. https://www.licadho-cambodia.org/reports/files/112CAMBOWViolenceWomenReport2007_ENG.pdf

[6] WHO, Violence Against Women. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

[7] Global Databases on Violence Against Women. <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/fr/countries/asia/cambodia/2014/national-action-plan-to-prevent-violence-against-women>

[8] Supra note 1, page 3.

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