Reporting and Referral Mechanisms for Children and Families Affected by OCSEA and CSEA: Evidence of Good Practice in Cambodia

Helping Children Affected by OCSEA and CSEA
To Reach Out and Access Support:
What Is Good Practice?

The 'Good Practice' Project:
This document has been produced to collect and share some important ideas and helpful suggestions for helping children following abuse and exploitation, including online (OCSEA).

We met with Cambodian service providers and asked them to share their experiences and ideas about 'good practice' - when working with child victims and survivors, and their families.

What do we mean by 'good practice'?
'Good practice' (in relation to reporting and referral mechanisms) can refer to the design or features of a service, and to activities, or types of service provision or ways of working that are helpful, effective and produce good and positive outcomes.

Therefore, we were interested to find out about what service providers do that work well, are successful and effective to help children reach out for help and support, and to report abuse and exploitation. We also wanted to know more about successful activities to refer children to services, and support children following abuse. In simple terms, we are interested to know more about 'what works'?

Our ideas about 'good practice' do not stay the same, and change over time. We are always learning new things, so our 'practice' and our understanding of what is effective and useful, also changes and develops.[1]

Before you start reading - a few important notes:

Why is it important to know more about 'good practice'?
When children are abused and exploited they have many different needs. But they often feel isolated and fearful of telling others, of reporting to authorities, and accessing support.

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[1] One example of how things change over time is the use of orphanages. In the past, very often, when a child was poor or had experienced harm people thought the best place for them to be was in a center or an orphanage. We now know that the best place for children is in families.

People assume that children will go to the police, social services or family members to report and disclose CSEA and OCSEA. But all over the world, and in Cambodia, this rarely happens. Almost no children go to the police, helplines or a social worker.[2]

> In Cambodia a national survey of children indicated that **11%** of children had experienced some form of OCSEA. This roughly translates to a potential 160,000 victims.
>
> Very few of these children reported their experiences or asked for help.

So if we want to help children, it is important to find out more about what we can do as service providers, to encourage and support children to report and access support services.

What do we know about why children do not report?

To understand how to help children access support, it is helpful to understand some of the reasons that children may choose not to disclose, report and seek help.

Various factors are known to limit, interfere or prevent children from reporting abuse.

You and your team will already know about many factors that make it difficult, or prevent children from reporting OCSEA and CSEA. These barriers may include:

Related to Thoughts and Feelings (Internal)	Related to Society, Social Norms and Services (External)

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[2] In recent research related to OCSEA, of over 1000 victims in 13 countries - only 2.5% contacted a social worker, just 3% contacted a helpline and 2.9% contacted the police. In Cambodia in 2022 evidence tells us that children are not reporting.

Most abusers are known to the child, so fearful of saying anything *(The perpetrator could be a family member or neighbour, a friend, and/or may have made threats)*	**Lack of information and awareness of OCSEA and CSEA** *(low concern in families and communities)*
Effects of grooming *(Children manipulated into keeping the secret)*	**Lack of information and low visibility of services**
Self blame and self criticism	**Services may not appear to be accessible, child friendly, and/or confidential**
Stigma, shame, embarrassment *(This can be similar and different for girls and boys)*	**Services may not offer a choice of gender of person to speak to**
Fear of consequences *(being judged, blamed, punished, or thinking you will be arrested)*	**Don't know where to go, who to tell and who can be trusted**
Not knowing what happened is wrong	**Community and social attitudes often discriminate against and blame victims**
Not wanting to lose freedom if they report *(being kept at home; phone being taken away)*	**Previous experiences of accessing services may not have been positive**
Lack of trust and fearful of authorities and police	**Awareness of blaming attitudes by services, family, community or others.**

Key Learning:

As a result of these and other reasons, many victims and survivors of abuse and exploitation remain silent. Keeping silent about abuse is very common. Silence can feel safer than speaking out.

Some children may be viewed by services as 'not cooperating' if they stay silent and they are blamed. This is not true and not helpful.

We should never blame a child for being abused or exploited, and we should never blame them when they find it hard to talk about what happened.

Children and young people often see the world very differently to adults, service providers, authorities and others.

This raises some important questions for service providers:

- *What needs to change so that these support mechanisms are seen as a realistic choice by children?*

- *What do we do already that is helpful, that we can apply to our work with children, to improve support mechanisms?*

This document may help us begin to answer this question. It shares some ideas about 'good practice' that we can apply to our own work, and to help children reach out and access support.

Information From Group Reflections - Good Practice:

Participants were asked to share ideas about what they considered to be good, promising or emerging practice - and to provide specific examples where they could. Links to examples and resources have been provided in some cases.

The challenge for service providers is to consider how to transform many of these ideas into action on the ground, to suit the Cambodian context, and to maintain them in the future.

How to use this document:

The information has been shared under several headings relating to different aspects of our work and interventions. They are broken down into specific ideas and steps in many cases.

You can use the document in different ways:

We have provided a few ideas below on how you can use the document, which is also available as a slide deck for sharing with your team.

(a) Read through on your own and also with your team and reflect on the information provided; discuss and consider what is new and helpful information, and how some of the ideas might be useful in your own organisation. There are links to other resources in this document, so it can also be used as a learning resource.

(b) Use the simple **'Good Practice Self Assessment Tool'** to make notes on what your organisation does well; what your organisation might do better or need to improve; what your learning and resource needs are.

When completed, this can help you build on your strengths and identify action to take to access learning to improve your practice. You can then share with your management team, donors or others to work on your goals. You can also share your completed assessment tool with APLE to help them develop and coordinate activities to support government and NGO services in future.

(c) There are also some recommended action tasks included under each heading, some of which are linked to external resources, so this document also acts as a 'gateway' to additional resources and learning.

The document includes ideas and suggestions related to seven different areas, as illustrated in the diagram below. All are considered to be essential to support the development of good practice.
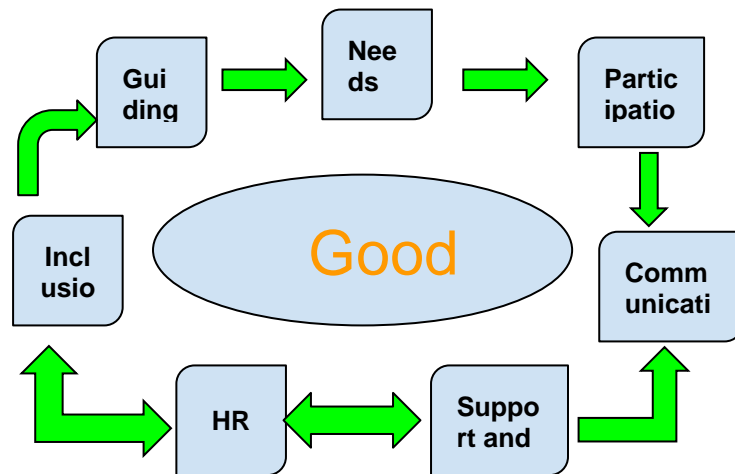
Guiding Values and Principles

This section describes what are considered to be the essential foundations upon which our relationships with children should be built and maintained, and services provided, at all times.

Good practice is achieved when these principles and values guide the development, design and the provision of all services. Ideally they should form the foundation of, and be the basis for our knowledge, attitudes and behaviour.

Ethical approaches based on the best interests of the child:

- All services and support should be based on children's rights for non- discrimination;
- to enjoy their rights fully;
- the right to survival and development;
- and respecting the views of the child, as described in the UNCRC. (Children's Version)

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Make sure your team understands the Best Interests of the Child, and is familiar with the UNCRC and how that relates to the work you do. If there are gaps in knowledge, access resources and training.

Our work aligns with relevant national laws, guidelines, and procedures (Also regional and international laws, conventions, protocols and relevant guidelines):

- All staff should be familiar with, and able to implement relevant national standards, guidelines, and procedures.

- Staff should also understand the relevant national laws, conventions and protocols that form the basis of good practice.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Make sure your team has access to all relevant documentation, and bases their work on relevant protocols and minimum standards guidelines; conduct an assessment to identify learning needs and access relevant training.

Consistently Base Your Work On The Active and Meaningful Participation of Children:

- Ensuring that the voices, opinions, views, wishes, needs and suggestions of children are essential for us to understand how they wish to seek help on their terms, and how we can best protect and support them.
- When services provide safe environments and opportunities to listen and involve children, the outcomes are better. More detail and specific examples relating to participation are provided in the section of this document which focuses on participation.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Read the section of this report that focuses on Participation and Inclusion, and develop an action plan to learn about tools and methods to increase participation. One a day to day basis - listen to children, and keep listening!

Services and Support should be 'Gender Informed'. Good practice includes ensuring that:

- No person (child or adult) should face discrimination based on their gender.
  (e.g. People may say that the abuse and exploitation of boys is less serious than girls; or young people who identify as gay may be blamed for their exploitation).
- Services ensure that *all* children and young people have equal opportunities and access to services and support that is safe, accepting and responsive
- This includes girls, boys and young people who identify as LGBTQI
- Services should be aware of how gender can influence OCSEA and CSEA, and how gender norms can lead to discrimination - and ensure that this does not take place
- Services should be aware of the similar and different needs of girls, boys and LGBTQI people, and work to meet those needs
- This includes for example, providing a choice of gender of staff to support children who may request a female or male worker
- Organisations have a responsibility to provide training and ongoing support for staff to ensure this is achieved.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Developing inclusive and gender informed approaches can be complicated and there is a lot to learn. Use the [Assessment Tool](#) included in this document to identify your strengths and learning needs, share it with APLE, and we can help you access appropriate training. This [toolkit](#) includes learning resources and ideas for best practice in working with boys.

Making Services Inclusive:
Good practice should recognise that:

- Some children are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation
- This includes street based children, children with impairments and disabilities, LGBTQ children, or children who are marginalised due to economic status, ethnicity, language or other identity.
- Services need to be flexible and welcoming to all children and take whatever action is required to ensure that they are included in service provision
- If we are not sure how to help - we do need to collaborate with services with experience of working with marginalised children
- Achieving good practice requires collaboration, flexibility and a commitment to learning and improving our work

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Develop links, collaborate, work with and learn from organisations that work with marginalised children; discuss how you can work together to protect and support children, using your different skills and resources.

Needs Based:
- Good practice is achieved when services are provided entirely on the needs of the individual child seeking and receiving services.
- Services should not be swayed by external influences, including politics, religion or inflexible 'one size fits all' organisational approaches.
- Services are also more effective when they acknowledge an individual's strengths and capacity, not just their problems and needs.
- Effective assessment processes and clear case management systems are essential to ensure that the needs of children are met
- Collaboration with other services is also essential to meet the needs of children, so do establish close links and referral pathways to organisations working on health, legal and psychosocial and other services; actively support children to get the help they need.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Ensure that your team has appropriate training, resources and ongoing support to carry out good needs based assessments and case management; Link with organisations who provide different kinds of services, and do learn more about what they do; ask them about their 'best practice'.

Attitudes and Behaviour of Service Providers:

- Core values should guide the work and promote the importance of working professionally with dedication and safety at all times
- This should include the best interests of the child, treating each child equally, and as an individual, showing respect, compassion and empathy, at all times.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Spend time individually and with your team reflecting on the core values that influence your work; identify your strengths, and any gaps and needs that you may have to link them more closely with practice.

Collaboration:
- Services can not hope to meet all the needs of children
- Achieving good practice means that all agencies and individuals need to collaborate to achieve the best possible services for all children.
- Services need to have good and trusting relationships, communication and commitment to collaborate with other services
- This may mean meeting regularly to learn, share and support casework and having effective referral mechanisms

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Review the information and connections you have with different services, and update the resource information you have. Go and visit different organisations to build trust and find out more about what they do, and discuss how you can work more closely together.

Learning and Support for Staff:

- Organisations and individual staff that are open to continued learning, and building on evidence of best practice, are better for children and staff.
- Peer support, learning through sharing and reflecting on your work can be very helpful

- Learning can be achieved in many other ways - through formal training, but also providing one to one and group support for staff facilitated by an experienced, empathetic and suitably qualified person (Supervisor, mentor)

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Consider how your organisation or team promotes and provides learning and ongoing support for staff to improve the services provided, and staff care. If there are gaps and areas of improvement, find out more about how to develop systems in your own organisation.

Providing Services Based on the Expressed Needs of Victims and Survivors

If we want to achieve best practice, it is vital that survivors are given a voice and genuine opportunities to share their opinions about the kind of service and support they need, and provide feedback. Services that are built this way are more likely to be trusted, be used by children and have successful outcomes.

Service providers can reflect on the following ideas and consider how they can implement them in their own services.

Improve Prevention and Protection:

- Provide children and youth with accurate information about online safety, OCSEA, CSEA, and other issues as they grow. This can help them learn how to keep safe and make healthy choices online and in the offline world.
- There is no need to treat OCSEA as a new and different topic, as service providers, you can train your staff to adapt existing approaches to the realities of the online world.
- Some examples of good practice are these Khmer language videos made by children, for children, through participatory and co- creative activities. They can be found by following this LINK.
- Help your staff to understand more about OCSEA and what is needed to keep children safe
- As described above - participation is a protective factor: ask children what they need to keep safe and help them achieve that.
- Evaluate all aspects of your service with children that receive them - and use that feedback to improve what you do.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discuss your OCSEA related learning needs in your team using the Self Assessment tool and share with APLE, who can direct you to resources and training; visit the APLE bot, and use it to learn more - and share with the children and young people that you work with.

Build on existing safe relationships to help children report and access help:

- Helplines are an important component of a strong child protection system.
- However, Cambodian research evidence shows that children mostly prefer to disclose within their existing networks of trusted friends, and not formal reporting mechanisms.
- Therefore, engaging with children and youth, (and other people likely to receive first disclosures) is very important for services.
- Providing them with knowledge of how to keep safe and what support services are available can be very helpful.
- Awareness-raising efforts should (also) target people in contact with children.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discuss with your team how the new information above means you might need to change or adapt what you do, so you can engage with children and youth more effectively. What resources can you share with them? Find ways to share these Khmer language online safety videos made by children, for children, through participatory activities, and online media.

Begin the conversation and create safe opportunities for children to share, and they will tell you what they need. Share links and information about the APLE chatbot, so they can seek the information themselves.

Services should be responsive, flexible and provide easy access:
Evidence from research and practice tells us that the following can help achieve good practice:

- Service information should be visible and widely disseminated using networks and media that children and young people use and trust
- Ask children what information they need to see that will help and encourage them to access help; do involve children in designing resources that target them.
- Survivors often ask for help when they are hurt, traumatised and in a crisis - so providing swift responses to calls for help, without long delays or waiting lists can be very important

- Helpline/hotline and reporting mechanism staff need to be well trained and able to listen and communicate effectively and with empathy to callers, providing encouragement and relevant information
- Service hours need to be flexible, and available after office hours *(so they do not draw attention by missing work or school)*
- Services need to be locally based, easy to use, welcoming and comfortable; Spaces where services are offered need to provide confidentiality and safety.
- Mobile and flexible outreach services in spaces where children spend their time can also be important. (This includes the online environment)
- Providing access through online media and platforms is also important, and explained in more detail in this document.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Spend time reflecting on the information and evidence above, and what it may mean needs to change or be adapted in your service? Use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to make services more accessible for children.

Build trust and safe relationships:

- Survivors' belief and trust in others is often destroyed following abuse and exploitation.
- It is essential that service providers earn the right to be trusted, rather than expect it.
- If we receive calls, messages or meet survivors face to face, we need to communicate genuine empathy, concern, and respect for them at all times.
- The following good practice guidelines (below) can also promote trust.

Ensure Safety and Trust:

- Building physical and psychological safety is essential for survivors
- This relates to the relationship with service providers, how they are treated and spoken to.
- Service providers should clearly communicate empathy, acceptance, warmth and kindness.
- Ensuring safety also applies to the physical environment in which they are reporting or receiving services. Privacy and confidentiality are essential.
- Any conversations or interviews need to take place in safe and confidential spaces without other people passing by or listening.
- If you want to build safety and trust - ask each individual survivor what they need to help them feel safe, and try your best to provide it.
- Providing choices - such as a choice of gender of person to report or speak to is very important for building trust and safety

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Spend time reflecting on the information and evidence above, and what it may mean needs to change or be adapted in your service to build safety and trust? Does this require more training, and/or changes to procedures, and/or the physical environment? Use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to make services safer for children.

Child Friendly Approaches:

This can depend on the age, level of development and capacity of each individual child, there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Evidence tells us that services that promote best practice:

- Are built on the foundation of human rights and children's rights
- Show respect for children and their choices and do not discriminate in any way
- Explain to children that they are not to blame for what happened to them
- Treat each child as an individual in their own right and avoid 'one size fits all' approaches to engaging with and supporting children
- Provide services that are flexible and able to respond to children of different ages and capacities
- Provide safe environments [spaces] and staff have the skills and ability to build safe and accepting, and encouraging relationships.
- Value each child as an individual, and without judgement and blame for what happened to them, or comparing them to other children
- Listening attentively and giving children time and space to share, without asking too many questions
- Avoiding complicated language or terminology, and avoid situations where children have to repeat their story over and over again to different people
- Can provide and use different tools and creative methodologies to help children share their experiences *(e.g. Life story tools, writing, drawing, toys etc.)*
- Make sure that approaches will need to be adapted and improved over time, based on feedback from children.
- Pay attention to specific needs of children, such as children with disabilities to ensure that they can also receive information, and gain access to services and support
- Able to provide services to all children, based on gender or identity.

> **RECOMMENDED ACTION:** This is a long list of important requirements, so consider using it as a checklist, and use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take, and learning/resources are required, to make all aspects of your service child friendly. Talk

to organisations that have experience of developing child friendly approaches and ask how they can support you to learn.

Listen and Provide Information About Choices and Options:
- Survivors need to know that we are listening, providing encouragement and not rushing to provide advice and opinions.
- Provide accurate information to inform children of what their options are, and about the choices they have, and other child friendly services and supports.

Respect Children's Rights, Decisions and Choices:
- Children have no choice when someone abuses or exploits them, so providing choices, and a voice in deciding what happens to them, is an essential part of healing.
- All services and responses should be based on children's right to have accurate information about options and choices, and should be encouraged to have a voice in decisions made, according to their evolving capacities.
- Survivors need time to process what happened, and make decisions.

Focus On The Whole Person:
- Being a victim of sexual exploitation and abuse does not define a person. (We should avoid seeing them as just a 'victim' only)
- Good practice helps us remember the 'whole person', and that our support should also pay attention to all of their needs - physical, emotional, social, learning, and spiritual.
- This can be described as a 'holistic' approach that aims to address the overall well-being and quality of life of each child.

Providing Pathways and Easy Access to a Range of Support Services:
- The needs of children affected by OCSEA and CSEA are varied and unique, based on the needs of each individual child.
- Services will therefore need to provide information about, and help children safely access appropriate child friendly legal services, psychosocial support, specialist mental health services, medical and sexual health services, and any others identified to support them. *(Information should be provided and available in person and through resources and online media).*

Support Families and Promote Family and Community Based Care:
- The impact of exploitation and abuse is not limited to the survivor. Families need support too.
- We need to work with families to help them understand the best interests of the child, and build on their strengths.

- This could mean providing helpful information about OCSEA and CSEA, addressing their concerns and helping them understand what happened to their child.
- Many parents need help building trust, safety and the capacity to empathise with and support their child.
- Parents may also need emotional and/or practical support based on an assessment of their needs.
- Service responses would not assume that a child needs to be placed in a shelter because they have experienced CSEA or OCSEA. Being separated from families can have a negative impact on children, and service interventions need to be community based where possible.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Spend time reflecting on the information and evidence above, and if you need any additional learning or support to help you work more effectively with families. Use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to make your services more family friendly.

Collaborate with other organisations to support families, and find out more about working with Cambodian families by accessing this link to Family Care First, which is a network of organisations working together to support children living in safe, nurturing family based care.

Participation

Participation of children in designing, using and evaluation of services is very important. Participation helps us to protect children.

Genuine child and youth participation, when applied to all aspects of our work, makes them more relevant to children, and increases the possibility that they will be engaged with services.

Peer groups can be a vital element of the reporting mechanism process.

Specific examples of good and successful practice from Cambodia are provided below:

Co- creation of OCSEA resources with children:
- One local NGO in Sihanoukville (M'Lop Tapang) recognised the need to develop resources to help children understand how to keep safe online, and protect themselves from OCSEA.
- They met with youth groups, co- designed a survey about online safety and delivered training (based on the survey) about safe ways to report.
- The children then worked together to develop online safety videos. Other examples of Online safety video resources made by older youth are also available.
- NGO APLE also developed a Chatbot - dedicated to OCSEA with children

Co- creation of youth community networks to provide feedback, reporting and support:

- M'Lop Tapang (MT) also established a number of community based processes for children and families to provide feedback and complaints related to services, and youth representative groups who can report any concerns within communities.
- A peer support network was also established, where youth volunteers meet regularly to provide feedback on services and new needs, and support children to report problems and seek help.
- MT helped the youth learn, provided training and have watched the network grow into a vital part of the reporting mechanism.

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<mark>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</mark> Watch the videos produced with children to learn about OCSEA issues, and then share them with children you know about. This can be a useful tool to start conversations with children and youth.

Use the [Self Assessment Tool](#) to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to make your services more participatory, and make a plan to take that forward.

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Inclusion and Diversity

- Children who are marginalised from society are more vulnerable to CSEA and OCSEA
- People can be excluded from opportunities and services for a number of reasons, based on where they live, their age, identity, ability, ethnic origin, HIV status, gender or sexual identity, economic status, and other identity factors.
- So we all need to take steps to make services accessible, welcoming and effective for all children.

Some examples of good practice in relation to children with disabilities and LGBTQI youth are described below:

Some Facts About Children with Disabilities:

- Approximately 10- 15% of children have some form of disability
- Children with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse and several times more likely to be abused than their non disabled peers
- Children with disabilities and their families face many barriers when faced with reporting and accessing help and support from child protection services.
- Many of the reasons for this are related to organisations' limited awareness of disability

- Evidence from Cambodia shows that child protection and disability focused organisations could benefit from working more closely, to avoid children falling through the gaps.

Achieving good practice requires service providers to take some simple steps to address this:

- Learn more about the [rights of children with disabilities](#)
- Review practice and include inclusion of children with disabilities in strategic/work plans
- Network and collaborate with organisations working with, and representing children with disabilities (share learnings and trainings)
- Use good practice resources to [Learn about disability and 'twin track' approaches](#) to effectively collaborate with specialist organisations to protect children with disabilities.
- Improve and adapt our services to meet the needs of children with disabilities

LGBTQI youth
- Research tells us that LGBTQI youth (sometimes referred to as diverse SOGIE - people with diverse Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression), face increased vulnerability to OCSEA and CSEA
- They are also marginalised in other ways, due to discrimination.
- Achieving good practice requires services to learn about and address harmful and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours within their workplace, and in the community in general.
- We can collaborate with LGBTQI organisations, and commit to learning and developing appropriate reporting mechanisms and services that are accepting and safe for LGBTQI youth.
- Twin track approaches (described above), and working closely with organisations working with and representing SOGIE diverse youth, can also improve our practice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: To make services truly inclusive takes a big commitment to learning and change. Read through the information above and use the [Self Assessment Tool](#) to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to make your services more inclusive, and make a plan to take that forward. Network with organisations working with children with disabilities and develop collaborative working partnerships.

Remember that effective child protection services should be inclusive and should 'leave no child behind'.

Communication and Messaging - What Helps Children Reach out and Access Services?

Service providers in Cambodia are learning some important lessons that help us in our work with children and youth. Some of these ideas are shared below:

- Reporting mechanisms, services and resources that are specially targeted at, and communicate effectively with children and youth about OCSEA and CSEA, are more likely to be used by them.
- This relates to all forms of communication - face to face and in person (*the words and language we use, and showing warmth and kindness)*; and key information and messages shared in leaflets, awareness raising documents and key messages shared on websites and online media.
- Children and youth do not respond well when they are being told what to do by adults - but they do respond positively to being treated with respect, being given accurate and helpful information, and provided with choices. This helps build trust.
- Therefore, in order to be successful, it is essential that we listen to and work closely with children and youth to understand their needs, and have them co- create and design successful communication strategies and resources.

Use child /youth focused platforms to publicise and link to reporting mechanisms and services:

- As with direct face to face communication, good practice uses mediums and online spaces where children and youth spend their time.
- This may mean using Instagram, Facebook, Messenger, Tik Tok, Messenger Kids, Telegram, Snapchat - and updating as new apps and spaces become popular.
- This is what we could call 'digital outreach'.

Provide accurate information based on what children need to know:

- Consult with children about their real and expressed needs and what helps them reach out for support.
- Listen to children to understand what they need to know, not what adults want to tell them
- Provide helpful information about how to access safe and confidential support, also providing choices of how to report if, and when they need to.
- When children receive complete, accurate and clear information, they are equipped, motivated and feel more confident to make better choices.

Use Child and Youth Centred Language:

- Children and youth may not fully understand adult or NGO language and terminology, and avoid services that use it.
- Children's use of language and understanding also changes as they develop and become older, according to their capacity.

- Collaborate with children to co- create communication materials that are child and youth focused. Explore ways to easily communicate to, and reach children of different languages, ethnicity and ability.

Clearly communicate confidentiality, empathy and supportive attitudes and services:
- When children experience OCSEA and CSEA, they often feel responsible and blame themselves for what happened. They also expect to be blamed and judged by other people.
- So face to face, online and print media messaging needs to highlight confidentiality, acceptance, and empathy.
- Some messaging for boys and girls may need to be different and targeted specifically at them. For example, boys are taught that they should be strong, and that asking for help is a sign of weakness. So services need to communicate that asking for help is a 'sign of strength and courage', not a weakness.
- This can help them overcome powerful social norms that act as a barrier to help seeking.
- More information about evidence-based best good practice, and working effectively with boys can be found in this [toolkit](#), specially designed to help support boys affected by abuse and exploitation.

Highlight Encouraging and Clear Messaging:
- Provide **choices and options** of how people can report (different methods, including reporting anonymously, and/or with a friend/family member in person), and **clearly explain the steps, process and what to expect.**
- Providing a **choice of gender** of person to connect with can be very important. Girls more often want to speak with a woman, and many boys prefer a choice too.
- Highlight the **'benefits of reporting'** in your messaging, and how their situation can improve when they access support, as this can help overcome the many barriers they face.

==RECOMMENDED ACTION:== There is a lot of information about communication to reflect on. Spend time with your team reading through the sections above, and consider what information and ideas are new to you. Think about the way your organisation publicises your services and communicates at this time, and consider what improvements you would like to make. Maybe consider how you can engage children and youth to help you?

Take a look at these [short films about OCSEA and keeping safe on the internet](#), made for children, and by children. Share them widely with children you work with.

You can also use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to help improve your communication, and make a plan to take that forward.

Good Practice Case Study:
Evidence Based Solutions for 21st Century OCSEA Challenges

Cambodian NGO APLE has worked closely with children to develop a Chatbot to help children and youth learn more about OCSEA, report concerns and link to helpful services.

Place case study text here…

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Spend time using the Chatbot to learn about OCSEA and how people can make reports and access support through the different functions; share the Chatbot widely with children and youth that you work with. If you want to learn more about OCSEA and the Chatbot, contact APLE.

Read through the examples of good practice in the case study above and reflect with your team about how you might like to apply some of the 'best practices' to your own work. Use the Self Assessment Tool to help reflect and identify what steps you need to take to build and develop good practice in your own work.

Learn more about child participation, through accessing training and resources like: **The Nine Basic Requirements for Meaningful and Ethical Children's Participation**

Human Resources and Organisational Issues:

This document includes information, ideas and practical suggestions about 'good practice' but this can only be achieved if teams and organisations also have a strong foundation of processes and support in place to help achieve that. These are briefly summarised below.

- Organisations will benefit from remembering that there is no need to treat online sexual exploitation and abuse as a new and different topic, frontline workers need to be trained to adapt and improve their existing services and responses.

- Enhance existing standards, responses and SOPs relating to child safeguarding, practice and procedures to include OCSEA issues

- Provide Learning and Training Needs Assessments (LTNA) related to OCSEA and develop or access appropriate resources and learning materials, or modify existing ones.

- Provide training, support and resources which address specific OCSEA related issues, designed specifically for the Cambodian context, to all staff

- Develop and provide ongoing individual and group [technical] support for service providers working in the field, to build on good practice, address vicarious traumatisation, and establish self care interventions. This should be considered an essential requirement of service provision.

- Ensure recruitment procedures and planning of services addresses the need for both female and male staff to be employed on reporting mechanism helplines, hotlines and face to face activities.

- Improve record and data keeping capacity to feed into the development of effective M&E processes (Quantitative and qualitative) to inform continued service development and implementation of good practice.

Widening and Strengthening Support Networks:

Service providers recognise that while many services and resources are located in the major cities, many children and young people live across many rural provinces. Making sure that all children in Cambodia receive the information, support and services they need is essential. The group therefore recommended the following as useful good practice for all organisations.

Work closely with the CNCC and partners to support the OCSEA National Plan of Action (NPA):
- Find out about how your organisation can actively support and contribute to the role out of the RCG National Plan of Action related to OCSEA.
- This will enhance the NPA process and contribute to strengthening and connecting services and supports across all sectors.

Create Safe and Supportive Communities and Responses:
- Ensuring that community members understand the risks related to OCSEA and CSEA, child rights and appropriate, safe and child friendly responses is essential.
- Use this document, and some of the resources in it, to inform and raise awareness.

Utilise existing community based services:
- There is no need to reinvent services - but rather build on existing community based services and enhance their knowledge and capacity.
- Disseminate information about child friendly approaches to schools, pagodas and community organisations, sangkat authorities, youth groups and others in rural areas. This includes MoWA, DoSAVY and law enforcement representatives.