

**Child Work and Child Labour**  
**at the Chub Rubber Plantation in Cambodia**

**By**

**Center for Advanced Study**  
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# Table of Contents

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Table of Contents.....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>List of maps, charts and tables.....</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>1. Introduction.....</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| 1.1 Child labour in Cambodia.....   | 3         |
| 1.2 The National Response.....  | 3         |
| 1.3 Background and aims of this study.....  | 4         |
| 1.4 Defining child labour.....  | 5         |
| 1.5 Structure of the report.....  | 6         |
| <b>2. Methods of research.....</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| 2.1 Methods and problems encountered.....   | 8         |
| 2.2 The researchers.....  | 10        |
| 2.3 Validity and reliability of the findings.....                                       | 10        |
| <b>3. Organisation in the Chub Rubber Plantation .....</b>                              | <b>12</b> |
| 3.1 General background of the plantation.....   | 12        |
| 3.2 Organization of the plantation: bases, centres and villages.....                    | 13        |
| 3.3 Schooling and medical facilities.....   | 16        |
| 3.4 Other organizations.....  | 18        |
| <b>4. Work at the plantation: conditions, activities, tools.....</b>                    | <b>20</b> |
| 4.1 Conditions of employment.....   | 20        |
| 4.2 Salary and allowances.....  | 20        |
| 4.3 Work activities in the rubber plantation.....                                       | 21        |
| 4.4 Material used.....  | 22        |
| 4.5 Work hazards.....   | 22        |
| 4.6 Organisation of work.....   | 22        |
| 4.7 Trade Union.....  | 22        |
| <b>5. Magnitude of child labour in the rubber plantation.....</b>                       | <b>24</b> |
| 5.1 Work in the rubber plantation.....  | 24        |
| 5.2 Work times.....   | 25        |
| 5.3 Schooling.....  | 27        |
| 5.4 Basic data per village.....   | 29        |
| <b>6. Selected case study examination of child labour in the rubber plantation.....</b> | <b>31</b> |
| 6.1 Socio-economic background of the families interviewed.....                          | 31        |
| 6.2 Decision making.....  | 33        |
| 6.3 Child work and child labour at the plantation.....                                  | 34        |
| 6.4 Schooling.....  | 37        |
| 6.5 Health Care.....  | 38        |
| 6.6 Perception of work and life at present and in the future.....                       | 38        |
| 6.7 Community life and involvement of other organisations.....                          | 39        |
| 6.8 Needs.....  | 39        |
| <b>7. Conclusion and recommendations.....</b>   | <b>41</b> |
| 7.1 The magnitude of child labour in the rubber plantation.....                         | 41        |
| 7.2 The nature of child labour in the rubber plantation.....                            | 41        |
| 7.3 The causes.....   | 42        |
| 7.4 Most urgent problems to be solved.....  | 43        |
| 7.5 Possible constraints: need for a careful approach.....                              | 45        |
| <b>Bibliography.....</b>  | <b>46</b> |

## List of maps, charts and tables

### Maps:

- 3.1: Map of the Chub Rubber Plantation .....15
- 3.2: Map of Schools and Movement of Students in the Chub Rubber Plantation .....17

### Charts:

- 3.1: Organisation chart of the Chub Rubber Plantation .....14
- 5.1: Percentage of Children at Different Ages Involved in Work Activities .....25
- 5.2: Work Times of Children at the Rubber Plantation .....26
- 5.3: Percentage of School Going Children in Age Group 6-17 Years Old .....26
- 5.4: Reasons for Not School Going.....27
- 5.5: Percentage of School Going Children per Age Group .....28
- 5.6: Percentage of School Going Children per Age in Tboung Kmom District and the CRP....28
- 5.7: Percentage of School Going Children by Sex.....29

### Tables:

- 5.1: Children Working at the Rubber Plantation by Base and Age Group.....25
- 5.2: Work Times of Children Working at the Rubber Plantation per Age Group .....26
- 5.3: Baseline Data on Schooling and Work per Village .....29
- 6.1: Basic Data per Selected Village .....30

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Child labour in Cambodia

Not much is known about child labour in Cambodia. Children are known to work in different occupations, such as begging, scavenging, garment manufacture, stone cutting, domestic service, construction work, street vending, salt field work, factory work, fish processing and plantation work. However, little information is presently available on the nature and magnitude of child labour in these areas.

The Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey (CSES), conducted in 1998, provides some basic data about child workers in Cambodia. It shows that most child workers are between 14 and 17 years old (42% of the children in this age group are listed as “working”). Of the children between 10 and 13 years old, 9-10% had a job, and this was 3% of the children aged 5 to 9. The CSES shows that most child workers were girls, with 50% of all girls of 14-17 years old working, compared with only 30% of all boys in the same age group.<sup>[1]</sup>

The CSES also provides some information about the average work times of child workers in general, which is 44.2 hours/week.<sup>[2]</sup> Unfortunately, no specific information is available for the different occupations. The CSES cannot help us further either on the specific activities that child workers are engaged in.

The Asian American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI) and the Cambodia League for Defence of Human Rights (LICADHO) conducted a qualitative study on child labour in Cambodia in 1996, interviewing working children in many different occupations. The (unpublished) report provides a good overview of the different occupations and some of the main problems. More in-depth studies were undertaken by various organisations since, focussing on child labour in for example the sex business, scavenging for recyclables, rubber and salt production.<sup>[3]</sup>

## 1.2 The National Response

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1992 started a new worldwide program: the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). ILO-IPEC works in cooperation with the government, and is one of the most important sponsors of local NGOs focusing on child labour. Although ILO-IPEC's final aim is to eliminate all forms of child labour in the long term, it has decided first to focus on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour as defined in Convention No 182. In this Convention worst forms of child labour comprise:

- "All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic purposes;
- The use, procurement or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs;
- work which, by its nature or the circumstances, in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children."<sup>[4]</sup>

In 1997, ILO-IPEC opened an office in Cambodia. Its role is to improve knowledge on child labour and forms of commercial exploitation of children in Cambodia. It is also in charge of undertaking situational analyses and action research on these issues.

In 1992 the Cambodian Government signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government has indicated a commitment to improve the situation regarding worst forms of child labour in the country, and is expected to sign the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour soon. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSALVY) is the lead government agency in enforcing labour-related

legislation through a network of labour inspectors. However, the Department of Labour Inspection is severely understaffed and faces many logistical problems.<sup>[5]</sup>

Late 1997 a National Steering Committee was set up, with a National Subcommittee on Child Labour. It has a tripartite structure, with representatives from employers, trade unions and the government (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Interior). Several NGOs working on issues of child labour are also part of the subcommittee. The aim of the committee is to monitor the implementation of the national policy on child labour and ensure coordination between the different partners.

### **1.3 Background and aims of this study**

In 1999 ILO-IPEC undertook a study on child labour in three rubber plantations in Kampong Cham, including Chub. Unfortunately, the external consultant carrying out the research died in a car accident before field work was completed. The Ministry of Planning, in cooperation with Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour, completed the report, but not all information was available. The (unpublished) report concluded that child labour at the rubber plantations in Cambodia was "not at the critical level". Children helped their parents in light and easy tasks, but the work activities were not considered harmful to the children. The report indicated poverty and heavy work load required of the parents as the main causes for child labour. Most working children were not attending school and gave as main reason that they had to work. Overall, the report concluded that the living conditions in the rubber plantations were generally better than in other rural areas in Cambodia.

In 2000 the Cambodian Labour Organisation (CLO) conducted another study in the Andoung and Boengket rubber plantations in Kampong Cham Province, with entirely different results. The unpublished report draws a bleak picture of the labour situation of the workers. It concludes that plantation workers in general, and children in particular, are used as cheap and easily exploitable workers.

The Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour in Kampong Cham has, with regard to solving child labour problems in the province, indicated the Chub rubber plantation as an area of high priority. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) has committed funding for a child labour programme in the plantation. However, with the contrasting findings of the two reports, the nature and magnitude of the child labour problem in the Chub rubber plantation remains unclear. In order to be able to design appropriate programmes in the area, an in-depth understanding of the child labour situation in the rubber plantation, the magnitude of any problems and the needs of any target populations were needed.

The Center for Advanced Study (CAS) was asked to conduct a comprehensive baseline study in the Chub Rubber Plantation in order to provide the information and data needed for future program design purposes. Data were to be gathered about the nature of child labour, the children's working conditions, the problems and needs of the targeted population, the socio-economic background of the families and communities, and the availability of services and other development projects in the area. The aim of the research was to provide the baseline information needed to finalise the design of future projects in the Chub rubber plantation.

CAS conducted field research in the months April and May 2001, for duration of 3.5 weeks, following the Terms of Reference (see Annex A). The data were processed partly during the field research and partly in the second half of June/first half of July. Analysis and write up of the report took place in July 2001.

### **1.4 Defining child labour**

Child labour in itself is a rather vague, ill-defined concept, which needs clarification in order to reduce confusion. The concept consists of two words: labour and child. The question is: who is "a child", and what exactly is "child labour"?

Internationally, everyone under the age of 18 is considered a child. In Cambodia the age limit is 15 years, but Cambodian law allows children between 12 and 15 years to be involved in “light work”. However, there is no clear definition as to what constitutes “light work”. In this study, all children of school age between 6 and 17 years old are taken into account. A distinction is made between three age groups: younger than 13 years old, 13 and 14 years old, and 15 to 17 years old (inclusive). According to the ILO Convention 182, a child below 13 years old is totally prohibited to be engaged in any wage employment if the minimum age for employment in a country is set at 15 years old, as is the case in Cambodia. Children of 13 and 14 years old can be hired to do light work, provided that the work is not hazardous to their health or mental and physical development and that the work will not affect their regular school attendance. Children from 15 to 17 years old are allowed wage employment if the health, safety and morals of the child are fully protected and they have received adequate instruction or vocational training.

Vague definitions of child labour contribute to a lack of clarity about the issue and can give rise to a different understanding by different people, organisations and stakeholders. For example, some may define child labour as any work performed for pay, profit or family gain by children under the age of 18 years. This broad definition entails that all child work qualifies for the somewhat negative connotation of “child labour”. However, not all forms of child labour are necessarily bad. In rural areas, most children are involved in family-based activities that are essential for the family's survival. This work often constitutes an important learning component. Transfer of knowledge and skills from parent to child is a natural process that ensures the family's and child's survival in the future. As long as this work is not physically too demanding, does not take up too much of the child's time, does not interfere with school going, and is not harmful for the physical health or mental well being of the child, it should be called child work rather than labour.

As stated by ILO-IPEC: debates on child labour can become emotional, with some downplaying the magnitude and nature of the problem, and others exaggerating it.<sup>[6]</sup> A clear definition that is shared by all stakeholders involved (children, families, employers, government and others), is essential for combating the problems associated with child labour.

The concept of child labour is often linked to two underlying ideas: the idea of human development and the notion of human rights. Human development refers to the children's possibility to enlarge the choices available to them, so that they can improve their lives and future. The notion of human rights refers to the specific right of children to realize and develop their full human potential. Any work activity that prevents children from attending school and realizing their full potential can be seen as a violation of their human rights. Labour can prevent them from going to school, and that in turn prevents them from rising out of poverty. Besides, children have the right to enjoy their childhood without having to worry about earning a living. Child workers also have the right - like any other worker - to decent work (that does not harm their health) without exploitation. Children are particularly likely to be powerless in their relation with the adult employer and are prone to exploitation.<sup>[7]</sup>

However, children are not always powerless, passive victims. Myers and Boyden stress the importance of also taking into account the point of view of the children and their families, as they too have a significant perspective on the issue. It is important not only to “assess” the potential harmfulness of child work or labour from an outsider's (and often Western) point of view, but also to look at the meaning of the work for the child within a cultural context, including its disadvantages and advantages. It is important to link any assessment of child labour to an assessment of the situation of the child and the family as a whole. Outsiders, coming from a different cultural and social background, brought up in a different political and economic context, are not always neutral and objective in their assessment. Myers and Boyden point out the active side of children: “children are not always passive victims of poverty, forced purely out of necessity”.<sup>[8]</sup> They state that many children work because they want to. They can earn money, gain experience, find excitement, or they may find pleasure and esteem in helping their families.

It is therefore important to mention here also another child's right. As stated in article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), "In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

Steve Gourley, child rights advisor at the human rights organisation LICADHO, has attempted to combine article 3 of the CRC with the right of children to protection from work that threatens the child's health, education and development. He has developed a scheme that is meant to help clarify the nature of child work and/or labour and identify the major areas of risk or hazards children are exposed to. This Child Labour Matrix makes a distinction between harmless household chores at home, more substantial but still harmless - light - child work, minor forms of child labour, more serious forms of child labour, and worst forms of child labour. To facilitate an assessment, different criteria are used according to indicators such as the purpose of work, the education status, work times and work days, tasks performed, exposure to hazards, work environment, nature and frequency of injuries, sanitation, overtime, etc. Also included are the child's and parents' perceptions of the work.

In this report we will use the matrix in order to assess the nature of child labour in the Chub Rubber Plantation. The full matrix with a brief explanation can be found in Annex B.

### **1.5 Structure of the report**

Chapter 2 in the report will elaborate on the methods of research used, the problems encountered during the research and the solutions found. It also provides an assessment of the validity of the research and the reliability of the data. Chapter 3 provides a general background and overview of the Chub Rubber Plantation: its management structure, its organisation, the location of villages, schools and health facilities, and activities of other organisations in the area. Chapter 4 explains some of the aspects of rubber tapping at the plantation in general, in so far as they are relevant for this study: conditions of employment, salaries and allowances, work times and activities, tools and work hazards, and organisational aspects of the work. Chapter 5 presents quantitative material on numbers and percentages of working children, age, sex, work times and schooling. It provides a first impression of the magnitude of child work and child labour at the plantation. However, numbers and percentages cannot provide an adequate picture of the nature and conditions of the work performed by children and their own assessment of their work activity. It is mainly through qualitative interviewing that more light was shed on the aspects that are necessary to understand the real nature and impact of child labour in the area. This is the core of chapter 6, in which information is provided on the background, the causes of child labour, and its nature as discussed in paragraph 1.3. A summary of findings with conclusions and recommendations can be found in chapter 7.

## 2. Methods of research

### 2.1 Methods and problems encountered

The field research was conducted from 19 April to 12 May 2001. The study was to consist of three main activities: identification of working children at the work places, observation at the work places, and qualitative interviewing of working children and their parents/guardians in several selected villages (see Annex A for the Terms of Reference). The situation at the rubber plantation was different than expected and the methods as described in the Terms of Reference for this study had to be adapted to the actual circumstances.

#### 2.1.1 Household survey

One of the main aims of the baseline study was to provide data on the magnitude of child labour at the rubber plantation. This was to be achieved through identifying working children at their work places, and gather basic information (age, sex, and type of activity) through a brief questionnaire. The research team decided to conduct a brief household survey, instead of a small survey at the work places. The following considerations prompted this decision:

1. Many children worked part time. Identification at the work place would lead to highly questionable data: places visited during school times would record a low incidence of child workers, whereas places visited at other times would suddenly record a very high incidence.
2. Salaried workers and their children worked at different places at the plantation during the day, and also changed work places in one day (trees need to recover several days before they can be tapped again). Counting at the work places would lead to double counting, as workers who were counted yesterday at place A would be counted the next day again at place B.
3. The large distances in the rubber plantation and the fact that workers were scattered over the area - sometimes hardly visible because they work in between the trees – did not allow for counting at the work places. It would have cost too much time, which was not available for the study.
4. Villagers related that meetings had taken place prior to our arrival in certain villages, where they were told about the research to be conducted. Several villagers said that they were told in the meetings not to let their children come to the plantation to work. Other villagers indicated that the amount of work to be finished per day was reduced considerably lately. Although some villagers related this work reduction to the arrival of Prime Minister Hun Sen, which was planned just after our field research, others related it to our presence in the plantation.<sup>[9]</sup> The researchers indeed saw very few children working at the plantation. The work and child labour situation at the time of our field research may thus not have been representative of the work and child labour situation at other (normal) times.
5. Group leaders and village chiefs supervised the workers at the workplaces. Workers indicated being afraid to talk when these authorities were nearby. Many villagers explained how they were told (in the meetings mentioned above) to tell the researchers that all their children are in school and that none of them work at the plantation. Many villagers feared that they would be chased out of the plantation if they told the research team the truth. The relative seclusion of their homes provided the privacy needed to speak out freely, although many workers indicated being afraid to even talk in their homes.

There was an additional advantage of a small household survey over identifying children at the work place. It provided information on all children of 6-17 years old, allowing for an estimation of the percentage of all children working at the rubber plantation.

A disadvantage was that the team had to visit all families in the plantation (over 3000 families). Only questions were asked about the children from 6 to 17 years old. The questions focussed on their sex, age, whether they were school going or not, reasons for not school going, whether or not they were working at the rubber plantation, and how many hours per day they were working at the plantation. It took on average 10-15 minutes per family to ask these questions.

#### 2.1.2 Qualitative interviewing

Four villages were selected for qualitative interviewing on the basis of preliminary findings of the household survey. Villages were selected on the basis of high incidence of working children

and non-school going children. Selection of households for interviewing took place on the basis of incidence of child labour. The team worked with existing village maps (if available) and house numbers, in order to easily locate and trace back families with many working children.

The qualitative interviewing was based on an interview schedule that was developed and pre-tested with great care before fieldwork began. During the research a few modifications were made, and some questions were added as new issues appeared. The interview schedule indicated the questions and topics that had to be covered. However, the order of the topics was left to the interviewer. The interview guide was intended to enable both teams cover the same topics in more or less the same depth. Younger children were mostly "interviewed" in an informal way, without pen and paper, in order to create a more relaxed and less formal atmosphere. The researchers played games with them, such as *koun kool* and *but poyn*. However, this meant not all questions were systematically asked to all children.

In each selected family, a parent<sup>[10]</sup> of the child was interviewed, as well as a working child. The researchers made sure that the child was not present when interviewing the parents, and vice versa. On average, the qualitative interviewing required one hour per interview.

The semi-structured interviews with the parents focused on household composition, living conditions, income and expenditures, decision making around child work, perception of the work and life of their child, as well as wishes and visions for the future. It also included questions on the nature of the work, work times and impact of the work on their child, as well as schooling in the area (perception of importance of schooling, opinion of quality/quantity of schooling facilities and teachers, costs of schooling, etc.). The questions to the child focused on free time, perception of life, wishes and vision of the future, the decision around child work in the family, work activities, work times and work hazards, and schooling (perception of importance, opinion on quality/quantity facilities and teachers, distance, etc.). Many questions were asked to both parents and children, and served to cross check the information.

During the last days of the research, group discussions were conducted in all four villages. The discussions were aimed at verifying information from the qualitative interviews and clarifying points that remained unclear.

The qualitative interviews and group discussions were conducted by two teams, consisting of an experienced male and a female socio-economic researcher. Two younger researchers were selected on the basis of their qualities to establish rapport with children. The two teams interviewed in total 57 families (parents and children), which means a total of 114 interviews. Besides, the owner of the plantation, village chiefs, medical personnel, teachers, school directors and other key people, such as *chah tum*<sup>[11]</sup> and *acaar*<sup>[12]</sup>, were interviewed.

The researchers presented themselves as independent researchers. They explained to the workers that they were from a neutral, independent organization, not connected to the rubber company or the government. They assured the informants of strict confidentiality and anonymity, and explained that the purpose of the research was to obtain the worker's experiences and views, in order to better understand their life situation and recommend other organisations to help them by starting development activities in the area.

### **2.1.3 Observation**

Observation of working children was not possible for the reasons mentioned above (2.1.1). The team therefore decided to change its strategy and observe adults' working activities and tools at the rubber plantation instead, and gather information needed on working children through qualitative interviews.

## **2.2 The researchers**

The research team consisted of six experienced researchers from the Center for Advanced Study and one staff member from the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour: Hout Hoeun (Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour), Hun Thirith (BA), Sou Ketya

(MA), Khann Sareth (BA), Mak Sophea (BA), Hem Kannitha (BA), and Phan Rithy (BA). During the last week, the team was strengthened by Lim Sidedine (BA) and Souk Narin (MA). The team was led by Judith Zweers (MA), working as UNV Research Officer for the CAS since August 1999.

Two additional enumerators were locally recruited: Mrs. Heng Vichhika and Mr. Choub Phally. They were both living in the rubber plantation and know the area well.

The CAS research team was experienced and highly trained in quantitative and qualitative research, child labour, the context of the study and the aims of the study prior to fieldwork. Each researcher received a copy of the proceedings of the workshop on research on worst forms of child labour, held in Bangkok in 1999 for background reading.<sup>[13]</sup> Several days were spent in Phnom Penh to develop interview schedules and questionnaire forms, during which the aims of each question were extensively discussed. Several meetings during the course of the field research were held to monitor the process, discover problems and find solutions, adapt strategies and questions, and clarify again any questions that had occurred to the researchers during the stay in the rubber plantation.

### **2.3 Validity and reliability of the findings**

During the first few days of the research, the researchers were followed by staff from the rubber company. This was in villages 14, 15, 46 and 48. At almost every house visit in the four villages a staff member from the company was present, often answering the questions for the householder. This made it impossible to ask certain questions and to pursue questioning further in case of unclarity or contradictions in answers. People in the villages who were able to talk with the researchers in private explained that the villagers did not dare to speak out freely if a staff member of the company was present. This makes the findings from these four villages less reliable than later data. Unfortunately, there was no time left to redo the house visits in these four villages. The problem was solved later when ILO/IPEC and staff from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour came to the plantation to talk with the manager. From that moment onwards, the researchers were no longer followed in the villages. In the report findings of the four villages are sometimes not included, for reasons mentioned above.

Even though people were more willing to talk when interviewed at home, some remained hesitant. It is important to stress that the quantitative data presented in this report should be taken as an indication, as an approximation of the situation. For that reason, all percentages are rounded, as the reliability of the data do not allow for a too precise indication. It would suggest an accuracy that does not reflect reality.

As expected, the quantitative household survey (brief visits) and the qualitative interviews (long visits) yield different kinds of results. Qualitative interviewing is, when time is available, a much better way to gain trust. Comparison of some of the qualitative interviews with the data gathered through the household survey sometimes show differences.

Even though confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed, many workers were initially hesitant to talk. Many indicated a fear of being expelled from the plantation. In most cases the researchers were able to explain the purpose of their presence clearly and gain confidence. However, contradictions between answers within one interview and between answers of parents and children, suggest that their fear was not always overcome.

It is inevitable in research on human subjects, especially in a sensitive situation like a work place such as a rubber plantation, that initial resistance will be encountered by a team of outside researchers. However, once cooperation of the plantation management was assured, the research proceeded to yield very informative insights into children and work at the Chub rubber plantation.

## 3. Organisation in the Chub rubber plantation

### 3.1 General background of the plantation

Rubber plantations were set up in Kampong Cham since 1921 by the French “Compagnie du Cambodge”. The largest one was the Chub plantation. Around 60% of the workers were Vietnamese during the French colonial period, which lasted until 1953. In the subsequent “Sihanouk time”, the rubber plantation remained virtually under French control. Even though small plots of land were provided to households, those households still depended on the French company for technical assistance and selling their produce.

During the Lon Nol period (1970-1975) the Khmer Rouge occupied the Chub Rubber Plantation. Parts of the plantation fell in disorder: other parts were still exploited. Especially during the years 1971 and 1972 the plantation served as an important base for the Khmer Rouge. During the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1978) parts of the plantation continued to be exploited for local use. Its workers were recruited among armed Khmer Rouge forces.<sup>[14]</sup>

After the fall of the Khmer Rouge in 1979 the Chub plantation came under the government's Rubber Plantation General Department (direct state governance). In 1983 the General Department decided to divide the plantations over three main companies: the largest plantation, the Chub rubber plantation, came under management of the 7 Makara Rubber Company (still under direct state control). The plantation was, by that time, equipped already with a rubber processing factory. New workers were recruited from outside the plantation. Even though the rubber company became responsible for the daily management, its workers remained government employees under the General Department. Work conditions were the responsibility of the General Department.

The nineties were marked by a transitional period towards a self-financing system. The rubber company became responsible for its own financial management, operating directly under the General Department. Workers, though paid by the company, were still recruited and employed by the state. In March 1999, the management of the plantation changed from a state enterprise to a public enterprise. The General Department became part of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, and delegated all aspects of daily management and finances to the company. The company has to report to the General Department. The responsibility for the annual audit of the rubber plantation, which used to be the responsibility of the General Department, was transferred to the Ministry of Finance and Economy (in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture).

The plantation property (land, trees, buildings, houses etc.) still belong to the state. The company (through the appointed General Manager) is, by sub-decree, responsible for all decisions regarding the daily management. Work conditions, including the salary system, are developed by the rubber company. The Ministry of Agriculture, the General Department and the Ministry of Finance and the company are all represented in the Board of Governors of the rubber company.

### 3.2 Organization of the plantation: bases, centres and villages

The Chub Rubber Plantation is located in Tboung Kmom District in Kampong Cham Province. The plantation is divided in three bases: Chub base, Thmar Pic base, and Crap base. Each base contains 6 to 7 villages. The village chiefs, center chiefs and base chiefs are all company employees and are all linked by a radio network. The workers in the plantation live in 20 villages located in the three bases. There are in total 4686 registered workers (rubber tappers) and employees (company staff).<sup>[15]</sup> The plantation is further divided in squares of rubber trees of one by one kilometres. The squares and villages are connected through an extensive network of unpaved roads.<sup>[16]</sup>

The villages in Chub base are the largest (see map), with 1329 families and 6424 people.<sup>[17]</sup> Chub covers an area of 3,220.16 ha. There were no statistics available about the number of children between 6 and 17 years old. Chub base is located close to the central administration and the rubber factory of the Chub plantation. The Chub base contains many older productive rubber trees. Rubber from these trees is often tapped at heights up to 3 metres from the ground.

Crap base is located 8 to 10 kilometres to the North of Chub base. A total of 668 families, or 3594 people are living in Crap in 6 villages.<sup>[18]</sup> Crap covers an area of 1.932,15 ha. Crap does not have many productive rubber trees: many are too old and are waiting to be cut down, or were recently planted and still too young to produce rubber. This is especially the case for areas close to the border of the plantation. Villagers often plant beans in the areas in between the young trees.

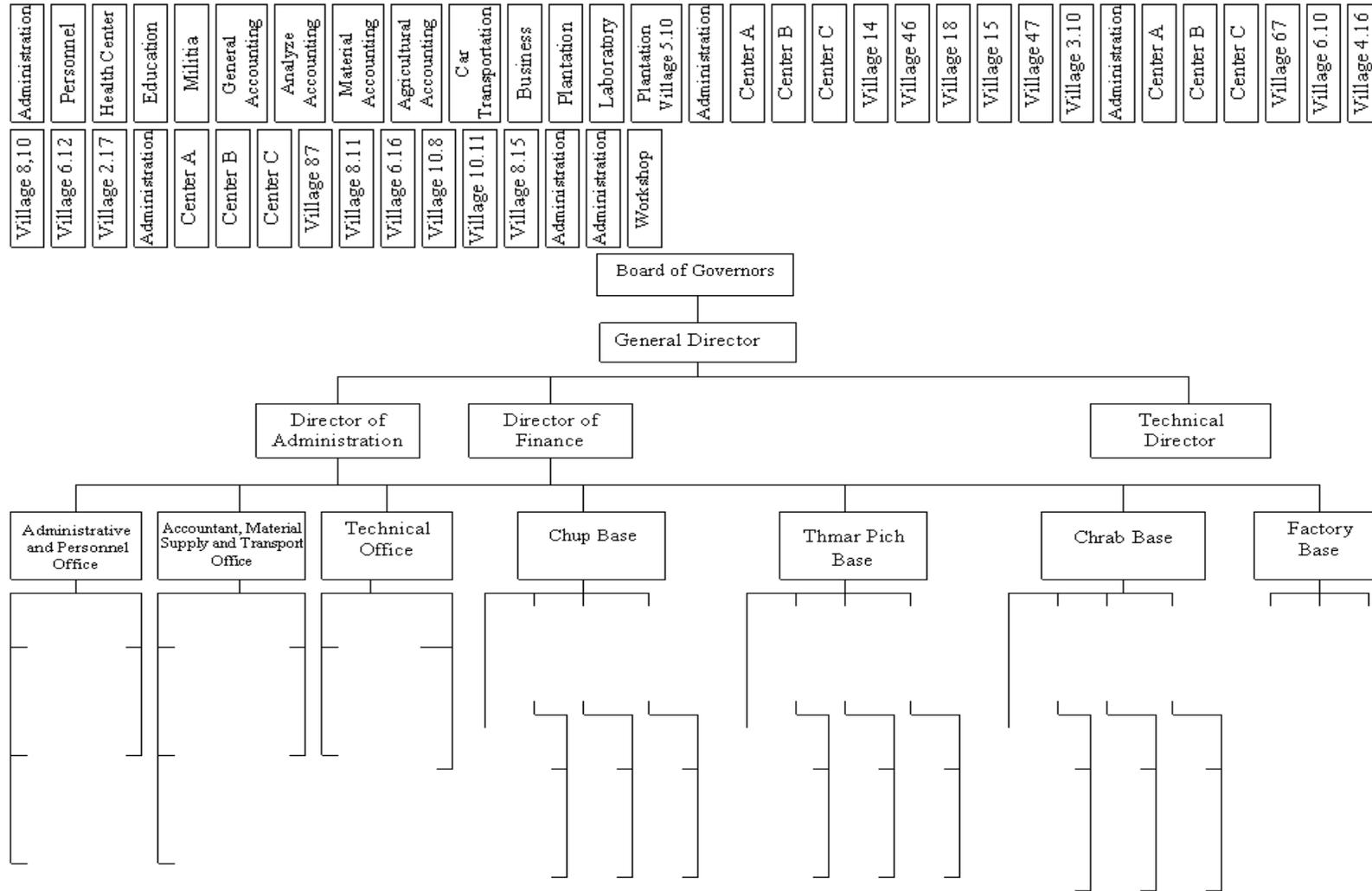
Thmar Pic base is located in the middle of the plantation, between Chub and Crap. It has 7 villages<sup>[19]</sup> with a total of 769 families, or 3630 people. Thmar Pic covers an area of 2.676,01 ha. and contains many younger productive rubber trees. Rubber is mainly tapped at low positions close to the base of the tree.

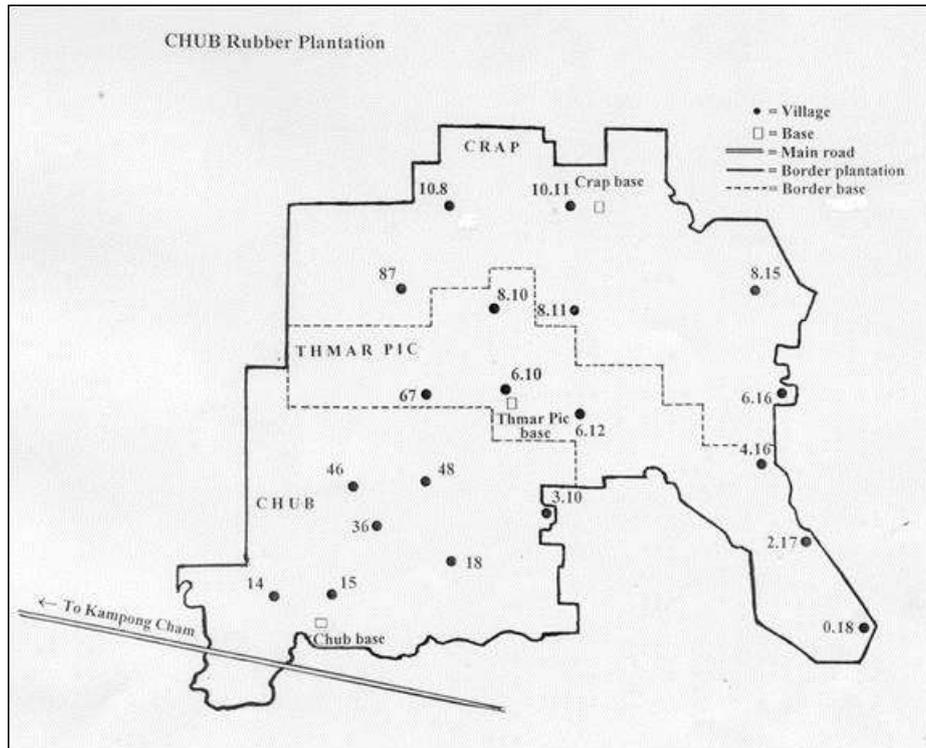
The accessibility of all villages is good. However, the roads become very slippery in the rainy season. There is a safety problem in and around villages on the Northern and Eastern border of the plantation (Crap and Thmar Pic). Robberies at gunpoint apparently take place regularly. The robbers are believed to come from outside the plantation, and steal motorbikes, cows and buffaloes.

The manager of the plantation indicated that improving the general living standard of workers and employees are high priorities. Each worker is provided with electricity and free housing: the houses are made from brick and tiles and mostly have an earthen floor. They typically consist of two main rooms and two kitchens, for two households. The houses are of different quality. Some houses were built in the French period and are still in use after renovation in the eighties. From 1983 onwards new houses were gradually built and old ones repaired. The houses built in the nineties are slightly larger and have an indoor toilet. New houses, built after 2000, have a tiled floor. From 1983 until 2001, 1875 houses were built for 3750 families. New houses will be built in the near future.<sup>[20]</sup>



# Organizational Chart of Chup Rubber Plantation





Water wells (pump wells) are available in all villages, and are easily accessible for most (for some villagers living at the end of the village the distance may be great). Water use is free of costs. Water is pumped during a particular time in the day but is sometimes not sufficient for all families. This problem especially happens when a lot of families go to fetch water at the same time after work. Public latrines were built in the French period, but most are no longer in use. The company plans to restore the public toilets from the French period.

### Map 3.1: Chub Rubber Plantation

#### 3.3 Schooling and medical facilities

The management of the rubber plantation indicated attaching high importance to schooling facilities in the area. They related that “some” children do not go to school because they are orphans or are from very poor families. The management of the plantation indicated no problems and/or further needs with regard to the schooling system.

There is a primary school in each base, teaching up to grade 6. Chub base also has a high school (grade 7-12). Each base school has annexes in the villages that usually teach grade 1-2 or 1-3. A few villages have no schooling facilities at all, whereas a few others have annexes up to grade 4 or 5 (see map of schools).

The system for schooling in the Chub rubber plantation is slightly different from the system outside the plantation. The costs for teacher's salaries, school buildings and furniture are funded by the rubber company and not by the government (Ministry of Education) as is normally the case. However, the teacher's trainings remain the provincial and district's responsibilities. Teachers receive a company salary of 100.000-150.000 riels/month (25-38 US\$) + 24 kg. of rice. This is higher than the salaries of teachers in state-run schools (12/13 US\$ average). The situation for teachers in the plantation seems thus much better. However, we have to take into account that teachers within the plantation are supposed to teach both in the morning and afternoon, thus reducing their possibilities for earning money through other jobs. School times in the plantation are longer than at state-run schools: 6 or 7 hours/day at the Chub schools,

compared with 4 hours/day at the state run schools outside the plantation. Most teachers live within the plantation and are provided housing for free by the company. Some teachers, however, come from outside, and live in Suong Commune. They mostly have other jobs to supplement their income.

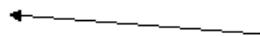
The schools that are located near the Chub base (7 January Primary School and Samdech Me High School) are the best schools in the plantation area, with modern buildings, good material and good teachers. This is probably related to their location near the Chub base, which is the administrative and production base for the whole plantation. Many students come from company staff families (administrative staff, guards, policemen, drivers, etc.). It is the only high school in the rubber plantation, also attracting students from outside. Its total number of students is 1218. Most are from Chub base; very few come from Crap and Thmar Pic.<sup>[21]</sup> According to the school director of the high school, JICA planned to provide teaching materials and computers, but nothing has happened so far.

It is especially in Thmar Pic and Crap bases that poor quality school buildings can be found. Some are old (wooden buildings) with leaking roofs and termites and other insects. In general, the schools do not seem to lack school books. Books are provided through the Ministry of Education (with financial assistance from UNICEF and Redd Barna) for the whole district, including Chub plantation. Children borrow the books, and return them at the end of the year. In general, there seems to be a serious lack of teaching materials (posters and other material used for teaching) in most schools in Crap and Thmar Pic. There are no latrines or clean water at the annex school compounds.

1-2



1-3



**Map 3.2: Schools and movement of students in the Chub Rubber Plantation**

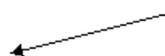
1-6  
7-12



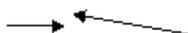
1-4



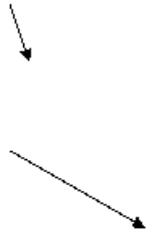
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1-2



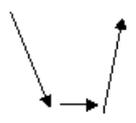
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1-2

1-2



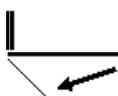
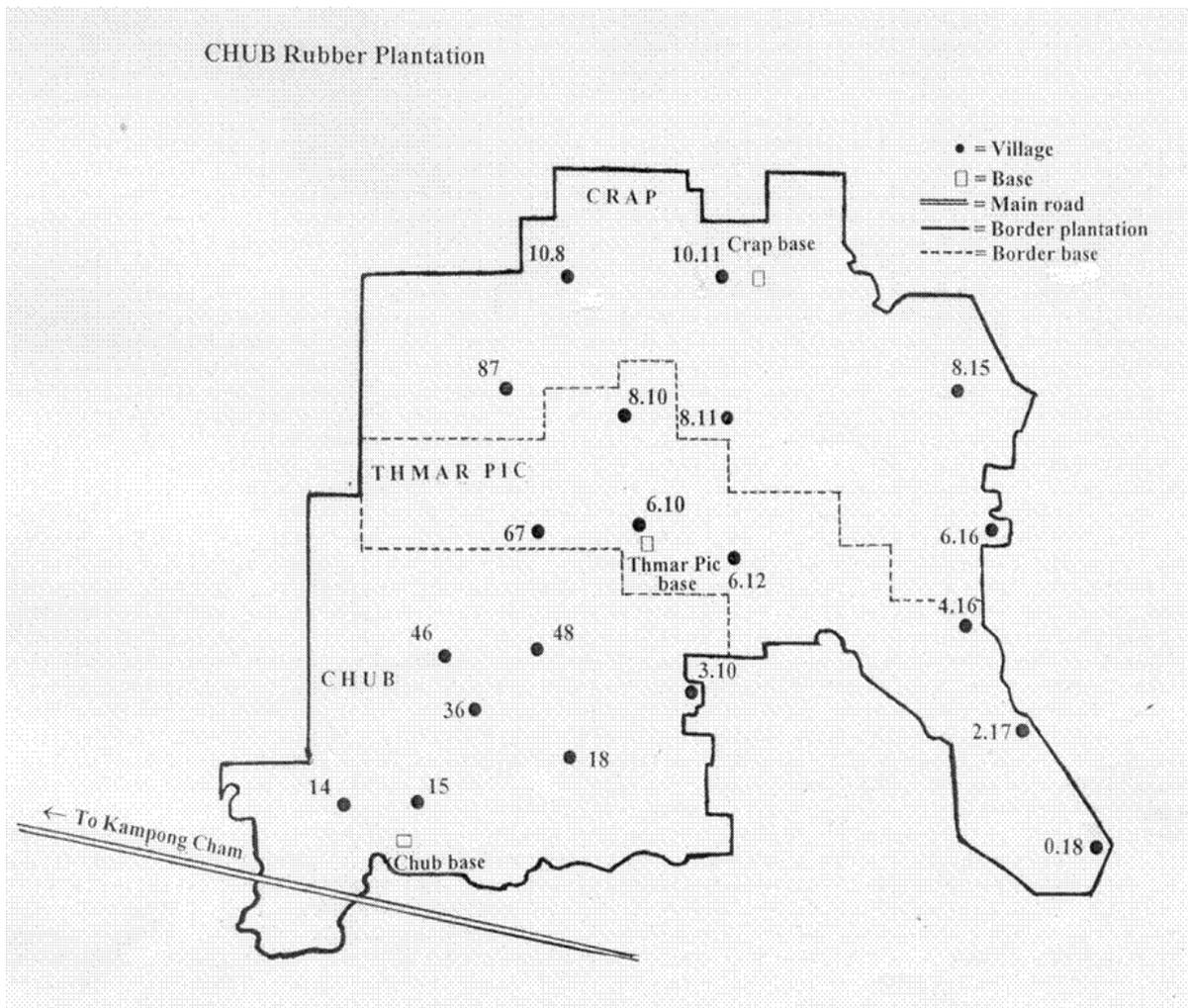
1-6



1-6 = School and grades  
↗ = Movement of school  
going children

1-5

1



1-2 1-6 1-6 1-6

The plantation has one health centre, located in Chub base, near village 36. The health center has one medical doctor, two medical assistants, two pharmacists, 14 midwives and 8 nurses. The center provides free medical assistance and receives approximately 70 patients per day, or 350 patients per week. An estimated 50% of the patients are below 18 years old. Most common health problems are diarrhoea (from non hygienic food and water) and fever (from hard working, combined with climatic change and rains). Most common accidents reported were cuts from knives and chisels (used to cut grass and young trees, and to tap rubber) and falling from ladders that are used to tap at high positions on trees.

Thmar Pic base and Crap base each have a *peet* (medical staff with nurse qualifications) at the base, but there are no health posts.

Each village has one *peet*: someone who received a basic medical training from the health center and who is the main contact person for villagers in case of medical problems or concerns. The *peet* keeps village statistics on pregnant women and newborn children, provides the necessary vaccinations, and makes referrals to the health center. Referrals are a little complicated: the *peet* has to provide a written referral letter that has to be signed by the village chief. The referral letter goes to the center, then to the base *peet*, and finally to the health center.

There are health protection regulations for factory workers (who have to work with acid to process the latex) and laboratory personnel. No children are working in either factory or lab.

All medical staff in the plantation are recruited and paid by the rubber plantation.

### **3.4 Other organizations**

The research team hardly found any development organisations working at the rubber plantation. The human rights organisation LICADHO has been working low profile in the plantation since November 2000. It has entered only the area close to the central base in Chub a few times to observe and monitor child rights, interview company staff and interview some children. These activities form part of an agreement that was recently signed between LICADHO, ILO/IPEC and the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and labour to focus on child labour in the rubber plantation. The programme aims at awareness raising and problem solving through maximum participation of all stakeholders, and consists of four activities:

1. awareness raising on child labour and child rights among government officials, local authorities, NGOs, parents and children through a series of workshops and meetings
2. networking among the stakeholders mentioned above through monthly meetings
3. investigation, monitoring and victim assistance
4. establishing children's networks

The program has just started the first activity.

The Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour regularly receives reports from the plantation owners (among others Chub) about the number and age of workers, and the number of school going and non-school going children. According to these reports, no children under 18 years old were employed by the company as rubber tappers, and less than a total of 84 children in the plantation (mainly orphans, and some children of very poor families) were not school going.<sup>[22]</sup>

The Provincial Department of Rural Development only focuses on targeted farmer's villages. The Provincial Department of Education is in charge of promoting technical and pedagogical methods in the whole area, including the Chub plantation. The department assists the company teachers in training and distributes reading books (Khmer language, mathematics, applied science and social studies). The publication of the books is funded by UNICEF, Redd Barna and PASEC. Redd Barna conducts teacher trainings for first and second grades at district level. Although it is not directed specifically to the plantation teachers, they can also benefit from the trainings. The Provincial Department of Education is also responsible for recruitment of secondary school teachers. According to the rector of the high school in Chub, there were some contacts with JICA in the past.

Most teachers in Chub are member of the Khmer Teachers' Association in Kampong Cham and became active in the Chub area in 1995. Each member (membership costs 1300 riel/month) receives a Quarterly Journal that focuses on educational techniques.

The management of the plantation confirmed that indirect support had been received from UNICEF through the Ministry of Education, and that ILO-IPEC so far is the only organisation that has contacted the rubber plantation with the aim to start activities.

## **4. Work at the plantation: conditions, activities, tools**

### **4.1 Conditions of employment**

According to the conditions of employment set up by the company, no workers below 18 years old are employed. New applicants have to be between 18 and 25 years old. The following information is derived from the official Conditions of Employment of the CRP.

Work times are 8 hours/day, 6 days/week (Monday-Saturday). The basic salary is 3500 riel/day. The workers work according to a work plan that states the activities and the actual work times: workers can be obliged to perform additional tasks according to the work plan. The workers do not receive extra payment in such a case. Workers can also be requested to work overtime (i.e. beyond the work plan). In such cases, the worker has the right to receive overtime payment (150%). Decisions on overtime work are made by the unit or the Director General. Workers who decide to work on Sunday, receive 150% of their daily salary.

The Chub Plantation follows the calendar of holidays of MoSALVY. There are additional annual holidays. Workers have right to 4-15 days paid annual leave, depending on the length of period worked. The holidays are determined by the management. If workers work during holidays, payment is 200%. Work on a Sunday during a holiday is paid 250%.

Women have right to maternity leave of 90 days before and after delivery, during which she receives 50% of the basic salary plus allowances. A total of 50,000 riel is paid upon delivery of the baby. When she resumes her work (after maternity leave), she is allowed to spend 1 hour of work time to feed the baby, until the baby is one year old.

Workers that are absent due to illness, need a medical certificate. The worker is paid 30% of the salary, plus allowances for wife and children. In case the illness lasts longer than 1 month, no salary is provided (allowances are still provided). After the third month a last payment is provided, after which the worker is fired.

The Company is responsible for all medical expenses resulting from accidents that are related to work (including travel to and from work). In case of work-related accidents, the workers keep 100% of the basic salary plus allowances during the first three months and 30% in the fourth month. A Commission for Work Hazards has to investigate the accident: if the accident was the worker's fault, the company pays only 70% of medical expenses.

In case of death of a worker, the family will be provided 100,000 riel, or 150,000 riel in case death was work related.

### **4.2 Salary and allowances**

The basic salary for a rubber tapper is 3500 riel/day and 5000 riel on Sundays<sup>[23]</sup>. The workers work according to a daily work plan, which defines the minimum kilos of dry rubber to be collected per worker.<sup>[24]</sup> The workers receive an additional 150 riel/kilo of dry rubber collected according to the assignment, and an 140 riel incentive allowance for each kilo of dry rubber that is collected in addition to the number of kilos set in the work plan. The workers receive a child's allowance of 1000 riel/month and a spouse allowance of 5000 riel/month. One worker receives 24 kilo rice per month, and 10 kilo per child (until the age of 15 years old), for a maximum of two children. Families with more than one registered worker thus receive more.

There is a death insurance for registered workers. Each month 500 riel is deducted from their salary to pay for this insurance. If a worker dies, the family receives 500,000 riel (128 US\$).

### **4.3 Work activities in the rubber plantation**

During observations, the following work times per activity for a rubber tapper were observed.

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 5.30/6.00 - 10.00 | Tap rubber  |
| 10.00 - 11.30     | Collect latex into buckets  |
| 12.30 - 12.45     | Put the latex from the buckets into the container car (the car brings the latex to the factory at the Chub Base, where it is processed).          |
| 12.55 - 15.00     | Cut grass and small trees in a plantation with young rubber trees, and other activities, such as cleaning roads from branches, leaves and debris. |

This means a regular working day of 8 hours. However, this may not present an accurate picture of a regular working day at the plantation. During some months (especially the rainy season) the trees produce more latex than during others and it needs to be collected two times a day. Moreover, many workers related that the work had been considerably reduced at the time of the research. Some indicated work days of 9-11 hours, sometimes returning home around 19.00 in the evening.

More specifically, the following activities take place at the rubber plantation:

- take dry latex from the ceramic bowls
- tap rubber at a low position
- tap rubber at a high position (up to 3 m. height: a ladder is needed)
- collect latex from the trees into buckets that can contain 15 litres each
- put the latex into buckets that can contain 27 litres each
- put the latex into the container car
- put medicine on the tree bark
- take care of young rubber trees (cut grass around, put fertilizer)
- cut grass and young trees in between the productive trees
- clean roads from branches, leaves and debris in order to prevent fire

Tapping rubber is a precise job, as the tree can be damaged if the cut is too deep. The company therefore only officially employs workers over 17 years old. Each rubber tapper is responsible for three different work places. Each work place contains 3 to 5 lines of rubber trees, with a length per line of 500 meters. There are on average 180 to 210 trees per work place, with some exceptions of 300 trees. The workers change their work place every day in order to let the trees recover. Each person has to tap a minimum of 200 trees per day and is over three days responsible for 600-650 trees. As the number of trees and the productivity of the trees differs per work place, there may be easy and more difficult work days. The work places are at different distances from the village, but usually within a distance of 1 or 2 kilometres from the village.

The activities that were generally considered the heaviest were collecting latex and cutting grass and young trees. Collecting latex is difficult because of the long walking distances, the bucket that becomes heavier and heavier as more rubber is collected, and the uneven ground in between the trees (thick grass, tree-stumps and roots, holes etc.). Many workers fall and wound their feet, as they only wear slippers to protect their feet.

A worker who taps rubber and collects the latex all by him/herself, has to walk daily 1.5 to 2.5 km. to tap rubber (depending on the number of lines), and an additional 1.5 to 2.5 km. to harvest the rubber. This is in total 3-5 km. per day in the dry season. In the rainy season, the distance can be 4.5 -7.5 km.: as the trees produce more latex, the worker has to collect it twice. Workers that use ladders to tap at high altitudes also have to get up and down the ladder on average 200 times per day and carry the ladder 200 times from one tree to the other. Each worker collects on average 38-45 litres of latex per day. During the rainy season, the harvest is greater.

Overall, the workers reported that the activities in themselves are not too difficult or heavy. However, they feel that too many activities are added after rubber tapping and collecting in the afternoon (especially cutting grass and small trees). That makes the job heavy and tiring. The most difficult period is the rainy season, when the trees produce more latex, and the latex has to be collected quickly because raindrops in the latex make it useless.

#### **4.4 Material used**

The following equipment is used:

- a chisel to tap rubber (to strip the tree bark)
- one regular knife and 2 kinds of *kvaev* (reaping hook/hooks knife) to cut small trees and grass
- ceramic bowls to collect the rubber
- 3 kinds of buckets (small, medium, big)
- a scraper
- a ladder for tapping at higher positions

The following chemicals are used:

- ethyphon (5%) to increase the tree production
- ammoniac to mix with the latex in order to prevent it from drying
- petrolatum to treat the tree if the cut is too deep

#### **4.5 Work hazards**

Not many accidents were reported. Most common accidents were falling over tree roots and cuts. Occasionally, accidents such as falling from ladders were reported.

The workers are usually plagued by a lot of mosquitoes. Malaria used to be a problem only in the past; the last malaria case was reported several years ago. Sometimes snake bites and scorpion bites (that like to sit in the ceramic bowls) were reported. Most common health problems were dizziness, headaches, backache and stomach ache, and were related to the work.

Workers are not provided with any protection materials, such as boots, gloves, raincoats and mosquito repellent. Raincoats and mosquito repellent were provided once a long time ago.

#### **4.6 Organisation of work**

Each morning starts with a village meeting, in which absence is noted down, replacement is sought, work materials are divided and work instructions are provided to the workers according to a work plan.

The workers work in groups of 10 persons each, led by a group leader. The village chief oversees the work of all groups. He is thus actively involved in the work of rubber tapping, and is usually at the rubber plantation.

The groups change locations each day, among three different locations. Each group is responsible for a total of approximately 6500 trees, divided over the three work places.

#### **4.7 Trade union**

Each rubber plantation has had its own trade union since 1979. Until 1997, these trade unions were led by the government. In 1997 a new labour law was adopted, after which an independent trade union was set up at national level, named "Cambodian Independent Syndicate". It represented labourers from different kinds of industries, among others rubber workers and garment factory workers. One year later the "Independent Trade Union of Cambodian Labourers in the Chub Rubber Plantation" was created. The union represents all 4666 staff members and workers at the Chub Rubber Plantation and is led by seven people, with representation from both employer and employees. Its office is at the Chub base.

The goals of the trade union are:

- 1) To serve the interests of plantation workers with respect to work conditions through negotiation and agreement between employer and employees.
- 2) To represent the plantation workers.
- 3) To protect the interests of workers, government and investors.
- 4) To promote linkages with the world syndicate movement.

Fees for membership are between 300 and 500 riel/month. 10% of these contributions are sent to the office of the national trade union in Phnom Penh and 90% is used locally. Employees have to fill out an application form in order to become member. The activities of the trade union were not clear. According to its deputy director, the trade union has not been very active. Workers who were interviewed for this study said they were unaware of the existence of a trade union.

## 5. Magnitude of child labour in the rubber plantation

According to the management of the rubber plantation, children usually help their parents in their free time and during holidays, combining it with schooling. Only a few children are not able to attend school, either because they are orphans, or because they are from very poor families.

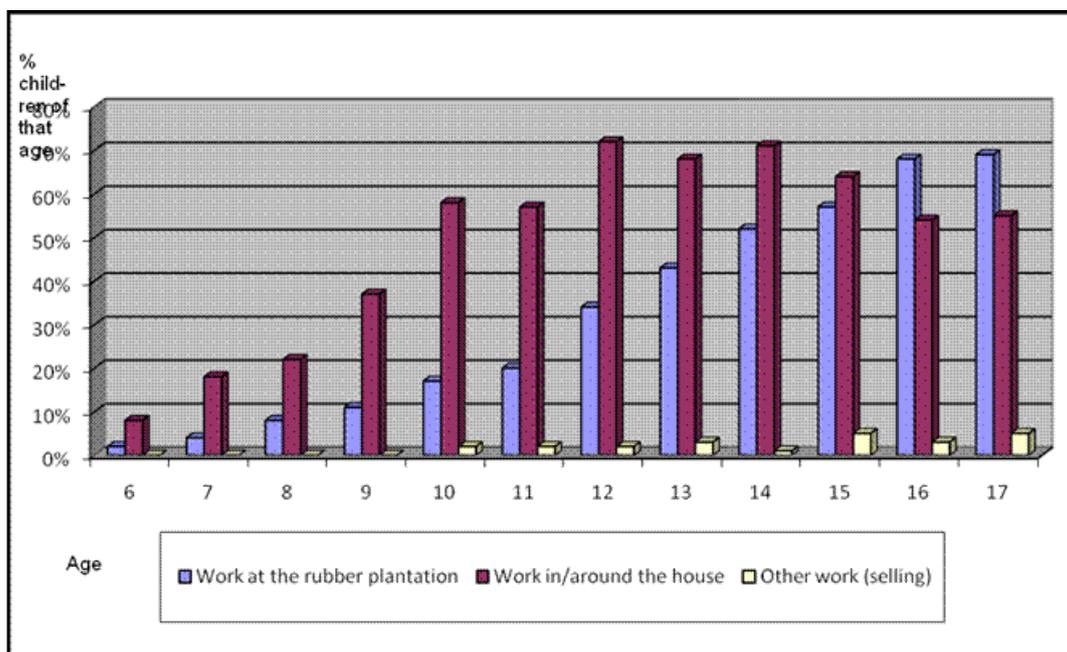
The research team reached more nuanced findings. During brief house visits questions were asked about the children between 6 and 17 years old living in the household. Children that were living with relatives in other provinces were not counted. Questions were asked about age, sex, school going, grades, work activities, and work times. The research team counted a total of 4081 children in the age group of 6-17 years. [25]

### 5.1 Work in the rubber plantation

It is clear from our survey results that almost no other work duties and/or opportunities besides household tasks and work at the rubber plantation exist in the area.

Our survey results reveals the following findings shown in the graph below. We can see that a few children start being involved in work at the rubber plantation at the age of 6. At the age of 9, more than 10% is helping at the plantation; at the age of 11, the percentage reaches 20%. At the age of 14, more than 50% is working at the rubber plantation, and the percentage reaches almost 70% at the age of 16 and 17.

**Chart 5.1: Percentage of children at different ages involved in work activities**



Although more female children were involved in household tasks, there hardly existed any difference in percentages of male or female children working at the rubber plantation. Of male children, 23% worked at the plantation: this was 24% of the female children. This group was more often burdened with a double task: of the female children working at the plantation 57% also had household tasks, and this was 45% of the male children.

If we divide the children in age groups of children below 13, 13 and 14, and 15-17, we find the following percentages.

**Table 5.1: Children working at the rubber plantation by base and age group (all villages)**

| <b>Chub</b>        | <b>Total</b> | <b>Working in rubber</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 6-12 years old     | 1329         | 55                       | 4%                |
| 13-14 years old    | 282          | 68                       | 24%               |
| 15-17 years old    | 398          | 224                      | 56%               |
| Total              | 2009         | 347                      | 17%               |
| <b>Thmar Pic</b>   | <b>Total</b> | <b>Working in rubber</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| 6-12 years old     | 678          | 133                      | 20%               |
| 13-14 years old    | 163          | 93                       | 57%               |
| 15-17 years old    | 208          | 141                      | 68%               |
| Total              | 1049         | 367                      | 35%               |
| <b>Crap</b>        | <b>Total</b> | <b>Working in rubber</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
| 6-12 years old     | 689          | 66                       | 10%               |
| 13-14 years old    | 140          | 54                       | 39%               |
| 15-17 years old    | 194          | 114                      | 59%               |
| Total              | 1023         | 234                      | 23%               |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>4081</b>  | <b>948</b>               | <b>23%</b>        |

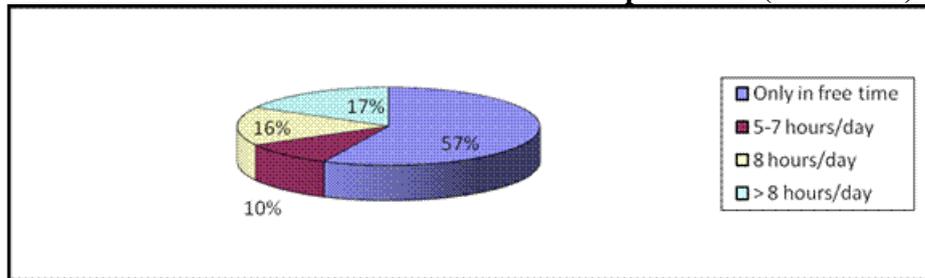
Most working children were found in Thmar Pic base, although the figures of the villages 14,15,46 and 48 in Chub base may not be accurate and could be higher in reality (see 2.3). Children in Thmar Pic also seem to start working on average at a younger age. In Thmar Pic, more than half of all 13 and 14 year old children (57%) is involved in work at the rubber plantation. For children below 13 years old, this is 20%, and for 15 to 17 year old children the figure reaches a high 68%.

## 5.2 Work times<sup>[26]</sup>

Most children working at the rubber plantation did this on a part-time basis, combining it with school going. 57% of the children working at the rubber plantation did this only in their free time (1-2 hours on school days and 1-8 hours during Thursdays and Sundays) or did this for 1 to maximum 4 hours a day on a daily basis. Some worked a few hours only on Thursdays and Sundays, the two school free days in Cambodia.

10% of the children worked 5-7 hours/days. 16% worked full-time (8 hours/days) and 17% worked longer than that on a daily basis. Those children work usually 7 days/week, with one day off per month.

**Chart 5.2: Work times of children at the rubber plantation (total = 680)\***



\* Data on work times are only available of 680 working children

The table below shows the average work times of children at the rubber plantation per age group.

**Table 5.2: Work times of children working at the rubber plantation per age group**

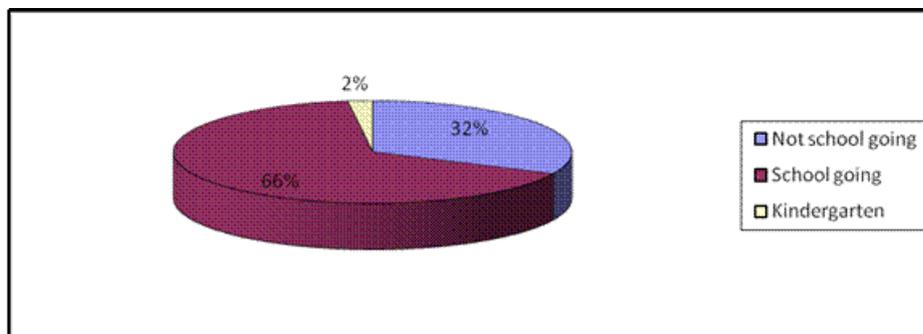
| Working times     | 6-12 years old      | 13 and 14 years old | 15-17 years old    | Total              |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Only in free time | 89.6%               | 66.7%               | 27.7%              | 56.6%              |
| 5-7 hours/day     | 6.1%                | 10.7%               | 11.7%              | 9.7%               |
| 8 hours/day       | 2.4%                | 10.7%               | 29.3%              | 16.3%              |
| > 8 hours/day     | 1.9%                | 11.9%               | 31.3%              | 17.4%              |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>100% (N=212)</b> | <b>100%(N=168)</b>  | <b>100%(N=300)</b> | <b>100%(N=680)</b> |

Very young children (6-12 years) mostly worked in their free time. In this age group, 6% worked 5 to 7 hours per day, and 4% worked 8 hours or more. They were probably from families that had a serious problem finishing the work in time, possibly due to illness of the main worker in the family. Children in the age of 13 and 14 also mostly worked in their free time. However, the number of children in this age group working long hours was higher: almost 23% worked full time or more. For 15 to 17 years old children, the situation was clearly different. A fairly large group of 28% worked only in their free time. However, more than 60% of children in this age group worked 8 hours or more per day. It is obvious that children work more when they get older.

### 5.3 Schooling

Of the total number of 4081 children between 6 and 17 years old that were counted in the 20 villages, 32% was reported not school going.<sup>[27]</sup> This situation is better than the general situation in Tboung Kmom District, where almost 40% of children between 7 and 17 years old are not school going.<sup>[28]</sup>

**Chart 5.3: Percentage of school going children in age group 6-17 years old**



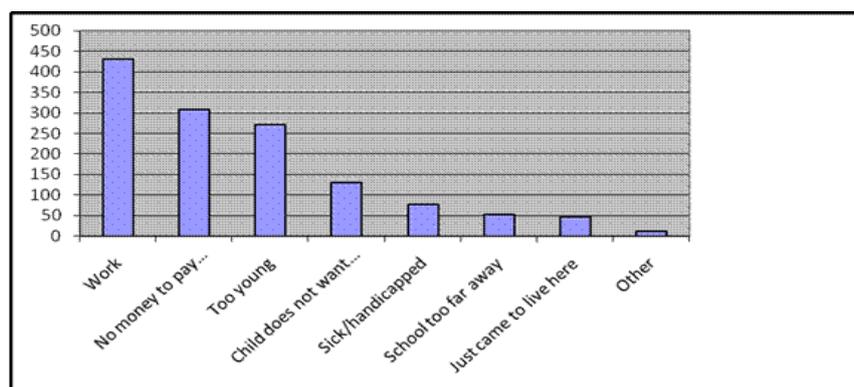
The most frequent reasons reported for not going to school were (multiple answers were possible):

1. Need to work either at the rubber plantation or at home because the parents both work at the plantation. (mentioned 431 times)
2. No money to pay the costs of school going (fees, uniform, transport, pens, unofficial teacher fees) (mentioned 307 times)
3. Too young to enrol. Most children enrol at the age of 7, 8, or 9: parents often found their 6 and 7 year old children too young to go to school. (271 times)

Reasons 1 and 2 were often found in combination. Other reasons mentioned, were:

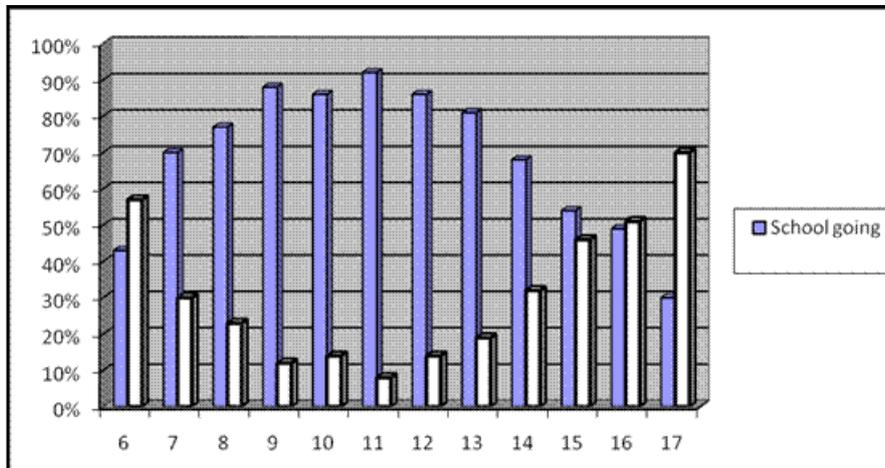
4. The child does not want to go to school (130 times)
5. The child is chronically ill, handicapped, or has a learning problem (77 times).  
Included are also children of Cham families who are "handicapped" because they do not speak Khmer.
6. The school is too far away (51 times)
7. The family just came to live here and the children are not yet registered (45 times)
8. The child stays at the Wat (5 times)<sup>[29]</sup>
9. Just married (females of 17 years old) (4 times)
10. The school class was full already (2 times)

**Chart 5.4: Number of times particular reasons were mentioned for not going to school (multiple answers possible)**



The following figure shows that children living at the rubber plantation are often late to start school going. Most 6 year old children are not yet at school. At the age of 11, almost all children are at school. After the age of 11, children gradually drop out, with a clear turning point between the age of 15 and 16 years old. At the age of 17, almost 70% has dropped out.

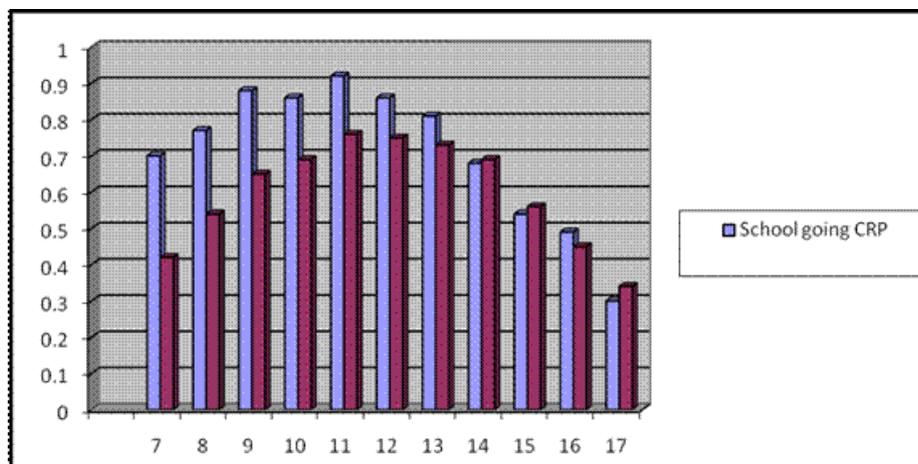
**Chart 5.5: Percentage of school going children per age group**



A combination of non-school going and work at the rubber plantation was found in almost 14% of the children (= 565 children).

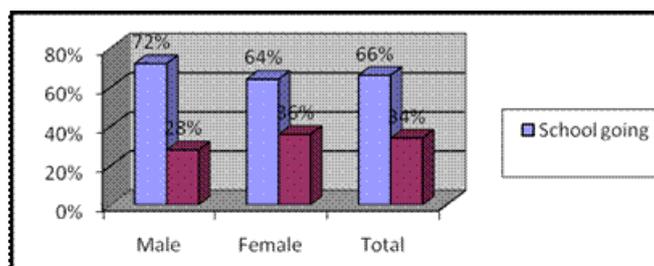
It is interesting to compare these data with the data from the General Population Census 1998 on school going children in Tboung Kmom District in general. If we compare these results, we see that the situation in the plantation with regard to schooling seems better than the situation outside the plantation in the same district, especially for children from 7 to 13 years old.

**Chart 5.6: Percentages of children going to school per age in the Chub Rubber Plantation and in Tboung Kmom District in general**



Parents tend to give priority to their male children for schooling: 28% of male children were not attending school, compared with 36% of female children.

**Chart 5.7: Percentage school going children by sex**



The research team gathered information about the grades of 811 children who were not school going (from all villages except village 14, 15, 46 and 47). Of the 811 children, 330 non-school going children were below 9 years old. They may go to school in one or two years. Of the remaining 481 children, 92 children had never gone to school (19%); 49 children stopped at grade 1 (10%), and 75 children stopped at grade 2 (16%). This means that a total of 216 children who should be literate, are probably not functionally literate.

#### 5.4 Basic data per village

The figure below shows a breakdown of some of the basic data per village. In terms of percentages, villages 67, 8.10, 6.12 and 87 were the villages with most working and most non-school going children. In terms of numbers, this rather seems the case in villages 14 and 48.

**Table 5.3: baseline data on schooling and work per village**

| Village | Number of children 6-17 years | % not school going | Working at plantation | % working at plantation | Working at plantation+not school going | % working + not school going |
|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| 14      | 458                           | 31.4%              | 79                    | 17.3%                   | 76                                     | 16.6%                        |
| 15      | 392                           | 28.6%              | 47                    | 12.0%                   | 39                                     | 10.0%                        |
| 46      | 440                           | 33.6%              | 73                    | 16.6%                   | 66                                     | 15.0%                        |
| 48      | 286                           | 29.0%              | 54                    | 18.9%                   | 52                                     | 18.2%                        |
| 36      | 71                            | 31.0%              | 10                    | 14.1%                   | 10                                     | 14.1%                        |
| 3.10    | 115                           | 29.6%              | 30                    | 26.1%                   | 26                                     | 22.6%                        |
| 18      | 247                           | 34.4%              | 54                    | 21.9%                   | 24                                     | 9.7%                         |
| 6.10    | 274                           | 27.7%              | 60                    | 21.9%                   | 20                                     | 7.3%                         |
| 67      | 178                           | 34.3%              | 84                    | 47.2%                   | 32                                     | 18.0%                        |
| 8.10    | 166                           | 31.9%              | 95                    | 57.2%                   | 35                                     | 21.1%                        |
| 2.17    | 131                           | 16.0%              | 28                    | 21.4%                   | 10                                     | 7.6%                         |
| 0.18    | 75                            | 21.3%              | 22                    | 29.3%                   | 7                                      | 9.3%                         |
| 6.12    | 119                           | 39.5%              | 44                    | 37.0%                   | 25                                     | 21.0%                        |
| 4.16    | 106                           | 40.6%              | 34                    | 32.1%                   | 19                                     | 17.9%                        |
| 87      | 151                           | 47.7%              | 67                    | 44.4%                   | 34                                     | 22.5%                        |

|              |             |            |            |              |            |              |
|--------------|-------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| 10.8         | 71          | 33.8%      | 21         | 29.6%        | 9          | 12.7%        |
| 8.11         | 195         | 27.7%      | 32         | 16.4%        | 11         | 5.6%         |
| 10.11        | 214         | 29.4%      | 35         | 16.4%        | 24         | 11.2%        |
| 8.15         | 226         | 26.1%      | 40         | 17.7%        | 19         | 8.4%         |
| 6.16         | 166         | 49.4%      | 39         | 23.5%        | 27         | 16.3%        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>4081</b> | <b>32%</b> | <b>948</b> | <b>23.2%</b> | <b>565</b> | <b>13.9%</b> |

## 6. Selected case study examination of child labour in the rubber plantation

Four villages were selected for in-depth interviewing, on the basis of the data gathered through the brief house visits in all villages. The villages were selected on the basis of high incidence of non-school going children and children working at the rubber plantation. This choice was made with the strategic purpose of identifying the qualitative factors surrounding child labour in locales where child labour was most frequently reported. This case study approach was intended to illuminate some social-cultural aspects of the issue of working children in the Cambodian context.

It is not intended to characterize the child labour situation as a whole in either Chub or the rubber plantation industry in Cambodia, or the agricultural sector as a whole in Cambodia. Rather our aim is to shed some light on factors at play in attracting children into the workforce.

Three of the selected villages are located in Thmar Pic base, and one in Crap. They are all fairly close to one another (see map 3.2). The team interviewed a total of 57 families in the villages (57 children and 57 parents or guardians), as well as key persons such as village chiefs, respected people, medical personnel and teachers.

Village 67 has 119 households and 574 inhabitants. Most are Khmer (79 families) although many families (40) are from the Cham minority. Village 8.10 has 112 households and 514 inhabitants. The inhabitants are mainly Khmer. Village 6.12 has 80 households and 350 inhabitants, with more Cham than Khmer households. Village 87 is located in Crap base and has 103 households. Most are Khmer: only two households are of Cham background. The village has 523 inhabitants.<sup>[30]</sup>

**Table 6.1: Basic data per selected village**

| Village      | Households* | Inhabitants* | Children 6-17 yrs.** | Not school going** | Working in plantation/school going** | Working in plantation/not school going** |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 87           | 103         | 523          | 151                  | 72                 | 33                                   | 34                                       |
| 67           | 119         | 574          | 178                  | 61                 | 52                                   | 32                                       |
| 6.12         | 80          | 350          | 119                  | 47                 | 19                                   | 25                                       |
| 8.10         | 112         | 514          | 166                  | 53                 | 60                                   | 35                                       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>414</b>  | <b>1961</b>  | <b>614</b>           | <b>233</b>         | <b>164</b>                           | <b>126</b>                               |

\* From statistics at the central administration of Chub base

\*\* Data gathered through the household survey

## **6.1 Socio-economic background of the families interviewed**

### ***6.1.1 Ethnic and geographic background***

About half of the families interviewed were originally from Kampong Cham. The other families came from different provinces, mostly Prey Veng. Many came in the eighties, some to escape the draft into the army, but mostly because they had no alternatives: the rice harvest failed or they lost their village and farming land due to debts and they had relatives living at the rubber plantation. Several came to live here in the nineties, for the same reasons. In villages 67 and 6.12 many families were Cham. Many of them came to live here from other places in Kampong Cham between 1975 and 1979 due to the relocation policy of the Pol Pot regime.

Villages 8.10 and 87 were predominantly Khmer villages, with the families interviewed coming largely from Prey Veng (village 87) or almost equally from Prey Veng and Kampong Cham (village 8.10). Most interviewees came to live here in the eighties and nineties, because of lack of alternatives. Many families in 8.10 came to escape draft into the army and into the infamous K5. The rubber plantation was by that time a state enterprise, and people working for the government were exempt from the army.

### ***6.1.2 Household composition***

The average household size for the 57 families interviewed was 6.7 members, which is high compared to the overall average of 5.1 for Kampong Cham province. The families interviewed also had many young children, which is shown by the high age-dependency ratio for the families interviewed: 1.1 (meaning that on average 1 productive household member - between 16 and 65 years old - has to support 1.1 dependent household member). The age-dependency ratio for Kampong Cham province overall is 0.86. The families that were selected for interviewing, were families with working children. We can see that there is a clear relationship between household size and dependency ratio on the one hand, and occurrence of child labour on the other.

### ***6.1.3 Services provided***

Like everywhere in the rubber plantation, the families of our case-study sample were provided free housing, water and electricity. The houses were small brick houses, with one room and one kitchen per family. Some houses were very old with broken windows; some were newly built and had a tiled floor. Most houses in village 67, 6.12 and 8.10 were renovated or rebuilt in the eighties and nineties. Some houses had an own latrine. Most houses had an earthen floor. In village 87 many houses were recently built and had a latrine and a tiled floor. Only a few families interviewed lived in such a newly built house and had a latrine. Most families lived a short distance from the water well, although for some the distance was quite large.

### ***6.1.4 Income and expenditures***

Average earnings per worker ranged from 120,000 to 170,000 riel/month, depending on the season (appr. 30-44 US\$), and 44 kilo of rice (each worker gets 24 kilo and 10 kilo per child for a maximum of two children).<sup>[31]</sup> Of the families interviewed, most had one or two registered rubber tappers in the family. Other family members did house work, helped their relatives at the plantation, or worked for pay at the plantation for other families. Usually, one can find work for pay only a few days per month when an absent worker needs to be replaced. Extra earnings from work for pay for other families in the rubber plantation were usually around 20,000 riel per month (for 4 or 5 days work), sometimes an exceptional 60,000 riel. One family interviewed had no registered rubber tappers in the family: all members worked for pay for other families. As there were no other jobs available in the plantation (other than company jobs and selling sweets and groceries), the families depended almost entirely on the one or two salaries and some extra earnings from work for other families. The average household income of the 57 families interviewed was 215,000 - 280,000 riel (55-72 US\$), with a range from 120,000 riel/month (31 US\$) to a very exceptional 720,000 riel (185 US\$). This was a large, productive household of nine members with three registered workers.

The main expenditure of the households was on food and rice. This was more than half of the income. Several families spent more than 85% of their income on food and rice: their income was not enough to meet basic needs. Other important expenditures were medicines, bicycle

repair and clothing. Most families complained that their income was not sufficient to meet basic needs, although their monthly expenditures for meeting basic needs (rice, food, medicines, clothing and bicycle repair) were lower than their income. However, most families did not have many financial reserves. Unexpected expenditures, mostly for curing sick relatives and in a few cases for weddings, left family easily indebted. It can be concluded that most families interviewed were able to meet their basic needs without problem, but had little or no reserves to buy extra's (special cloths, cigarettes, make up, gold etc.) or to meet unexpected expenses. It seemed that most families interviewed were living on subsistence level or a bit higher. Several families seemed to live below subsistence level.<sup>[32]</sup>

It was difficult for people to estimate the costs per child related to schooling. The most important costs were for the uniforms. Yearly costs for schooling per child estimated were between 35,000 and 47,000 riel (9-12 US\$), of which most has to be paid at once for buying uniforms (60%). For each child, 3000 riel per year had to be paid as a kind of school fee/for borrowing books. 100 to 200 riel had to be paid monthly for chalk and/or teacher fees. Besides that, some families would have to buy a bicycle in order to enable their child to go to school. Extra costs for transportation (repair/buying bicycle) were estimated at 50,000 - 150,000 riel (13-39 US\$), depending on whether a bicycle had to be bought. It can be difficult to pay for these kind of "investment" costs, especially if a family has several children in school going age.

In all four villages the families bought almost everything on credit (rice, food, cloths, etc.). For some families this was a necessity; for others it may have become a habit. Even families who had cash available, indicated buying most things on credit. Buying on credit is more expensive than paying in cash directly. This situation has led many villagers to be indebted to other villages. Almost all families interviewed were indebted to others. At pay day villagers with a small business and others (such as doctors)<sup>[33]</sup> can be seen going house by house to collect their money. Many workers were left with not more than 10-15% of the salary they just received.

## **6.2 Decision making**

In only a few cases did the parents decide to put the child to work without taking the opinion of the child into consideration. It was in most cases a mutual decision of parents and child, or the decision of the child.

The child often did not remember any particular moment of decision making, and perceived it as a kind of normal or "natural" process. Often heard was the phrase "all children do it, so I started to do like them". Several younger children related that they like to go to the rubber plantation, because they can meet their friends and play with them in the plantation.

Almost all children and their parents gave as main reason for working the need to help the parents and older siblings to finish the work at the rubber plantation in time, or to help the family boost the production of rubber in order to increase the income of the household. Many children (and less parents) gave as another reason the need to earn money for the family's survival. However, most children primarily worked to help their family, and if possible they earned some extra money through work for pay at the plantation for other families. These contributions were rarely higher than 8,000 riel/month for children below 13 years old (2 US\$), or 20,000 riel/month for older children (5 US\$). This is unless the children were registered workers and received an own salary: their basic salary was equal to that of adults, and further depended on surplus production. Two exceptions were found of children earning 40,000 riel (10 US\$) and 60,000 riel (15 US\$) respectively. Many children related that they pity their hard working parents who always come home very tired after a hard day's work and that they wanted to help solve the problem. Few children explained that they decided to start working at the plantation in order to earn money for themselves. However, earning some pocket money is also attractive for children at the rubber plantation. Although most is given to the family, children usually keep 10-15% for themselves, which they spend on sweets.

## **6.3 Child work and child labour at the plantation**

Although many families had only one or two registered workers, many other family members often joined in the plantation work. The amount of work was generally considered too much for

one person. Moreover, families tried to increase their income by boosting their production. This can be induced by treating the bark with ointment more often than is allowed by the company.<sup>[34]</sup> Rubber tappers usually worked seven days a week, with only one day off per month. Working on Sundays was voluntary according to the rubber plantation, but the researchers did not meet any worker who ever stopped on Sundays. According to the villagers, they were obliged to work on Sundays.

During the rainy season more children can be found working at the plantation than during the dry season. The production is higher and thus requires more work. Moreover, extra manpower is needed in case of rain: the rubber has to be harvested quickly in order to prevent raindrops from spoiling the latex.

In general, people complained that the work had become heavier and supervision stricter since 1999, when the management of the plantation changed from a state enterprise to a public enterprise.<sup>[35]</sup>

### **6.3.1 Work activities<sup>[36]</sup>**

Children started helping their family at a young age. Many children below 13 years old (starting at age 6, 7 or 8) were taking dry rubber from bowls and collecting latex. The very young ones only took dry rubber from bowls and helped cleaning the roads from debris, some put ointment on the trees. From age 11 or 12 onwards children started collecting latex along the trees. This activity was by most children and parents regarded as one of the heaviest activities in the plantation, as the bucket, which can contain 15 litres, becomes heavier and heavier after each tree.

*Han is 10 years old and lives with her parents and 6 brothers in a village in the plantation. Her family belongs to the Cham minority. Her father and her oldest brother of 20 years old are registered rubber tappers, her mother works at home. Her brothers of 16 and 18 years old dropped out from school after grade 1 and help their father and brother at the plantation as unregistered, i.e. unofficial workers. Her brother of 13 years old is still going to school, at grade 3, and also helps after school time and on Thursdays and Sundays. She dropped out from school at grade 1, in order to help her mother cook, fetch water and collect firewood because her mother fell ill.*

*Last year Han started helping her brother at the plantation. Han gets up early in order to start taking dry rubber from the bowls at 6 o'clock. She does this one hour. When she has finished, she goes to see her friends and plays with them. Around 9 o'clock she goes home in order to cook. She brings the food to her father and brothers in the plantation at 10 o'clock and eats with them. Then she collects latex until 11.30. In the afternoon she helps her mother at home, collecting firewood and fetching water.*

*Han likes to go to the plantation, because she can meet her friends there and play with them. Her mother finds the work acceptable for her child, although she would prefer to send her to school. She thinks her children will all remain in the rubber plantation.*

*[interview code 7.3]*

At age 13 and 14, working children were mainly involved in taking dry rubber from bowls, collecting latex, cleaning roads and putting ointment on the tree bark. Some children in this age group were also involved in taking care of young rubber trees, and cut grass and small trees. This last activity was mentioned as one of the heaviest tasks in the plantation. In 6 cases 14 year old children were involved in rubber tapping at a low position (for which no ladder is needed).

*Surya is 14 years old. She lives with her parents, grandmother and 6 brothers and sisters. Her father is registered rubber tapper. She, her mother, her younger sister of 11 and her younger brother of 9 years old all help their father. Her older sister of 17 is very weak and often ill: she helps her older brother who lives somewhere else in the village for a few hours per day, in return for rice.*

*Surya dropped out from school at grade 3, because she had to work. She had started doing easy jobs in the plantation at the age of 5 or 6. She cannot remember any discussion taking place between her and her parents about her dropping out from school and working at the plantation. She just did like all the other children did. Then another villager(an official*

*rubber tapper) saw her working and asked her to help him take dry rubber from bowls and collect latex. He gives her 60,000 riel per month. She keeps 10,000 riel herself, and gives the rest to her family. She usually works 7 days per week, 6 hours per day: from 6-10 o'clock in the morning and from 2 to 4 o'clock in the afternoon.*

*The work can be difficult and hard, especially when she is blamed for bad work. But her parents think this is a good working opportunity for her, as she can earn some money.  
[interview code 10.6]*

Most children in the age group of 15-17 years old that were interviewed, were doing all activities in the rubber plantation, including rubber tapping at low and high positions. One 17 year old girl replaced her father who became chronically ill. She thus became a full-time rubber tapper, although she was working under the registration of her father. In the group of children interviewed, no other children were registered as workers. However, during the house visits in other villages we found quite a few 16 and 17 year old children that were registered rubber tappers.

*Mat is 16 years old and lives with his parents, three grandparents and a sister at the plantation. His father is too old to work; his mother is already 59 years old, but is a registered worker. His sister of 20 years old also is a registered worker. He started working at the plantation at the age of 10 because his parents were too old to finish the work on their own. He dropped out from school at grade 2, because grade 3 was too far away, and he needed to help his family.*

*Mat taps rubber from 6-10 o'clock. He can take one half hour rest during tapping. Between 10 and 11 he takes lunch and has a rest. At 11 o'clock he collects latex or takes dry rubber from bowls. In the afternoon he takes care of young trees, cuts grass and young trees, and puts ointment on the bark of the trees. He does not know how much time he spends per activity: rests depend on the amount of work and change from day to day. He thinks that he returns home around 5 o'clock, after which he plays football with his friends. He works 7 days per week, and has only one day off per month.*

*Mat would like to be a rice farmer, but he thinks that he will become a rubber tapper. His mother finds the work acceptable, although she would prefer to move out and become a rice farmer. She would like her child to become a motor repairer.  
[interview code 7.2]*

### **6.3.2 Work times**

The qualitative interviews support the findings from the household survey that many children work only a few hours per day: this was the case for 25 of the interviewed children. 16 children combined this with schooling and sometimes worked up to 8 hours on Sundays and Thursdays. 15 children worked 5-7 hours/day, and 17 children worked 8 hours or more (mostly in the age group of 15-17 years, although it included a few children of 13-14 years as well).

### **6.3.3 Payment**

Besides helping relatives, many people (young and old) tried to earn a little extra by working for pay for other families who were unable to work due to illness, could not finish the work on their own, or wanted to boost their own production. Of the 57 children interviewed, at least 21 were working for pay.

Young children from 7-12 years old could earn 700-800 riel/day taking dry rubber from bowls. They did this work for only one or two hours per day. Their monthly earnings were 8000-10,000 riel (2-2.5 US\$). Some children used this as pocket money to buy cakes; others kept part of it, and gave part to the parents.

The children of 13 to 17 years old that worked for pay, were able to receive up to 5000 riel/day. Most did this only a few days per month and earned approximately 20,000-25,000 riel/month (5-6.5 US\$). A few were able to earn as much as 45,000 and 60,000 riel/month. In only three cases the parents collected the money earned by their child: in all other cases the children collected it themselves. Some of the money was used to buy cakes (5-15%), but most was usually given to the parents. In only one case the child kept all the money earned for himself.

A few children of 16 and 17 years old were registered workers at the rubber plantation. They received a regular salary, equal to that of adults.

#### **6.3.4 Work hazards**

The most common work hazards were relatively small hazards, such as cuts, blisters and insect bites. Mosquito bites were very common. Child workers reported sometimes being bitten by scorpions or (less frequent) poisonous snakes. Workers tapping at high position reported sometimes falling from the ladder after rain, as the water makes the steps slippery. No serious accidents were found, although some workers told about people falling from the ladder and remaining unconscious for a while. Most children related that they often fall over tree stumps and roots in the plantation when they walk in between the trees. Their feet get too little protection from the slippers they are wearing, sometimes leading to small wounds. Some children (and adults) have a sensitive skin that develops an allergic, itchy skin reaction if latex is spilled over the skin.

Many workers complained of the bad smell of the dry rubber, which reportedly causes headaches, and -in a few rare cases - also vomiting.

Other health problems were related to the hard working conditions, sometimes irregular meals, and changing weather conditions in the plantation where the workers sometimes have to work in the rain. Headaches, fevers, dizziness, backaches and stomach aches were among the most commonly reported problems. This is probably similar to complaints of all workers in the agricultural sector.

The older children who put the latex from the buckets into the container, sometimes reported spilling latex over the head when they have to raise the bucket over their heads in order to reach the container. The head has to be shaven when this happens.

Sometimes children helped carrying ammoniac, which is used to mix with the latex in order to prevent it from drying. One worker reported that children sometimes take the ammoniac for water and drink it. The team heard this only once: it may have been a single unusual accident.

#### **6.4 Schooling**

Villages 87, 67, 8.10 and 6.12 all have primary school facilities for grade 1 and 2. The schools have 25 to 57 students. Estimations of teachers about percentages of non-school going children, absence rates and drop out rates after grade 1 or 2 reflect a lack of close attention, as answers by different teachers (often teaching at the same school!) were too different from one another. Estimations about non-school going children in the villages ranged from 3% to 30%. Estimations of absence during afternoon classes ranged from 5% to 50%. Estimations for drop out rates after grade 1 or 2 even ranged from a very low 5% to an extremely high 95%. The reliability of (some of the) teachers as adequate informants about numbers of non-school going children, absence and drop out rates can thus be questioned (see chapter 2 for possible causes).

Two teachers who both estimated high absence rates of 40-50% related that to the fact that children are often staying at the plantation to help working after they brought lunch to their parents. One teacher indicated that drop out rates had increased considerably in recent years due to an increased work load of the parents.

Villages 87 and 67 both had a wooden school that was plagued by insects (Chay Preah) living under the roof, falling down during class and disturbing both teacher and students. Lack of blackboards or poor quality of blackboards led students to write on the tables instead. Village 6.12 also had a wooden building and had only one big room for two classes: there was no wall separating the two grades. All schools lacked teaching materials, chalk, clean water and latrines. There were enough reading books.

Students that wanted to continue studying after grade 2 went to the primary school at Thmar Pic base, which was around two kilometres from villages 67, 6.12 and 8.10, and more than four kilometres from village 87. The Thmar Pic Primary School, which consisted of both concrete and wooden buildings, had 441 students and taught grade 1-6. The school received students from village 6.10, 67, 6.12, 8.10 and 87 after grade 2. The number of students in grade 3 was almost twice as many as in grade 2 (114 and 66 respectively). At grade 4 the number of students had dropped to 79 students, to 72 students in grade 5, and in grade 6 there were only 48 students left. This clearly shows the tendency to drop out from school after a few grades. The director estimated that a total of approximately 60 students in grades 3-6 were from other villages in the plantation.

The most important reason mentioned for not going to school (mentioned most often by both parents and children) was the need to help the family with work. The second reason given was often that the school is too far away if one wants to continue studying after grade 2. Quite a few children (11) commented that an important reason for not school going was that they did not want to go to school.

In general, parents and children thought that school is useful because children become literate, which will help them in daily life. However, many did not see a very positive relationship between education and a possible improvement of the child's future. Almost all parents and children thought that the future of the children would remain in the rubber plantation, even though almost all wished to change jobs (find a job in a garment factory in Phnom Penh; start rice farming, become motortaxi driver, teacher, or sell groceries). Within the plantation their hopes were to become a group leader in the plantation, or a village chief. However, most understood that these options were not very realistic, as they either needed money for bribery or contacts to get such a job. Contacts with the right people and money were clearly perceived as the most important agents for change; not education. Of the 57 families, 13 parents found education for their children not very, or not at all useful: 14 children were of the same opinion. "After all, we all will become rubber tappers, whether we go to school or not".

There may also have been other reasons that affected the popularity of school going. Both parents and children complained that teachers often only come in the mornings, or just a few hours per day. Especially teachers living outside the rubber plantation seemed to be absent frequently, in particular during the rainy season when roads in the plantation are difficult to go. Some teachers were known to have other jobs outside the plantation, which explains their frequent absence. Other complaints were related to the behaviour of some teachers in class, beating children or frightening them in other ways. Of the children who reported not wanting to go to school, the reason most often mentioned was being scared of the teacher. Many parents also complained that teachers ask the students for money in class or oblige them to buy their cakes.

Teachers also had their complaints. They pointed out the poor attendance of the children, especially during the afternoon classes. Some teachers estimated an absence rate of sometimes up to 50%: others reported no problems, estimating a school attendance of more than 90%. Another problem mentioned by the teachers was the lack of pens and notebooks among the students, who have to buy those themselves. Many students just seemed to sit in class and listen to the teacher, without noting down anything. In some villages (such as 67 and 6.12), the Cham made up a large proportion of the community. Cham children learned to read and write their language at home or in the mosque. Some spoke little Khmer and never went to school. Teachers complained that Cham have different holidays, which means that they are often absent.

## **6.5 Health Care**

There was a *peet* in each village. According to the villagers the *peet* worked as a private *peet*, asking payment for medicines and services, rather than as a company *peet*, providing care for free. Villagers frequently complained about the high medical costs and the bureaucracy in case of referrals to the health center. Referral letters first had to be signed by the village chief, then by the chief of the center, then by the *peet* at the base, before they can go to the health center. Sometimes this takes up too much time, in the case of an illness that should be treated speedily.

## 6.6 Perception of work and life at present and in the future

When asked to compare their living conditions with those of poor rice farmers, most said that they would prefer to be rice farmer, despite the fact that housing, water and electricity were provided for free in the rubber plantation. The most common complaint was the hard work, the lack of time off, and the lack of freedom in the plantation. Many times a comparison with slavery and conditions during the Pol Pot period were made, with the difference that they receive a salary and that there is enough food nowadays.<sup>[37]</sup>

Many parents interviewed did not perceive the work that their child did in a positive way. They considered the work too difficult for their children, mainly because of the long work times. Slightly less than half of the parents interviewed found the work "acceptable".

The majority of the children interviewed found their work difficult. However, younger children who work only a few hours reported being happy to work in the plantation, as they often meet their friends and can play with them. They were also the ones reporting being "happy" in general, whereas the older children mostly reported that their life is difficult due to poor living conditions, lack of freedom and excessively hard work.

Few parents interviewed could think of any alternative jobs in the rubber plantation. Possible alternatives mentioned by only a few parents were selling sweets and groceries, or becoming a group leader in the plantation. They saw more alternatives outside the plantation, such as working in a garment factory in Phnom Penh, farming, sewing, and teaching. Greater freedom and (supposedly) less hard work made these jobs attractive. However, they realised that money and contacts were needed to make a change. Most felt almost "caught" in the plantation: they have no money, no house and no land outside the plantation, which makes it impossible to move out, even though most people interviewed wanted to move out of the plantation if possible. Almost all parents interviewed saw no other future for their children than tapping rubber.

The wishes of the younger children were not very realistic, viewing the fact that most children interviewed were not school going. Many wanted to become a teacher or a doctor. Others wanted to become a village leader or group leader in the plantation, sell sweets or groceries, become tailor or work in a garment factory. Most older children thought, like their parents, that the future would have no other possibilities for them than rubber tapping in the plantation.

## 6.7 Community life and involvement of other organisations

In rural Cambodia in general, one can find, in some villages, associations that are meant to help one another in times of need, or other forms of mutual cooperation. The research team found almost no signs of community life in the Khmer villages of the plantation. An Association for the Dead existed, but was set up by the company, and thus cannot be seen as an expression of community life.<sup>[38]</sup> The villagers indicated that only the rubber company can solve problems, and that everything within the plantation is only organised by the rubber plantation.

The village chiefs and parents interviewed in the four villages all indicated that no other organisations had ever been in the village: nor had the villages ever received any other help than from the rubber company. Most villagers were convinced that the rubber company would never allow organisations from outside to work in the area.

This was different in the Cham villages, where we found an Islam association that was set up by the villagers themselves. The Islam Association helped its Cham members in case of death, weddings and in other times of need. There is a mosque in village 6.12 that also attracts people from neighbouring villages.

## 6.8 Needs

The village chiefs of 6.12, 67 and 87 stressed that there were no problems or specific needs in the village. However, one village chief suggested that children who finished grade 2 and lack means of transportation of their own, should be provided a bicycle in order to continue school at Thmar Pic base.

Few villagers were able to make suggestions for improvement. The most important suggestion made by almost all villagers, was to reduce the work load and number of different activities that are added in the afternoons. This was perceived as the only way to prevent their children from working or to reduce their work load. The second most important suggestion was to raise salaries.

Most villagers also mentioned the need for free health care, health posts in the neighbourhood, and an improvement of the bureaucracy around referrals.

Many villagers wanted to have access to low-interest credit, but few were able to say what they would use it for. Most did not know what they would spend it on; they said that they would buy food and other things. A few thought of using it for raising animals, such as pigs or goats, chicken and ducks.<sup>[39]</sup>

In the area of education, the villagers requested for adding grades to the annexes beyond grade 2. Rehabilitation of the buildings, fighting the insects, adding playgrounds to the school compound, planting trees to provide some shadow (some class rooms become too hot in the afternoon), and extra teaching materials were all considered important in attracting students.

Some villagers requested a plot of land, in order to grow some vegetables.

## **7. Conclusion and recommendations**

### **7.1 The magnitude of child labour in the rubber plantation**

A total of 4081 children between 6-17 years old living in the rubber plantation were counted. More than 23% reported working at the rubber plantation (948 children), ranging among different villages from 12% to 57%. A small percentage of children started working at the plantation at the age of 6-9 years. These figures increase gradually: by the age of 14, more than 40% worked at the plantation, and this was 50% of the 15 year old children. More than 65% of 16 and 17 year old children worked at the plantation. The largest percentage of children working at the plantation was found in Thmar Pic base (20% of 6-12, 57% of 13 and 14, and 68% of 15-17 year old children).

Overall, an estimated 57% of the working children did this only in their free time (1-3 hours/day and 1-8 hours on Thursdays and Sundays), 10% worked 5-7 hours/day, and 33% (approximately 310 children) worked 8 hours or more on a daily basis.<sup>[40]</sup> Most children worked 7 days/week and had 1 day off per month. Almost all 6-12 year old working children only worked in their free time. Most 13 and 14 year old working children also only worked in their free time, although 8 hours or more were no longer an exception (>20%). More than 60% of the 15-17 year old working children did this 8 hours or more per day.

There was hardly any difference between boys and girls working at the plantation, although more girls also had duties at home (cooking, fetching water, collecting firewood).

In the Chub rubber plantation we found a total of 1306 non-school going children. This is 32% of all children with a range from 16% to 49% for different villages. This situation seems better than the situation in Tboung Kmom District in general, where almost 40% of 7-17 year old children is not school going.

A total of 565 children were both working at the rubber plantation and not going to school. This is 13.8% of the total number of children, with a range among different villages between 5.6% and 22.6%. Chub had the largest number (but a low percentage) of working children that are not school going.

For these 565 children, the reason for not going to school may be linked to work activities at the rubber plantation. Having to work was mentioned 431 times as an important reason for not going to school. Although 134 more children both worked at the rubber plantation and did not go to school, their main reasons for not going to school were not primarily linked to the work activities. Reasons were: no money to pay school costs, not wanting to study, and the school is too far away (after grade 1 and 2). Once having dropped out of school, a natural alternative is to start working at the plantation.

## **7.2 The nature of child labour in the rubber plantation**

There is a lot of variation in the rubber plantation activities and work times. In order to clarify the nature of child labour in the plantation, distinction is made between the least problematic and the most problematic forms of child labour found. Individual cases fit somewhere in between the two extremes.

A fairly large group of mainly younger children combined work with schooling. In their free time, they help their parents in the plantation. For many, this means 1 to 3 hours daily, and 1-8 hours on Sundays and Thursdays. Some children were not school going, but worked only a few hours/day. It was not the work that prevented them from going to school. Most had decided themselves to start working, or decided it together with their parents. Some also worked 1 or 2 hours per day for pay. They used few or no tools that can cause accidents. Many met their friends in the plantation and had time to play with them. According to the Child Labour Matrix of Gourley (see Annex B) this qualifies for the label "child work". The most important problems for this group of children were: carrying heavy weights (in case they collect latex); the bad smell of dry rubber; minor injuries (blisters, cuts from broken bowls, and wounds from stumbling over holes, tree stumps and roots in the plantation); most work on a daily basis, 7 days per week; the work times can be quite long on Thursday and Sundays (although this seems rather an exception than the rule). Carrying heavy weights (up to 15 kilos) was a serious problem for the children in this group, which can be found under the label "worst forms" of child labour in the child labour matrix if we take the young ages into account. The other problems were minor problems that can be found in the matrix in the column of "minor forms of child labour". Most thought that they will become rubber tapper in the future, although they would like to do something else. Overall, this category of child workers is on the border of "child work" and "minor form" of child labour. Children that only take dry rubber from bowls are engaged in child work, whereas the children that also collect latex, are on the border of "child work" and "child labour".

Another fairly large group, mainly constituting of 15-17 years old (and some 14 years old), performed most activities in the plantation: rubber tapping at low positions, tapping at high position (using a ladder), collecting dry rubber and latex, cutting grass and young trees, etc. Most helped their parents or older siblings and also worked a few days per month for pay. A few were officially registered as worker with the rubber company, bearing full responsibility for the work and receiving basic salary and benefits. Most children in this group started working because they wanted to. The children had dropped out of school (or never went). They faced the same problems as mentioned above. However, their most important problems were mainly related to work load and work times. Although their work times did not enable them to go to school, it goes too far to conclude that work activities had prevented them from school going. They may have dropped out for other reasons. However, for some, the work indeed prevented them from school going. They worked full time, or longer, usually 7 days per week, with only one day off per month. Those who worked for pay, often had to work overtime. Cuts from chisels and knives were more frequent. Those who tapped at high positions, risked falling from the ladder, although this did not seem to happen frequently. Both children in this group and their parents perceived the work as negative, due to the heavy work load, lack of free time and lack of freedom. According to the Child Labour Matrix, the work by this group of children is on the border of minor forms and more serious forms of child labour.

It can thus be concluded that we find a high variation in nature of child labour in the rubber plantation, varying from relatively harmless child work, to potentially harmful forms of more serious child labour. Combining this with estimations derived from the quantitative material, we can conclude that an estimated total of approximately 310 children in the rubber plantation may

be involved in child labour that is on the border between a "minor" form and a "more serious" form. However, it is also clear that we cannot speak here of "worst forms" of child labour.

### **7.3 The causes**

The most important reason for child labour was the hard work required for registered rubber tappers. The amount of daily work, 29 to 30 days per month, was generally considered too much for one single person to finish. It appears that the entire family has to assist the rubber tapper complete the tasks. Usually, children from the age of 6-10 years old onwards, join in the work. Many children interviewed primarily helped their parents finish the work in time. Families that did not have many members hired children from other families to help them.

Poor living conditions were another reason for child labour, though less important than the work load. All families were provided free housing, electricity and water, and the registered workers had a monthly salary and rice allowance. Most families interviewed were poor, but did not belong to the "poorest" we can find in other rural areas in Cambodia, people who live from day to day to make ends meet and who lack sufficient caloric intake during a large part of the year. Many children worked for pay, but did this just a few days per month or a few hours per day, contributing less than 8% to the family's income. A few children earned a full salary.

Even though not belonging to the poorest, most families did not have many financial reserves. Almost all families bought rice, food, and other things they needed, on credit. Most families were indebted to other villagers with a small business. Illness easily caused more serious financial problems.

Several families were very poor and seemed to live below subsistence level. This was particularly the case for large families with only one registered worker. In these cases the children were not only needed to help finish the work, but also to boost the family production, and thus increase the income. In general, there seemed to be a clear relationship between a large family size and high age-dependency ratio on one hand, and occurrence of child work and child labour on the other.

Many children had dropped out of school after grade 2, for a combination of reasons: lack of money to pay for the costs, too far away, not wanting to go, need to work at home (because both parents work at the plantation) or need to work at the plantation. Most families lack enough bicycles to send their children to the school at Thmar Pic base. Quite a few children did not want to go to school or perceived it as useless. When children drop out of school (for various reasons), a logical alternative is working at the plantation. Many children follow other children who also started working at the plantation, and perceive it as normal, "natural" process.

### **7.4 Most urgent problems to be solved**

The most important reason behind child labour in the area is the large amount of work (too many different and heavy activities that are added after rubber tapping and harvesting) 7 days a week. This leads to children starting to help their parents at a very young age (under 10 years old), and working for pay for other families who cannot complete the work on their own. This problem can only be solved at the level of the rubber company.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC, in cooperation with the Provincial Department of Social Welfare and Labour contact the Chub Rubber Plantation in order to determine the amount of work and the work times for registered workers. This should be followed up by regular, unannounced, visits from the labour inspectors at the work sites.
- Any discussion/negotiations on the regulation of amount and kind of work activities per day should be represented by the workers, in order to avoid a change in regulations that is not beneficial to them (a reduction in number of trees, for example, is likely to lead to a reduction in output, and thus will reduce the income).

Another reason for child labour, are the poor living conditions of some of the families. Although they earn a monthly salary, this is too little to support their very large families, whose members

have no other opportunities for earning an extra income than working at the plantation. The workers increase the amount of latex collected, which can only be done if all family members, young and old, help in the work. It seems important to diversify the income sources, but the plantation area does not have many opportunities. Still, families might be helped if they can raise animals or grow some vegetables on a plot of land.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC assist villagers in animal raising activities (pigs, goats, chicken, ducks)
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC request the Chub Rubber Plantation to provide some plots of unused land in the area to poorest families. The plots could be provided to families directly, or through land committees at village level.

The opportunities within the plantation remain limited. Setting up a vocational training centre for young people could provide an alternative. However, the question remains whether they would be able to find a job in the area. On the other hand: solutions do not necessarily have to be sought within the area. There are too many young children in the plantation, and it is unlikely that, in the future, the plantation would be able to absorb this large new labour force. It might be good to start planning for alternatives outside the plantation.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC set up a vocational training center in the plantation that caters especially to young people who have to help their parents in the plantation part of the day.
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC includes an informal education programme to the curriculum of a vocational training center, with a strong focus on functional literacy.
- Any such initiative should be coupled with contacts with possible future employers outside the plantation and small credit facilities in order to be able to settle outside and start another job.

Another focus could be to improve the primary and secondary education facilities, in order to make it more attractive for children to go to school.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC rehabilitates existing old school buildings, improve the water and sanitation situation at all annexes, and provide teaching materials
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC improve the accessibility of schooling beyond grades 1 and 2. The number of students may not be enough to add higher grades to the existing annexes. If enough students are to be expected, higher grades could be added. In cases where this is not feasible, ILO-IPEC could assist improve the accessibility by providing bicycles to families that need a bicycle and promise to send their children to school if provided one.
- We recommend ILO-IPEC to pay special attention to villages with a large proportion of Cham families. Khmer schools could be made more attractive for this group, by adding Cham reading and writing to the curriculum. A bilingual Cham teacher should be hired from the community and provided an official teacher training. Another possibility would be to support the mosque to expand their own existing educational programme.
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC set up dormitories with provision of free meals near the high school in Chub, in order to enable students from Crap and Thmar Pic to continue education after primary school.

There seems to be a clear connection between the occurrence of child labour and the size of families. Most child workers came from families with a very large number of young, dependent, children.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC facilitates the strengthening of the birth spacing program of the health center, as well as a health education program at village level in general.
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC explores possibilities for strengthening the present health care system by setting up health posts at Thmar Pic and Crap bases.

Most villages in the plantation seemed to lack any form of community life. We found almost no expressions of community life (village committees of associations that are set up and led by the villagers) or mutual cooperation, except for the Cham villages. Some sense of community life, of social capital, could help decrease the present feeling of powerlessness and dependence on

the company. It would enable villagers to start initiatives by themselves in order to improve their own situation in the future.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC facilitates the foundation of a Chub Worker's Association with representatives among common workers (elected by villagers without interference from company staff) in each village. Such an association could become helpful in facilitating possible future committees and associations at village level.

It does not yet seem advisable to set up credit facilities on a large scale. The present custom of villagers to buy everything on credit is not very encouraging. When asked people what they would do with the credit if provided, they said "buying things", but were not able to specify what for. Few people had an idea of setting up a small business, which is - in a way - logical, as possibilities for such alternatives within the plantation are very limited.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC waits with providing credit facilities, or starts such an activity on a small scale as a pilot project (for example linked to a particular activity such as animal raising). Any credit project should be coupled with training and advice to the borrowers.

### **7.5 Possible constraints: need for a careful approach**

No development organisations have ever worked in the rubber plantation, other than the human rights organisation LICADHO. This organisation has entered only the area close to the central base in Chub a few times to observe and monitor child rights, interview company staff and interview some children. They reported difficulties entering the plantation. Villagers were convinced that the rubber company would never allow organisations from outside to work in the area. The way the research team was received, and the accounts of the villagers that they had been instructed and warned by company staff, as well as the accounts of many key persons who seemed to be briefed before, are not very encouraging.

We can say that minor and more serious forms of child labour take place at the rubber plantation, but it goes too far to call it "worst form of child labour". However, the company still does not acknowledge that child labour takes place. They state that most children are school going (with exception of orphans and a few children from very poor families) and combine that with helping their parents with very light tasks, mostly taking dry rubber from bowls. As long as the company does not acknowledge that child labour takes place, it will be difficult to start any activities.

If ILO-IPEC wants to start activities in the area, it will have to adopt a very careful approach, in which the building of a relationship of trust with the manager of the plantation is of utmost importance. We therefore recommend to not to start any project activities at this stage yet, but first take the time needed to invest in such a relationship.

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## **Annex A**

### **Terms of Reference**



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# **BASELINE SURVEY ON CHILD LABOUR IN THE RUBBER PLANTATIONS TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A CONSULTANT ILO-IPEC MARCH 2001**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Rubber plantations, salt production and fishing/shrimp processing in Cambodia represent economic sectors where visibly children and youth are engaged in exploitative and hazardous child labour. Following the recommendations by the Cambodian National Steering Committee on Child Labour, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) has committed substantial funding for a child labour initiative covering the three sectors.

In preparing for the final project design, reliable and substantial baseline data on children working in the rubber plantations needs to be gathered in order to provide for a good understanding of the child labour situation and the particular needs of the targeted populations. Moreover, the data will provide substantial insights in existing services, programmes and projects as a basis for the identification of specific project interventions.

## **2. PROPOSAL**

A baseline survey on child labour in the Chup rubber plantation in Kampong Cham Province will be conducted. This plantation has been selected based on recommendations by the local labour inspectorate, the Ministry of Labour and findings of an earlier ILO-IPEC study<sup>[41]</sup> which indicate a total of 4479 workers and 7012 dependent children. Chup plantation has a semi-autonomous management and the owners/employers are willing to collaborate in the child labour initiative.

The upcoming baseline survey will provide substantial inputs to the final project design, such as detailed information on the nature of child labour, the children's working conditions, the educational profile, the problems and needs of the targeted population, the socio-economic background of families and communities and the availability of services/development projects. Findings and recommendations will be compiled in a comprehensive report and validated with the stakeholders at the local and national level.

For this research undertaking a consultant or an academic institute will be hired whose work will be closely supervised by ILO-IPEC Cambodia with assistance by the ILO-IPEC Regional Office in Bangkok.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS

ILO-IPEC proposes the following methodology in the conduct of the baseline survey on child labour in the rubber plantations. Suggestions by the consultant are welcome and will have to be agreed upon prior to the survey. As a general backgrounder for the development of the research methodology, the consultant should take the guidelines of a RWG-CL publication on 'Improving Action-oriented Research on the Worst Forms of Child Labour' into consideration<sup>[42]</sup>.

#### 3.1 *Review secondary data on the topic*

Review census reports, specific research papers, articles, project documents and (un)published reports on the topic as a basis for the design and focus of the baseline survey. As much as possible try to integrate the raw data from the ILO-IPEC study on 'Child Labour in the Rubber Plantations in Kampong Cham Province/Cambodia', Phnom Penh, January 2000.

#### 3.2 *Micro-level sampling of specific locations*

In consultation with ILO-IPEC select a number of communities from the Chup rubber plantation for actual information gathering. The selection should be based on the incidence of child labour in the respective locations, the needs of the targeted population, the accessibility of the sites and the willingness of the target group to collaborate.

#### 3.3 *Development of an interview guide*

An interview guide for different target groups will be developed by the local consultant with inputs by ILO-IPEC. The local consultant will arrange for the translation of the interview guide in local language.

#### 3.4 *Conduct comprehensive training to the enumerators*

Teams of enumerators/investigators will be recruited, trained, and supervised by the national consultant. Proper training of enumerators is considered crucial to the success of the undertaking.

#### 3.5 *Actual information gathering on the selected locations*

The teams of enumerators/investigators will visit the communities for approximately ten days each to undertake the following activities<sup>[43]</sup>:

- Direct observation: observation guidelines will be provided by ILO-IPEC (from the ILO labour inspection manual);
- Mapping of each selected location where children work;
- On-the-spot identification of all working children: their age (below 18 years of age), sex, and type of activity in the workplace;
- In-depth open-ended interviewing<sup>[44]</sup> of a number of children working in the rubber plantations (about 20 to 30) and their family members (about 20 to 30) from each location: standard lists of questions<sup>[45]</sup> will be provided by ILO-IPEC and will need to be fine-tuned by the consultant;
- Interviewing of a number of 'key' local informants (e.g. doctors, teachers, monks, village leaders, government officials, NGO-staff, and employers if possible);
- Focus group discussions with children and/or adults.

ILO-IPEC will be kept informed on data gathering progress, and will be consulted in case problems arise. A close cooperation with the provincial labour inspectors is being encouraged.

### *3.6 Information processing*

Validate, process, analyze, and interpret the research results - partly through a workshop with the enumerators and local stakeholders. ILO-IPEC will be kept updated on the developments.

### *3.7 Preparation of a comprehensive report*

The findings of the baseline survey will be compiled in a report according to the outline presented in section 4. Written in English language, it should comprise approximately 25 to 30 pages (single spaced), plus annexes. It is recommended to present the draft of the findings to a number of key officials before finalizing it. The final version will be presented during a high-level meeting for approval and further project planning.

## **4. OUTLINE FOR THE REPORT ON CHILD LABOUR IN THE RUBBER PLANTATIONS**

The report should include an introduction, a section on methodological issues, detailed information resulting from the baseline survey and a conclusion. Specific details to be covered are the following:

### *4.1 Introduction*

Briefly explain the background of the assignment, the topic covered from a conceptual and definitional point of view, knowledge to date on the issue and the aims of the baseline survey, the geographical focus of the study, and the structure of the report.

### *4.2 Methodological issues*

Mention the body of knowledge to date, its relevance and the need for additional information. Provide information on research methods employed - including possible sampling techniques for the selection of interviewees and locations. Judge the validity and reliability of findings. Describe the difficulties encountered when conducting the research and how they were addressed/overcome.

### *4.3 Baseline information resulting from the rapid assessment*

4.3.1 Description of the **socio-economic, cultural and historic context** in which child labour on the rubber plantations occurs (this may include socio-economic conditions of workers, social service provision and infrastructure, decision-making structures in the family and community, religious aspects, traditions and historical aspects).

4.3.2 Information on the **magnitude of the problem** in the researched locations, if possible as percentage of the respective age groups disaggregated by sex, age (below 13; 13 and 14; 15 to 17 inclusive), ethnicity, family background (0,1,2 parents), and income. This information should be based on the secondary data assessment and the raw data from the actual information gathering in all researched locations.

4.3.3 Detailed description of the **nature and specifics of the problem** through baseline information from interviewed respondents in the chosen geographical locations should cover working children, their families, and employers.

**Information on the interviewed working children should cover:**

- Age of interviewed children (below 13; 13 and 14; 15 to 17 inclusive), their sex, family size (including number of parents), and ethnicity;
- Do working children attend school? If not, why not? If so, how many hours per day, week, and month? At what type of school? What do they think of schooling (e.g. relevance of education for their future, quality of available education, distance to school)? What are the costs involved (e.g. uniform, teacher fee, travel costs, opportunity costs of work)?
- What recreational activities do they engage in, and how frequently, and what other interests do they have?
- What are their aspirations in life and work?
- Since when do they work with this employer? When did they enter this profession and why? Explain the recruitment process, and whether the children decided freely or not (was there peer or family pressure)?
- What are their perceptions of the work, of their future, and possible alternatives?
- How many hours do they work per day, week, and month and what is the timing (day/night)?
- What are the conditions they work in, both physical and psychological?
- Have they been involved in any work-related accidents and/or illnesses, and/or do they know of fellow workers involved?
- What are the work hazards<sup>[46]</sup>?
- Do they receive any protection against work hazards?
- How is their relationship with their employer?
- How much do they earn per month (specify base salary/piece rate, bonuses, tips) and how does this compare to adult wages for the same type of work? Who collects the salary (they or their parents/guardians)? Which amount is deducted by the employer for costs incurred (e.g. housing, recruitment and/or transportation, provision of loans, work equipment)? What do they do with the money earned (e.g. buying things, saving, giving it to the family)?
- What remedies do they suggest to overcome work related problems?
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**Information on the interviewed parents/guardians of working children should - to the extent possible - cover:**

- The family size (including number of parents) - double-check information from the children;
- What is the family's ethnicity?
- Since when do they live here? Check on possible migration pattern;
- What income generating activities are parents and other family members involved in?
- What is the family income and is this sufficient to meet basic needs?

- Do they have any debts, and if so, as a result of what (e.g. illness, death, recruitment process)?
- Who made the decision to put their child to work, and based on what (e.g. peer or family pressure, the community, middle-man, money needed, lack of alternatives)?
- How much does the child contribute to the family income?
- Since when does their child work with this employer? When did the child enter this profession, how and why? Explain the recruitment process, and whether they decided freely or not (was there peer or family pressure)?
- How many hours does their child work per day, week, and month - and what is the timing (day/night)?
- What are the conditions their child works in, both physical and psychological?
- Has their child been involved in any work-related accidents and/or illnesses?
- What are their perceptions of the work (good, bad, acceptable) and the future of their children, and possible alternatives?
- What do they think of the usefulness of work and/or schooling for their children (e.g. relevance of education for future of children, quality of available education, distance to school), costs involved (e.g. uniform, teacher fee, travel costs, opportunity costs of work)?
- Is the family involved in any community work and/or groups?
- What remedies do they suggest to overcome the work related problems of their children?

**Information on the enterprises and employers should cover:**

- Size of the rubber plantation in terms of output, and number of (non)registered employees;
- How and where does the finished product go? What classification of workers are to be found there?
- Mention any other significant production or manufacturing (industry) that can be found in the same location?
- Do the employers belong to or are linked to any group, association, or network?
- How does the work of child labourers on the rubber plantations contribute to the overall production process (size of industry, production processes, technologies used, geographical locations of production, chain from raw materials to end product and children's involvement)?
- What remedies do key-informants propose to overcome exploitative child labour in the rubber plantations?

4.3.4 Describe the **responses to child labour** in the rubber plantations including relevant legislation, enforcement mechanisms, and policy plans. Also describe organizations working to combat child labour (e.g. programmes of government agencies, workers and employers, NGOs, and civil society)<sup>[47]</sup> and more general service providers in the geographical area, e.g. on health, education, income generation. Information to be covered includes:

- Type of organization (e.g. Government agency, worker or employer organization, NGO, other civil society group);
- Type of service provided (e.g. education, vocational training, empowerment, rehabilitation) and geographical coverage;
- Number and type of beneficiaries per year;
- Major achievements to date (including lessons learnt);
- Major challenges to address the issue of child labour.

#### 4.4 *Conclusions*

This chapter should comprise a summary of findings and recommendations focusing on the following question: what can be done by the upcoming ILO-IPEC project to effectively address child labour in the rubber plantations (e.g. in the area of policy making, legal reform, direct service provision, community empowerment, networking).

## **Annex B**

### **Child Labour Matrix**

Developed by Steve Gourley  
Child Rights Advisor  
LICADHO

The matrix as used in this report is not the final version: the matrix was, at the time of the writing of this report, still under development.



## *Understanding the Child Labour Matrix*

### **Q. What is the Child Labour Matrix?**

**A.** The Child Labour Matrix is a tool for systematically evaluating the situation of children working in any community or occupation. It is intended to assist various actors addressing child labour to:

- 1. Identify the form of child labour being dealt with, e.g., light, heavy or worst form, etc.*
- 2. Identify the major areas of risk or hazards the children are exposed to;*
- 3. Identify the most appropriate strategy needed to address the problem, e.g. immediate withdrawal from workplace vs. progressive improvement of working conditions);*
- 4. Identify specific areas of intervention needed to improve working conditions, e.g. reduced working hours, increased safety, access to education, etc.*

### **Q. Why is the Child Labour Matrix needed?**

A. There is a great deal of confusion among actors working on child labour issues as to identifying the forms of child labour children are involved in. This is often due in part to a lack of clarity in international conventions and national labour laws, which do not provide clear definitions or assessment criteria for identifying “light” or “heavy” work, etc. This lack of clear criteria can then lead to differing assessments by different individuals and organisations. If working children’s situations are not assessed correctly, it can result in responses that are not helpful to them and their families, and which are not effective in reducing hazardous child labour in the long-term. An accurate assessment method is therefore needed to:

- 1. Promote agreement and solidarity among key actors (inc. government and non-government organizations, employers, workers, etc.) by providing standardized and mutually agreed upon criteria for identifying the various forms of child labour;*
- 2. Promote effective responses by identifying specific areas of intervention needed in order to reduce the harmful effects of child labour.*
- 3. Improve the implementation of child labour laws by making it possible for labour inspectors, child rights workers, etc. to identify “light”, “heavy” and “hazardous” work as referred to in the current Cambodian labour code;*
- 4. Promote understanding of the difference between helpful and harmful child labour among the general population by providing an effective training tool for use in awareness-raising activities.*

The Child Labour Matrix can help to achieve the above objectives by providing an easy-to-use tool that, in addition to providing clear and comprehensive indicators, also shows how these relate and interact with one another, so that a balanced picture of the child's situation emerges. It also offers a *visual presentation* of the results to make analysis easier.

### **Q. How is the Child Labour Matrix used?**

**A.** The Matrix may be used to assess the situation of children working in any occupation, workplace or community, whether formal or informally employed (although separate versions may be developed for each of these sectors.) It can be also be used with either individual cases or groups of children.

The Matrix consists of a chart which lists 5 forms of child work or labour along the top row, from lightest to worst. Key criteria to be used for identifying these are listed on the left hand column. As one moves from the left to the right, the indicators are listed for each criteria which become increasingly worse in their impact on children, and therefore indicate a more serious form of labour.

A suggested use of the Matrix is as follows:

**1) Target Group Selection:** If a group or community of working children is being assessed, identify the different sub-groups of working children that may exist (such as school going and non-school going children, migrant and permanent workers, etc.) These should be assessed separately so that the results reflect such differences and so that a comparative analysis of the various groups can be made.

**2) Data Collection:** Use the criteria given in the left hand column of the chart as a guide for information to be collected on the selected target group.

➤ The Matrix can be used with either existing data from previous research (to aid further analysis), or as a guide in collecting new information.

➤ Various types of data collection methods can be used to complete the Matrix, including face-to-face interviews, household surveys, focus group discussions and participatory, rapid estimation methodologies such as PLA or PRA. Often a combination of methods is used, according to the information needed and the researcher's skill and experience.

➤ Various sources of information may also be used, ranging from the children and their families to key informants such as labour inspectors, employers, adult workers, teachers, village leaders, etc.

**3) Data Compilation:** Compile the information collected by entering it into the chart:

➤ Select an identifying characteristic to be examined in the "Criteria" column on the left of the chart;

➤ Circle the box to the right of the selected criteria which most closely matches the information gathered. (If none of the criteria are an exact match, choose the one which most closely resembles the children's situation and note the actual data in the box);

➤ Continuing entering information until all the criteria (or as many as possible) have been completed.

4) **Analysis:** View the results by placing page one over page two and aligning the charts to form one chart. Then count the number of circles under each form and enter the total in the bottom row.

➤ The form of child labour will be indicated numerically by which form has the highest total, and visually by which column has the most circles in it.

➤ Areas of possible interventions will also be indicated. Generally, the areas of highest risks to the children (and therefore indicating potential areas of intervention in improving working conditions) will be shown in those criteria circled *farthest to the right* of the Matrix. These should be addressed so that the children's situation becomes in line with the criteria given for "Minor Child Labour" or "Child Work," according to what can feasibly be achieved. However, if circles are present in Lines 1,5,9,10 or 12 under the "Worst Form" heading (which directly relate to ILO Convention #182), a complete withdrawal of children from the workplace as required by the convention should be pursued as a matter of urgency.

### **Try It Yourself!**

In addition to its use as an assessment tool described above, the Matrix may also be used as a training tool in awareness-raising activities. LICADHO currently does this by having workshop participants use a real-life case study to fill out an abbreviated Matrix and assess the form of child labour involved, as well identify problems needing to be addressed. Try this yourself using the attached case study to fill out the sample Matrix provided (note that this is an abbreviated "training version"; the Matrix used for actual field assessments contains additional and more comprehensive criteria.)

Please note that this tool is still in development and is not yet intended for distribution. It has initially been sent to selected experts in the field of child labour and/or child rights for comments, after which the final version it will be made available for broad distribution and use. Therefore your input in the form of suggestions, ideas and comments will be extremely valuable in refining and finalizing this tool. Please send your comments or suggestions for revisions to: Steve Gourley, LICADHO Child Rights Consultant, Cambodian League for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (LICADHO), Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Email: [stevegourley@yahoo.com](mailto:stevegourley@yahoo.com)



# CHILD LABOUR MATRIX

## A SYSTEMATIC TOOL FOR EVALUATING THE SITUATION OF WORKING CHILDREN

BY STEVE GOURLEY, CHILD RIGHTS CONSULTANT, LICADHO – PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA  
WITH LICADHO AND MINISTRY OF LABOUR STAFF

| INDICATORS FOR ASSESEMENT      |   | CHILD CHORES  | CHILD WORK  | MINOR FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR  | SERIOUS FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR   | WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>I. CHILD WORKER PROFILE</b> |   |   |   |  |   |   |
| 1                              | <b>PURPOSE OF WORK</b>  | UNPAID HOUSEWORK TO IMPROVE HOUSEHOLD FUNCTIONING                           | PAID WORK (OFTEN PAID INDIRECTLY TO PARENTS) TO CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVED LIVING STANDARDS | PAID WORK (PAID DIRECTLY TO CHILD) TO CONTRIBUTE TO FAMILY SURVIVAL  | PAID WORK TO CONTRIBUTE TO INDIVIDUAL SURVIVAL  | EXPLOITIVE LABOUR<br>(ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING):<br><br>1. FORCED OR SLAVE LABOUR<br>2. ILLEGAL/CRIMINAL ACTS<br>3. SEXUAL OR PORNOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES |
| 2                              | <b>RELATIONSHIP TO CO-WORKERS</b>   | WORKS WITH FAMILY   | WORKS WITH PARENT(S) AND/OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBERS                                    | WORKS WITH DISTANT RELATIVES OR FRIENDS  | WORKS ALONE OR WITH ACQUAINTANCES   | WORKS FOR STRANGERS   |
| 3                              | <b>MIGRATION STATUS</b>   | LIVES AND PERFORMS CHORES AT HOME   | LIVES AND WORKS IN HOME COMMUNITY   | LIVES AT HOME BUT COMMUTES DAILY TO WORK OUTSIDE HOME COMMUNITY  | MIGRATES TO WORK (LIVES AND WORKS OUTSIDE OF HOME COMMUNITY)  | LIVES AND WORKS OUTSIDE OF HOME COUNTRY   |
| 4                              | <b>EDUCATION STATUS</b><br><br>*ASSUMING SCHOOL FACILITIES EXIST NEARBY AND FAMILY CAN AFFORD EDUCATION | ATTENDS SCHOOL REGULARLY<br><br>E.G. CHORES DO NOT INTERFERE WITH EDUCATION | ATTENDS SCHOOL REGULARLY<br><br>E.G. WORK DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH EDUCATION             | ATTENDS SCHOOL BUT ATTENDANCE AND PERFORMANCE AFFECTED BY WORK, E.G. ABSENT OR LATE FOR CLASS, FATIGUE, NO TIME FOR HOMEWORK, ETC. | UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO WORK (E.G. BUSY WORK SCHEDULE AND/OR NEED TO SUPPORT SELF OR FAMILY) | IMPOSSIBLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL DUE TO EXTREME DEMANDS OF EMPLOYER AND/OR EXPLOITIVE NATURE OF WORK   |
| <b>II. WORKING CONDITIONS</b>  |   |   |   |  |   |   |
| 5                              | <b>WORK HOURS</b>   | 1-4 HOURS PER DAY IN HOME   | 3-6 HOURS PER DAY   | 7-9 HOURS PER DAY  | 10-12 HOURS PER DAY   | 13 HOURS OR MORE PER DAY  |
| 6                              | <b>WORK DAYS PER WEEK</b>   | IRREGULAR   | 1-4 DAYS PER WEEK   | 5 DAYS PER WEEK  | 6 DAYS PER WEEK   | 7 DAYS PER WEEK   |

|   |  |  |  |   |   |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| 7   | <b>WORK BREAKS</b>   | BREAKS FREELY TAKEN AS NEEDED  | BREAKS FREELY TAKEN EVERY 2-3 HOURS OR AS NEEDED                     | 1 MEAL BREAK AND 1 REST BREAK ALLOWED EACH DAY  | 1 MEAL BREAK ALLOWED; REST BREAKS DISCOURAGED   | NO BREAKS ALLOWED   |
| 8   | <b>FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT</b>   | FREEDOM TO MOVE OR LEAVE PREMISES (UNLESS YOUNG CHILD RESTRICTED BY PARENTS) | FREEDOM TO MOVE FROM WORK POSITION AND/OR LEAVE WORKPLACE AS DESIRED | FREEDOM TO MOVE FROM WORK POSITION AND/OR LEAVE WORKPLACE, LIMITED BY DEMANDS OF WORKLOAD | MOSTLY FREE TO MOVE FROM WORK POSITION AND/OR LEAVE WORKPLACE, LIMITED BY DEMANDS OF SUPERVISOR | FORBIDDEN TO MOVE FROM WORK POSITION AND/OR LEAVE WORKPLACE                                       |
| 9   | <b>TASKS PERFORMED</b>   | No SIGNIFICANT LEVELS OF:  | VERY LOW LEVELS OF:  | LOW LEVELS OF:  | HIGH LEVELS OF:   | EXTREMELY HIGH LEVELS OF:   |
|   |  | 1. LIFTING   | 1. LIFTING   | 1. LIFTING  | 1. LIFTING  | 1. LIFTING  |
|   |  | 2. STANDING  | 2. STANDING  | 2. STANDING   | 2. STANDING   | 2. STANDING   |
|   |  | 3. SITTING   | 3. SITTING   | 3. SITTING  | 3. SITTING  | 3. SITTING  |
| 10  | <b>PRODUCTION PROCESS</b>  | No EXPOSURE TO:  | No EXPOSURE TO:  | SOME EXPOSURE TO:   | EXPOSURE WITH SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:   | EXPOSURE WITH NO SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:  |
|   |  | 1. FIRE/EXTREME HEAT   | 1. FIRE/EXTREME HEAT   | 1. SMALL FIRES/LOW HEAT   | 1. FIRE/EXTREME HEAT  | 1. FIRE/EXTREME HEAT  |
|   |  | 2. EXPLOSIVES  | 2. EXPLOSIVES  | 2. N/A  | 2. EXPLOSIVES   | 2. EXPLOSIVES   |
|   |  | 3. ELECTRICITY   | 3. ELECTRICITY   | 3. N/A  | 3. ELECTRICITY  | 3. ELECTRICITY  |
| 11  | <b>WORK LOCATION</b>   | WORK IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:   | WORK IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:                                     | WORK IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:  | WORK IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS WITH SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:  | WORK IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS WITH NO SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:                                       |
|   |  | 1. GROUND LEVEL  | 1. GROUND LEVEL  | 1. HEIGHTS UP TO 1.5 M  | 1. HEIGHTS OF 1.6 - 3 M   | 1. DANGEROUS HEIGHTS 3M+  |
|   |  | 2. NOT UNDERGROUND   | 2. NOT UNDERGROUND   | 2. N/A  | 2. UNDERGROUND - SHALLOW  | 2. UNDERGROUND - DEEP   |
|   |  | 3. NOT UNDERWATER  | 3. NOT UNDERWATER  | 3. N/A  | 3. UNDERWATER - SHALLOW   | 3. UNDERWATER - DEEP  |
| 12  | <b>WORKING ENVIRONMENT</b>   | No EXPOSURE TO:  | No EXPOSURE TO:  | EXPOSURE TO LOW, SAFE LEVELS OF:  | EXPOSURE TO HIGH LEVELS WITH SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:  | EXPOSURE TO HIGH LEVELS WITH NO SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:   |
|   |  | 1. NOISE   | 1. NOISE   | 1. MILD NOISE   | 1. EXTREMELY LOUD NOISE   | 1. EXTREMELY LOUD NOISE   |
|   |  | 2. EXTREME TEMPERATURES (HOT/COLD)   | 2. EXTREME TEMPERATURES (HOT/COLD)                                   | 2. MILD TEMPERATURES  | 2. EXTREME TEMPERATURES (HOT/COLD)  | 2. EXTREME TEMPERATURES (HOT/COLD)  |
|   |  | 3. AIR POLLUTION   | 3. AIR POLLUTION   | 3. MILD AIR POLLUTION   | 3. EXTREME AIR POLLUTION  | 3. EXTREME AIR POLLUTION  |
| <b>III. HEALTH, SAFETY AND SANITATION</b> |  |  |  |   |   |   |
| 13  | <b>PHYSICAL INJURY</b><br>*<br>*PHYSICAL INJURY AS A DIRECT RESULT OF WORK PROCESS | NONE   | NONE   | MINOR SHORT-TERM HEALTH RISKS: INJURIES QUICKLY HEAL OVER 2-4 DAYS                        | SHORT-TERM HEALTH RISKS: INJURIES MAY TAKE 5 OR MORE DAYS TO HEAL                               | SERIOUS AND LONG-TERM HEALTH RISKS: MAY TAKE MONTHS OR YEARS TO HEAL; PERMANENT OR FATAL INJURIES |

|  |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 14                                     | <b>FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL INJURY</b>   | NEVER  | RARE   | OCCASIONAL: SEVERAL TIMES PER YEAR                                     | FREQUENT: SEVERAL TIMES PER MONTH  | REGULAR: INJURED ON A WEEKLY OR DAILY BASIS  |
| 15                                     | <b>EMOTIONAL OR MORAL INJURY*</b><br><small>*TRAUMA, DEPRESSION OR IDENTITY CONFLICT, ETC. AS A DIRECT RESULT OF WORK</small> | NONE   | NONE   | MINOR: QUICKLY RECOVER W/OUT COUNSELLING                               | MEDIUM: SHORT-TERM PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING OR DEBRIEFING NEEDED TO RECOVER      | SERIOUS EMOTIONAL INJURY AND/OR ABUSE: LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLING NEEDED; RECOVERY DIFFICULT |
| 16                                     | <b>FREQUENCY OF EMOTIONAL/MORAL INJURY OR ABUSE</b>   | NEVER  | RARE   | OCCASIONAL: SEVERAL TIMES PER YEAR                                     | FREQUENT: SEVERAL TIMES PER MONTH  | REGULAR: ABUSED ON A WEEKLY OR DAILY BASIS   |
| 17                                     | <b>EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE</b>  | NO EMERGENCY CARE REQUIRED   | NO EMERGENCY CARE REQUIRED                                       | EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE AVAILABLE AT WORKPLACE                           | EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE AVAILABLE NEAR WORKPLACE                                   | EMERGENCY CARE NECESSARY BUT UNAVAILABLE AT OR NEAR WORKPLACE  |
| 18                                     | <b>SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING</b>  | SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING PROVIDED BY PARENTS & FAMILY MEMBERS | SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING PROVIDED BY FAMILY OR EMPLOYER | SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING SYSTEMS EXIST BUT POORLY IMPLEMENTED | SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING SYSTEMS EXIST BUT NOT IMPLEMENTED              | SAFETY INFORMATION AND MONITORING SYSTEMS DO NOT EXIST   |
| 19                                     | <b>DRINKING WATER</b>   | SAFE DRINKING WATER PROVIDED   | SAFE DRINKING WATER PROVIDED                                     | SAFE DRINKING WATER AVAILABLE AT OR NEAR WORKPLACE                     | INSUFFICIENT CLEAN WATER OR UNSAFE DRINKING WATER AVAILABLE AT OR NEAR WORKPLACE | DRINKING WATER NOT AVAILABLE OR DENIED TO WORKERS  |
| 20                                     | <b>TOILETS</b>  | TOILET OR ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                              | TOILET OR ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                        | ONLY SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE (NO TOILET)                                  | UNSANITARY TOILET OR SUBSTITUTE AVAILABE   | NO TOILET OR SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE  |
| <b>IV. COMPENSATION &amp; BENEFITS</b> |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21                                     | <b>REGULAR COMPENSATION</b>   | UNPAID: NORMAL CHILDHOOD RESPONSIBILITIES                              | NO ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION – COMPENSATION AT FAIR MARKET RATE      | COMPENSATION SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN MARKET OR ADULT RATE                  | COMPENSATION FAR LOWER THAN MARKET OR ADULT RATE                                 | EXTREMELY LOW AND EXPLOITIVE WAGES, OR DENIAL OF COMPENSATION  |
| 22                                     | <b>OVERTIME</b>   | NO OVERTIME REQUIRED   | NO OVERTIME REQUIRED   | FAIRLY PAID OVERTIME MAY BE REQUESTED BY EMPLOYER                      | OVERTIME W/ UNFAIR PAY REQUIRED BY EMPLOYER                                      | UNPAID OVERTIME DEMANDED BY EMPLOYER   |
| 23                                     | <b>EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HOUSING</b>  | NO SPECIAL HOUSING REQUIRED  | NO SPECIAL HOUSING REQUIRED                                      | ACCEPTABLE HOUSING PROVIDED BY EMPLOYER                                | POOR HOUSING PROVIDED BY EMPLOYER  | UNSANITARY, UNACCEPTABLE HOUSING PROVIDED BY EMPLOYER  |
| <b>V. STAKEHOLDER VIEWS</b>            |   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24                                     | <b>CHILDREN'S VIEWS AND DESIRES FOR THE FUTURE</b>  | NO COMPLAINTS  | NO COMPLAINTS, REGARDED AS POSITIVE                              | REGARDED AS POSITIVE WITH MINOR DISADVANTAGES; WISHES TO CONTINUE      | REGARDED AS NEGATIVE BUT ACCEPTABLE; WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS    | REGARDED AS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE; WISHES TO STOP WORKING OR CHANGE OCCUPATION                     |

|    |  |  |  |  |   |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| 25 | <b>PARENT'S VIEWS AND DESIRES FOR THE FUTURE</b>           | NO COMPLAINTS  | NO COMPLAINTS; REGARDED AS POSITIVE, WISHES CHILDREN TO CONTINUE | REGARDED AS POSITIVE WITH MINOR DISADVANTAGES; WISHES CHILDREN TO CONTINUE | REGARDED AS NEGATIVE BUT ACCEPTABLE; WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE WITH IMPROVED WORK CONDITIONS | REGARDED AS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE; WISHES CHILDREN TO STOP WORK AND/OR CHANGE OCCUPATION |
| 26 | <b>EVALUATOR'S VIEWS ON APPROPRIATENESS OF AGE TO WORK</b> | APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN 6 YEARS AND UP, DEPENDING ON TASK | INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OLD                    | INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 15 YEARS OLD                              | INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD   | INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18  |
| 27 | <b>EVALUATOR'S VIEWS ON GENERAL IMPACT ON CHILD</b>        | HELPFUL TO CHILD AND FAMILY (NO NEGATIVE IMPACTS)          | HELPFUL TO CHILD AND FAMILY (FEW NO NEGATIVE IMPACTS)            | HELPFUL TO CHILD IN SHORT-TERM; HARMFUL IN LONG-TERM                       | HARMFUL TO CHILD IN BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM   | LIFE-THREATENING AND/OR LONG-TERM RISKS TO PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL OR MORAL HEALTH             |

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<sup>[1]</sup> MoP 2001, p. 28-30

<sup>[2]</sup> Ibid. p. 31-32

<sup>[3]</sup> See for example the studies by Derks (on trafficking), Gourley et al. (on scavenging), the MoP 2000 and the CLO (on rubber plantations).

<sup>[4]</sup> Convention 182, Article 3

<sup>[5]</sup> MoP, 2001, p. viii

<sup>[6]</sup> ILO-IPEC, 1998, p. 3

<sup>[7]</sup> MoP, 2001, p.18-19

<sup>[8]</sup> Boyden and Myers, p. 6

<sup>[9]</sup> Villagers who related it to Hun Sen's visit thought that work conditions were improved in order to avoid workers to complain about work conditions to Hun Sen.

<sup>[10]</sup> In this report the term "parents" is used throughout, and also includes guardians.

<sup>[11]</sup> Older people that are respected by other villagers for their experience and wisdom.

<sup>[12]</sup> Older respected lay people that are connected to the pagoda.

<sup>[13]</sup> Regional Working Group on Child Labour (RWG-CL), *Improving Action-oriented Research on the Worst Forms of Child Labour: Proceedings of Asian Regional Workshop 8-10 December 1999, Bangkok, Thailand*, RWG-CL Bangkok 2000.

<sup>[14]</sup> Information from the Rubber Plantation General Department

<sup>[15]</sup> Information through written communication with the management of the Chub Rubber Plantation

<sup>[16]</sup> The village numbers reflect their locations in the plantation (number of kilometres to the North, and number of kilometres to the East, counted from the central administration base). Village 48, for example, is located 4 kilometres to the North and 8 kilometres to the East.

<sup>[17]</sup> Statistics central administration Chub plantation, per 2001

<sup>[18]</sup> Ibid.

<sup>[19]</sup> Two villages are under one administration. The official number of villages in Thmar Pic is 6.

<sup>[20]</sup> Information from the management of the plantation, through written communication.

<sup>[21]</sup> School Statistics Samdech Me (Queen) High School

<sup>[22]</sup> Information from the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour

<sup>[23]</sup> This goes for only 3 Sundays a month, as one Sunday is supposed to make up for the free day that is connected with the payment day (pay day is a day off).

<sup>[24]</sup> The yield is not measured by the number of litres of latex collected, but by its weight once it is dry.

[25] In fact, a total of 4082 children were counted. However, the information about one child was so incomplete, that it could not be processed. In order to avoid confusion, we decided to take out the child from our data all together.

[26] The information in this paragraph is based on all villages, except village 14, 15, 46 and 48 (see 2.3).

[27] Comparison of our findings with school statistics was difficult. The two main schools in Chub also attracted students from outside the plantation, and people living in the villages in Thmar Pic close to the border of the plantation were known to send their children also to schools outside the plantation.

[28] Data from 1998 General Population Census of Cambodia.

[29] There are two Wats (pagoda and compound) at the plantation: one near the Chub base and one at village 6.10, near the Thmar Pic base.

[30] According to statistics of the general administration of the plantation

[31] Some families had a lot of children, but received extra rice for only one child or not at all. Rice for children can be received when the children are registered. However, registration is only possible within one month after birth, and is a complicated procedure. The different steps in the registration process sometimes take more than 1 month, after which registration is no longer possible.

[32] This is an assessment based on the data provided by the householder on monthly household income, household size and most basic expenditures on food, medicines, bicycle repair and clothing. Families whose income equalled these basic expenditures, were considered to live on subsistence level.

[33] Even though medical doctors officially provide medical assistance free of costs, most also – or mainly - operate privately (see 6.6)

[34] The company provides only a limited amount of ointment, but more can easily be bought from the market at Suong.

[35] The General Department indicated that management and supervision in the plantations had indeed become stricter - and better - since the change in management.

[36] The names used in this section are fictitious. Han and Mat are Cham names; Surya is Khmer.

[37] The villagers referred to a lack of freedom of speech: not being allowed to air their own opinion if it were critical of the company, not being allowed to complain or protest, and being told by the company what to say to people and organisations coming from outside.

[38] Each worker pays 500 riel monthly for "death insurance".

[39] Cows are not advisable, as there is not enough grass available and grazing cows easily destroy newly planted rubber trees and knock over bowls and buckets with latex.

[40] Data on work times were based on 73% of working children mostly in Thmar Pic and Crap bases.

[41] Child Labour in Rubber Plantations in Kampong Cham Province/Cambodia, Phnom Penh, January 2000

[42] A copy will be provided by ILO-IPEC.

[43] **All research activities will be undertaken without jeopardizing the well-being of working children.**

[44] Preferably in a private one-on-one environment.

[45] These questions will be very much along the lines of point 4.3.3 below, and should be phrased in such a way that children will be able to answer them given sensitivities of the research topic.

[46] Work hazards are defined in Article 2 of Recommendation 190 (to ILO Convention 182) as

(a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological, or sexual abuse; (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces; (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads; (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health; (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night, or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

[47] The ILO-IPEC National programme co-ordinator will provide relevant information on national level set ups to the extent possible.