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Survey on street-based Child Sexual Exploitation in Cambodia:

Overview of 7 provinces



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and sponsored by the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangkok

-January to March 2006-

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|--|
| APLE | Action Pour Les Enfants |
| ATJPU | Anti-Trafficking and Juvenile Protection Unit |
| CCPCR | Cambodian Center for the Protection of Children's Rights |
| CSF | Children Support Foundation |
| CST/A | Child Sex Tourism/Abuse |
| CWCC | The Cambodian Women's Crisis Center |
| MoSALVY | Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation |
| MoT | Ministry of Tourism |
| G/H | Guesthouse |
| ILO/IPEC | International Labor Organization/International Programme on the Elimination of Child labor |
| IO | International Organization |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| KHR | Khmer Riel (Cambodian Currency) |
| Licadho | Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights |
| (L)NGO | (Local) Non Governmental Organization |
| Mol | Ministry of Interior |
| MoP | Ministry of Planning |
| MoWVA | Ministry of Women and Veterans Affairs |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| WVI | World Vision International |

NOTE

The information gathered for this survey is based on people's personal stories. The study is the result of the common and collective efforts of many un-named individuals and organizations.

Limitations faced during the conduct of the survey included:

- The nature of the survey resulted in surveyors being visible on the street when talking to children, both individually and in a group. It was thus problematic for situations where discretion or secrecy was required, and as a result, surveyors experienced limitations in the number of children interviewed and the length and depth of those interviews;
- Some responses may have been exaggerated. Also an issue was the ability of respondents to recall specific times and dates.
- Translations from Khmer into English were conducted by APLE investigators. As a result of translation, the vocabulary used may be slightly different in English than it was originally in Khmer.

In this report, prices are mentioned in Khmer Riel. 4,000 Khmer Riel (KHR) is equivalent to \$1.00 USD.

Special thanks are extended to APLE investigators, the children, parents, community members, police officers, and NGO staff who took time to share their experiences and information. We also thank our colleagues from the APLE office in Phnom Penh who facilitated the coordination of this survey, as well as Katherine Keane and Zelda Hunter for proof-reading this report.

Many thanks to the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangkok for its support.

FOREWORD

“(Pedophilia in Cambodia) has come high onto the political agenda, as well as the media and NGO agenda. (...) The reality is that it is much more country-based than international-based. While the current emphasis tends to be on foreign travelling sex offenders, there is little doubt that the trade is much broader than that and Cambodians themselves are certainly not free of this problem. (...) One of the initial responses to many of these things is to blame someone else, and at the moment it's the internationals who are getting the blame. They deserve the blame (...) they're (*not*) being wrongly accused of the problem. (...) Change in the government's stance could produce a ripple effect that could seriously hit the child sex trade. (...) The first thing that we hope to see will be a reduction in international pedophiles coming to Cambodia.¹”

Child sexual exploitation has been increasing in Cambodia since the 1990's, with sexual predators coming from abroad as short-term tourists or as long-term residents. Usually, travelling sex offenders visiting Cambodia operate in two different ways, either by visiting brothels or by preying on children in the streets, the markets, the beaches or other public areas. APLE has worked with street-based child sexual exploitation in Phnom Penh since 2003, and in Sihanoukville since November 2005. On-going observations made by APLE in Phnom Penh led to the conclusion that pedophile-related behaviors were changing in the Capital. It was suspected that travelling sex offenders were moving into more remote areas as a result of the strengthening of law enforcement activities with respect to child abuse in Phnom Penh.

Poor law enforcement control, under-developed judicial systems, and high numbers of vulnerable children have allowed street-based child sexual exploitation to occur with greater frequency in the countryside. There is clear evidence that the number of travelling sex offenders outside of Phnom Penh is increasing. However, limited factual data is available on street-based child sexual exploitation in remote areas of Cambodia due to the concentration of NGOs in Phnom Penh.

The objectives of this study are:

- To provide an overview of street-based child sexual exploitation perpetrated outside Phnom Penh;
- To gain an understanding of the underlying factors that make street-based child sexual exploitation possible in countryside Cambodia; and
- To obtain information on the profiles of victims and sex-offenders.

¹ Rodney Hatfield (UNICEF), quoted by BBC News in *Cambodia's child sex crackdown*, 4 February 2004.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted as a result of the observations and conclusions made by APLE's Phnom Penh office with respect to new trends of street-based child sexual exploitation in Cambodia. It aims to provide a better understanding of the street-base child sexual exploitation phenomenon in areas where APLE does not have an established branch. Current branches are located in Phnom Penh (since 2003) and Sihanoukville (since 2005).

The survey was conducted during two months in seven locations: Svay Rieng, Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Siem Reap, Ratanakiri, Kampot/Kep and Koh Kong. These areas were chosen for the number of tourists they attract or for their geographical location (border with Thailand and Vietnam).

This study is based on formal and informal interviews conducted with street children, families, moto-dops, guides, G/H owners, expatriates, NGOs and Police Units. Data collection involved various techniques of investigation and intelligence gathering and was conducted by 3 experienced APLE investigators and a foreign coordinator.

The general conclusions of this study are:

- Monitoring of travelling sex offenders does not occur outside Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville;
- While the phenomenon of child sex exploitation perpetrated by travelling sex offenders is spreading to the countryside and remote areas of Cambodia, data collected indicates it did exist in these areas prior to 2003 and the establishment of APLE in Cambodia and ATJPU's within the Cambodian Police.
- Trends can be identified in "grooming" and access methods used by traveling sex offenders to develop relationships with vulnerable children;
- It is necessary to develop alternative tools for dealing with street-based child sexual exploitation when law enforcement is nonexistent or ineffective;
- Specific results and conclusions vary at city/provincial levels.

Short, medium and long-term recommendations are given to APLE. They include:

- Creating the necessary conditions for nationwide monitoring and investigation by opening a new office in Siem Reap and extending areas of monitoring to nearby provinces;
- Capitalization of APLE knowledge, expertise and the provision of ongoing training;
- Readjusting advocacy efforts at the local community level to raise awareness of foreigner- perpetrated street-based child sexual exploitation;
- Taking further steps to collect and disseminate factual information about street-based child sexual exploitation in Cambodia.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF THE SURVEY

This survey deals with the issue of street-based child sexual exploitation. This type of exploitation differs from the commercial sexual exploitation of children in establishments (brothels, massage parlors), involves particular kinds of victims (principally young boys,² not trafficked) and predominantly Western child sex offenders.

The main objective is to assess street-based child sexual exploitation occurring in countryside and remote areas of Cambodia by gathering information to determine its general features and characteristics.

The specific objectives that guided the survey were focused on collecting detailed information on street-based child sexual exploitation in each identified area of Cambodia that has not previously been monitored by APLE. This involved detailed questioning and analysis, customized for each province or town as follows:

- Does street-based child sexual exploitation exist in visited areas? If yes, to what extent? By what means can it be observed?
- What is the profile/s of individuals involved (victims and offenders)? Who are the main targets of child sex offenders? How do they act?
- Where do travelling sex offenders recruit child victims? Where are acts of sexual abuse performed? Do trends exist with respect to perpetration of abuse at specific times of the day or year?
- Are monetary amounts paid by travelling sex offenders to child victims? If so, how much money changes hands per transaction?
- Which individuals, organizations or government bodies are fighting to tackle street-based child sexual exploitation? Which individuals, organizations or government bodies are hindering the fight against street-based child sexual exploitation?
- In what ways could systems be established to monitor street-based child sexual exploitation, taking into consideration links with concerned partners and awareness of existing constraints?

The findings of the survey, and subsequent conclusions drawn from those findings, provide APLE with key indicators regarding the possible extension of APLE activities into new locations. A set of recommendations is also put forward about the long term strategy of APLE and the need to develop means additional to traditional law enforcement and monitoring to protect children from sexual exploitation.

² Since 2003, eighty per cent of victims in cases monitored by APLE were male.

The study is based on a related **set of three working hypotheses**:

- (a) Travelling sex offenders are being prompted to move to areas outside Phnom Penh as it is in the Capital where law enforcement activities against street-based child sexual exploitation are most competently performed.³ Child sex offenders are generally flexible and mobile and therefore able to take advantage of areas within Cambodia in which NGOs are not prevalent and law enforcement activities are ineffective;
- (b) In comparison to the countries on its border (Laos, Thailand and Vietnam), Cambodian law enforcement with respect to child sexual exploitation is the weakest at the regional level. Bordering countries have strengthened law enforcement activities on child sex exploitation, giving Cambodia a reputation as a safe destination for pedophile activity in the region. As a result, there is an increasing trend of “predatory” child sex tourists coming to Cambodia to exploit the “preferential” judicial system;
- (c) Cambodia is experiencing a boom in tourism:
 - 1.4 million visitor arrivals in 2005 (high season (Nov-Feb) accounting for approximately 40% of total visitors).
 - Exponential growth⁴:
 - 35% increase in visitor arrivals in 2004/05;
 - 50% increase in visitor arrivals in 2003/04;
 - Average yearly growth rate since 2003: 42%;
 - Best performance in Siem Reap: 42.3% of all visitor arrivals in 2005.

The flow of travelling child sex offenders increases as the overall number of tourists increases.⁵

The organizational format of the Survey:

- 7 day missions (on average) in each identified place/province (in chronological order):

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Svay Rieng Province (Svay Rieng City + Baavet) | 5. Ratanakiri (Ban Lung) |
| 2. Battambang | 6. Kampot/Kep |
| 3. Banteay Meanchey (Poipet + Sisophon) | 7. Koh Kong |
| 4. Siem Reap | |

- A team of 3 experienced APLE investigators supervised by a foreign coordinator;

³ The focused work of APLE in Phnom Penh since 2003 has led to 25 arrests, 3 convictions within Cambodia, and 3 extraditions of travelling sex offenders to the United States.

⁴ All data provided by Statistics Tourism Information Department, MoT.

⁵ Of the 26 travelling sex offenders arrested as a result of APLE's investigations, almost one third were tourists at the time of arrest.

- Coordination and strategy conducted by APLE's Phnom Penh office.

Methods used to gather data and perform data analysis:

- Formal meetings with official bodies (ATJPU, MoSALVY, MoT) and NGO representatives working in the areas of child sexual exploitation and child rights protection;
- Informal and individual discussions with direct and indirect key actors in close contact with street-based child sexual exploitation: facilitators (moto-dops, G/H owners), tour guides, vulnerable children (street and poor children) and expatriates;
- Collection of promotional information and material used to guide, entice and educate tourists.
- Under-cover monitoring of the behaviors of key actors and those suspected of possible child sexual exploitation.

Qualitative survey

This survey has a strong qualitative basis, aimed at appreciating the prevalence of foreigner-perpetrated street-based child sexual exploitation in Cambodia. No formal questionnaires were used in the collection of data for this survey. Information gathered from key actors was done on an informal and flexible basis, and questioning was tailored to suit each individual interview. Main findings are based on personal stories, impressions, observations and other qualitative indicators from varied sources.

This study is intended to be read and disseminated by the general public, official bodies and professionals working within the subject matter. Names of places visited and people interviewed during the course of the conduct of this survey mission have been kept confidential, in order to firstly protect their identities, and secondly prevent this report from inadvertently directing travelling sex offenders to source destinations for child sexual exploitation.

DEFINITIONS

Street-based child sexual exploitation

Street-based child sexual exploitation is generally facilitated personally by the sex offender, who approaches children directly on the streets, beaches, markets or other public areas in order to commence a sexual relationship with them. Street-based child sexual exploitation thus occurs when the first encounter between the victim and perpetrator happens in a public area. Contrary to child sexual exploitation occurring in brothels and other establishments, street-based child sexual exploitation involves more boys than girls. Street-based child sexual exploitation does not necessarily involve street children. Children who have been separated from their families, children with drug addictions and children who are used by those close to them as a source of income are also vulnerable. These are children who do not benefit from the protection of their parents or the legal system.

Sex tourists

Sex tourists are tourists who engage in sexual activities with prostitutes in the country or countries they are visiting. Such activities are often the primary reason for travel to particular destinations.

Travelling sex offenders

Travelling sex offenders are tourists who engage in illegal sexual activities with children in the country or countries they are visiting. Some are opportunistic offenders, who do not necessarily have a sexual preference for children but take advantage of opportunities presented to them in countries where children are easily accessible. Others travel for the purpose of obtaining children for sexual activities, and may repeatedly visit a particular country for such a purpose or even reside there for extended periods of time.

Street children

UNICEF defines street children as “[a]ny human being below the age of 18 years who lives or spends a significant amount of time on the street of urban areas taking care of himself/herself and/or his/her family, doing various small jobs or begging.”⁶

UNICEF distinguishes between two types of street children:

Children of the street (homeless street children): *children who have no home or are unable to return to their homes. They look for shelter, food and sometimes a sense of family among other children and homeless adults on the streets. This category would include abandoned children, orphans or children who have run away from home. These*

⁶ Reproduced from “*Street Pedophilia*” in *Cambodia, a survey on Phnom Penh’s suspects and victims*, Caroline Grillot, Action Pour Les Enfants, September 2005, p. 13-15.

children might sleep in empty buildings, temples or literally the street - sometimes with other street children, homeless adults, or alone. This category also includes homeless street children who sleep on the street with members of their family, even though one or both parents may be present.

Children on the street, (street children with a home): *children who earn their living or beg for money on the street and return home at night. They maintain contact with their families and live at home.*

GENERAL FINDINGS

Monitoring of travelling sex offenders does not exist outside Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville

Monitoring work (gathering evidence and intelligence on travelling sex offenders and supporting police in making arrests) is performed only in Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville, where APLE fulfills this role. Law enforcement on street-based child sexual exploitation and child rights in general in Cambodia is still in its infancy. ATJPUs have an average of 3 years experience, the project establishing the Units being launched in 2000, with almost all provincial offices opened progressively in 2003. The human and financial resources of the ATJPUs appear insufficient to deal with the complexity of the issue. Police work is limited to carrying out investigations only when a complaint is lodged, and often not even then. High levels of corruption in police and judicial bodies affect both victims and offenders.⁷ As a result, the country is seen as a safe destination for travelling sex offenders, the few listed cases involving Westerners echoing this fact.⁸ It should however be noted that while the emphasis of this survey and APLE's work is on travelling sex offenders, the issue of child sexual exploitation in Cambodia is much more country based than international based. Exploitation perpetrated by Cambodian nationals accounts for a far greater percentage of abuse in Cambodia than that perpetrated by foreigners.

A spreading phenomenon...although in existence before 2003

While travelling sex offenders are now visiting countryside and remote areas with greater frequency, recorded complaints indicate that some were already active in these areas prior to 2003, before ATJPUs were established in the provinces. They developed their own local networks for protecting themselves against blame by cultivating relationships with other travelling sex offenders, business owners, local officials and members of the community.

Trends in the use of "grooming" and access methods

Outside Phnom Penh, the field within which travelling sex offenders are able to act is increasing greatly in provincial urban areas and surroundings. Trends can be identified in the way in which travelling sex offenders target vulnerable children in these areas. Priority is given to targeting street children in towns, meeting them in "traditional" places catering for Westerners such as bars and restaurants. High-level tourist areas such as Siem

⁷ From a reliable source: lodging legal proceedings in Ban Lung costs between \$15USD and \$25USD. The Police ask a complainant for between 30,000 KHR and 50,000 KHR to "pass the file on to the court". The court asks the same to give a ruling.

⁸ For some of the provinces covered by this study:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Svay Rieng: | 0 case since 2000 (source: Licadho) |
| Battambang : | 1 case in 2004 (ATJPU) |
| Banteay Meanchey : | 1 case in 2002 (ATJPU) |
| Siem Reap : | 2 cases in 2002; 2 cases in 2003 (CWCC). |

Reap/Angkor allow for greater interaction between foreigners and children, who work selling souvenirs or begging in tourist-dense areas.

Some traveling sex offenders gain access to children and develop relationships with them in orphanages and child centers or shelters. This is normally achieved by the offender obtaining employment with the organization or by providing sponsorship and support for the children.

Another method used by travelling sex offenders involves ingratiating themselves with the child's family and/or the community. Such grooming-based tactics within the family may include marrying the child's widowed or single mother; building a house or repairing an existing home for the child's family; or providing financial support. Grooming-based tactics in the broader community may include house building, well digging, monetary donations and gifts for community cultural life, such as the construction of pagodas. This practice provides children, families and communities with confidence in the offender and reduces the possibility of complaint against a person who is seemingly so decent and helpful.

Alternative tools for working against street-based child sexual exploitation are required when law enforcement activities are ineffective or non-existent.

The use of monitoring and investigation to hinder the prevalence of foreigner-perpetrated street-based child sexual exploitation is on its own insufficient in dealing with the problem. These techniques must be used in conjunction with preventative methods to address the problem from the supply side as well as the demand side. These preventative methods must be culturally-sensitive, designed by Cambodian people for Cambodian people, in order to best address taboo issues such as sexuality, sexual abuse and the notion of preserving face. The implementation of awareness and education programs must be conducted at a family and community level.

Specific results and conclusions vary at city/provincial levels.

Siem Reap was identified as a location requiring urgent attention and action. During their seven day stay in the area for the purpose of collecting information for this survey, APLE investigators monitored a case involving a 14 year old boy who had been 'sponsored' by a travelling sex offender. As a result of APLE's investigation, the offender was arrested by the ATJPU and charged with debauchery. This case, together with other data collected, demonstrates the need for viable permanent monitoring in the city and province to be implemented. The ATJPU in Siem Reap cooperated willingly with APLE investigators and were pro-active in dealing with information provided by them.

In comparison, the mission to Svay Rieng found no evidence of travelling sex offenders operating in the area, and the risk of future activity was assessed as minimal. As a result, the need for a permanent monitoring presence in Svay Rieng does not at this stage appear necessary.

SPECIFIC RESULTS

Svay Rieng

Svay Rieng is located in south-east Cambodia on the Vai Kou River. It is linked to Phnom Penh, Vietnam, and neighboring areas by a national highway. The surrounding region is important for its agriculture; rice, potatoes, bananas, corn

(maize), mulberry, and cotton are grown. The province is subdivided into 7 districts.

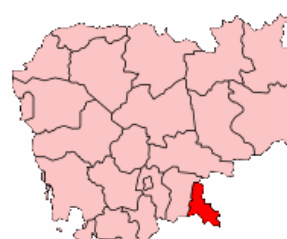


Figure 1: General Information

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 2,946 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ⁹ | 538,180 [255,082 ; 283,098] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 183 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ¹⁰ , ‰ | 3.15 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 1.07 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 4.4 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [44.8 ; 52 ; 3.2] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M : 54.5 F : 60.5 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ¹¹ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>70</u> [71.5 ; 68.5] |
| Secondary | <u>14.8</u> [20.1 ; 9.5] |
| Literacy rate (%), <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> [M ; F] | <u>67.1</u> [77.7 ; 58.1] |

Situated on the border with Vietnam, Svay Rieng has a low level of tourist activity, but is known as a place where human-trafficking is high. The province was chosen as part of this study for that reason, in order to assess levels of travelling sex offenders and child sex exploitation in an area which is free from tourist development but at the same time economically vulnerable.¹²

⁹ General Population Census of Cambodia (GPCC), National Institute of Statistics (NIS), MoP, 1998.

¹⁰ GPCC, NIS, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS), MoP, 2000.

¹² The 4th poorest Cambodian province (MoSALVY).

Mission

The survey mission in Svay Rieng Province was carried out for five days in two main locations: Svay Rieng city (and surroundings) and Baavet (border check-point with Vietnam).

Svay Rieng City

- A center with a high level of migration

Poverty in the province does not generate such problems as large communities of beggars and street children as it does in other areas. Rather, poverty in Svay Rieng tends to create a forced rural migration to regional capitals such as Phnom Penh or Ho Chi Minh City,¹³ where people search for alternate means to generate income. Street children do not reside in Svay Rieng City: they collect rubbish, beg with their relatives, or have been sent by parent to the regional capitals.

- Insignificant tourist development

Svay Rieng cannot be considered as a tourist destination or as a stopping point for visitors travelling from Vietnam to Cambodia or vice versa. Tourists coming from Vietnam are able to travel directly to Phnom Penh in one day, while tourists travelling in the opposite direction stay overnight in Baavet.

- Limited interaction between tourists and children

As neither a street child network nor a tourist community exists in Svay Rieng City, there is limited interaction between children and foreigners. Tourist resources in the town are not significant enough to attract a steady stream of visitors. As a result, children do not engage in activities such as selling souvenirs or acting as guides as they may in other areas. No businesses such as bars, restaurants, internet cafes and guesthouses are dedicated to foreign customers. The only 'sitting' rooms of note are karaoke bars for Cambodian and Asian customers. Hotels and G/Hs in Svay Rieng are few and fall within the budget to mid-range category. Most of these G/Hs, including the one used by investigators conducting this survey, welcome prostitutes and their exclusively Cambodian clients into their establishments. Few orphanages or shelters for children are operating in Svay Rieng.

- Child sexual exploitation in Svay Rieng

According to the ATJPU, there were twelve sexual abuse cases in Svay Rieng province concerning children under 18 years of age¹⁴ in 2005 (7 cases less than in 2004). The victims were all girls, and the perpetrators relatives or neighbors of the girls. Visits to two shelters for children run by LNGOs¹⁵ provided information which established that none of those present

¹³ Approximately 130 km from Svay Rieng.

¹⁴ Data on child sex abuse cases involving children under 15 was unavailable.

¹⁵ CCPCR and Wathnak Pheap.

who had been sexually abused had suffered that abuse at the hands of a Western foreigner. Rather, Cambodian or Asian 'virginity seekers' were predominantly responsible. Among the victims, one was raped during a "bauk"¹⁶ and another was murdered by the offender after the rape.

At the local level, local authorities, LNGOs and concerned members of the community are organized into a Committee¹⁷ which meets monthly and places emphasis on cooperation to prevent and to manage situations of child sexual abuse. At the commune level, Mol and MoWVA are implementing committees training intermediary persons (two or three in each village) in 32 communes. Prevention is mainly focused on country-based population.

Baavet

- Baavet: a second Poipet?

Baavet's significance lies in its locality – it is the main international frontier post between Cambodia and Vietnam, linking Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Minh City by road. As with other Cambodian cities such as Poipet that are located on borders with neighboring countries, Baavet has a casino industry based development.¹⁸ The Government has recently presented a master plan to boost the economy in Baavet which involves the development of more casinos and various factories.¹⁹ Through the creation of a free economic zone along the border, it is planned to create 10,000 new jobs. If the large-scale project is completed, it may eventually cause counterproductive side-effects similar to those observed in Poipet: increased flows of migrants (workers or not), smuggling, street communities, poverty, slum areas, drug addiction, and a high rate of HIV infection.

¹⁶ Gang-rape.

¹⁷ Prevention children provincial committee, funded by UNICEF and ILO/IPEC.

¹⁸Four casinos are currently running.

¹⁹According to MoSALVY in Svay Rieng, 3 more casinos and several factories (bicycle and motorbike assembly plant, paint and garment factories) will be built, although further details on a timeframe for this development have not been provided.

Battambang

Battambang Province is in the northwest of Cambodia (293km from Phnom Penh), and its capital is Battambang city. This is Cambodia's second-largest city (according to the 1998 census). People from Battambang earn their living from rice cultivation and cross-border trade with Thailand. Like other minor tourist places (after Siem Reap, Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville), the province has taken advantage of the tourist boom in Cambodia in the last couple of years. Until recently Battambang was inaccessible for road travelers, however facilities have

recently been improved and it has proven a great base for tourists visiting the nearby temples and villages. Battambang is also on the overland route between Thailand and Vietnam (no air link). A community of Western foreigners exists in Battambang, working in the humanitarian sector. The province is subdivided into 13 districts.

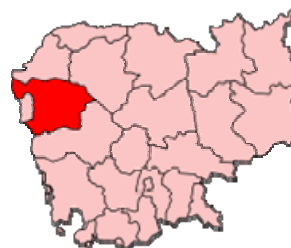


Figure 2: General Information

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 11,663.7 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ²⁰ | 997,840 [491,652 ; 506,188] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 85.5 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ²¹ , ‰ | 4.12 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 1.82 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 17.6 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [44.4 ; 52.4 ; 3.2] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M : 57.3 F : 63.3 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9.6:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ²² , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>70.9</u> [70.4 ; 71.4] |
| Secondary | <u>16.5</u> [21.7 ; 12] |
| Literacy rate (%), <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> [M ; F] | <u>65</u> [72.4 ; 58] |

Mission

The survey mission in Battambang province was performed over seven days.

²⁰ GPCC, *op. cit.*

²¹ GPCC, *op. cit.*

²² CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*

- ***Low to mid-level tourist development***

Tourists do not visit Battambang in the same numbers or with the same frequency as Siem Reap and other major tourist destinations in Cambodia. Battambang has limited places of interest for foreign tourists: Sumpel and Banang mountains, Kamping Poy picnic area, Ek Phnom Temple, the Bamboo trains and the local circus. Visits by tourists to the area are only for short periods of time. There are few accommodation facilities, bars and restaurants; all are gathered in one small area. The nightlife is calm and quiet.

- ***A small street child community in Battambang***²³

A small community of street children exists in Battambang. All are addicted to sniffing glue and spend most of their time on the riverfront, as well as begging from tourists around the Western block (perpendicular to the riverfront) in the area where it is known that sex offenders have acted.

- ***Child sexual exploitation in Battambang province***

Only one case of foreigner-perpetrated child sexual exploitation is formally recorded in Battambang province. This case involved an American citizen accused of raping two underage boys inside his hotel room in 2004. No judgment was passed on this case for reasons of legal irregularity. A second incidence of foreigner-perpetrated child sexual exploitation was reported to APLE investigators by Licadho's Battambang branch office. This situation, which did not result in a formal complaint or lawsuit being filed, involved a Western foreigner (no mention of his nationality) allegedly abusing the son of his Khmer wife, born from a previous union. The victim was placed in a child shelter after the abuse, The Director of that shelter refused to allow Licadho staff access to the child for questioning and as a result no further information was obtained. The Police did not act on information provided to them. This case emphasizes the difficulties in convicting foreign suspects when a deep-seated resistance to action exists in official bodies and child-care 'professionals'.

Data collected demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of child sex offenders in Battambang province are Cambodian nationals. In 2005, thirty-four female minors between the ages of four and seventeen reported sexual abuse at the hands of a Cambodian national.²⁴ The majority of offenders were from within the family unit (main offenders being stepfathers and 'godfathers'). While no separate database exists for the purpose of recording sexual abuse of children under the age of 15 years, it appears that the majority of sexual abuse victims are indeed under this age.

²³ According to Battambang MoSALVY.

²⁴ According to Battambang ATJPU.

- ***Battambang: an area of retreat for travelling sex offenders?***

It appears that Battambang has become a 'safe area' for travelling sex offenders previously operating in Phnom Penh and Thailand. A suspected traveling sex offender monitored by APLE for two years left Phnom Penh, where he was living, and moved to live in an outer suburb of Battambang with his Cambodian wife. During the seven day mission in Battambang, investigators received confirmation that the suspect continues to spend time with young boys. A neighborhood investigation showed that the family living next door was unaware of his activities.

Since law enforcement with respect to child sexual exploitation has been strengthened in Thailand, a certain type of traveler (Western male, travelling alone) has been seen in greater numbers in Battambang, entering the country from Thailand. While the regular flow of backpackers and package-tourists is following the general trends of tourist activity, including upward/downward fluctuations, this new type of tourist seems to move regardless of general tourist activity.

- ***Orphanages in Battambang: a target of travelling sex offenders***

Battambang province has a considerable number of orphanages and shelters for vulnerable children.²⁵ Assistance provided by these NGOs is aimed at a wide range of situations: refugees, orphans, street children, drug addicts, children who had been abused or trafficked, and children from other provinces or outside Cambodia. The need for these organizations is as a result of Battambang's status as a former combat zone (the Khmer Rouge was formerly based in nearby Pailin city).

Professionals working in child care shelters and orphanages stated that they were often approached by Western foreigners wishing to support their centre by sponsoring a child. On many occasions, the conduct and manner of the person raised suspicions regarding his intentions with the child, and the offer of sponsorship was refused. Canvassing shelters and orphanages on the grounds of child-sponsoring seems to be a wide-scale method used by travelling child sex offenders to contact children in general, and especially in Battambang province, as a large number of these centers are located in the area.

²⁵ According to Battambang MoSALVY, over 20 shelters/orphanages have assisted almost 900 children.

Banteay Meanchey

Banteay Meanchey is located in the northwest of Cambodia. Its capital is Sisophon (361 km from Phnom Penh). The province is subdivided into 8 districts. Poipet, a major border crossing with Thailand, has shown rapid but anarchic growth in a space of a few years based on cross-border trade, smuggling and the local casino industry. These well-paid industries have attracted families and whole communities, who come in search of a better livelihood. The street child

community in Poipet is the second largest in Cambodia. The casino area, located in no man's land between Cambodia and Thailand, acts as something of an oasis for a wealthy class.

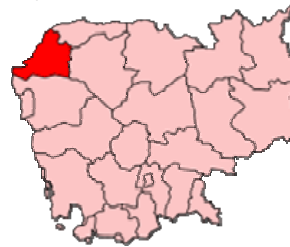


Figure 3: General Information

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 6,641.1 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ²⁶ | 773,092 [380,559 ; 392,533] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 116.4 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ²⁷ , ‰ | 3.91 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 2.71 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 17.1 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [44.3 ; 53.1 ; 2.5] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M : 61.1 F : 67.5 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9.7:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ²⁸ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>72</u> [73.8 ; 70.2] |
| Secondary | <u>15.5</u> [17.1 ; 13.9] |

Mission

The survey mission in Banteay Meanchey province was performed over seven days in two locations: Sisophon (3 days) and Poipet (4 days).

- *Child sexual exploitation in Banteay Meanchey*

There is only one recorded case of a Western travelling sex offender being questioned with respect to sexual abuse in Banteay Meanchey.²⁹ The Suspect had previously been

²⁶ GPCC, *op. cit.*;

²⁷ GPCC, *op. cit.*.

²⁸ CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*

arrested in Phnom Penh for similar offences. After interviews at Sisophon police station, the Suspect was released,³⁰ and the ATJPU has had no further involvement. This case again highlights the fact that offenders are travelling to countryside and remote areas to escape notice in the Capital.

Twenty-eight cases of child sexual abuse were recorded in Banteay Meanchey in 2005, a substantial increase on previous years.³¹ All cases involved Cambodian victims and perpetrators. This increase may not necessarily be the result of an increase in the rate of the occurrence of sexual abuse but rather in the numbers of people actually reporting the abuse.

Poipet

- Poipet: A gambling retreat for Thai and Asian tourists

Many of the tourists going to Poipet are Thailand nationals and other Asian nationals who gamble in the casinos.³² Western tourists tend to use Poipet as a transit town, rather than as a destination in itself.

- Prostitution for Westerners is based in casino resorts

Western tourists are encouraged to stay in the casino area of Poipet, with a large range of accommodations available, as well as prostitute services. Poipet town centre is not considered as enticing for Western tourists, with a reputation for being unsafe, dirty and having few Western facilities. A fact-finding and investigative mission inside the casino resort area would be relevant in the future as very little factual data is available on sex-workers in the area.

- Western tourists in Poipet town

Accounts given by social workers of NGOs mention Western foreigners wandering through the slums, making contact with street children. Moto-dops and young street children reported Western tourists passing through the streets, talking with children in remote places. Unfortunately, these stories were too imprecise to allow for in-depth investigation. No official reports of street children being sexually abused by foreigners have been made to local NGOs.

²⁹ Italian citizen, suspected of having sexually abused four boys under the age of 15 years, according to Banteay Meanchey ATPJU.

³⁰ A member of Banteay Meanchey ATJPU stated that the release was made after the Suspect paid money to the Court.

³¹ According to ATJPU data, the number of sexual abuse cases in 3 years has been as follows (in brackets, number of case where victim under 18 years of age):

2005 67 (28), +130% for 2004/05.

2004 30 (12).

2003 27 (15).

³² There is no admittance for Thai gamblers in Thailand-based casinos.

- ***APLE in Poipet?***

The results of APLE's investigations indicate that the situation of street-based child sexual exploitation in Poipet does not require a permanent APLE presence, but rather stronger coordination with LNGOs working among street children to identify suspects and investigate when required.

Sisophon

- ***Child care centers targeted in Sisophon***

One case monitored by APLE during its mission involved a European Director of a child care center situated approximately 50 kilometers outside Sisophon. The case emphasizes the possibility of travelling sex offenders gaining access to children through these types of projects, particularly in remote areas where there is little chance of them being monitored. Like Battambang, Sisophon has a considerable number of refugees and orphans. The orphanages and children care centers are generally situated outside the city in remote villages, making it difficult for activities within the centers to be monitored and investigated. They provide an ideal opportunity for sex offenders wishing to abuse children away from prying eyes.

- ***Monitoring and arrest of Belgium national***

During their investigations for this survey, APLE investigators monitored a European man who had for four years supported a Cambodian single-parent family (widowed mother) by building a new family home, providing financial support and paying for their holidays to Sihanoukville and Siem Reap. This man was suspected of debauchery in late 2005, and had been monitored by APLE's Sihanoukville and Phnom Penh branches. He had traveled back and forth between his homeland and Sisophon (where he was staying with the family), and had shown great interest in the two sons, both under fifteen years of age. Subsequent to the completion of APLE's survey mission, the man was arrested in Phnom Penh (as a result of APLE's investigations) and charged with debauchery against the eldest son, aged 13 years.

Siem Reap

Siem Reap is a province located in northwestern Cambodia on the shores of the Tonle Sap Lake. The provincial capital is also called Siem Reap. Siem Reap is the major tourist destination in Cambodia, as it is the city closest to the Angkor temples. Angkor Wat is the most famous of the temples and draws the most amounts of tourists. Recently, the city has seen a great deal of expansion, with hundreds of hotels, restaurants and shops opening to cater to both international and

Cambodian tourists. Other sites of interest near Siem Reap include Angkor Thom, Banteay Srei, Ta Prohm, as well as hundreds of other temple ruins. The province is subdivided into 12 districts.

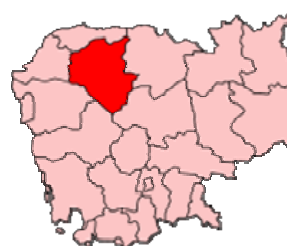


Figure 4: General Information

| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 10,237.7 |
| Projected Population, Total [Male; Female] ³³ | 861,214 [419,362; 441,852] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 84.1 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ³⁴ , ‰ | 4.21 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 2.34 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 17.2 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [45.3 ; 52.2 ; 2.5] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M : 60.9 F : 67.3 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9.5:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ³⁵ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>58.3</u> [60.5; 55.8] |
| Secondary | <u>7.9</u> [8.2; 7.5] |

With respect to APLE's survey mission as a whole, Siem Reap was, prima facie, the most important location in Cambodia. Siem Reap has a combination of all the relevant factors for perpetration on a large scale of street-based child sexual exploitation:

- A large and growing street children community, different in nature than that in Phnom Penh;
- Exponential increase in tourist flow, both in tourists wishing to visit Siem Reap itself and for those using Siem Reap as a gateway to other areas within the country;³⁶

³³ GPCC, *op. cit.*;

³⁴ GPCC, *op. cit.*;

³⁵ CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*.

- Large numbers of foreign residents; and
- Inadequate law enforcement combined with a complete lack of monitoring and investigation of travelling sex offenders.

Mission

The survey mission in Siem Reap province was performed over 8 days in Siem Reap city.

- Immediate results obtained during APLE's mission

As a result of APLE's investigations during its 8 day mission in Siem Reap, a German citizen was arrested and charged with debauchery for sexually abusing a child under the age of fifteen. His modus operandi was typical of the grooming techniques used by travelling sex offenders in the area: initial contact with the child (a fourteen year old boy, living with his divorced mother) in the temples area, leading to financial sponsorship for the family and community, winning their confidence in the process, and lastly recurrent visits (two-three month stays at the family home) during which he abused the boy. The Suspect would take the boy out at night, check into a guesthouse (using four or five regular places), abuse the boy in the guesthouse, and return to the family home early the next morning. This case, together with other intelligence collected, demonstrated the need for APLE to make a long-term commitment in the area by opening a branch office. The Siem Reap ATJPU was willing to cooperate with APLE on this case, and ties of confidence were made between APLE and the local police team.

- History of street-based child sexual exploitation in Siem Reap

Only four street-based child sexual exploitation cases involving Western foreigners have been recorded in Siem Reap in the past four years. These four cases occurred in 2002/2003. Two of the offenders were tourists and two residents.³⁷ The tourists recruited children for abuse around the Angkor temples area, while the residents abused their domestic staff. The residents had been based for a long time in Siem Reap province, highlighting the fact that traveling sex offenders are well established in the area. It appears that the existence of travelling sex offenders in Siem Reap is not a new phenomenon as it is in other areas of the country, but rather a deep-rooted trend.

- Insufficient will amongst law enforcement and other authorities to address the problem

The gap between observations made in the field with respect to the prevalence of travelling child sex offenders in Siem Reap and actual recorded cases indicates an unwillingness or

³⁶ For 2005, Siem Reap accounted for 47.6% of all visitor arrivals in Cambodia. Visitor arrivals to Cambodia via Siem Reap increased by 42.26% in 2005 (MoT).

³⁷ According to CWCC's data.

inability on the part of law enforcement to deal with the issue. The arrest made as a result of APLE's investigations was the first one in three years in Siem Reap, and yet data collected during the course of the survey indicated many more instances of abuse must have occurred during this time.

The attitude of government and law enforcement officials in Siem Reap with respect to the issue appeared to be epitomized by the MoSALVY Deputy Director, when he stated during a meeting that: “[o]bviously sexual and pedophile tourists can come to Siem Reap (...) But with the strong commitment that local authorities have on the matter, pedophiles have been reduced to enforced inactivity in Siem Reap”. The results of APLE's mission in Siem Reap indicated that this statement does not reflect the reality of child sexual exploitation. In reality, measures to ensure child protection are limited to advertising for child safe tourism³⁸ and for providing care and legal support for sexual abuse victims. They do not include monitoring or investigation of suspects.

Grooming environments and methods in Siem Reap

- 'Pub street'

The block where bars and restaurants for Westerners are concentrated provides many opportunities for interaction between Westerners and street children. At any time, large numbers of street children are begging in this area, either alone or in small groups, and sometimes with relatives. 'Pub Street', full of bars, restaurants and souvenir shops, is expanding rapidly onto neighboring streets, and the children are also to be found in these new, expanded areas.

- Angkor Temples

During the daytime, hundreds of children are begging, selling souvenirs or acting as tour guides around the temples. Many of these children live in the villages inside the Angkor Temples area. Visiting the villages, with more than 60,000 inhabitants, is not difficult and can provide access to large numbers of children.

- Sponsorship

Sponsoring a child is a long term grooming strategy used by travelling sex offenders to gain the trust of the child/children, their families and communities. The sex offender is able to take advantage of that trust, the positive perception of Western foreigners held by Cambodians and the lack of communication within families with respect to sexual matters. Sexuality remains a 'taboo' subject among many families, particularly those in the countryside, and as

³⁸ Child safe tourism coordination, funded by WVI and ILO/IPEC.

a result children do not feel free to discuss sexual abuse with their family members. After establishing trust in these relationships, the offender is generally able to perpetuate abuse free from repercussions.

- ***Child care projects (centers/shelters/orphanages)***

A director of a child care centre in Siem Reap reported that several Cambodian directors of similar organizations have sexual relations with the children in their care. In this director's opinion, it was a widespread phenomenon amongst child care projects in Siem Reap.

- ***Hotels supplying "traditional" shows performed by children***

'Traditional' Khmer song and dance shows often use child performers in hotels and guesthouses in Siem Reap. These children have to endure a heavy workload, working late at night, and can be subjected to propositions and abuse from customers and guests, with the manager of the show often acting as the facilitator.

Ratanakiri

Ratanakiri is a province in the northeast corner of Cambodia. Its capital is Ban Lung (18,000 inhabitants). The province is subdivided into 9 districts. Ratanakiri is a remote area bordering Laos and Vietnam, located 630 km away from Phnom Penh (a 12 hour journey by car, with flights from Phnom Penh also available). Ratanakiri has an atmosphere of a 'wild east', with wide and dusty avenues in Ban Lung in the dry season, and its countryside a deserted outback with large forested expanses and ethnic minorities (hill-tribes). Ratanakiri and nearby province

Mondolkiri share the ecotourism market in Cambodia. It's a niche market with reasonable tourist flows consisting of mostly Westerners traveling in groups. The hill-tribes, fauna and flora are the star tourist attractions of the area. Nightlife is extremely limited.

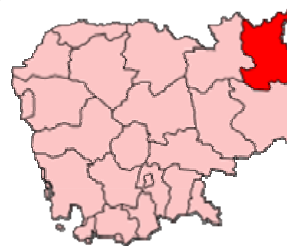


Figure 5: General Information

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 10,471.4 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ³⁹ | 121,028 [59,774; 61,254] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 11.5 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ⁴⁰ , ‰ | 5.95 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 2.82 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 18 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [44.4 ; 52.1 ; 3.5] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M: 42.1 F : 45.9 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9.8:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ⁴¹ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>29.4</u> [32.6; 26.1] |
| Secondary | <u>7.1</u> [7.6; 6.7] |
| Literacy rate (%), <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> [M ; F] | <u>23.5</u> [32; 15.3] |

Mission

The survey mission in Ratanakiri was performed over five days in Ban Lung and its surrounds.

³⁹ GPCC, *op. cit.*

⁴⁰ GPCC, *op. cit.*

⁴¹ CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*

- ***Tourist facilities are modest***

In Ban Lung, tourists have the choice of two or three budget and mid-range G-H/hotels, with a capacity of 60 persons per place. One lodge resort is also in operation. Only 2 or 3 bars and restaurants cater for the tourist market. No other facilities or nightlife are in existence. There is the possibility of staying overnight in places of interest among hill-tribes.

- ***Tourist highlights often inaccessible***

Tourist highlights such as the National Park and waterfalls are 35-40 kilometers from Ban Lung. Road conditions make it difficult to get to such 'tourist' places, and this has curbed organized tourist development.

- ***Few Western expatriates***

The few foreign expatriates living in Ban Lung work almost exclusively in the tourism industry. Job opportunities for foreigners in relief/development agencies are scarce, with few NGO offices in Ban Lung. APLE investigators monitored several mixed-racial couples; however no indications of child sexual exploitation were noted.

- ***Small street community***

Sparsely populated, with few natural or industrial resources, Ban Lung is not a destination of migrants looking for a better livelihood. Communities retain a significant part of their traditional way of life, with community ties remaining strong and few social outcasts who may be vulnerable to exploitation. As a result, Ban Lung has very few members of its community living or working on the streets.

- ***Child sexual exploitation***

None of the three reported cases of child sexual abuse in Ratanakiri 2005 involved Western foreigners.⁴² Two of the cases occurred in hill-tribes, and the victims were extremely young (from four to nine years old.).

Ratanakiri seems to suffer from a high level of police and judicial corruption. During a meeting between members of APLE's survey mission and the ATJPU, the Officer present seemed more concerned with showing APLE the log book in which prostitutes must be recorded (and which is an "official" means for controlling and extorting money from them under the pretence of care concern) than talking about child sexual exploitation. Victims are deterred from lodging complaints, and crimes are often solved at a commune level without sentence.

The Legal Aid of Cambodia office in Ban Lung is involved in providing legal and care support to victims. ADHOC also works in addressing this issue. Awareness sessions held during a

⁴² According to Ban Lung ATJPU.

workshop⁴³ in Ban Lung district were focused on child sexual abuse perpetrated within the community by its members, the main source of child sexual exploitation in Ratanakiri.

An employee of the hotel where members of APLE's survey mission stayed reported that on three separate occasions in the previous month, three different Westerners had spent the night with a boy in a private hotel room. The employee requested anonymity and asked that this not be mentioned to the hotel owner. This information raises once again the issue of G/H and hotel owners acting as facilitators of child sexual exploitation.

- ***An increased risk: forced re-settlement of nomadic hill-tribes***

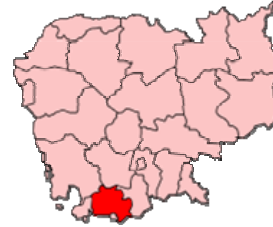
Because of its remote location, harsh living conditions and stable communities, Ratanakiri is an area in which it is more difficult for travelling sex offenders to act compared to other regions. However, land issues in Ratanakiri could result in ethnic-minority communities being stripped of their land and livelihood. Such an exodus from the land has the potential to force hill-tribes to the periphery of Ban Lung and reduce them to abject poverty. As a result, vulnerability to exploitation by travelling sex offenders would be much higher.

⁴³ Organized by CSF, Phnom Penh-based NGO.

Kampot Province / Krong Kep municipality

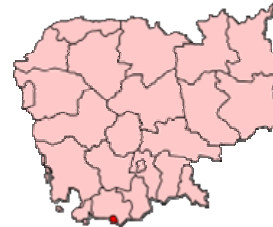
Kampot is a province in the south of Cambodia. Its capital is Kampot. The city is a quiet riverside town just a few kilometers from the Gulf of Thailand. Its natural environment entices tourists, with the city acting as a base from which people can explore Bokor National Park, cruise the river, and visit waterfalls. The seaside town of Kep is also only about

half an hour away, connected by a decent paved road. The province is subdivided into 8 districts.



Kep is a small municipality, subdivided into two districts. Kep used to be Cambodia's most popular beach town but has fallen on hard times in recent years. Its beaches consist mostly of mangrove and black rock rather than the white sands of Sihanoukville. Kep does however appear to be experiencing something of a renaissance, with several mid-range and

luxury guesthouses and bungalows recently opened or under construction.



Tourists visiting the Cambodian coast often commence their journey in Sihanoukville, and then travel to Kampot/Kep for short-term stays. The short distance between Sihanoukville and Kampot/Kep make it possible for tourists to visit both areas in just a few days. Tourists often leave Cambodia at the end of their journey via the port in Sihanoukville, travelling by boat to the border at Koh Kong.

Figure 6: General Information

| Data | Kampot | Kep |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 4,892.6 | 337,2 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ⁴⁴ | 602,624 [291,225; 311,399] | 37,786 [18,820; 18,966] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 123.2 | 112.1 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ⁴⁵ , ‰ | 3.73 | 3.73 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), ‰ | 1.27 | 3.21 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 6.3 | N/A |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], ‰ | [44.9; 51.6; 3.5] | [46.1; 50.3; 3.6] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M: 56.4 F: 62.4 | M: 55.7 F: 61.7 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 9.3:10 | 9.9:10 |
| Net school attendance rate (%) ⁴⁶ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | <u>67.3</u> [70.9; 63.9] | <u>67.3</u> [70.9; 63.9] |
| Primary | 17.4 [25.9; 10.1] | 17.4 [25.9; 10.1] |
| Secondary | | |
| Literacy rate (%), <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> [M ; F] | <u>59.3</u> [68..2; 51.4] | <u>54.1</u> [63.3; 45.6] |

Mission

The survey mission was performed over 6 days in two places: Kampot (4 days) and Kep (2 days).

- *Tourism industry well established*

Although tourism in Kampot/Kep is not on the same scale as Sihanoukville, it has been a well-established industry for many years. Both Cambodian and Western foreigners run G/H, restaurants and bars.

In Kampot (35,000 inhabitants), Western-operated establishments are gathered on the riverside and in two others sites not far away. Kampot is a small town and travel around the city is effortless. Nightlife is reasonably quiet, with customers leaving bars around midnight. Other businesses dedicated to tourist activity include internet cafes and motorbike rental shops.

Kep is a quiet, small town with 5000 residents. After farming, tourism is the second largest industry in Kep. It is common for tourists to do a one day tour from Kampot to Kep. Kep has recently increased its range of accommodation facilities for tourists and upgraded existing ones, and this has sparked a renewed interest in the area. An upgraded road network has allowed for easier travel to and from Kep from nearby areas and Phnom Penh.

⁴⁴ GPCC, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ GPCC, *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*

- **Small street child community**

Few street children were seen in Kampot and Kep, both during the day and at night. The children working as rubbish collectors who were interviewed for this survey were not addicted to glue sniffing. Direct observations indicated that the majority of contact between Western foreigners and children was for the purpose of taking photographs or buying ice-cream. At night, no interactions were witnessed between foreigners and children either on Kep beach or Kampot Riverside, where the nightlife takes place.

- **Orphanages and child shelters**

There are 4 orphanages in Kampot,⁴⁷ all located in the town center or close to it, and one in Kep. Monitoring by APLE's mission revealed nothing untoward. In both the ASPECA orphanage and the Khmer music orphanage in Kampot, visiting rights are restricted and supervised. Both orphanages previously hired foreign staff either permanently or temporarily. No Westerners had visited the Muslim community-based orphanage in Kampot.

- **Few locations for grooming**

The opportunity for tourists to make contact and interact with children is limited in the tourist destinations of Kampot and Kep such as Bokor national park and the waterfalls. There are no unsolicited guides or children selling souvenirs or begging in these places.

- **Child Sexual exploitation**

No cases of child sexual abuse involving foreigners have been recorded by the ATPJU of Kampot. In 2005, the ATJPU dealt with forty-three complaints of sexual abuse, all of them involving Cambodian perpetrators and victims.⁴⁸

A meeting held with the ATJPU and senior members (2nd and 3rd in command) of the Kampot Police was unsuccessful in dealing with the issue of street-based child sexual exploitation in Kampot/Kep. The Chief of the ATJPU remained silent the entire meeting, which was instead controlled by the seniors members of the Kampot Police, who avoided 'sensitive' topics and instead tried to present a picture of Kampot as a safe tourist destination. As a result, questions about the situation of street-based child sexual exploitation in Kampot/Kep and the methods being used by law enforcement to address the issue went unanswered.

- **Some factors of concern**

- o As well as tourists, there is a significant community of foreign residents based in Kampot. The numbers of these residents appears to exceed what is required for the

⁴⁷ ASPECA (Kampot and Kep), Khmer music orphanage, Kuy Vet orphanage, a Muslim community-based orphanage.

⁴⁸ According to the ATJPU data; no data available on child victims.

tourism and humanitarian industry, and the reason was for many of these foreigners residing in the area was unclear;

- The deputy commissioner of Kampot admitted that the tourist flow into Kampot includes “deviant” tourists, among them travelling sex offenders. Police activity is reactive rather than proactive, waiting for complaints to be lodged before performing any monitoring or investigative activities;
- Kampot and Kep are widely dispersed towns, stretching for several kilometers. The many isolated and remote areas in the region could provide sex offenders with the opportunity to abuse children in private and out-of-the way places.

Koh Kong

Koh Kong is situated at the south-west of the Cambodian coast on the Thailand border. Its capital is Krong Koh Kong. Travelling to Koh Kong is done by boat from Sihanoukville to Koh Kong (4 hours cruise), or by road, (around 7 hours) from Phnom Penh or Sihanoukville. The local economy was based on fishing, although that industry has been in decline since 1998, and the logging industry has since taken over. Economic development relies on border trade (including smuggling) and tourism (eco-tourism in surrounding forested areas and casinos) to draw Western and Thai visitors. Despite being

in a similar situation to Poipet (cross-border trade, smuggling, casinos), Koh Kong has not experienced to the same degree the negative side effects (street communities, slums etc) seen in Poipet. The sparsely populated province, which presented poor key development indicators, is subdivided into 8 districts.

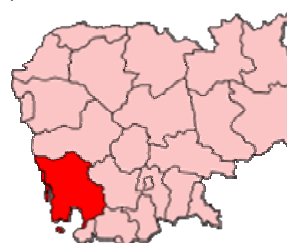


Figure 7: General Information

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Area (sq. km) | 11,009 |
| Projected Population, [Male; Female] ⁴⁹ | 191,468 [99,045; 92,423] |
| Density (per sq. km) | 17.4 |
| Projected total fertility rate (2005) ⁵⁰ , ‰ | 3.93 |
| Annual rate of growth (2004/05), % | 4.17 |
| Urbanization rate (% pop) | 22.2 |
| Population distribution, [0-14; 15-64; 65 and above], % | [40.7; 57.5; 1.8] |
| Projected life expectancy (at birth) | M: 62.4 F: 68.8 |
| Gender ratio (M:F) | 10.7:10 |
| Net school attendance ratio (%) ⁵¹ , <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> , [M ; F] | |
| Primary | <u>53.6</u> [55.3; 51.8] |
| Secondary | <u>8</u> [9.6; 6.2] |
| Literacy rate (%), <u>total</u> and <i>by sex</i> [M ; F] | <u>55</u> [65.3; 44.3] |

Mission

The survey mission in Koh Kong province was performed over five days in Krong Koh Kong.

⁴⁹ GPCC, NIS, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ GPCC, NIS, *op. cit.*

⁵¹ CDHS, NIS, MoP; *op. cit.*

- ***Limited numbers of street children***

Street children are rare in and around Koh Kong. Those interviewed had been sent by their families before or after school to collect rubbish in the street. The children wore clean clothes, were polite, and gave no indication of sniffing glue or taking any drugs. These children differ completely from the street children of Phnom Penh, Siem Reap or Poipet.

- ***Koh Kong: a short- term destination***

The average visits to Koh Kong by tourists are short-term only. Except for trekking in the National Park or taking a cruise on the river, tourist services are limited. Most tourists use Koh Kong as a stopover point when travelling to or from Thailand. Those coming from Thailand who wish to spend time by the water give priority to other sea-side sites like Sihanoukville or Kampot.

- ***Sex tourism***

One category of tourist has chosen Koh Kong for another reason: its brothels and bars. Websites can be found promoting Koh Kong as an ideal sex-tourist destination.⁵² A significant proportion of Western men spend a lot of time in these places at both nighttime and daytime. Habitual sex tourists in Koh Kong do not require a facilitator but simply contact the 'mama san'⁵³ directly, who then sends a prostitute to their room. Guesthouses offer special monthly rates, which could entice sex tourists to stay for longer periods.

The spread of prostitution in Koh Kong initially started with fisheries development in the area. This industry employed a large sector of migrant labor, who regularly frequented the sex establishments. When the fishing industry began to decline in the late 1990's, the prostitutes turned their focus to the tourism industry. Many prostitutes are able to communicate in English as a result. Nearby casinos attract Thai gamblers, who visit the brothels in town.

- ***Tourist facilities expanding***

Accommodation facilities dedicated to Western customers are expanding and many can be found on the way to the brothel area. Westerners are taking control of tourist businesses, some of them having owned similar businesses in Thailand. A significant proportion of Western-management establishments are located on the riverside. Internet cafes are also being established in Koh Kong.

- ***Sex tourism or child sexual exploitation?***

There is no official record of child sexual exploitation perpetrated by travelling sex offenders in Koh Kong.⁵⁴ This is hardly surprising given inadequate law enforcement and the lack of monitoring in the area. Different NGOs working with vulnerable persons and victims

⁵² www.kohkong.com/kohkong/index.html

⁵³ A term used in Cambodia to refer to female pimps/brothel-keepers.

⁵⁴ Source: Licadho, Koh Kong.

acknowledge that the line between prostitution and child sexual exploitation is thin. Observations made during the mission indicated that some prostitutes in Koh Kong seem to be underage. In addition, children interviewed admitted to having had contact with Western foreigners who wanted to take them for a bike ride – although whether this was out of goodwill or an act of grooming was unclear.

Tourism in Koh Kong faces a dark reality: it is either a temporary stop-over during transit or a place in which the 'natural resources' visited by tourists are not the surrounding tropical forests but brothels and bars. Wider investigation and monitoring is required in Koh Kong, which could be led and supervised by APLE's Sihanoukville branch.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Focus on strengthening law enforcement in Cambodia

Increased law enforcement activity in Phnom Penh has led to a spread of street-based child sexual exploitation in other areas of Cambodia: offenders leave monitored areas for those where they can act with impunity. Data collected during the missions lead to the conclusion that **APLE's activities should be extended to include certain areas within Cambodia where monitoring and investigation are required.**

The justification for this conclusion is demonstrated by the following observations:

- ▶ No monitoring or investigation of travelling sex offenders is currently being performed outside Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville;
- ▶ Travelling sex offenders are moving into countryside and remote areas;
- ▶ The issue of child sexual exploitation is longstanding in some areas (e.g. Siem Reap);
- ▶ A message needs to be given to travelling sex offenders that the culture of impunity in Cambodia is being weakened. On-site investigations and monitoring assist in sending this message;
- ▶ The demand side of child sexual exploitation needs to be addressed in order to also address the supply side. Without demand (for sexual interaction with children) there will be no supply.

By **opening an APLE office in Siem Reap**, conditions for continuous, nation-wide monitoring and investigation will be established:

- ▶ The three main tourist destinations in Cambodia(Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville and Siem Reap) will be covered by a full-time, active APLE branch office. The three regional offices would then be responsible for utilizing expertise in monitoring and investigating street-based child sexual exploitation in nearby areas. For example, the Sihanoukville branch office could be responsible for monitoring activities in Kampot/Kep and Koh Kong. The Siem Reap branch could be responsible for monitoring Banteay Meanchey province;
- ▶ The area within which travelling sex offenders are able to move and operate without being monitored will narrow;
- ▶ Increasing cooperation between regional offices will be facilitated, as information on sex offenders as they travel the country can be passed on and monitoring can be shared. For example, during the collection of information for this survey, investigators were able to investigate a case in Sisophon as a result of information provided by APLE's Sihanoukville office.

Capitalization of APLE knowledge, expertise and the provision of ongoing training

APLE's expertise in monitoring and investigating travelling sex offenders is unique in Cambodia. It should be recognized, spread and developed.

Since 2003 and the launch of the Protect Project, APLE has collected a wealth of information, knowledge and intelligence with respect to street-based child sexual exploitation: grooming methods; places and areas used by travelling sex offenders to gain access to, and/or sexually abuse children; targets and methods of travelling sex offenders; networks amongst offenders etc. APLE has also developed methods of investigation and monitoring to gather evidence and intelligence.

Two issues have been identified, which if addressed, could further enhance APLE's success in dealing with child sexual exploitation. Firstly, APLE's expertise remains internal, and little-known among local stakeholders (official bodies, local NGOs). Secondly, APLE's investigations are sometimes hampered as a result of insufficient training and knowledge among investigators. It is recommended that these issues be addressed by:

- ▶ **Involving new actors in the monitoring and investigating of travelling sex offenders.** APLE is currently the only NGO monitoring travelling sex offenders and street-based child sexual exploitation. In countryside and remote areas, many NGOs are established at a local level, supporting all kinds of vulnerable persons (victims of sexual abuse, street communities, prostitutes etc). By engaging with these NGOs and providing information, guidelines and advice with respect to street-based child sexual exploitation, APLE will be able to establish a "soft" network consisting of intermediary organizations that are able to assist APLE to conduct its activities on a wide-scale. Networking represented a significant part of APLE's mission in conducting this survey, and it was found that valuable information and local knowledge was obtained through these channels. Identification of partners interested in liaising with APLE should be made.
- ▶ **Develop training programs for APLE personnel.** Guidelines and training methods should be developed to provide skills in monitoring, investigation, legal and judicial process and civil rights. Such training reduces the risk of mistakes and abuse of procedure in monitoring and investigating travelling sex offenders. It also reduces the level of stress experienced by personnel in difficult situations.
- ▶ **Developing and nurturing the skills and talents of APLE Investigators' and other personnel.** APLE aims to work closely with the Cambodian police on monitoring and apprehending sex offenders.
 - Monitoring is conducted with a mix of indirect and direct approaches to (a) *travelling* sex offenders and (b) child victims. Utilizing both approaches allows for a high level of

data collection but also requires a range of knowledge and techniques. Training for investigators could include:

- Observation and tailing methods for undercover monitoring so as to avoid recognition or suspicion by suspects;
 - English language training, tailored to the types of information investigators need to obtain;
 - Child interviewing and counseling techniques.
- APLE personnel can be closely involved in the arrest and subsequent investigation of suspects. APLE is often present during the arrest and interviewing phases of cases and provides assistance to the Police in these matters. These situations can create a great deal of stress for the APLE investigators and other personnel involved. It is clear that personnel involved in such circumstances must have the ability to:
- Deal with stress in a way that does not have a negative impact on the case;
 - Address issues with the Police as and when they arise: for example, when the German national was arrested in Siem Reap as a result of APLE's investigations and subsequently questioned, the police officer in charge of the questioning was not prepared to deal with 'sensitive topics' related to sexual abuse. APLE personnel must have the strength to deal with such issues as they arise;
 - Ensure that civil rights are not being breached and that due process is being followed.
- Monitoring and investigating child sexual exploitation may have serious psychological consequences for APLE personnel. Counseling and other forms of psychological support for investigators and other members of staff are necessary.

Readjusting advocacy efforts at the local level

APLE participates in advocacy at national and international levels to promote child safe tourism in Cambodia. This advocacy is generally focused on the demand side of child sexual exploitation; that is, it is aimed at travelling sex offenders and foreign members of the community. As law enforcement activity and monitoring improves with respect to the demand for child sexual exploitation, APLE's advocacy should be altered to ensure sustainable child protection by focusing on communities and families.

Several factors demonstrate that this rationale is viable:

- ▶ Law enforcement is only one element of child protection. For long term, sustainable protection, others tools and methods have to be utilized;
- ▶ Monitoring and investigation of suspects will become eventually a police task, and APLE's advocacy efforts should reflect this;

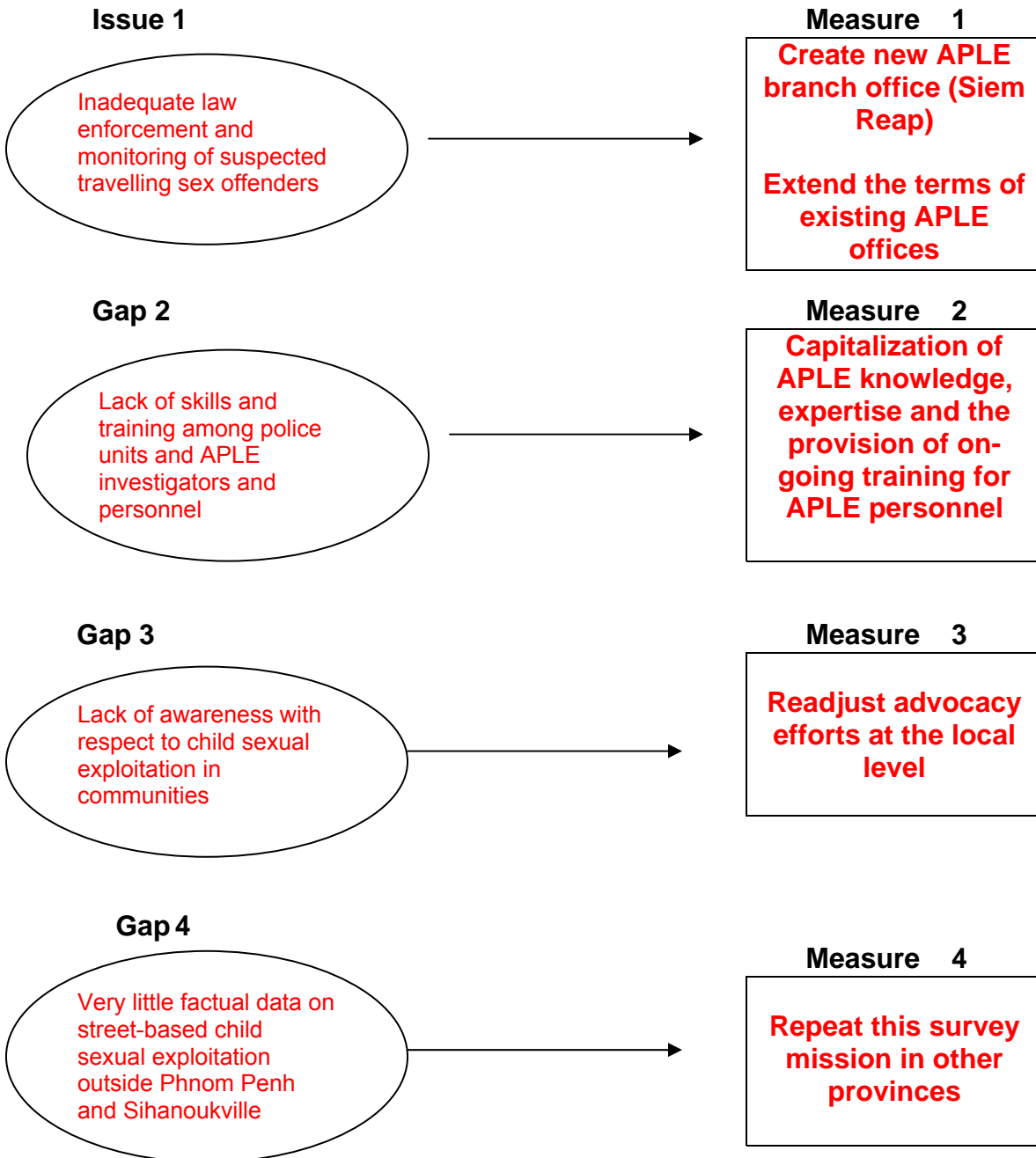
- ▶ Communities are misinformed about foreigner-perpetrated child sexual exploitation. Current awareness sessions being held in communities are dealing with sensitive issues such as domestic violence and rape, but do not address child sexual exploitation or travelling sex offenders.

Communities which are clearly targeted by travelling sex offenders should be educated with respect to such issues as grooming methods used by offenders, how children are chosen and access to them obtained, the physical and psychological dangers to the child etc. This must be done by Cambodian people through a Cambodian-style message. APLE is well-placed to provide advice and knowledge to local people on this sensitive matter. It could be done through a partnership with LNGOs which are already established and working in communities.

Repeat this survey in other provinces

- ▶ The present survey has covered seven provinces chosen for the number of tourists they attract and/or their geographic location (border with Thailand and Vietnam). It does not exhaustively cover all areas of Cambodia. Provinces such as Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Thom, Kratie, Mondolkiri and Takeo welcome significant numbers of foreign tourists and residents and are worthy of a survey mission to determine the extent of child sexual exploitation occurring within them.

Summary of General recommendations



SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Opening an APLE office in Siem Reap

The need for a permanent APLE presence in Siem Reap is required as a result of the following factors:

- The outcome of APLE's presence in Siem Reap on only one relatively short (seven day) mission was an arrest;
- Siem Reap is an area without monitoring or investigation, despite its large street communities and child laborers (sellers, beggars);
- Siem Reap is the number one tourist destination in Cambodia. Opening an office in Siem Reap will ensure that, alongside Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville, Cambodia's three largest tourist destinations will be monitored for street-based child sexual exploitation.

In Siem Reap, key stakeholders are receptive to APLE's work with street-based child sexual exploitation. During this survey mission, cooperation with the Siem Reap ATJPU led to the arrest of a suspect, and it is believed that other monitored cases would be dealt with by them in a cooperative and efficient manner. A relationship with CWCC was also established. CWCC provides legal support and shelter to victims of sexual abuse and works closely with the ATJPU. There is thus an opportunity to combine three types of expertise: Monitoring and investigation (APLE), arrest and legal proceedings (ATJPU), legal support and shelter (CWCC).

APLE has two options for opening an office in Siem Reap:

- Focus on monitoring and investigation, while child support is conducted by an NGO-partner (as is the case in Sihanoukville).⁵⁵ This allows for a quick launch with low operating costs; or
- Monitoring, investigation and full integration of child protection activities

A minimum initial operation period of six months is required.

The large size of Siem Reap will ensure APLE investigators will be able to work in the city with anonymity and therefore little risk in collecting data.

⁵⁵ M'lop Tapang Center For Street Children: APLE's NGO partner in Sihanoukville for child welfare and shelter.

Additional prerogatives for existing offices: extend area of monitoring to nearby provinces

Existing APLE offices will retain their focus of constant monitoring and investigating in the areas in which they are based. However, it is recommended that they commence ad-hoc monitoring of certain nearby provinces which do not require permanent offices but do justify a certain level of monitoring.

It is recommended that the following provinces be monitored by existing APLE offices:

| Provinces | <i>under supervision of office in:</i> |
|--------------------------|---|
| Koh Kong, Kampot and Kep | <i>Sihanoukville</i> |
| Banteay Meanchey | <i>Siem Reap</i> |
| Battambang | <i>Phnom Penh (or Siem Reap)</i> |

These places would be followed-up on a regular basis (rate to be fixed), and also when certain situations arise. For example:

- when a suspected person leaves a monitored province and enters a nearby province; or
- when intelligence is provided by witnesses (local people, NGOs) in a nearby province that a situation or certain person requires investigation.

Regular and planned monitoring in these provinces will enable APLE to build tangible indicators of factors such as tourist flow, foreign residents, street children communities and incidence of street-based child sexual exploitation.

It may be determined that a permanent APLE presence is required in one or more of the nearby provinces. APLE should utilize the skills, knowledge and networks of APLE personnel from existing offices who are involved in the monitoring of those provinces to ensure the swift and unproblematic establishment of the new offices.

Status quo

In some areas, such as Svay Rieng and Ban Lung (Ratanakiri), the situation of street-based child sexual exploitation does not require intervention. Although it cannot be said that street-based child sexual exploitation does not exist in these provinces, it appears to be an insignificant problem compared to other areas. Considering the financial and human constraints of an organization such as APLE, primary efforts should be concentrated in those other areas.