

**Child Work and Child Labour**  
**in the Fisheries in Sihanoukville, Cambodia**

**By**

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# 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 The (unpublished) report provides a good overview of the different occupations and some of the main problems.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**

The Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour in Sihanoukville has, with regard to solving child labour problems in the province, indicated the fisheries as an area of high priority. The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) has committed funding for a child labour programme in the main fisheries locations. However, too little information is available on the nature and magnitude of the child labour problem in this field. The AAFLI/LICADHO research mentioned above made some observations on children peeling shrimps at factories, but this was in 1996. The child labour research unit of the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and several NGOs working in the areas have also made observations, but they are not more than anecdotal evidence.

In order to be able to design appropriate programmes in the area, a better in-depth understanding of the child labour situation, the magnitude of the problem and the needs of the targeted populations were needed. The Center for Advanced Study (CAS) was asked to conduct a comprehensive baseline study in the fisheries and fish processing industries in order to provide the information and data needed for future programme 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 fisheries areas in Sihanoukville.

CAS conducted field research in the months May and June 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 and second 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 fisheries in Sihanoukville. 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 brief historical background of the three main fishing locations and some basic data. It also discusses other organisations that are active in the area, as well policies and activities of provincial departments with regard to the fishing villages. Chapter 4 presents quantitative material on numbers and percentages of working children, age, sex, work times and schooling. It provides information on the magnitude of child work and child labour in the fisheries. Chapter 5 discusses the socio-economic background of working children: the geographic background, the household composition, the housing, water and sanitation situation, the income and expenditures of the families, debts, schooling in the area, and needs as expressed by the community members. Chapter 6 provides more detailed information on the nature of working children: the activities, work times, payment and work hazards. It also discusses decision making around child work and reasons for children working. Finally, the chapter gives an impression of the perception of life and work of children and their parents. A summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations can be found in chapter 7.

## **2. Methods of research**

The field research was conducted from 17 May to 11 June 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). However, the methods as described in the Terms of Reference for this study had to be adapted to the actual circumstances.

### **2.1 Identification of working children by a brief quantitative study**

One of the main aims of the baseline study was to provide data on the magnitude of child labour in the fisheries. 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. Children often had multiple jobs at different places. 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. Children working on fishing boats could not be counting at the work place (i.e. at sea), and when ashore, these children could be anywhere and would be extremely difficult to identify as "children working on boats at sea".

A small household survey provided us an initial opportunity to gather information on the activities of the children per household. This was the only way to get a clear picture of the numbers of children working, their activities, estimations of their work times, and whether they were school going or not.

The fishing areas had a total of almost 5000 households. A small test showed that children belonging to families that were involved in other businesses than fisheries (especially the small businesses along the road side) did not work in the fisheries. We therefore decided to skip these households. Still, the team interviewed a large majority of the households. Only questions were asked about the children from 6 to 17 years old that worked on a regular basis (i.e. minimum two days per week) for a minimum of three hours per day in the fisheries. This enabled us to directly exclude a group of children from this research that worked very little, solely in order to earn some pocket money in their free time. The questions focussed on their sex, age, whether they were school going or not, reasons for not school going, work activities in the fisheries, and number of work hours per day. This took on average 10-15 minutes per family.

Sometimes there was nobody home and the houses were locked. In those cases the researchers asked the neighbours whether there were any children in the household between 6 and 17 years old. If so, the researchers returned another time or day, maximum 3 times. In several cases, the researchers were not able to meet people, possibly because they were gone to visit family in the countryside. Some houses were thus not included in the survey: the numbers as presented in chapter 4 may therefore be slightly higher in reality.

## **2.2 Qualitative interviewing**

The research team decided to do qualitative interviewing in all three main fishing areas: Tumnup Rolok, Stung Hav and Koh Khyang. Families with children working in various activities were selected for interviewing. This selection was based on a research goal to obtain as broad and diverse a sample of respondents as possible. Families were selected that had children working at boats in day time, boats at night time, fishing net repair, work at the wharf, and peeling shrimps and crab at home, at the wharf and in the factory.

The 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 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. However, this meant not all questions were systematically asked to all children.

In each selected family, a parent<sup>[9]</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/guardians 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 quantity/quality 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, several group discussions were conducted in the three villages. The discussions were aimed at verifying information from the qualitative interviews and clarifying points that remained unclear.

The researchers interviewed in total 58 families (parents and children), which means a total of 114 interviews. Besides, employers (factory owners), village chiefs, medical personnel, teachers, school directors and other key people, such as *chah tum*<sup>[10]</sup> and *acaar*<sup>[11]</sup>, were interviewed.

### **2.3 Observation**

The research team has been able to observe all work activities of the children, except fishing on boats and casual workers peeling at the factories. Observation of fishing was logistically impossible. It was obvious before the research began, that information had to be gathered entirely through interviewing. The researchers were able to observe the work of regular employees at the three main factories in Tumnup Rolok (it was decided not to visit the two factories at Stung Hav, as it was clear from the household survey that almost no children below 18 years old were working at the factories. However, the shrimp catch in the period of research was low and the factories did not need to employ any casual workers. Most children working at the factories did this as casual workers. As we were not able to observe the work conditions of casual workers at the factory, we had to get the information through interviewing.

### **2.4 The researchers**

The qualitative interviews and group discussions were conducted by two teams, led by two experienced socio-economic researchers. Two younger researchers were included on the basis of their qualities to establish rapport with children.

The research team consisted of six experienced researchers and one staff member from the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour: ms. Heng Samoeun (Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour), Lim Sidedine (BA), Hun Thirith (BA), Sou Ketya (MA), Khann Sareth (BA), Mak Sophea (BA), and Hem Kannitha (BA). The team was led by Judith Zweers (MA), working as UNV Research Officer for the CAS since August 1999.

Three additional enumerators were locally recruited: ms. Sou Sonat, ms. Kek Somalis, and ms. Soeu Kanha.

The CAS research team was highly experienced and well 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>[12]</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 were held during the course of the field

research 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 field work.

The researchers presented themselves as independent researchers. They explained to the workers and their families that they were from a neutral, independent organization. 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. The researchers were very well received and had no problems interviewing the people.

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

People that were interviewed were not at all reluctant to talk and were very open. They seemed happy that an organisation from outside came to listen to them and ask for their opinions. Child labour was not a sensitive topic in the area and could openly be discussed, among children and parents, as well as among village chiefs, factory owners and other key people. There was a great similarity and consistency in answers from different people, and in answers from parents and children. We therefore have, in general, no reason to doubt the reliability of the findings.

The fact that several households could not be interviewed due to absence over a longer period, may have contributed to a slight undercounting of working children. The quantitative data as presented in this report should therefore be taken as minimum figures. However, the number of households that were not interviewed, was very small. We may have missed a few working children, but not many.

## **3. Three fishing villages**

Krong Preah Sihanouk<sup>[13]</sup> consists of three districts: Mittapheap District, Sung Hav District and Prey Nub District (see map on page 11). There are three main fishing areas in Sihanoukville: Tumnap Rolok, Stung Hav and Koh Khyang. Other small villages are scattered along the sea shore, but often consist of just a few houses and are difficult to reach. These small villages were not included in this research.

### **3.1 Tumnap Rolok**

Tumnap Rolok is located near the main port of Sihanoukville and is easily accessible. After 1979 the first families settled in the area. They were the families of government officials from the Department of Fisheries that came to a part of Tumnap Rolok that was specifically designated as a living area for the government officials. The area soon started to attract other families from different provinces that settled on a thin strip along the shore and worked as fishermen. However, the area was officially declared a seaport area and fell under the seaport authorities, which meant that the families had settled there illegally. In 1984 the authorities decided to relocate approximately 1000 families to a newly developed fishing village in Stung Hav District. However, people from other provinces kept coming to Tumnap Rolok in search for work, and the area quickly became densely populated again. At the time of the research, Tumnap Rolok had 1870 households and 349 registered boats. A total of 263 households in the area owned one or more boats, most with engines. There are three fish and shrimp processing factories.

The area still falls under the seaport authorities, which means that the families may have to move out again if the seaport needs the area for its development. The future of the fishing community in Tumnap Rolok is thus an uncertain one.

### 3.2 Stung Hav

Stung Hav is located in Stung Hav District, approximately a 30 minutes drive to the North of Sihanoukville's main port and Tumnup Rolok. In the early eighties the area was still a deserted and densely forested area. It bordered the Province of Koh Kong to the North, where Khmer Rouge soldiers were active. Populating Stung Hav was not only meant to relieve some of the densely populated areas near Sihanoukville town, but also to prevent the Khmer Rouge from entering Sihanoukville. In 1984 the area was developed into a relocation area for families from Tumnup Rolok and a few other areas in and near Sihanouk town. During the first years many new settlers died of malaria endemic in the forest, which was in that period a major problem in Stung Hav. This is no longer the case, as most trees are cut. As the area developed, families from other provinces also settled in Stung Hav.



#### Map 3.1: Krong Preah Sihanoukville

= **Border Krong Preah Sihanouk**

= **District Border**

= **Provincial Road**

= **Main Road**

● = **Fishing Village**

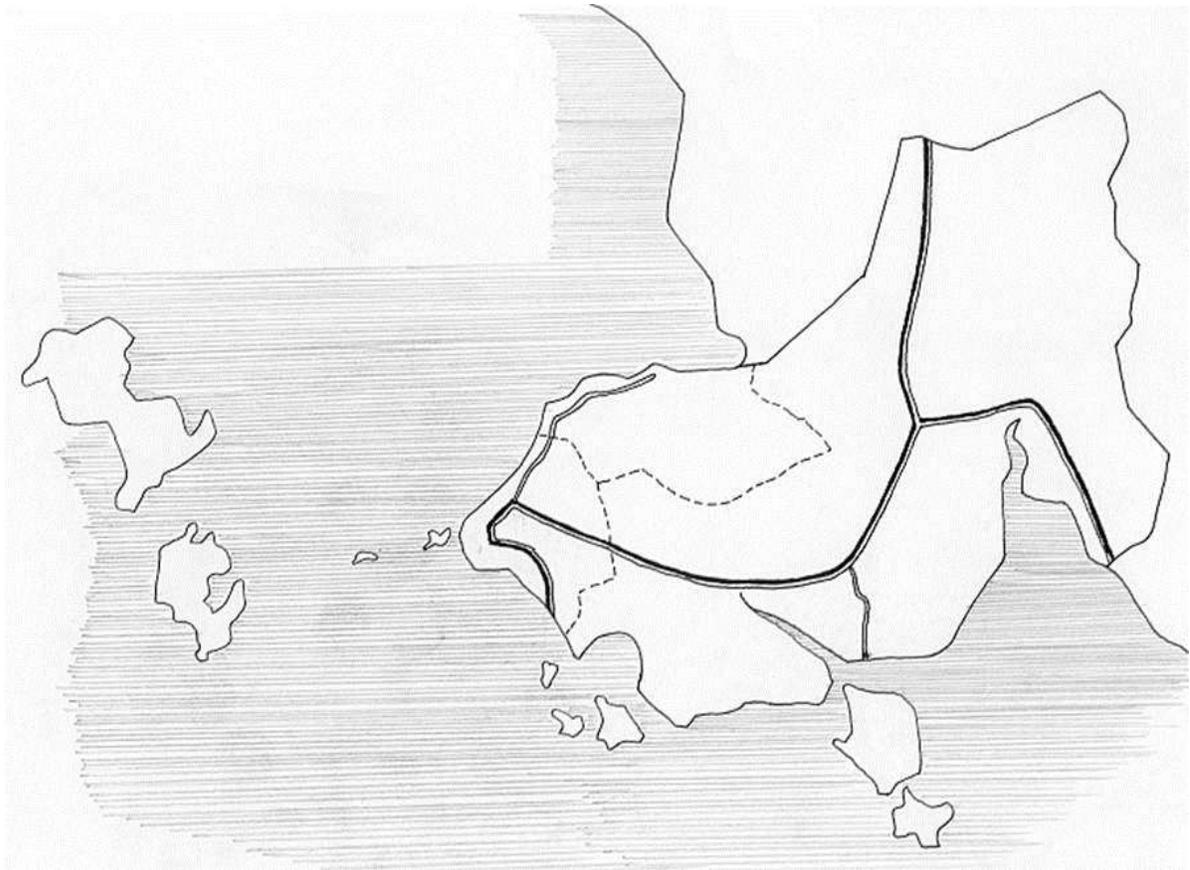
----- Bay of Kampong Saom

At the time of the research Stung Hav had a total number of 2353 households and 550-600 registered boats. Stung Hav consists of 3 Sangkat: Tumnup Rolok Thmey, O Tres, and Kampeng. O Tres is located relatively far from the seaside. Not many people in that area work in the fisheries, although the only two fish and shrimp processing factories of Stung Hav are both located in O Tres. Tumnup Rolok Thmey (“new” Tumnup Rolok) comprises the households that resettled in 1984 from Tumnup Rolok and is the largest Sangkat, with most people (1354 households). It consists of 4 *mundul* (centers). Mundul 1 is by far the largest one, with mostly poor people working in the fisheries. Qualitative interviewing in Stung Hav was concentrated in this area.

**01 = Mittapheap**

**02 = Prey Nub**

**03 = Stung Hav**



According to statistics at the Mundul offices, a total of 974 children between 6 and 17 years old lived in Tumnup Rolok Thmey, Mundul 1.

### 3.3 Koh Khyang

Koh Khyang is located in Prey Nub District. It can be reached from Sihanouk town by national road nr. 4 to Phnom Penh (30 minutes) and 15 minutes dirt road. Koh Khyang village existed before the war. However, during the Pol Pot period all inhabitants were relocated to other areas, and Koh Khyang became a prison. In the early eighties people slowly returned to Koh Khyang. Some people recounted that there were only two or three houses in the early eighties, and around ten in the mid eighties. Many families came to Koh Khyang late eighties and in the nineties in search for work. At the time of the research Koh Khyang had developed into a large village with 506 households and 270 registered boats. 100 boats are *Kie* catch boats.<sup>[14]</sup>

Koh Khyang has a Fisheries Community, established in 2000 at the initiative of the Ministry of Environment/Ream National Park. It receives assistance from DANIDA (Danish Aid). It was set up in order to improve living conditions of households of fishermen, to protect the fishermen's interest and preserve the natural resources, and solve disputes. DANIDA provided the community US\$ 70,000 to raise crab, but the project failed. The waves caused by the frequent traffic of boats threw the young and still unprotected crabs against the bamboo fence, which killed them. The materials used probably also contributed to death among the crabs. Another organisation from the Philippines is providing funds to raise livestock and start a project of replanting mangroves. There are no fish/shrimp processing factories in Koh Khyang.

### **3.4 Organisations working in the three areas**

The credit bank ACLEDA provides regular services to people in Tumnup Rolok, Stung Hav and Koh Khyang. ACLEDA has an office in Stung Hav; people from Tumnup Rolok go to the office in Sihanoukville, and people in Koh Khyang go to the office in Wiering (Prey Nup), which is quite far away. Most fishermen with own boats have loans, often from ACLEDA, in order to buy fishing boats, engines and other fishing materials such as fishing nets, or for boat repair. Poorer families take small loans to buy crab and shrimps, peel them and resell them at a higher price.

Several human rights and law organisations (LICADHO, ADHOC and CCPCR) are occasionally active in the three areas. They focus on teaching people about human rights, and investigate and follow up on violations, such as rape and trafficking of women. KWDC works in Tumnup Rolok and focuses mainly on prevention of trafficking of women and reintegration of women rescued from the sex industry. It provides poorest young women with vocational training (sewing, making paper flowers) and has a safe sex education program.

LICADHO recently signed an agreement with ILO/IPEC and the Provincial Department of Social Affairs and Labour to focus on child labour in Sihanoukville. 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 Bureau Catholique de l'Enfance (BICE) started working in Sihanoukville in 2000. Its aims are to fight against child sexual abuse, trafficking and child exploitation. It is a local NGO that forms part of an international network of BICE organisations in other countries. BICE also cooperates with the Provincial Departments of Education and of Social Affairs and Labour. It attempts to empower communities and its families by focussing on resources and potentials that are locally available. Training and networking within the communities are their main activities. They are active in a total of 11 villages, among others in Koh Khyang, Stung Hav and Tumnup Rolok. They have formed a network between the 11 villages, which is represented by two villagers each. BICE also trains staff at provincial level to train people within the villages. The village trainings focus on non-formal education for working children in the evenings and human rights, child rights and trafficking. BICE plans to extend its network to 40 villages.

The international reproductive health organisation RHAC is also working in all three areas. It focuses on birth spacing and safe sex education among young people, and training of health centre staff.

Assembly of God has an orphanage in Sihanoukville, with 2 orphans from Koh Khyang, 2 from Stung Hav and 2 from Tumnup Rolok. It provides vocational training. Krousar Thmey has a small fishing training centre for young men above 17 years old from poorest families.

### **3.5 Government policies and plans in the fishing areas**

The Municipal Department of Women's Affairs focuses on health (sanitation, HIV/AIDS and vaccination programs), trafficking of women and children, and child labour in Sihanoukville, including the three fishing areas. The Department is also involved in awareness raising about child labour among NGOs and parents of working children. The Department is well aware of the existence of child labour in the fisheries. At present, the Department is involved in providing

credit to five families in Stung Hav. Only two families are successful and are expected to be able to repay their loan. There are plans to start credit facilities (with low interest) on a larger scale soon.

The Municipal Educational Department follows an inter-departmental policy on reducing poverty. With regard to reducing poverty through education (other departments focus on issues such as health and agriculture), the policy is aimed at improving the accessibility of primary and junior high schools for children from poor families. In the near future, children will no longer be required to pay school fees for grades 1-9. The policy also includes intensive additional courses for students with learning problems. The Department is active in whole Sihanoukville, including the three fishing areas. The Educational Department stressed that educational facilities for primary schooling are good in both Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav, but realises that there is a problem in Koh Khyang, where only grades 1 and 2 are available. As Koh Khyang is a quite populated area, the Department thinks that an addition of grades 3 and 4 in Koh Khyang would be appropriate. The Department welcomes any organisation that is willing to improve the schooling situation in the area. Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav both have requested the Educational Department for a Senior High School. However, the Department sees no possibilities, as the future of Tumnup Rolok is highly uncertain (people may have to move out) and it is close to Sihanouk town where facilities are available. As for Stung Hav, the Department thinks that the area does not have enough students to justify a senior high school. Schools do, in general, not have any problems with teaching materials and school books, as they are distributed by the MoEYS free of charge. The Municipal Department of Education supervises the Don Bosco Vocational Training Centre in Sihanouk town, which provides training on sewing, carpentry, electrics, welding and computers. The centre has approximately 100 students and offers trainings from one to two years. There are plans to involve street children into the training programs.

The Municipal Department of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth rehabilitation (MDoSALVY) has a separate department of labour inspection, and a department of social welfare, which is also responsible for child's health issues. The labour inspection department inspects working conditions, work times, sanitation (including protection measures) and work security at factories and enterprises in the area. The Department is also responsible for an orphanage with 144 orphans. The orphanage provides computer and weaving training. The Department plans to turn present orphanages into vocational training centres. The Department is expecting to cooperate with the French organisation ASPECA for realising this plan. There are, at present, two main vocational training centres in Sihanouk town. The Don Bosco center (mentioned above) and the JVC training centre, which is supervised by the Municipal Department of Public Works and Transportation. The centre focuses on welding and motor/car repairing.

The Municipal Department of Agriculture, Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries is responsible for check points in the main fishing areas to control fishing and act against illegal fishing (for example fishing in shallow waters with large fishing nets) in order to protect natural resources. Large boats have to pay taxes annually to the Department. The Department is also responsible for developing and improving the water ecology and culture. The Department recognizes a growing problem of a depletion of sea resources and increased poverty in the fishing communities. In areas such as Stung Hav, where there are at present hardly any alternatives to fishing, alternatives such as animal raising should be developed. Food for animals can be made from fish and seafood waste. The Fisheries Department has started an "animal credit project" and has allocated a budget to buy pigs to be distributed among poor families. During the first year, the Department will take the piglets and distribute them to other households. The newborn piglets in the second year will be for the owner. The Fisheries Department in Banteay Meanchey and Svay Rieng has apparently successfully implemented a similar project in the past. The fisheries Department will be responsible for technical training on husbandry and animal vaccinations. The Fisheries Department would like to see fishing communities be set up in all fishing areas (see below).

The Ministry of Environment has started a pilot project with a Fishing Community in Koh Khyang, with assistance from Danida. It is part of a national plan to start fishing communities all over the country. The objectives are to educate local people about protecting the natural resources on which they depend. It is aimed at protecting the fishermen's common interests and to preserve sea resources and other natural resources surrounding the village. Its members are elected locally among fishermen. Each household is to provide regular reports about their catch, which are discussed in monthly meetings. The fishing community identifies problems, discusses possible solutions and helps solve disputes, for example between large boat owners and small fishermen.

## 4. The magnitude of the problem of working children

Quantitative material for the research was gathered through a brief household survey in the three locations. The aim of the survey was to gather quantitative data on the age and sex of working children, their work activities and work times, and whether they are school going or not.

### 4.1 Working children

The research team counted a total of 1678 working children in the three fishing areas. Most working children were found in Stung Hav (981), less in Tumnup Rolok (590) and a small number was found in Koh Khyang (107). Many children, in all three locations, went to school and worked only one or two hours per day in order to earn some pocket money. These children were not included in the data on working children. All other children working in fisheries were included (see 2.1).

**Table 4.1: Number of working children per location**

| Total working children | Tumnup Rolok | Stung Hav | Koh Khyang |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| 1678                   | 590          | 981       | 107        |

The largest group of working children was engaged in shrimp/crab peeling at home. This was more than 61% of working children (1031 children), mostly in Stung Hav and Tumnup Rolok. The second largest group were children who went fishing at sea on small boats. This was almost 20% (331 children). Most of them can be found in Stung Hav, although both Tumnup Rolok and Koh Khyang have a considerable group of children engaged in fishing as well. If we look at the working children in Koh Khyang, we find that the group itself is fairly small (107 children), but that almost 58% of the children working in the fisheries is engaged in sea fishing.

A small group of children worked on large fishing boats (51 children), which leave several days or weeks in a row, sometimes even several months. They can mostly be found in Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav.

The table below shows the number of children engaged in each activity per location. The total numbers per location exceed the total number of working children, as children were often involved in more than one activity.

**Table 4.2: Number of working children per activity for the three locations**

| Activity                           | All locations | Tumnup Rolok | Stung Hav | Koh Khyang |
|------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Fishing small boat                 | 331           | 82           | 187       | 62         |
| Fishing large boat                 | 51            | 27           | 22        | 2          |
| Net repair                         | 119           | 44           | 56        | 19         |
| Factory                            | 95            | 94           | 1         | -          |
| Peeling at wharf                   | 291           | 230          | 58        | 3          |
| Peeling at home                    | 1031          | 323          | 690       | 18         |
| Glacé / porter                     | 18            | 10           | 7         | 1          |
| Sort incoming fish/sell fish-offal | 63            | 18           | 44        | 1          |
| Steam fish/dry kie                 | 14            | 8            | 1         | 5          |
| Sell fish                          | 14            | 3            | 11        | -          |
| Clean fishing nets/take out fish   | 14            | 4            | 10        | -          |
| Other*                             | 15            | 5            | 9         | 1          |

\* Making baskets to catch crab, pump water from boats, look for shells,etc.

A total of 291 children were engaged in shrimp and crab peeling at the wharf. Most of them could be found in Tumnup Rolok (230). Fishing net repair and shrimp peeling at the factories constituted two other fairly large groups (119 and 95 children respectively). Fishing net repairers were found in all three locations, whereas shrimp peeling in factories was only found in Tumnup Rolok (one exception in Stung Hav).

A majority of 54% of the working children were girls. This percentage was even slightly higher in Stung Hav (56%) but considerably lower in Koh Khyang (38%), which is related to the fact that most working children in Koh Khyang were involved in sea fishing (see table 4.4).

**Table 4.3: Sex of all working children per location**

| Sex           | All locations |            | Tumnup Rolok |            | Stung Hav |            | Koh Khyang |            |
|---------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
|               | Count         | Percentage | Count        | Percentage | Count     | Percentage | Count      | Percentage |
| <b>Male</b>   | 770           | 45.9%      | 273          | 46.3%      | 431       | 43.9%      | 66         | 61.7%      |
| <b>Female</b> | 908           | 54.1%      | 317          | 53.7%      | 550       | 56.1%      | 41         | 38.3%      |
| <b>Total</b>  | 1678          | 100.0%     | 590          | 100.0%     | 981       | 100.0%     | 107        | 100.0%     |

A closer look at the sex of working children per activity (see table 4.4) shows that girls are mostly working in fish, shrimp and crab processing businesses (at home, at the wharf or in a factory). Almost 65% of the children involved in fish processing, crab or shrimp peeling were female. Approximately 82% of children engaged in fishing net repair were also female. Boys were mostly the ones fishing at sea (more than 91%), although girls were also fishing at sea (a total of 33 girls, almost 9%).

**Table 4.4: Sex per activity per location\***

| Activity                              | All locations |            | Tumnup Rolok |            | Stung Hav |            | Koh Khyang |            |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
|                                       | Count         | Percentage | Count        | Percentage | Count     | Percentage | Count      | Percentage |
| <b>Fishing at sea</b>                 |               |            |              |            |           |            |            |            |
| Male                                  |               | 91.1%      |              | 94.5%      |           | 89.5%      |            | 90.6%      |
| Female                                |               | 8.9%       |              | 5.5%       |           | 10.5%      |            | 9.4%       |
| <b>Net repair</b>                     |               |            |              |            |           |            |            |            |
| Male                                  |               | 17.6%      |              | 20.5%      |           | 17.9%      |            | 10.5%      |
| Female                                |               | 82.4%      |              | 79.5%      |           | 82.1%      |            | 89.5%      |
| <b>Fish/shrimp/** crab processing</b> |               |            |              |            |           |            |            |            |
| Male                                  |               | 35.2%      |              | 38.5%      |           | 32.6%      |            | 28.6%      |
| Female                                |               | 64.8%      |              | 61.5%      |           | 67.4%      |            | 71.4%      |
| <b>Glacé/Porter</b>                   |               |            |              |            |           |            |            |            |
| Male                                  | 16            |            | 10           |            | 5         |            | 1          |            |
| Female                                | 2             |            | -            |            | 2         |            | -          |            |

\* Some percentages are difficult to compare, because of the low numbers (especially for Koh Khyang).

\*\* Crab and shrimp peeling, clean and salt fish, prepare fish for steaming, dry *kie*, sort fish, etc.

## 4.2 Age groups of working children

The table below shows that children of different age groups work in the fisheries. The largest group of working children were between 15-17 years old (44%). Children of 13 and 14 years old constituted almost 24%, and 33% were below 13 years old. In Koh Khyang a remarkably small group of children below 13 years old was working in the fisheries (14%).

**Table 4.5: Working children per age group in the three locations**

| Age group    | All locations |        | Tumnup Rolok |        | Stung Hav |        | Koh Khyang |        |
|--------------|---------------|--------|--------------|--------|-----------|--------|------------|--------|
| < 13 years   | 553           | 32.9%  | 219          | 37.1%  | 319       | 32.5%  | 15         | 14.0%  |
| 13-14 years  | 394           | 23.5%  | 131          | 22.2%  | 242       | 24.7%  | 21         | 19.6%  |
| 15-17 years  | 731           | 43.6%  | 240          | 40.7%  | 420       | 42.8%  | 71         | 66.4%  |
| <b>Total</b> | 1678          | 100.0% | 590          | 100.0% | 981       | 100.0% | 107        | 100.0% |

A closer look at the age groups per activity (see table 4.6) reveals that the youngest children were mostly working in the fish, shrimp and crab processing businesses. This explains the low number of young working children in Koh Khyang, as most working children in this village were engaged in fishing activities. However, young children were also found fishing at sea, although their numbers were small. Most children below 13 years old that were engaged in fishing, lived in Stung Hav. Children of all ages worked at the factories in Tumnup Rolok: almost 29% of these children were below 13 years old.

## 4.3 Work times

Table 4.7 provides more data about the work times of the children. Many children worked part time and combined it with schooling: this was more than 48% of all working children counted (807 children). A smaller group (almost 13%) worked part time but did not go to school, even though the work times could not have prevented the child from school going (213 children). This percentage was considerably higher in Tumnup Rolok (17%) and lower in Stung Hav (10%).

A more problematic situation existed for the remaining group of 658 children, for whom combining work with school going was impossible. Not all children in this group necessarily worked long hours; the unpredictability of work times sometimes prevented a child from school going. A total of 207 children were working long hours on fishing boats, of whom 42 children stayed at sea for 2 to 3 days in a row, several weeks, or – in a few cases – even several months. Of this group of 658 children, 393 were in Stung Hav, 197 in Tumnup Rolok, and 68 in Koh Khyang. That is more than 33% of all working children in Tumnup Rolok, 40% of working children in Stung Hav, and almost 64% of working children in Koh Khyang.

Table 4.8 shows that the largest group were 15 to 17 years old children whose work did not permit them to combine it with schooling, either because of long work hours or because of unpredictability of the work. This was 27% of all working children (458 children). The second largest group were the very young children aged 6 to 12 years old, who worked part time and combined this with schooling. This was 22% of the working children (367 children). A total of

11% of the working children were 6 to 12 years old and did not go to school (186 children). Almost half of them were unable to go to school because of the work.

When we focus on the children that are unable to combine school with work, we see that most are within the older age group of 15-17 years (458 children), 119 children are between 13 and 14 years old, and 81 children are younger than 13.

Most children who are unable to combine work with schooling, are between 15 and 17 years old. This is almost 70% of this group of children. 18% is between 13 and 14 years old, and 12% is below 14 (see table 4.10).

**Table 4.6: Activities per age group per location**

| <b>Fishing (small boat)</b>         | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| <13 years                           | 30           | 9.1%          | 5                   | 6.1%          | 19               | 10.2%         | 6                 | 9.7%          |
| 13-14 years                         | 64           | 19.3%         | 11                  | 13.4%         | 44               | 23.5%         | 9                 | 14.5%         |
| 15-17 years                         | 237          | 71.6%         | 66                  | 80.5%         | 124              | 66.3%         | 47                | 75.8%         |
| <i>Total</i>                        | <b>331</b>   | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>82</b>           | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>187</b>       | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>62</b>         | <i>100.0%</i> |
| <b>Fishing (larger boat)</b>        | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
| <13 years                           | 2            | 3.9%          | 1                   | 3.7%          | 1                | 4.6%          | 0                 |               |
| 13-14 years                         | 7            | 13.7%         | 4                   | 14.8%         | 3                | 13.6%         | 0                 |               |
| 15-17 years                         | 42           | 82.4%         | 22                  | 81.5%         | 18               | 81.8%         | 2                 |               |
| <i>Total</i>                        | <b>51</b>    | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>27</b>           | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>22</b>        | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>2</b>          |               |
| <b>Net repair</b>                   | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
| <13 years                           | 20           | 16.8%         | 4                   | 9.1%          | 13               | 23.2%         | 3                 |               |
| 13-14 years                         | 25           | 21.0%         | 11                  | 25.0%         | 11               | 19.7%         | 3                 |               |
| 15-17 years                         | 74           | 62.2%         | 29                  | 65.9%         | 32               | 57.1%         | 13                |               |
| <i>Total</i>                        | <b>119</b>   | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>44</b>           | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>56</b>        | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>19</b>         |               |
| <b>Factory</b>                      | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
| <13 years                           | 27           | 28.4%         | 27                  | 28.7%         | -                | -             | -                 |               |
| 13-14 years                         | 20           | 21.1%         | 20                  | 21.3%         | -                | -             | -                 |               |
| 15-17 years                         | 48           | 50.5%         | 47                  | 50.0%         | 1                |               | -                 |               |
| <i>Total</i>                        | <b>95</b>    | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>94</b>           | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>1</b>         |               | <b>-</b>          |               |
| <b>Shrimp/crab peeling at wharf</b> | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
| <13 years                           | 107          | 36.8%         | 104                 | 45.2%         | 3                | 5.2%          | -                 |               |

|                                    |              |               |                     |               |                  |               |                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 13-14 years                        | 76           | 26.1%         | 56                  | 24.4%         | 20               | 34.5%         | -                 |
| 15-17 years                        | 108          | 37.1%         | 70                  | 30.4%         | 35               | 60.3%         | 3                 |
| <i>Total</i>                       | <b>291</b>   | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>230</b>          | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>58</b>        | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>3</b>          |
| <b>Shrimp/crab peeling at home</b> | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |
| <13 years                          | 454          | 44.0%         | 169                 | 52.3%         | 279              | 40.4%         | 6                 |
| 13-14 years                        | 264          | 25.6%         | 80                  | 24.8%         | 177              | 25.7%         | 7                 |
| 15-17 years                        | 313          | 30.4%         | 74                  | 22.9%         | 234              | 33.9%         | 5                 |
| <i>Total</i>                       | <b>1031</b>  | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>323</b>          | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>690</b>       | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>18</b>         |
| <b>Glacé/porter</b>                | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |
| <13 years                          | -            | -             | -                   | -             | -                | -             | -                 |
| 13-14 years                        | -            | -             | -                   | -             | -                | -             | -                 |
| 15-17 years                        | 18           | -             | 10                  | -             | 7                | -             | 1                 |
| <i>Total</i>                       | <b>18</b>    | -             | <b>10</b>           | -             | <b>7</b>         | -             | <b>1</b>          |
| <b>Other (processing)*</b>         | <b>Total</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |
| <13 years                          | 38           | 31.7%         | 9                   | 23.7%         | 27               | 36.0%         | 2                 |
| 13-14 years                        | 33           | 27.5%         | 11                  | 28.9%         | 20               | 26.7%         | 2                 |
| 15-17 years                        | 49           | 40.8%         | 18                  | 47.4%         | 28               | 37.3%         | 3                 |
| <i>Total</i>                       | <b>120</b>   | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>38</b>           | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>75</b>        | <i>100.0%</i> | <b>7</b>          |

\* drying kie, prepare fish in baskets to steam, sort incoming fish, make fertilizer from fish rests, etc.

**Table 4.7: Work times and combination with schooling per location**

| <b>Work times/schooling</b>                     | <b>All locations</b> |               | <b>Tumnup Rolok</b> |               | <b>Stung Hav</b> |               | <b>Koh Khyang</b> |               |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Combining work (on a regular basis) with school | 807                  | 48.1%         | 294                 | 49.8%         | 495              | 50.4%         | 18                | 16.8%         |
| Working few hours, and not school going         | 213                  | 12.7%         | 99                  | 16.8%         | 93               | 9.5%          | 21                | 19.6%         |
| Combining work with school impossible           | 658                  | 39.2%         | 197                 | 33.4%         | 393              | 40.1%         | 68                | 63.6%         |
| <b>Total</b>                                    | <b>1678</b>          | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>590</b>          | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>981</b>       | <b>100.0%</b> | <b>107</b>        | <b>100.0%</b> |

**Table 4.8: Work times per age group**

|                                             | 6 - 12 years |       | 13 and 14 years |       | 15 to 17 years |       | Total |        |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Work part time, combined with schooling     | 22%          | (367) | 15%             | (247) | 11%            | (193) | 48%   | (807)  |
| Work part time, not combined with schooling | 6%           | (105) | 2%              | ( 28) | 5%             | ( 80) | 13%   | (213)  |
| Work full time or unpredictable             | 5%           | ( 81) | 7%              | (119) | 27%            | (458) | 39%   | (658)  |
| <b>Total</b>                                | 33%          | (553) | 24%             | (394) | 43%            | (731) | 100%  | (1678) |

**Table 4.9: Unable to combine work with schooling (percentages per age group)**

| 6-12 years | 13 and 14 years | 15-17 years | Total  |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|
| 81         | 119             | 458         | 658    |
| 12.3%      | 18.1%           | 69.6%       | 100.0% |

#### 4.4 School going

Overall, almost 57% of all working children did not attend school, or did this very irregularly. The largest percentage (but lowest number) was found in Koh Khyang, where more than 83% of the working children did not attend school or went very irregularly. This was clearly related to the fact that most working children in this village were involved in sea fishing, which could not be combined with schooling. The percentages for Tumnap Rolok and Stung Hav were 58% and almost 53% respectively.

**Table 4.10: Working children and schooling per location\***

| School going?       | All locations |       | Tumnap Rolok |       | Stung Hav |       | Koh Khyang |       |
|---------------------|---------------|-------|--------------|-------|-----------|-------|------------|-------|
| Yes                 | 721           | 43.0% | 243          | 41.2% | 460       | 46.9% | 18         | 16.8% |
| Not, or irregularly | 948           | 56.5% | 344          | 58.3% | 515       | 52.6% | 89         | 83.2% |

|              |      |        |     |        |     |        |     |        |
|--------------|------|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|
| Kindergarten | 8    | 0.5%   | 3   | 0.5%   | 5   | 0.5%   | -   | -      |
| <b>Total</b> | 1677 | 100.0% | 590 | 100.0% | 980 | 100.0% | 107 | 100.0% |

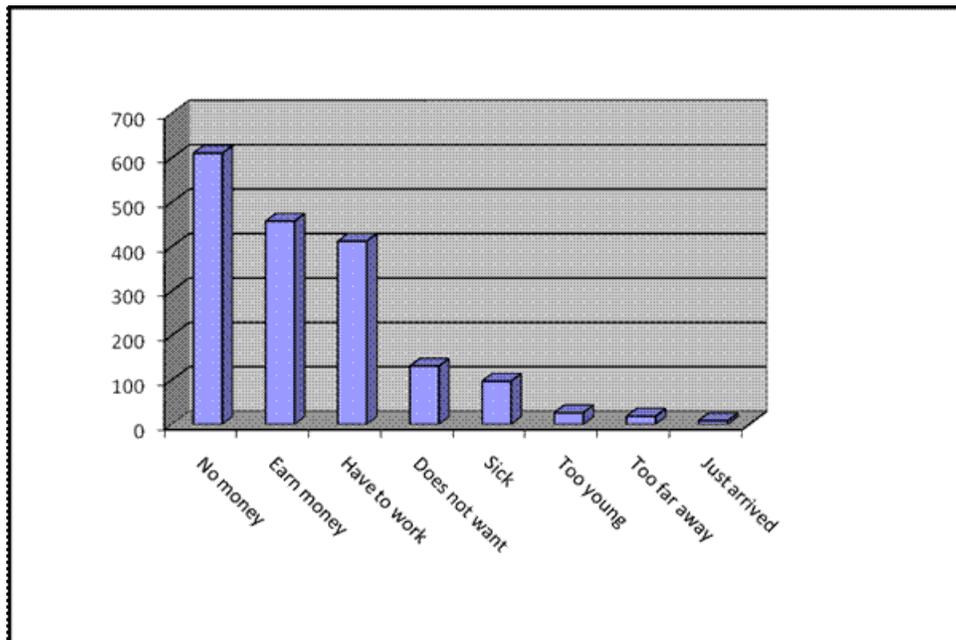
\* Data on school going from one child was unclear, and thus could not be included in this table.

The reasons for not school going most often mentioned, were:

- no money to pay school costs (610 times)
- have to earn money (457 times)
- have to help working (412 times)

These three reasons were often found in combination. This indicates that poverty was often the main reason for children not to go to school and to start working. Other reasons mentioned, were: do not want to go to school (131 times), being handicapped or chronically ill (91 times), being too young (26 times), the school is too far away (18 times), and the family just came to live here (8 times).

**Chart 4.1: Reasons for not school going (number of times mentioned):\***



\* Multiple answers were possible

## 5. Socio-economic background of working children

The information below is drawn from qualitative interviews with 58 children, their parents, village chiefs, health care personnel, school directors and other key people. The aim here is to illuminate the situation of illustrative families in order to help bring the tables and charts of chapter 4 to life.

### 5.1 Social and geographic background

### *5.1.1 Geographic background*

The results of the 1998 census show that the population of Sihanoukville is highly mobile: 52.2% had their previous residence at another place. Most migrants (almost 70%) had come from another province. This was well reflected by the qualitative interviews for this research: all families with working children that were interviewed, were migrants. They came from all over the country (Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Phnom Penh, Svay Rieng, Koh Kong, Takeo), although most came from Kampot, another fishing area bordering Vietnam to the east. Quite a few had come from Kampuchea Krom in Vietnam.<sup>[15]</sup> Many arrived in the eighties (especially in Stung Hav); others came in the nineties (especially in Tumnup Rolok). A few families had recently arrived.

The fishing population seems to move from one place to another. Most people living in Stung Hav came in 1984, when 1000 families from Tumnup Rolok were relocated. Some families who were relocated to Stung Hav had returned to Tumnup Rolok, or had gone to Koh Khyang. Several families had moved from Koh Kong to Koh Khyang or Tumnup Rolok because of frequent Khmer Rouge infiltration in Koh Kong in the eighties. Some families got arrested too often for illegal fishing practices in one place, and thus moved to another. Others moved from Koh Kong or Stung Hav to Koh Khyang because it brought them closer to their relatives in Kampuchea Krom, where they originally came from. Most families in Tumnup Rolok came from Kampot.

Interestingly, less than half of the families interviewed used to work in the fisheries before; many were rice farmers who lost their land (failed harvest, debts, confiscation) or had a small business that did not work out well. Many families from Kampuchea Krom came because their land was confiscated by the Vietnamese Government. Others (from various provinces in Cambodia) had only a small plot of land and decided to give it to their children and start a new life in the fisheries. Most came because they had relatives living here.

### *5.1.2 Household composition*

Most families that were interviewed were large and had many dependents. Their average household size was 6.7 members, which is remarkably higher than the overall average for Sihanoukville (5.5). We found an age-dependency ratio of 0.89 (meaning that, on average, one productive household member has to support 0.89 dependent). That is slightly higher than the overall average for Sihanoukville as presented in the Census: 0.83.

Most children that were interviewed lived with their father, mother and siblings. In 12 families either the father (in most cases) or the mother had died. Two children did not live with their parents at all: one child lived with a port owner, and the other lived with his uncle.

### *5.1.3 Housing, water, sanitation and electricity*

Most families that were interviewed lived in small one or two room houses made from wood and/or palm leaves, with a tin or a thatch roof. Most families in Koh Khyang lived in a wooden house with tin roof. Families in Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav seemed to live in slightly poorer conditions: most lived in a house made from wood and/or palmleaves. In Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav people complained that the roof and walls leaked even when it had rained a little. In Stung Hav some houses were leaning to one side and were close to collapsing into the water. A great part of these villages are built on the sea shore.

Access to clean water was a problem in especially Tumnup Rolok and Koh Khyang. There were many wells in Tumnup Rolok, but they were all located at the land side of the road. The families living along the shore depended on privately owned and distributed piped water, or bought drinking water in containers. Both were more expensive than water that was distributed by the government in other areas. In Tumnup Rolok many households had access to electricity. Most families in Koh Khyang also had both access to electricity and piped water, but the water was

often cut off due to problems in the water reserve and delays in payment by the households. They often had to buy water, or used wells or ponds that were located far away. As Koh Khyang is located at the seaside, it is difficult to dig wells. Few families interviewed in Stung Hav had electricity and/or piped water. They had to buy water, or get it from a well. However, many wells were available at a short distance. Water was less of a problem in Stung Have than it was in Tumnup Rolok and Koh Khyang. In Stung Hav, petroleum was often used as fuel for lighting instead of electricity.

Only four families of the 58 families interviewed had a latrine. The villagers usually used the water below their houses as a toilet, which also served as a trash heap. The water below the houses was often heavily polluted, smelling very bad when the water receded and leading to diseases, especially skin diseases among children.

Even though Tumnup Rolok had more than three times as many households as Koh Khyang, village statistics show that Koh Khyang had almost as many boats as Tumnup Rolok. This was clearly reflected by the families interviewed. All families interviewed in Koh Khyang owned a boat, whereas this was less than 30% among the families interviewed in Stung Hav and Tumnup Rolok. In these two areas the father often worked for pay on boats of others. In 10 cases the father had another job, and in 9 cases the father was permanently ill, absent due to divorce, or had died.

## **5.2 Financial situation**

### *5.2.1 Income and expenditures*

It was difficult for people to estimate their weekly income and expenditures, as incomes were highly unpredictable and money earned was usually spent immediately. Despite difficulties in answering, some tendencies could be discerned. However, the figures below should be taken as indications.

The weekly expenditures for basic necessities of an estimated 60% of the families that were interviewed, were equal to, or exceeding, the average income. During low income weeks, these families did not have enough to eat. There were four different income groups.

The group with the highest incomes were families that owned a large boat, several boats, or had several older male household members that were able to take turns: their boat could leave both in day time and in night-time. They were few. Their average weekly incomes ranged from 300,000 riel (77 US\$) to 600,000 riel (154 US\$). These incomes seem extremely high for rural Cambodia, but it is important to realize that investment costs and recurrent costs are also high (boat, fishing materials, repair, fuel). However, it was clear that the few families owning a large boat, or several boats, were well off and had no financial problems. They all had loans from ACLEDA for buying a boat, an engine or fishing materials, but had no problems repaying.

The families that owned only one small boat with engine had more financial problems. Fishing boats with an engine can catch shrimps, crabs and fish. Their average weekly incomes were between 100,000 and 150,000 riel. This is approximately 26 US\$ to 39 US\$. The investment costs and recurring costs mentioned above were often too high. Reparation costs ranged from 50,000 riel to 200,000 riel per year. Weekly expenditures for fuel took on average already 28% of their income. Food took (on average) another 50% , repayment of debts, medicines, cloths, house rent, water, and petroleum or electricity often took the rest, or more. In case there was no family member to help, the boat owner had to hire a worker, which meant that 10-20% of the profit had to be paid to the hired worker. If the catch was low, or they were not able to leave at all due to bad weather or illness, there was not enough to eat. It seemed that most small boat owners that were interviewed lived on, or just below subsistence level.

The third group consisted of families not owning a boat, but either having one member with a steady job (mechanic, dockerman). Their household income ranged, on average, from 80,000 to 140,000 riel/week (21-36 US\$). They did not face any serious problems.

Families that owned a boat without engine and families that did not own a boat and had to make ends meet on a daily basis, formed the fourth income group. Boats without engine had to stay near the shore and did not spend money on fuel. However, they were not able to use fishing nets (as the nets have to be pulled by a boat with engine) and their catch was therefore low. They usually fished crabs by putting *loob kdaam* (see 6.2). Many families in Stung Hav owned a boat without engine. Families that did not own a boat, depended entirely on different kinds of jobs available in the fish processing business. Their average incomes were between 40,000 to 75,000 riel/week (10-19 US\$), with a range between 21,000 to 187,000 riel/week. Their expenditures on food took on average almost 70% of their income. Medicines were another important cost: illness was a main reason for a family to become indebted to informal money lenders. Other costs were for house rent, water, electricity or petroleum, and clothing. It seemed that most families in this group lived on or below subsistence level. <sup>[16]</sup>

It was difficult for informants to give an indication of the costs for schooling, as many children and their families interviewed were not school going. Moreover, some costs had to be paid at once, whereas others were spread over the year. One important expenditure was for the school uniforms. Estimations ranged from a low 5000 riel (1.3 US\$) to a high 40,000 riel (10.3 US\$). This was the difference between a worn out second hand uniform for very poor children and a brand new one for the better-off. On average, families were spending 20,000 riel on a uniform for their children. School fees were not fixed. They changed according to number of school going children in one family and whether the child had just enrolled or not. Average fees were between 5000 and 8000 riel per year. Poor families were exempted from paying school fees: this was confirmed by both school directors and the families. Costs for books and pens were estimated at 5000 riel – 20,000 riel/year, averaging 10,000 riel (2.6 US\$). The highest costs for school going were obviously the more hidden costs: costs that had to be paid for extra private classes, for "curtains and tablecloth", or for cakes and material that the teacher sells in class. Private class costs 500 riel per hour. Following private class six days per week means an extra cost of 3000 riel/week. The number of private classes taken by poor children depends of course on the ability of the family to pay. Some may take just a few private classes per week, or none at all. The other weekly costs were estimated between 500 and 1000 riel per week. It can thus be concluded that the hidden costs are the most important costs for schooling and can make schooling quite expensive.

### 5.2.2 Debts

Credit was a hotly debated issue at all three locations, partly because fishermen need credit to make investments for their business. A small boat costs 700,000 – 800,000 riel (180-205 US\$). Many fishermen had borrowed money from ACLEDA in order to buy or repair a boat, and buy fishing materials. The families that were financially better off had no problems repaying. For them the loans were an important way to improve their situation. However, poorer fishermen seemed to often face problems with repayment of loans. Loans have to be repaid together with the interest on a monthly basis. However, those who got their boat repaired were unable to go fishing and had no income to repay the loan. Moreover, fishing is a highly unpredictable business: there are weeks with little catch and in case of storms, they cannot go fishing at all. As debtors are fined when they are late one day, many smaller fishermen borrowed from informal moneylenders (asking interest rates of 20%) in order to repay ACLEDA.

People that were unable to borrow from ACLEDA, borrowed from informal moneylenders. This was often the wharf owner who bought fish products from the fishermen when they returned. Fishermen who were not in debt to such a person, were able to choose themselves to whom to sell their catch. Those who were in debt often had to sell their catch to the person to whom they were indebted, for a lower price.

**Table 5.1: Summary of four social-economic groups**

| Social-ec.group                                    | Average weekly income | Credit                                                       | Recurrent costs                            | Problems                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Large boat or several small boats                  | 77-154 US\$           | ACLEDA: no repayment problems                                | High (boat, repair, materials, fuel, etc.) | None                                                                            |
| Small boat with engine                             | 26-39 US\$            | ACLEDA: turn to informal moneylenders to repay to ACLEDA     | High (boat, repair, materials, fuel, etc.) | Financial problems, especially when catch is low. Often indebted to wharf owner |
| No boat but steady job (mechanic, diocker)         | 21-36 US\$            | No loans, or small loans from informal money lenders         | None                                       | None                                                                            |
| Small boat without engine or no boat/no steady job | 10-19 US\$            | Loans from informal money lenders, mostly for curing illness | Low or none                                | financial problems, especially when catch is low                                |

### 5.2.3 Other problems

All three villages saw a considerable reduction in crabs and shrimps over the last few years. This was partly because of large fishing boats from Thailand (near Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav) that fished with modern equipment in the same (Cambodian) waters, reducing the catch of small local fishermen. Koh Khyang had the same problem with Vietnamese boats. According to the people interviewed, these boats were under protection of police or high ranking Cambodian officials. Pirate ships were an important problem in Stung Hav. People lost their boats and lives to sea pirates.

Other reasons for a depletion of water resources were related to the fishing villages themselves. The villages had attracted too many families from other provinces with too many people starting to fish. Over fishing from within has obviously also led to a depletion of resources. Koh Khyang is located in a protected environmental area (Ream National Park), and illegal fishing practices have led to a depletion of water resources. At the same time prices for sea products were falling and the costs for fuel were increasing. It was clear that the standard of living in all three areas had decreased considerably over the last few years.

### 5.3 Schooling

Tumnup Rolok had one school grade 1-9 (Sakura School). This was within 5 to 15 minutes walking distance from most households in the area. It was rebuilt in 1997 by JHP-Japan, and consists now of 6 buildings with 30 rooms. It had 1608 students, 798 female. About 30% of the students were exempted from paying school fees due to poverty.

Stung Hav had three primary schools grade 1-6, one in each Sangkat. We will concentrate here on the school in Tumnup Rolok Thmey, as that is the school where most children working in the fisheries went. Tumnup Rolok Thmey had a primary school, grade 1 to 6. Grades 7 to 9 were available in O Tres. The Tumnup Rolok Thmey Primary School had 1552 students, of which 742 female. The building consisted of 35 rooms. 40% of students were exempted from paying school fees. An estimated 10 to 20% of children in the area were not school going. Absence in class was 10 to 20% per day. According to the director, most students dropped out between the age of 13 and 15 years old.

Koh Khyang had only schooling facilities for grade 1 and 2. The Pou Sothyreak Koh Khyang Primary School had 223 students and 4 rooms. The director of the school estimated that 30% of children in Koh Khyang did not go to school, mostly because they had to help their parents. However, the village chief estimated that this was 40% of the children. Absence in class was 10 to 15% per day. The school lacked teaching materials, access to clean water and toilets. The director would like to expand the school to grade 6. Children had to go to O Chrov to continue their school. This involved costs of 1000 riel/day for motordup. Many dropped out after grade 2 because they cannot afford that.

None of the schools lacked books. UNICEF provided books through the Ministry of Education. Most children and parents were positive about both quality and quantity of school buildings, material and books in Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav. People in Koh Khyang had a different opinion, and complained about both the quality and quantity of school buildings, tables and chairs and books. They were mainly referring to the primary school (only grade 1 and 2) in Koh Khyang. The distances to school were mostly short, between 5 and 15 minutes walking. The most important problem was the school for grades 3 to 6 in O Crov, for which a motorcycle ride was needed (1000 riel/day).

Most parents and children interviewed were fairly positive about the teachers at school: they thought of them as "medium" to "good". Most common complaint was that teachers often ask for extra money. This mostly happened by giving extra, private class outside school hours. Even though attending these extra classes was voluntary, some parents complained that the teachers would not let their child pass to the next grade if they did not attend the extra classes. Others complained that they have to buy cakes and material in class that are sold by the teacher.

Parents and children sometimes complained that the teachers do not explain well, do not come regularly, or beat the children. Especially parents in Koh Khyang complained about the teachers: sometimes children had gone to school for four or five years but were still unable to read or write. This was also attributed to the full classes. Sometimes children did not want to go to school because the teacher beat them. Another reason for not wanting to go to school was shame. Children from very poor families had to buy a school uniform second hand and had no money to bring to school. Some children felt ashamed and were afraid of the other children. Other parents explained that their children do not want to go to school, because they want to earn some pocket money.

Most parents and children thought of schooling as something very useful. When asked what they thought was most important for improving their child's future, a large majority answered "knowledge", and half answered "money". Money was seen as important in order to pay for further studies of their child or to set up a business. A few parents thought of money in order to bribe people to get a job. Only a few parents thought contacts with the right people were the most important agents for change. However, there was still a fairly large group that did not perceive schooling as very useful for their children: this was almost one third of the parents interviewed.

We can conclude that most people living in the three fishing areas perceived schooling as important, also for changing their child's future. They did not have the feeling that they were

completely powerless to make a positive change. However, there were still many families that did not consider schooling as important for their child's future.

#### **5.4 Needs**

Parents, children, village chiefs and other key persons were asked what they thought was most needed in their community: needs in general, and needs that could contribute to a reduction in child labour in particular.

Vocational training for older children was in very high demand in all three locations: sewing for the girls and mechanics (especially boat mechanics) for the boys. Parents were convinced that their children would be able to find a good job if provided the right skills. Children were of the same opinion. As for sewing, girls thought they could start small at home, and later open a little shop at the market. Some also thought that it would be easier to get a job in one of the garment factories if they had sewing skills already. Boys wanted to learn about mechanics, in particular related to boat mechanics and engine repair. People thought that it would keep poor families from spending too much money on boat and engine repair if the child can do it. Moreover, with all the fishing boats that need to go ashore for repair once or twice a year, there would be enough work in this field. In Koh Khyang people wanted a work place for mechanics attached to a training center.

The village chief of Koh Khyang argued that the problem of child labour could not be solved without raising the standard of living in the area. However, he also felt that living conditions cannot be solved as long as too many people keep on fishing. The only way to improve the situation was, according to him, to get people to change their job.

Also in very high demand were improvements in housing conditions. Many people had no house and were dependent on the wharf owner (and often buyer of the incoming fish products) for housing. This meant that they had to sell their catch to the house owner, often receiving a lower price than if they would go somewhere else. Others did have their own house, but the roofs and walls were falling apart, leaking at the slightest rain, and some houses (especially in Stung Hav) were leaning too much to one side. House improvements were in demand at all three locations, but were clearly the most important in Stung Hav. Housing was an important concern for almost all families interviewed in Stung Hav.

Many families requested low interest credit facilities, but on different conditions than offered by ACLEDA. Families that did not own a boat, house or land title had no collateral and thus were unable to get an individual loan from ACLEDA. Another condition that people found difficult to meet was repayment of interest and loan together on a monthly basis. Moreover, the lending period was often perceived as too short. People requested low interest loans and repayment of only the interest on a monthly basis and the borrowed sum of money at once at the end of the period. They also requested that this period be extended to one or two years. Fishermen often need loans to build a boat or to repair one, and cannot start repaying before any profit is made. In Koh Khyang people also had other ideas for investment: start a motortaxi business, raise pigs and chicken, etc.

Improvements in schooling facilities were considered very important in Koh Khyang. People requested for adding school buildings, grades and teachers beyond grades 1 and 2.

Another concern, especially in Koh Khyang, was the availability of clean water. Many houses were connected to piped water, but water was rarely flowing through it, either because there was not enough water or because the family had no money to pay for it. Water cost 2000 riel/m<sup>3</sup>. The water wells were too far away. Some villagers suggested to make water wells in different parts of the village. Most villagers in Tumnuj Rolok had piped water and bought drinking water in

containers. This water was all privately owned and sold. The price was higher than water distributed by the government. The villagers requested pump wells in order to solve the problem.

Many people requested an improvement of the health facilities. There is a lot of Dengue in the area because of polluted water. People in Stung Hav requested for a hospital and free health care for the poor at the health centre. The health centre staff also works privately, and - according to the people - do not help them if they cannot pay for it. People in Tumnup Rolok had the same complaints. People at Koh Khyang related that they do not have to pay for health care at the health centre. However, they hardly ever went there, as the health centre was located in O Crov. They went to see the private "doctors" at the market, which costs 15.000 riel for an examination.

## 6. The nature of child labour

### 6.1 Decision making

Most children that were interviewed worked long hours and did not go to school. In only a few cases the parents had forced the child to start working. In all other cases it was either a mutual decision of parents and child, or it was never discussed. Many children perceived it as a natural process: they follow other children who dropped out from school and started working. Some liked to work with their friends.

Even though parents usually did not force their child to work and most children started to work voluntarily, many of them had no choice. Families owning a small fishing boat earned too little to hire *koun day*. *Koun day* are people who work for pay on fishing boats. They are usually young men in their early twenties from other provinces that came on their own in search for work. They came temporarily and often lived with the boat owner's family. But *koun day* can also be married men, or young but strong teenagers. Families in Stung Hav and Tumnup Rolok that did not own a boat often had the head of household and/or 15 to 17 year old male children working as *koun day*. *Koun day* were usually paid 10 to 20% of the profit. Many families that owned only one small boat could not afford to hire *koun day* and needed the help of their children instead. There was also an important aspect of teaching skills from parents to child, particularly in fishing and fishing net repair.

The children who worked in fish, shrimp and crab processing businesses had started to work mostly because they had to help the family and earn extra money to contribute to the family's income. For families that lived on or below subsistence level the extra help and earnings were essential for their survival.

### 6.2 Fishing

Most children working on boats at sea went with their father on their own boat, although quite a few children that were interviewed worked for pay on boats owned by others. Most children went with small boats, sometimes with and sometimes without an engine.

Some children only went in daytime. Boats without an engine stayed close to the shore in shallow waters and usually caught shells, or crab with *loob kdaam*. <sup>[17]</sup> An average of 50 *loob kdaam* were attached to one another by a string, and were slowly dropped into the water. After a while, they were pulled up again through a hooked stick. Many younger children (from 12 or sometimes 10 years old) were involved in this method of fishing. The youngest children prepare bait, and put the *loob kdaam* only in very shallow water; the older ones put them in deeper water. Many families with small boats in Stung Hav caught crab through this method.

*Sok is 12 years old and lives with his parents and three younger siblings in Stung Hav. His parents came in 1988 from Kampuchea Krom in Vietnam. They could not earn a living there, and decided to follow a cousin who had settled in Stung Hav before. Their house collapsed in a storm recently: they now live with relatives (in total 19 people) in a small one-room house made from palm leaves.*

*Sok's father has a small boat without engine, so they have to stay close to the shore. Sok dropped out from school at grade 2. His father started teaching him how to fish crab since he was 10 years old. He needed a helping hand, and his oldest son was the only one who could do that. At 6 o'clock in the morning he prepares the bait for the crabs, then they leave. They put the loob kdaam into the water and wait for about 30 minutes. Then he pulls them out again with a long hooked stick. They do this two or three times/day. If there is no crab at one place, they go to another one. When they return home before lunch, they sell the crab or keep them to boil and peel themselves and sell the meat at a higher price. They return to sea after lunch and come back at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.*  
[Interview code 2-4]

Boats with engine were able to fish with nets. They left early around 3 A.M. and returned at 4 or 5 PM (12-13 hours). They mostly caught crab, shrimps and fish. *Kie*<sup>[18]</sup> and shell fishing boats (only in Koh Khyang) left at 7 or 8 AM. and returned between 2 and 5 PM (6-8 hours). Boats usually fished at different places. First they put the nets into the water at one place. When the nets were pulled up again (a boat often has more than one net) and the fish and shrimps were taken out, the boat would go to another place and throw the nets into the water again. This was usually repeated several times. If the catch was good the first time, they returned home early. If the catch was bad, they would stay overnight. Boats that fished in day time had to stay, on average, 2 to 3 times per week overnight due to a bad catch. The ages of the children interviewed were between 12 and 17. Young children only did the lighter tasks, such as helping to prepare the boat for fishing, help put the fishing net into the water, take the shrimps and fishes out of the net, sort them, clean the boat, and pump out water. The older children (15-17 years old) worked like adults, including helping take the nets out of the water. This was especially the case for children who worked for pay on other boats. Children who went with their father or with an older brother mostly helped taking the lower, lighter end of the nets out of the water.

Some children interviewed worked always during night time in order to catch crab and shrimps. Night time fishing gives a higher catch, especially shrimps. The boats usually left around 5 o'clock in the afternoon and returned at 6 o'clock in the morning (13 hours). The activities were the same as described above. The children had time to sleep on the boats.

A small group of children interviewed left for several days, weeks, or in one case even several months. Unfortunately, we were not able to meet the child who left for several months, and his parents were not able to tell much. As for the other children who left 2 to 3 days: their activities were mostly the same as for those mentioned above. The boats are larger, have more space to freeze the catch. *Glacé*, taking care of freezing the products, was often an important activity for the children on these boats. The sea products are sorted, and put in layers covered with ice in cool boxes. The ice regularly has to be renewed. The boats go ashore on an island where the fishermen eat.

*Kuy is 13 years old and lives with his uncle and aunt in Tumnup Rolok. His parents are divorced and his mother lives in a pepper plantation. He dropped out from school at grade 2, because he no longer wanted to go. His uncle brought him to Tumnup Rolok when he was 10 years old. His uncle owns a medium boat and needed a helping hand. Kuy needed to earn money to help support his mother in the pepper plantation.*

*They usually leave at 3 o'clock in the early morning. At 5 o'clock they reach the fishing grounds and put the fishing nets into the water. Then he cleans the boat and pumps water out. From 6 to 8 o'clock he can have a rest. Then he helps his uncle take the nets out of the water, he takes the fish out of the nets and puts them in containers. Then they put the nets back into the water. They repeat this many times. He puts the sea products in small containers and covers them with ice. He regularly has to refresh the ice. They stay at sea for two or three days in a row. Kuy earns 10% of the profit they make and some cloths. That is approximately 40,000 riel per month. He spends 5% on sweets, and saves 20% in order to buy a pair of shoes. 75% is sent to his mother.*

*His uncle thinks the work is not too difficult, but would prefer a job in a factory for his nephew in the future. Kuy finds the work normal and hopes to have an own boat in the future.*  
[interview code 1-3]

One of the most dangerous fishing activities is putting *loob trey tokkae*. One has to go into the water with a mask, a tube that is linked to an oxygen bottle in the boat, and plumb or stones attached to the waist in order to reach a depth of 8 to 12 meters. The *loob trey tokkae* are larger than the *loob kdaam* (for catching crab) and are meant to catch a particular kind of fish, *trey tokkae*. The person who stays in the boat is responsible for monitoring the oxygen bottle and pulling up the person. In general, people were of the opinion that this work could only be done by people over 20 years old, preferably over 30 years old. However, one can find exceptions of 16 and 17-year old children who learn it from their father in more shallow waters, in depths of 3 to 4 meters. Children are usually responsible for surveying boat and bottle and pulling up the person (mostly father).

#### *Payment*

A total of 22 children fishing on boats were interviewed. 13 of them went with their father; 9 worked for pay (mostly in Stung Hav). Most children of 15-17 years old working on boats of others received the regular payment, which is 10 to 20% of the profit, after deducting costs for fuel. Younger children working for pay received less. The earnings depended on strength of the children, the size of the boats and the catch. The earnings of the children ranged between 2000 and 10,000 riel per day. Mostly, earnings for 15-17 year old children were approximately 5000 riel/day.

#### *Hazards*

Most common work hazards were cutting hands and getting blisters when pulling the nets out of the water, and red swollen hands because of the combination of salt water, ice and fluids from sea products. None of the children interviewed used gloves when pulling nets, but said that they would use them if provided. Most children also complained of backaches because of the heavy nets. Stomach aches due to irregular meals and headaches due to the smell of rotten fish were also reported

More serious hazards were falling into the water (which happened frequently) and the possibility of drowning. Most children reported being afraid of storms, big waves and sharks. Only a few boats, usually the larger ones staying at sea for longer periods, had life vests. In many cases life vests were lacking because they were too expensive. Or they were not perceived as necessary, as the boats carries plastic containers for fuel that can be used for flotation in case of an emergency. Another reason for not using life vests was that the boats were too small. We also frequently heard that people did not want to bring life vests because that would bring bad luck. In a few cases, life vests were available but not used (not brought along) because of the reasons mentioned above. However, most respondents said that they would use them if provided. During a group session in Tumnap Rolok the question about the use of life vests developed into a discussion among participants. At first, people explained why they did not use life vests and why they would not need them either. However, by the end of the discussion people acknowledged that it would be

better to have life vests, and that they would use them if other people also used them. The use of life vests may thus be more of a "nobody uses them, so I don't use them either" issue. Peer pressure, awareness of what others are thinking and doing and fear of ridicule may be important issues here.

Other hazards mentioned were robberies (which often leads to robbers killing the owner of the boat) and being struck by lightning. However, nobody actually knew children involved in these accidents and incidents.

It was not possible for the researchers to get an idea of the frequency of serious or fatal accidents with children on fishing boats. None of the persons interviewed seemed to know cases personally, but all "knew" that it happened. Estimations ranged from 0 to 10 children per year. A medical doctor in Tumnup Rolok indicated a number of accidents with engines leading to death two to three times per year. The director of the Health Centre in Stun Hav recalled ten accidents with boat engines per month. However, all cases were adults. Some *koun day* in their early twenties had lost their fingers, or part of their arm due to accidents with engines. According to the village chief in Tumnup Rolok Thmey, Stung Hav, those accidents also happen among 15, 16 and 17 years old. According to him, three or four children were drown in 1998, but no accidents with children seemed to have happened since. However, fatal accidents may not be reported.

Another potential hazard that was not mentioned by any child or parents, but only by doctors, was the possibility of contracting HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS rate among fishermen is known to be high. The possibility of sexual abuse on boats was not mentioned by anyone, but could be a problem as well. Fishermen will probably soon be included in the National program on HIV/AIDS as one of the high-risk groups.

### 6.3 Net repair

*Neang is 17 years old and lives with her father, mother, younger sister and two koun day from the province in a small house from wood and tin in Koh Khyang. It is a house at the wharf and they can stay there without paying rent, if father sells the catch for a lower price to the house owner. Her father goes fishing every day with the two koun day. Her mother repairs fishing nets. Neang's mother started teaching her how to repair nets when she was 13 years old.*

*Neang starts working at 7 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock. Then she helps her mother cooking, has lunch and starts work again at 12 o'clock. She works until 3 o'clock. When her father returns from sea, she helps him collect the shrimps. If there is a lot of work, she continues repairing fishing nets from 7 to 10 o'clock in the evening. It happens on average three times a week that she also has to work in the evening. Neang likes her work and wants to continue doing it in the future. But if she has to work too many hours, her body starts to hurt because she has to sit for too long periods. She earns 2000 to 5000 riel per day. She keeps half for herself and gives half to her mother.*

*[Interview code 3-11]*

Most children involved in fishing net repair were taught by their mother. Children learn how to repair nets from the age of 12 onwards. Most children interviewed in this category helped their mother, although several also worked for pay. Most children repairing fishing nets had a net repair "workshop" at home and worked there. Some went to work at another net repair place in the village, often together with the mother.

They used a knife to cut worn parts, and a special needle to repair them. Some combined fishing net repair with schooling. They worked four hours on school days and five to seven hours on Thursday and Sunday. Most fishing net repairers worked three to twelve hours per day, four to

seven days per week, depending on the amount of work. Several children related that they continue working up to 10 o'clock in the evening if there is a lot of work. This happened on average two days per week.

Earnings were difficult to estimate as payment usually takes place per net rather than per day. There are many different kinds of nets, requiring different material and different techniques. Some nets are large and difficult to repair, whereas others can be repaired in a very short time period. Some reparation work took only a few hours: others a few days. Sometimes there were many nets to be repaired, and at other days none. However, average earnings per day seemed to range between 2500 and 5000 riel. Children that were able to repair nets independently, received payment equal to that of adults.

Most problems were related with sitting for long hours, which causes backaches and makes the children feel bored. Some reported small cuts.

#### **6.4 Non-factory based fish, shrimp and crab processing**

There were usually many children at the wharf waiting for incoming boats, hoping to get a little job. Some did this after school together with their friends in order to earn some pocket money. They bought cakes, or used the money for school going.

Many young children whose families had to take on any small job in order to make ends meet, could also be found at the wharf looking for all kinds of jobs. They usually went with their mother and siblings. They did whatever needed to be done: sort incoming fish, prepare fish for steaming (put them in special baskets), peel raw shrimps, clean and boil crab and shrimps, peel boiled crab and shrimps, peel snails and peel palm fruit. If no work was available, some went to other places to sell cakes or collect thatch for making roofs. Most started at an early age, from 5, 6, 7 or 8 years onwards. However bad it may seem to see children peeling crab at such a young age, one should be careful to judge it. The researchers saw very young children who seemed to help peeling to have something to do while the mother took them with her to the wharf, rather than to increase the amount of crabs peeled. Their peeling was usually so slow, and the amount of crab eaten so much, that it can hardly have contributed to their mother's work.

The families that had money to buy crab and shrimps at the wharf were able take the work home. They bought 10 to 20 kilo of crab or shrimp (2000-3000 riel/kilo, depending on the quality), boiled it at home and peeled it. After peeling, only half of the original weight remained. They sold it at 5000-6000 riel/kilo. For example, 20 kilo crab or shrimp bought at 2000 riel/kilo gives 10 kilo meat that can be sold at 5000 riel/kilo. The profit after a long day of peeling with the whole family can than be 10,000 riel.

Work times were highly dependent on 1) whether the child was school going, 2) whether the child worked in order to earn some pocket money or to help the family, 3) the poverty of the family, and 4) the availability of work. The first two points speak for themselves. If a family is very poor and has to make ends meet on a daily basis and every bit of income is needed, work times can be long: 7 to 14 hours per day, six to seven days per week. Most children interviewed worked between 3 to 10 hours/day, four to seven days per week. Even though many families are on the outlook for jobs, work is not always available. If the weather is bad, boats cannot go fishing and there is no catch. If there is no catch, there is nothing to boil, sort or peel. In those times, there is almost no work at all in the fishing areas.

*Tam is 15 years old. Her family does not own a boat. Her father works as koun day. She dropped out from school at grade 3 in order to help the family earning money, because besides her, there are two younger brothers and a sister to support. They live in a one room house that is partly made from wood and partly from palm leaves.*

*Sometimes, when the boats have returned at night time with a good catch, the owner of a small workshop that steams fish nearby comes to their house at 2 or 3 AM. This only happens from July to October. The workshop has 5 or 6 regular workers, but if there is too much fish, they call other workers to help prepare the fish. She then goes with her mother to prepare baskets, take fish from the salt water and put them in the baskets. They get paid per basket. If the owner of the workshop does not call them, they go early in the morning to the wharf to see what jobs are available. Mostly they can find some work boiling and peeling shrimps and small crab, or they help sorting the newly arrived fish. Tam and her mother work 4 to 15 hours per day, 4 to 7 days per week, depending on the availability of work. It happens quite often that she has to work in night time, from 12 to 6 AM.*

*Peeling shrimps and crabs cause small cuts in her hands and her mouth, as she uses her teeth to crack the legs of the crab. Sometimes, if she peels crab and shrimps for a too long period, her hands get red and swollen. If the catch of the fishermen is good, there is a lot of work to do and she can earn 4000 or 5000 riel. But sometimes there is not much to do and she earns only 2000 riel.*

### **6.5 Factory based shrimp peeling**

Tumnup Rolok has three fish processing factories. The main activities in all three factories are shrimp peeling, cleaning, freezing and packing. The three factories have different owners, but all are private/joint ventures from Taiwan or Hong Kong. The products are sold to Hong Kong. The two most important factories are "Sun Wah Co. Ltd." and "Lian Heng Investment Co Ltd".

Sun Wah opened in 1996 and is one among several branches of the Hong Kong based Sun Wah. Its products are all exported to Hong Kong. The factory had 113 salaried workers, of whom 80 shrimp production workers (the rest were staff, guards etc). According to the policy of the factory, the workers were between 18 and 45 years old. Two thirds of them were female. When there are many shrimps, the factory employs sometimes up to 120 extra casual workers from the neighbourhood.

Lian Heng opened late 1995 and is a Hong Kong and Taiwanese private, joint venture. Its products are exported to Hong Kong. Lian Heng had 51 shrimp production workers, of whom 13 were female. They were between 18 and 25 years old. If there are many shrimps, 70 to 200 casual workers can be employed at the factory.

The working conditions and hygienic circumstances in the three factories were good. There was a clean environment and protection measures (overall, boots, gloves) were provided to all salaried worker. There were toilets, bathrooms and clean water, and there were dormitories for workers from other provinces. The factories only employed workers over 17 years old, although some exceptions of 16 and 17 years old were found, because the workers concerned lied about their age. The workers worked eight hours per day (8-12 AM and 2-6 PM), six days per week and received a salary of 40 US\$ (for beginners) to 80 US\$/month. If there was work in the evening, usually from 7-10 PM, the workers got paid 150%. The salaried workers could take free meals at the canteen, or receive extra money to buy food outside (2500 riel).

The salaried workers worked in four different groups: shrimp buying, shrimp peeling, shrimp cleaning and shrimp freezing and packing. The fresh shrimps were first frozen for one night, then they were peeled, cleaned and washed, classified by size, wrapped and packed, and frozen. The workers were happy to work at the factory. Many people in Tumnup Rolok wanted to find a job in one of the factories, and in Stung Hav and Koh Khyang, people repeatedly said that they wanted a factory to be set up in their neighbourhood.

The casual workers were paid per kilo of peeled shrimps, which encouraged the workers from outside to bring along their children to help. This seemed to happen mainly at two of the three

factories (Lian Heng and Sun Wah). Lian Heng had only limited space for casual workers. Workers often had to peel outside the building in the open air. They were not provided any protection measures. However, if provided, the question remains whether the workers would use them. Although peeling raw shrimps for a prolonged period can cause skin problems (red, swollen hands due to a combination of salt water, ice and shrimp fluids, also called *tik sii day*, literally "water that eats the hands"), use of gloves would slow down the pace of shrimp peeling considerably and reduce the income. Moreover, the skin problems easily heal within one or two days. Children often helped to increase the amount of kilos peeled, not the least because their small fingers can peel shrimps quickly. Most workers explained that they would not use gloves if provided.

Casual workers could earn between 3000 and 10,000 riel/day. They got paid per kilo peeled, which was 300 riel/kilo for bigger shrimps and 400 riel/kilo for smaller ones.

### 6.6 Ice handler

A few older children (15 to 17 years old) had a job at the wharf. They selected the incoming products by sort and quality, cleaned them and stored them in containers with ice (*glacé*). They carried the containers to the trucks that bring the products to factories, or brought the products to the market with the wharf owner to sell them. The most important problems were red swollen hands (*tik sii day*).

Work times were irregular, and depended on the times of arrival of boats. They usually worked from 6 o'clock in the morning to 11 o'clock, and sometimes from 9 to 11 o'clock in the evening. They earned 30,000 to 40,000 riel/month.

### 6.7 Perception of work and life and vision of the future

A clear majority of the working children that were interviewed, did not perceive their work activities as difficult. Most children working in fish and shrimp processing activities found their work easy. Those who perceived their work negatively, often linked their work to their living conditions in general. A majority of the children found their current life hard and difficult. When there is work to do, there is food to eat, but at other days there is not enough money to buy rice. They were well aware of the necessity of their work and the importance of their contribution to the family's survival. The perception of children fishing at sea was different: many did not perceive their work very positively. Most were afraid of storms and big waves, and of sharks. Several also related that the work itself is hard (especially pulling the fishing net out of the water). However, not all children were required to do heavy work on the boats.

Parents were in general less positive about their children working. They reported being very worried about their children leaving by boat, because of fear for accidents: "when the children go fishing at sea and there is a strong wind, the parents pray." Parents were in general most positive about fishing net repair. Approximately half of the parents whose children worked in shrimp and fish processing businesses (either home or factory based) found it appropriate work for their children. The other half found their children too young to work, and would prefer to send them to school. However, other parents found work healthy for their children. Some parents were afraid that their children will end up as hooligans. Some of the fishing areas are known for youth gangs. One mother: "Some people say that I exploit my children (...), I don't exploit them, I teach my child to be more interested in working than in *dae leeng*<sup>[19]</sup>. They go with friends. At first, it is not a problem, but I am afraid that later they will become hooligans when they grow up."

Parents hoped that their children would be able to find other jobs in the future. Their hopes were that they can find work as a tailor (for girls), in a factory (garment, shoe or fish processing factory), in a small business (selling noodles, sugar cane juice, groceries, etc.), or as a mechanic

(for boys). Many children hoped to stay in the same business, but become the owner of a large boat in the future. Girls often wanted to become a tailor, or start a small business. Both parents and their children thought that, in reality, they would do exactly the same in the future as they were doing now.

## 7. Conclusion and recommendations

### 7.1 Socio-economic background

The fishing communities are a highly mobile population. Most came from all over the country, and had tried out different places before settling in Tumnuh Rolok, Koh Khyang or Stung Hav. Many (especially those living in Tumnuh Rolok) were afraid of forced relocation. In the eighties Stung Hav was developed as a new location for the overpopulated Tumnuh Rolok. Most people currently living in Stung Hav were living in Tumnuh Rolok before, but were relocated to Stung Hav. Some do not own a house, but rent it. Some live with the wharf owner, who obliges them to sell their catch to him for a low price.

The working children came from large families with many dependents. They lived in very basic, poor housing conditions. Access to clean water was an important problem in especially Tumnuh Rolok and Koh Khyang. Poor housing was a main concern in Stung Hav. Most families interviewed seemed to live on or below subsistence level. The poorest families were the ones that do not own a boat, or owned only a small boat. Small boats with an engine provide a higher income than boats without, but the costs for fuel and repair undo this advantage.

Most small boat owners had loans from ACLEDA in order to pay costs for boat construction and repair, fishing materials and fuel. They often had difficulties repaying their loans. Many were forced to borrow from informal money lenders in order to repay ACLEDA. These informal money lenders were often the wharf owners, obliging the debtors to sell their catch to them at a lower price. Families that did not own a boat often had difficulties to make ends meet. They went to the wharf every morning to take whatever little job was available.

**Table 7.1: Summary of four social-economic groups**

| Social-ec.group                            | Average weekly income* | Credit                                                   | Recurrent costs                            | Problems                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Large boat or several small boats          | 77-154 US\$            | ACLEDA: no repayment problems                            | High (boat, repair, materials, fuel, etc.) | None                                                                            |
| Small boat with engine                     | 26-39 US\$             | ACLEDA: turn to informal moneylenders to repay to ACLEDA | High (boat, repair, materials, fuel, etc.) | Financial problems, especially when catch is low. Often indebted to wharf owner |
| No boat but steady job (mechanic, diocker) | 21-36 US\$             | No loans, or small loans from informal money lenders     | None                                       | None                                                                            |
| Small boat without engine or no            | 10-19 US\$             | Loans from informal money                                | Low or none                                | financial problems, especially when                                             |

|                    |  |                                    |              |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------|
| boat/no steady job |  | lenders, mostly for curing illness | catch is low |
|--------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------|

\* The figures in this column should be taken as an indication (see 5.2.1)

The living standard in all three places was obviously decreasing. The three fishing areas have attracted a large number of families, which have led to over-fishing, environmental degradation (in Koh Khyang) and falling prices for sea products. Moreover, the fishermen were plagued by violent piracy (Stung Hav), and illegal fishing practices by large Thai (Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav) or Vietnamese (Koh Khyang) fishing boats, using special lights and chemicals to catch large amounts of fish. And last but not least: the price for fuel has increased sharply.

## 7.2 The magnitude of child labour in the fisheries

The research team found a total of 1678 working children in the three fishing areas in Sihanoukville.<sup>[20]</sup> Stung Hav (the largest fishing community) had 981 working children, Tumnup Rolok had 590 working children, and Koh Khyang 107.

The children were involved in many different activities: fishing on a small boat, fishing on a large boat for two or three days, sometimes two or three weeks, or sometimes even for one or two months in a row, repairing fishing nets, shrimp peeling in a factory (raw shrimps), peeling boiled shrimps and/or crabs at the sea side (hired by the wharf owner), peeling boiled shrimps or crabs at home, working at the wharf to freeze sea products coming in and carry them to the truck transporting them to the factory ("glacé"), and numerous other jobs, such as steaming fish, sorting fish, sorting fish, etc.

Most children were involved in fish, shrimp and crab processing (at home, at the wharf or at the factory). 61% of all working children counted peeled crabs or shrimps at home: almost 65% of them were girls. In total, more than 54% of the working children were girls. 331 children fished at sea on a small boat (with or without engine). Most of them were from Stung Hav: 187 children in Stung Hav, 82 children in Tumnup Rolok and 62 children in Koh Khyang. Some (51 children) worked on larger boats and left several days or weeks in a row. More than 91% of children fishing at sea were boys.

Children of all ages worked in the fisheries: 553 children were below 13 years old (33%), 394 children were 13 or 14 years old (24%) and 731 children were between 15 and 17 years old (44%). The youngest children mostly worked in the fish, shrimp and crab processing businesses. However, some young children also worked on boats at sea: 30 children below 13 years old worked on small boats and two on large boats. Children of all ages could be found as casual workers at the shrimp peeling factories.

48% of the working children went to school, but combined it as much as possible with work. Most of them worked in fishing net repair or fish, shrimp and crab processing (mostly peeling). Many were between 6 and 12 years old (22% of all working children).

Almost 13% had dropped out of school, but worked only part time. Another group of children worked full time or more than that, or worked at unpredictable times. They were unable to combine it with schooling. This was a group of 658 children (39% of the working children): 393 in Stung Hav, 197 in Tumnup Rolok and 68 in Koh Khyang. 70% of these children were between 15 and 17 years old (485 children), although many were younger. 18% of this group were 13 or 14 years old (119 children), and 12% were below 13 years old (81 children).

Almost 57% of the working children did not go to school or did this very irregularly (58% in Tumnup Rolok, 53% in Stung Hav and 83% in Koh Khyang). The most important reasons for not

school going were a lack of money to pay the costs, having to earn money for the family, and having to help working. Lack of money was the most important reason most often mentioned, but the three reasons were often found in combination. The fourth reason was that children did not want to go to school.

### 7.3 The nature of child labour

It is not easy to understand the nature of child labour in the fisheries in Sihanoukville, as child labour takes so many forms. However, if we look at the group of child workers whose work is essential for the family that is, the poorest fisher families, we can roughly distinguish three different groups of child workers.

The first group consists of children who work in the fish, shrimp and crab processing businesses. It is the group of children that goes to the wharf every morning to take on any work that is available, often with their mother and siblings. If there are a lot of shrimps at the factories, they go to peel there. Or they repair fishing nets with their mother at home or in a small workshop. The work itself is not difficult or hazardous. Small cuts and red swollen hands (*tik sii day*) were the most common complaints but heal easily. The most important problems for this group of children were the long sitting periods, which cause backaches and boredom for children who would rather run around and play. However, many of these children come from very poor families and every bit of income is needed to make ends meet. Their work is essential for the family's survival. The work times are highly dependent on the work available and can range from 4 hours to 14 hours per day. Children from all age groups can be found doing this work. They are paid according to the number of kilos peeled, the number of baskets prepared, etc., equal to that of adults. They can earn 2000 to 5000 riel per day. According to the child labour matrix of Gourley, this qualifies for the label "child work", with some indicators of minor and more serious forms of child labour. The most important problems for this group of children are the long periods of sitting, the sometimes long work days and the inability to attend school.

The second group of working children are the children that work on boats with their father or other family members. Their father needs a helping hand and has no money to hire someone else. The boats leave early in the morning at 3 AM. and return at 4 or 5 PM. If the catch is bad, the boats stay at sea overnight. Some boats only fish during night time, leaving around 5 PM and returning the next morning. Times spent at sea can thus be very long. However, there is usually enough time to rest on the boats. The child prepares the boat, the bait for crabs, helps putting the nets and/or the *loob kdaam* (to catch crab) into the water, takes out the fishes and crab from the net, sorts them, puts them in containers with ice, cleans the boat, and pumps water from the boat. Fathers usually do not request their children to do heavy tasks, such as taking the heavy nets from the water. Sometimes the children help taking the net out of the water at the lower, lighter end. Minor injuries such as cuts and blisters from the fishing net and crabs, and red swollen hands from the salty water, ice and fluids from sea products were easily healed in one or two days. Accidents happened frequently: children who fell asleep on the boat and fell into the water, slipping away over squid on the boat, etc. These accidents were rarely serious. However, they can be fatal. Boats sometimes sink in storms and the children can drown. Most people knew that this happened, but were unable to give estimates of the number of children that drowned per year. Nobody knew such families personally. If we take the child labour matrix, we see that the indicators are almost equally divided over child work, minor forms, more serious forms, and worst forms of child labour. It is clear that we can no longer talk here about child work. The most important problems are the inability to attend school, the extremely long work times (although there are enough rests), in case of pulling the nets out of the water, heavy lifting, and potential serious long-term health risks that can be fatal.

The third group are the children that work for pay on other boats. Their work activities and hazards are similar to those of the children going with their father, except that children in this

group are often expected to work like adults and have to work harder. They have to pull out the heavy fishing nets and are more prone to exploitation. Some also drive the boat, and accidents with the engine can happen. Accidents with engines are, in general, known to be one of the most frequent and dangerous hazards when fishing at sea. It can lead to amputation of fingers or hands, or can even be fatal. There are many accidents in a year with engines, but we found no evidence of children involved in such accidents.

In conclusion, we found the following work hazards in the fisheries, in order of frequency (most to least frequent):

- cuts (from peeling shrimps and crabs or from the strings of the heavy fishing nets);
- lower back aches (from sitting down to peel or repair nets for too long periods);
- swollen hands (due to a combination of continuous wet hands from the salty sea water, ice to keep the sea products cold, and fluids from the sea products);
- stomach aches (from irregular meals, especially on boats);
- breathing problems and headaches due to bad smell of rotten fish and hard work;
- falling into the water when falling asleep on the boat, slipping away over squid, or due to high waves/storms. Most children know how to swim, but a few don't. Most boats don't have life vests. Small boats have too little space, and bringing along life vests is believed to bring bad luck. Moreover, most boats carry small plastic containers that can be used in case of emergency. However, if provided they might use them;
- fear for storm, big waves, sharks.
- accidents with the engine of the boat.
- violent piracy at sea (especially in Stung Hav)
- HIV/AIDS infection for 16-17 year olds working for pay on boats of others, especially those leaving several days/weeks/months.

#### **7.4 The causes of child labour**

Poor living conditions were a main reason for child work and child labour, and worsening conditions may make the situation for children worse in the years to come. Our sense is that the situation regarding child labour in the fisheries at this moment is not that bad. A large group of working children is doing small chores or earning some pocket money. Another large group combines more regular work, necessary for the household's survival, with schooling (child work). A smaller group is involved in work activities that could be called "minor" or "more serious" forms of child labour. However, with the decreasing living standard in all three areas, the situation with regard to child labour may easily change to the worse, if nothing is done. Children in families that own a boat often have to help their father because the family does not have enough money to hire an extra worker. Children in other families have to help make ends meet by trying to get any job that is available.

Serious forms of child labour in the fisheries can be found at the boats fishing at sea. The work itself may not be too heavy, but there are important potential dangers. Child labour on fishing boats is, however, not only linked to poor living conditions. A transfer of skills from father to son (and sometimes daughter) is an important aspect that should not be overlooked.

For Tumnup Rolok and Stung Hav child work and child labour were not primarily related to a lack of availability of schooling. Both areas have good schooling facilities up to grade 9. However, an important problem are the costs related to studying. Even though schooling is free for the poorest (and will become free for everybody next year), there are many other costs related to schooling: uniform, teacher fees for extra classes, costs for buying pens and notebooks, chalk, cake, etc. Those costs are often too high for very poor families.

Many children drop out after the second grade and start working. It seems a somehow natural process to drop out from school after a few grades and start earning money.

This situation was different for Koh Khyang, where only teaching facilities are available up to grade 2. Children who want to continue, have to go to O Crov, which is for many too far away.

## 7.5 Needs and recommendations

The most serious forms of child labour in the fisheries are mainly linked to poor living conditions. Therefore, activities should be aimed primarily at improving the living standard of poor and poorest households in the three areas.

Koh Khyang has recently set up a fishing community, in order to tackle those problems. It focuses both on improving the fisheries businesses (for example through replanting mangrove that attracts fish, and starting a crab-raising initiative) and providing alternatives, such as livestock raising. This seems an important initiative with a lot of potential that is worth supporting.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC support the fishing community in Koh Khyang, ensuring that the poor and poorest households are equally represented and that the members are provided with tools and confidence through a training programme that is linked to basic skills that are necessary to run such a community in a successful and truly participatory way. Possible examples are communication skills, leadership skills, strategies to link up with possible donors, negotiation skills, advocacy skills and accounting skills. The purpose of these communities would be to investigate their own situation, find solutions for problems and develop concrete proposals for activities that may be supported by ILO-IPEC or other donor organisations. Activities should focus on both improving fisheries businesses and providing alternatives.
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC support activities aimed at improving the fisheries businesses and alternatives, that the fishing community deems necessary and worth trying.
- We recommend that ILO-IPEC facilitates, in cooperation with the Provincial Department of Environment, the setting up of similar fishing communities in Tumnap Rolok and Stung Hav/Tumnap Rolok Thmey.

Vocational training was in very high demand in all three areas. People were convinced that they would be able to find a job if provided the proper skills.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC, in cooperation with Provincial Departments of Education and Social Affairs, set up vocational training programs for young people. Vocational training could focus on mechanics, boat repair (there is a lot of potential for engine repair in fishing areas) and sewing. Any vocational training should be linked to some financial help (credit) and provision of a set of tools at graduation, in order to set up an own workshop or sewing place.

At this moment poorest families do not easily have access to credit from ACLEDA, as house, land or boats are needed as a collateral. Most poorest household own none of these. Families that do have access but are poor, have a problem repaying loans on the conditions of ACLEDA. Credit was in high demand in all three areas, as fishermen have to make a lot of investments to improve their business.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC provide credit facilities to poorest households, which should be linked to training and providing advice, as well as monitoring of the people taking loans, in order to avoid serious repayment problems. There should be some flexibility in the repayment schemes.

Koh Khyang does not have sufficient and proper schooling facilities. The fact that children have to go to O Crov to continue schooling after the second grade, causes many to drop out and start working.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC investigate the possibilities for expansion of the primary school in Koh Khyang (at least up to grade 4) or improve access to the school in O Chrov through transportation and/or road improvement.

The most serious work hazards were related to fishing on boats. Almost no boats carried life vests, for various reasons. However, our sense is that life vests would be used if provided. It could take some time, but if some people start using them, others will follow. Although many reasons were given for not taking aboard life vests (superstition, too expensive, no place, no need), the main reason may rather be linked to "nobody uses them, so I don't use them either".

Cuts and blisters when pulling fishing nets out of the water are easy to overcome when using gloves. Most people said they would use gloves if provided.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC provide life vests and gloves to poor families that go fishing by boat

Sanitation, lack of clean water and poor housing conditions were important problems in the fishing communities. Many diseases (diarrhoea and skin problems) were related to poor sanitation and poor housing conditions. There were hardly any latrines in the area and the water close to the shore (under the houses) was heavily polluted.

- We recommend that ILO-IPEC investigate the situation of clean water and sanitation in all three areas. Latrines could be build, more wells could to be dug, houses could be improved, water could be cleaned and a system of garbage collection could be set up. Such activities can only succeed if linked to an awareness raising and health education program in order to change habits.

Important problems for the three fishing communities are piracy at gunpoint and illegal fishing practices by Thai and Vietnamese boats. However, any attempt to improve this situation needs a serious commitment and action of higher authorities.

- We recommend that ILO bring the above mentioned problems and the need for action to the attention of the Cambodian Government and international organisations interested in "rule of law".

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## **Annex A**

### **Terms of Reference**



## **BASELINE SURVEY ON CHILD LABOUR IN FISHING/SHRIMP PROCESSING TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A CONSULTANT ILO-IPEC MARCH 2001**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

Fishing/shrimp processing, salt production and rubber plantations 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 in fishing/shrimp processing 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 children working in fishing/shrimp processing in Sihanouk Ville will be conducted. With more than 1100 registered fishing boats in Sihanouk Ville and its surrounding villages, lots of children can be found working in various fishing activities. Based on an initial investigations by the Cambodian ILO-IPEC National Programme Manager in February 200<sup>[21]</sup>, many children can be found in fish processing factories and home-based industries peeling, storing, cleaning and packing shrimps. Aside from that there are unofficial estimates that a substantial proportion of the fisherman on the boats are under 18 years old.

This information will be further refined and updated in the baseline survey as an input to the final project design. Data will be gathered on the nature of child labour, the children's working conditions, 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. The latter undertaking will be jointly organised with the presentation of the survey findings on child labour in the rubber plantations.

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 fishing/shrimp processing. As for the data-gathering on children working on the fishing boats, the direct observation/investigation of the workplace will not be possible and be limited to 'second-hand' information from the children, parents, key informants, employers and secondary data.

Suggestions on the methodology by the consultant are welcome and will have to be agreed upon prior to the survey. As a general backgrounder 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>[22]</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.

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

In consultation with ILO-IPEC select a number of communities/port areas around/in Sihanouk Ville for actual information gathering. The selection should be based on the involvement of children in fishing/shrimp processing in the respective locations, the needs of the targeted population 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/port areas for approximately ten days each to undertake the following activities<sup>[23]</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>[24]</sup> of a number of children working in fishing/shrimp processing (about 20 to 30) and their family members (about 20 to 30) from each location: standard lists of questions<sup>[25]</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.

### *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 FISHING/SHRIMP PROCESSING**

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, it's 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 in fishing/shrimp processing 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 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.

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/in home-based shrimp processing/family-based fishing ? 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>[26]</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?

*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/in home-based shrimp processing/family-based fishing? 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 shrimp processing factory/fishing boat 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 in fishing/shrimp processing 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 fishing/shrimp processing?

4.3.4 Describe the **responses to child labour** in fishing/shrimp processing 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>[27]</sup> and more general service providers in the geographical area, e.g. on health, education, income generation. Information to be covered includes:

4.3.4 Describe the **responses to child labour** in fishing/shrimp processing 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>[28]</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 fishing/shrimp processing (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 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 ASSESSMENT      | 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> |                                                                                                         |                                                                             |                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>1</b>                       | <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 (ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING):<br>1. FORCED OR SLAVE LABOUR<br>2. ILLEGAL/CRIMINAL ACTS<br>3. SEXUAL OR PORNOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES |
| <b>2</b>                       | <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                                                                                                                                |
| <b>3</b>                       | <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                                                                                                            |
| <b>4</b>                       | <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                                                    |

| II. WORKING CONDITIONS |                            |                                                                              |                                                                      |                                                                                           |                                                                                                 |                                                             |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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                                                  |
|                        |                            | 4. REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS                                                      | 4. REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS                                              | 4. REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS                                                                   | 4. REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS                                                                         | 4. REPETITIVE MOVEMENTS                                     |
| 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                                              |
|                        |                            | 4. CHEMICALS/POISON                                                          | 4. CHEMICALS/POISON                                                  | 4. NON-TOXIC CHEMICALS                                                                    | 4. TOXIC CHEMICALS, POISON                                                                      | 4. TOXIC CHEMICALS, POISON                                  |
| 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                                        |
|                        |                            | 4. INDOORS W/ GOOD VENTILATION                                               | 4. INDOORS W/ GOOD VENTILATION                                       | 4. INDOORS W/ ADEQUATE VENTILATION                                                        | 4. INDOORS W/ POOR VENTILATION                                                                  | 4. INDOORS W/ POOR VENTILATION                              |
| 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> |                                                                                                                    |                                                                        |                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                                                  |                                                                                                      |
| <b>13</b>                                 | <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    |
| <b>14</b>                                 | <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                                                          |
| <b>15</b>                                 | <b>EMOTIONAL OR MORAL INJURY*</b><br><br>*TRAUMA, DEPRESSION OR IDENTITY CONFLICT, ETC. AS A DIRECT RESULT OF WORK | 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 |
| <b>16</b>                                 | <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                                                           |
| <b>17</b>                                 | <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                                        |
| <b>18</b>                                 | <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                                               |
| <b>19</b>                                 | <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                                                    |
| <b>20</b>                                 | <b>TOILETS</b>                                                                                                     | TOILET OR ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                              | TOILET OR ACCEPTABLE SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                        | ONLY SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE (NO TOILET)                                  | UNSANITARY TOILET OR SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                                        | NO TOILET OR SUBSTITUTE AVAILABLE                                                                    |
| <b>IV. COMPENSATION &amp; BENEFITS</b>    |                                                                                                                    |                                                                        |                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                                                  |                                                                                                      |
| <b>21</b>                                 | <b>REGULAR</b>                                                                                                     | UNPAID:                                                                | NO ECONOMIC                                                      | COMPENSATI                                                             | COMPENSATION                                                                     | EXTREMELY LOW                                                                                        |

|                             |                                                            |                                                            |                                                                  |                                                                            |                                                                                           |                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | <b>COMPENSATION</b>                                        | NORMAL CHILDHOOD RESPONSIBILITIES                          | EXPLOITATION – COMPENSATION AT FAIR MARKET RATE                  | ON SLIGHTLY LOWER THAN MARKET OR ADULT RATE                                | FAR LOWER THAN MARKET OR ADULT RATE                                                       | 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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[1] MoP 2001, p. 28-30

[2] Ibid. p. 31-32

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

[4] Convention 182, Article 3

[5] MoP, 2001, p. viii

[6] ILO-IPEC, 1998, p. 3

[7] MoP, 2001, p.18-19

[8] Boyden and Myers, p. 6

[9] In this report the term "parents" is used throughout, and also includes guardians.

[10] Older people that are respected by other villagers for their experience and wisdom.

[11] Older respected lay people that are often connected to the pagoda.

[12] 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.

[13] Krong Preah Sihanoukville is an urban area with three districts. Its center is also called Sihanoukville. In this report we will refer to "Sihanoukville" as the whole area. If the center is meant, we will call it "Sihanouk town" in order to avoid confusion.

[14] A kie catch boat is a boat (with or without an engine) that is equipped to catch very small shrimps, or "kie".

[15] A Khmer community lives in the southern Mekong Delta of Vietnam. They are called "Kampuchea Krom".

[16] This is an assessment based on the data provided by the householder on weekly income, household size and most basic expenditures on food, water, house rent, medicines and expenditures after recurrent expenses for practising the job (boat repair, fishing materials, fuel, hired worker) are deducted. Families whose income equalled these basic expenditures, were considered to live on subsistence level.

[17] *Loob kdaam* are small boxes made from bamboo and wire netting.

[18] *Kie* are extremely small shrimps, that are boiled and then dried in the sun.

[19] *Dae leeng* is Khmer for any kind of leisure activity, including going for a walk.

[20] Only children that worked on a regular basis (i.e. minimum two days per week) for a minimum of three hours per day were included in this study (see 2.1).

[21] See respective mission report

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

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

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

[25] 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.

[26] 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.

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

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