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**A Study on the Situation
Of
Cambodian Children and Youths Trafficked to Thailand**
– *Looking into traumatic experiences in the past* –

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Trafficking in children has been a critical phenomenon of major global concern in the recent years especially in Asia. The UN estimates that around 4 million people a year are now traded against their will to work in some form of slavery¹ and almost half of them are children and youths. Several international events were organized to tackle this issue, for example the first and Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children were held in Stockholm 1996 and Yokohama 2001 respectively to call for immediate action at international level. Moreover, many governments, international and local organizations have been taking action at national and local levels to eradicate the trafficking problem.

No matter how the trafficking pattern is, the trafficking of vulnerable young people is a violation of their rights comprising one of the worst forms of child labour.² The Cambodian government ratified UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the most widely known approved convention to protect the children's rights. According to the CRC, a child has the right to be protected against all forms of violence, sexual exploitation and harmful labour and is entitled to the right to education and access to healthcare.³

Trafficking takes place both internally and across borders for many different purposes. Through economic development and economic disparity, tourism, and modern communication technology, the issue is becoming increasingly trans-national in scope.⁴ People move from one place to another in seek for employment opportunities and a better life. However, while adults go to Thailand with a hope of earning higher income, thousands of children and women are taken advantage of the illegal networks and trafficked into exploitation. It is obvious that children and youths are always victimized and in need of humanitarian assistance once they are trafficked. While in Thailand, children have no other choice but to obey traffickers as to work as forced labor, beggar,

¹ David W. (World Vision) 'Child Trafficking in Asia'

² Panudda B. and June K. 'Trafficking of Children: The problem and responses worldwide'

³ Stacey S. 'How UNICEF is working to curb the sexual exploitation of children'

or prostitute. These forms of trafficking include a component of recruitment and/or transportation of a child for labour exploitation by means of violence, threat thereof, deception or debt-bondage.⁵ Children and youths suffer from slave-like work conditions, and the experiences that they endure produce lasting physical and emotional scars.⁶ Many of the youths get addicted to drugs and exposed at various risks for sexual exploitation.

1.2 Overview of Cross-Border Trafficking in Cambodia

Cambodia is an important source, transit, and destination country of child victims. While some children are trafficked within the country from provinces to the capital Phnom Penh, a great number of children and youths are brought to Thailand through illegal routes. A statistics of 2001 compiled by the Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC), one of the leading organizations to support vulnerable women in Cambodia, shows that approximately 1,650 Cambodians are deported monthly to the border from Thailand, and a half of them are women and children.

After the past decades of civil war and political instability, Cambodians have been struggling with the overwhelming poverty. A number of people, with a global trend of migratory movements, cross the border to work in Thailand where people are fully attracted by the perceived wealth of the neighboring county. As stated by ILO-IPEC, recent measures to deport at least 300,000 illegal migrant workers, also pushes illegal migrants in Thailand, including trafficked children, more underground and increases their vulnerability to exploitation. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking between the governments of Thailand and Cambodia has been signed in the end of May 2003 and expected to further enhance the bilateral cooperation.

⁴ Panudda B. and June K. 'Trafficking of Children: The problem and responses worldwide'

⁵ Panudda B. and June K. 'Trafficking of Children: The problem and responses worldwide'

⁶ IOM (2002) *Review and Assessment of the Situation of the Returned Cambodian Children and Women Trafficked to Thailand and of the Assistance and Reintegration Mechanisms in Cambodia* Researched by Sonia M., Lath P.

The major channels to cross the border from Cambodia to Thailand are: 1) Poipet in Banteay Meanchey Province to Aranyaprathet, 2) Koh Kong in Koh Kong Province to Hok Lek, and 3) other unofficial routes through forests, fields, and mountain areas. In addition to this flow of Cambodians to Thailand, hundreds of Vietnamese girls are reportedly trafficked into Cambodia mostly to the capital city Phnom Penh where many people prosper from sex industry. On the other hand, not a few children go to begging in Ho Chi Minh City of Vietnam from the Southeastern part of Cambodia.

National and local authorities as well as some NGOs are currently involved in supporting the young victims by providing return service and temporary shelters so that they can be safely sent back in Cambodia. However, it is envisaged that they still have to encounter several difficulties even after repatriation due to lack of education or vocational skill as well as post-traumatic consequences. Furthermore, families and communities are not fully prepared to assist the children and youths when they are reintegrated into society. As for consequence, a great number of the youths find themselves again neglected by their families, trafficked to Thailand, or forced to become street gangsters and repeat unstable life as before.

1.3 Governmental and Non-governmental Response

1.3.1 Repatriation Mechanism and Government's Commitment

In response to the critical phenomenon, the government of Cambodia officially adopted its 'five-year National Plan against Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children' under the coordination of the Cambodia National Council of Children (CNCC), which is the main government body responsible for planning and coordination on children's issues in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Its main area of interventions includes prevention, protection, rescue of victims, appropriate services for the victims and legal actions. There are several important Cambodian policies and legal instruments relevant to trafficking in children, however, there exists a huge gap between law and its implementation comprising inadequate education and training or corruption among the local authorities.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (MOSALVY) established a sustainable repatriation mechanism providing the victims with a safe return and reintegration services for trafficked women and children with technical and financial support of United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and International Organization for Migration (IOM). Currently IOM project staff identifies Cambodian children at an Immigration Detention Center (IDC) and Thai government welfare shelters in Thailand to return them by safe route. Then those children, through a governmental Transit Center in Poipet, are sent back home or transferred to the Battambang Reception Center or the other NGO shelters to go through the consequent recovery and reintegration process.

The victims who did not have a chance to meet the IOM project staff in Thailand, however, are directly deported by Thai authority and thrown away at the border where traffickers or parents wait for them. As a result, they are again exposed at risk of being trafficked and unable to be safely sheltered for rehabilitation. In reality, the number of children identified by IOM is limited. In 2001, IOM repatriated 152 children to Cambodia while the Thai authority deports approximately 800 - 1,000 children monthly in average. Moreover, the recent IOM survey reveals that 33% of the reintegrated children with families were found to have been re-trafficked and therefore unsuccessful. The IOM researcher says, "The processes do not simply consist of rejoining a victim with their family, but incorporate a rehabilitative component."⁷ The trafficking issue has a complexity of various contributing factors and it is true that the victims' complete reintegration has been not very successful.

1.3.2 NGO Activities Combating against Trafficking

Equally important as the government's response, numbers of international and local non-governmental organizations have been implementing various programs to prevent trafficking and support the victims. Quite a many projects are being carried out such as conducting surveys, setting up shelters, capacity building of local authorities, facilitating reintegration, and advocacy activities. At those shelters, children are

⁷ IOM (2002) *Review and Assessment of the Situation of the Returned Cambodian Children and Women Trafficked to Thailand and of the Assistance and Reintegration Mechanisms in Cambodia* Researched by Sonia M., Lath P.

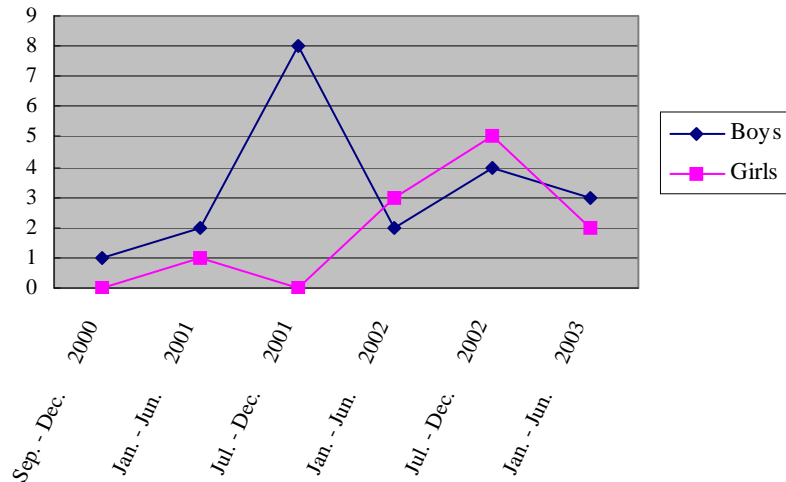
provided with medical care, literacy and arithmetic class, life skills, vocational skill training and counseling, so that the children could be reunited with family or helped to find a job independently. However, the number of shelters that positively accept trafficked children is not enough and each shelter's capacity is quite limited. Moreover, most of them are short-term shelters and so there exists very few long-term centers targeting trafficking victims to provide special treatment. Any shelter that provides adequate psychological treatment to boys was in particular never identified. It is obvious that the boys' distinct experiences comprising sexual abuse are not taken into consideration at all.

In addition to those activities, there are some NGOs that operate daycare centers to offer basic education, food and primary health care to the street children as one of the preventive measures. UNICEF and several NGOs established community-based child protection network involving volunteers in the vulnerable villages for awareness raising and protecting children. Some NGO places social workers at the border to watch the children deported by Thai authorities so that they can refer them to shelters. Also various street-base outreach activities have been implemented by NGOs in Poipet, Battambang and Phnom Penh, to prevent the street children, who are the very potentials, from being trafficked. Legal assistance for the victims' rescue and prosecution of the trafficking perpetrators has been performed by several NGOs too accordingly.

1.4 “House for Youth” Project and Research Objective

In September 2000, the “House for Youth” was established to support the youths, ranging in age from 15 and 19 years old, who used to be in vulnerable situation. Realizing the fact that the trafficking phenomenon is growing and that there was not enough capacity for sheltering the victims especially the elder ones, Kokkyo naki Kodomotachi (KnK) started receiving the trafficking victims in addition to the street children, who were the initial target for KnK. Up to date, the “House for Youth” has accommodated totally 83 youths in Battambang, and as indicated in Chart A, the number of the trafficked children has been drastically increased and it has reached up to 31 youths, which currently occupies the half of entire residents.

Chart A. Transition of the number of newly accepted trafficked children at the “House for Youth”



The project provides a long-term residential center for the youths, playing a part of recovery and reintegration process in view of assistance for trafficking victims. The programs, similar to many of the other NGO shelters, comprise basic needs, literacy and arithmetic education, vocational skills training, medical health care, counseling, family assessment, reintegration and follow-up. The project seems successful so far. Since the trafficked children are comparatively younger than the street children, there has been no graduate yet who completed the study or skill training. Among 31 youths who have been trafficked to Thailand, 25 remain studying at public school or undergoing skills training, 4 youths ran away and 3 youths were reintegrated back into families. Besides, 3 youths returned and rejoined the “House for Youth” after running away from the House and even after re-trafficked to Thailand again.

Observing the youths, who have been trafficked, at the “House for Youth”, however, it has been recognized that the reintegration process should be more difficult for trafficked children than the one of street children or other vulnerable children coming from poor families. First, the trafficking victims are deemed to have more risk with incorporating with their families; their families tend to move from one place to another and may sell or rent out their children again. Secondly, a majority do not have minimum literacy or knowledge to live in society; they have never attended school and were neglected at

home and therefore, it takes long time to be educated as mature social citizens. Lastly, not a few children demonstrate emotional problems or problematic behaviors; the children do not speak truth or realize their own problems, and besides project staff does not know how enough how to manage or even do not recognize the problems in many cases either.

Considering the difficulty of supporting and reintegrating the trafficked children, KnK decided to identify the problems the child and youth victims face after returning home country and the contributing factors that cause those problems. As a result KnK will seek for the solutions and determine the specific needs to be addressed and practical means of support for the victimized children and youths.

The specific objectives of the research are as follows.

1. To identify the problems that child and youth victims encounter after returned from Thailand.
2. To look into the root causes that affected the present problems by collecting the information on recruitment process, circumstances of the children while in Thailand, problems that the children and youths experienced before and after trafficked.
3. To examine and assess the existing interventions and activities to combat trafficking issues and assist the victims in Cambodia.
4. To sketch out recommendations to strengthen the project of KnK and to be disseminated among the concerned institutions in terms of support for trafficking victims.

2. Approach and Methods of the Research

2.1 Methods and Tools

In order to identify the specific needs of the trafficking victims focusing on young people, both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through five tools as follows.

- a. Relevant documents, literatures and websites of concerned institutions and organizations were reviewed and analyzed mostly prior to the research.
- b. In-depth interviews with youths were conducted to identify the problems they encountered while in Thailand as well as the ones after repatriation.
- c. Daily basis observations were performed on the behavioral and emotional characteristics and changes of youths by researcher and KnK's social workers.
- d. Interviews with social workers at local shelters were conducted to learn their observations on the victims and to identify the difficulties in supporting the victims.
- e. Visits were made to governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations mostly running shelters to hear and appraise the existing programs.

2.2 Participants and Definition

2.2.1 Locations

Poipet and Sisophon, Battambang and Phnom Penh were selected as study sites since IOM survey exposes that the places of origin of 95% of the trafficked victims, especially the children, come from those four locations. To visit institutions and organizations in those areas, as shown in Table 1, also enabled us to assess the gap between the needs of the victims and the existing programs provided at their shelters.

Table 1: Identified centers assisting trafficked children

No.	Organization Name	Location	Reception	Mid/long-term care	Daycare	Exclusive for Girls
1	Goutte d'Eau	Poipet	*	*		
2	Cambodia Vision Development (CVD)	Poipet			*	
3	Cambodian Children and Handicap Development Organization (CCHDO)	Poipet			*	
4	Cambodian Women Crisis Center (CWCC)	Sisophon	*	*		*
5	Field Relief Agency (FRA)	Sisophon		*		
6	Battambang Reception Center (BRC)	Battambang	*			
7	Meatho Phum K'omah (MPK, Homeland)	Battambang		*		
8	Komarrikreay (KMR)	Battambang		*		
9	Santepeap II	Battambang		*		
10	Coconuts House	Battambang		*		*
11	Neavea Thmey, World Vision	Phnom Penh		*		
12	Harvest International Service Cambodia (HISC)	Phnom Penh		*		
13	Cambodian Center for the Protection of Children's Rights (CCPCR)	Phnom Penh		*		*
14	Agir pour les Femmes en Situation Precaire (AFESIP)	Phnom Penh		*		*
15	Ban Pumiveth (Home for Boys)	Thailand		*		
16	Pak Kred (Home for Girls)	Thailand		*		*
17	Nonhaburi Reception Home for Destitute	Thailand		*		

2.2.2 Participants

In-depth one-to-one interviews were conducted with one hundred and ten children and youths who used to be 1) trafficked to Thailand (55% among the target), 2) living on the street for a long time (21%), 3) at risk for other reasons (16%) and 4) trafficked within Cambodia (8%). They were aged between 15 and 21 years old and 40 % of them were female. The youths categorized in 1) were mainly the returned ones who are currently sheltered in government or non-governmental institutions including “House for Youth” run by KnK. Additional information is: 8 youths among 110 participants were ethnic Vietnamese, and approximately 30% were born in refugee camp at the Thai-Cambodian border.

Table 2: Number of participants

Background	Boy (60%)	Girl (40%)	Total (100%)
Trafficked Children			
House for Youth, KnK	17	10	27
Other Shelters	24	10	34
Sub-total			61 (55%)
Street Children			
House for Youth, KnK	12	2	14
Other Shelters	8	1	9
Sub-total			23 (21%)
Orphans or Children from poorest family			
House for Youth, KnK	5	9	14
Other Shelters	0	4	4
Sub-total			18 (16%)
Domestically trafficked children			
House for Youth, KnK	0	3	3
Other Shelters	0	5	5
Sub-total			8 (8%)
Grand Total	66	44	110 (100%)

Relevant interviews with social workers, educators or directors of the organizations were also made to hear about the difficulties in supporting the target children and youths. Visiting concerned international agencies, government offices and key informants of trafficking issue was also very useful to understand the overall situation of human trafficking from Cambodia to Thailand as well as the supporting mechanism established by authorities. Furthermore, we made a visit to IDC for illegal migrants in Bangkok and three governmental centers for the young victims in Nonthaburi Province in Thailand.

After conducting several interviews, our main target was slightly shifted from the ones of the other shelters to the ones of the “House for Youth”. It was because the research team found difficulties to gain specific information from the participants by interviewing only once at their shelters especially on psychosocial problems, which was regarded as the most significant effect of the young victims. In addition to two male interviewers, one female educator of the “House for Youth” joined as an assistant to conduct interviews with girls so that they could share more profound feelings even on the sexual issues with the interviewer. This modification brought us a great change as more precise and real data on the victims’ past and present were obtained by having closer interactions and observations at the “House for Youth” on daily basis.

2.2.3 Definitions

There is no worldwide consensus of the definition of ‘trafficking’ and it is argued in all places at every opportunity. Therefore, it is better not to argue it here but to select the one in consistence with IOM practice. The definition is adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish trafficking in Persons, especially women and Children (2000) Article 3 (a) defines as below.

Definition of “Trafficking in Persons” is

“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or the use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”

Also it is useful to note an exception to the above definition in respect to children and youth. A child (any person under eighteen years of age) recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for the purpose of exploitation may be considered a “victim of trafficking” even if the child has not been threatened, forced, coerced, abducted, subject to fraud, deceived, abused, sold or rented out.⁸

For this reason, “traffickers” can be persons who are involved in recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving people for the purpose of exploitation.

2.3 Limitations

Because of the sensitive nature of trafficking, many of the participants were reluctant to provide specific information on the experiences in Thailand especially of negative aspect. Therefore, it was difficult to investigate the full extent of exploitation or abusive circumstances of the children. Additionally, since many of the social workers of visited shelters are not fully aware of the concept of psychosocial problem, it was not very easy to gather useful information based on their observations on the children’s problematic behaviors or mental status.

⁸ IOM (2002) *A Study on the Situation of Cambodian Victims of Trafficking in Vietnam and Returned Victims of Trafficking from Vietnam to Cambodia* Researched by SRDC

Furthermore, it was difficult to make a good comparison between the trafficked children and the others such as street children due to the limitation of the time and sample number. The quantitative data has less reliability because the sample number was not sufficient while qualitative findings are more dependable.

3. Findings

3.1 Way to Thailand

3.1.1 Poipet - A Gateway town

Poipet is the focal point of trafficking because of its location bordering with Thailand. Records of trafficked children returned from Thailand with the assistance of IOM/MOSALVY demonstrate that of all returned children, 89% have previously lived or have family living in Poipet.⁹ Immediately after the prolonged conflict between the State and the Khmer Rouge, the Poipet town has been rapidly expanded and developed, and the cross border trade gives several job opportunities to people. Even so it is seen that there exist huge slums with a large number of squatters at the same time. Majority is the people who come from other provinces to find better job opportunities at the border business or prosperous cities in Thailand. However, they finally reach there desperately without getting any good employment.

The population of street children and squatter families in Poipet is substantial and second largest to Phnom Penh. Cambodians are allowed to cross the border with a pass, which costs 10 Baht, and hired for unskilled labor on a daily basis. Some 20,000 people cross from Cambodia to Thailand every day in an attempt to make a living.¹⁰ Thousands of people including street children and infants daily go to work at the border area as beggar, porter or seller in the Thai market with poorly paid.

According to the study of ILO-IPEC, sending communities often have their own specific social, cultural, political and economical set up which makes them vulnerable to the problem of child trafficking. Common denominators are poverty, limited educational opportunities, dysfunctional families, politically or socially disrupted communities, and social exclusion. In fact, it is apparent that those fit all to the characteristics of the Poipet commune.

⁹ Anneka F. (2002) 'Living In The Shadows' (IOM)

¹⁰ Anneka F. (2002) 'Living In The Shadows' (IOM)

3.1.2 Profile of Trafficked Victim

For the people who are in desperate need of money, children are regarded as additional or even main source of labor. There exist many parents count on their children's income only to meet daily needs. One of the recent IOM studies reports that only 3% of the trafficked children surveyed, had families that had regular sources of income. In fact, more than half of the research participants said that they lacked food while at home. Besides, one third of the children were forced to do the housework for extremely many hours as well as looking after their siblings.

Family situation is a vital factor that contributes to trafficking in children. Quite a few of the previous studies reveal that a number of the trafficked children come from single parent families, mainly widows who were separated from or abandoned by husband. However, more than half of the youths responded in the research that they did have a pair of parents, as shown in Table 3, however, living mostly with stepfather. Even if they earn so as to manage the basic conditions, a majority of the parents must borrow money at a high interest from private moneylenders in case some crisis happens at home such as parent's death, illness or accumulated debt of family.

Table 3: Guardians of children staying with before going to Thailand

Guardians	Boy	Girl	Total
Parents	11	8	19
Mother	8	2	10
Mother with stepfather	11	7	18
Father	2	2	4
Father with stepmother	2	0	2
Relatives	2	0	2
Neighbors	2	0	2
Orphans	1	1	2
Living on the street	2	0	2
Grand Total	41	20	61

Among 61 youths interviewed during the research, 40 youths answered that they were in lack of food. Facing their own conditions in extreme poverty, children and especially youths perceive, as practiced in many of the Asian countries, that they should be responsible to earn money to support the family. This is also common with the characteristics of the victims of domestic trafficking. Table 4 indicates the same as below. On the other hand, more number of the street children leaves home due to some conflicts they had at home.

Table 4: Reasons of going to Thailand (Youths' perception)

Reasons	Boy	Girl	Total
To support family	10	10	20
To escape from conflict with family	4	1	5
To have a better life	2	2	4
To pay off family's debt	2	1	3
To earn for oneself	3	0	3
Forced by families, relatives, traffickers, etc.	20	6	26
Grand Total	41	20	61

Furthermore, those trafficked children seem to be more obedient as they never reject to go when they asked by their parents while many of the street children make decision by themselves and leave home. Here is a typical life of a girl who lives in Poipet. It also illustrates a profile of youth who is susceptible to become trafficking victim.

<Case Study >

Rotha (15-year-old female)

Rotha was born in Site II Camp, one of the biggest refugee camps located at the Thai-Cambodian border and repatriated in 1992. Her family once settled down in Battambang Province, however, they moved to live in Poipet as the living was difficult to support all family and heard from neighbors that they could find a good job in Poipet. They got a small bamboo-made hut with some plastic sheets for protection. It had only one room for 6 members in a muddy slum where a mountain of garbage is scattered on the ground.

All the family members including her younger sister started working in the ‘Thai market’ at the border every day. They did whatever work they could find there, for example, washing fish, carrying loads to cross the border, or holding umbrellas for Thai customers. Rotha and her sisters worked about 15 hours a day from early morning until night and earned daily income of 30-60 Baht, which she gave all to her parents. Needless to say, Rotha never attended school and spent most of her time working in the market. She did not have any other choice but worked extremely hard one day from another.

Rotha remembers that her father and mother often had a fighting. When her father was drunk, which happened very often, he became so violent. Once he tried to beat his wife with an iron stick and the other day he used a knife to threaten her. Rotha was always afraid to see such a father and she wanted to help her mother however, she was too small to do that.

Even though they all worked hard, the family’s living did not go so well as her mother became sick and had an operation with her stomach. Therefore the family had to spend lots of money for it. She never knew the amount but she noticed that her mother borrowed money from one neighbor. Then Rotha and her elder sister had to live and work inside the Thai market for 5 years. Rotha was 10 years old when she moved. She missed home and sometimes came back to visit parents in Poipet. One day, she found out that her father died because he was involved with bombing accident in Poipet.

While working in the market or border, she was arrested by police twice and had a terrible experience in the prison. In the prison, she was given food like “pig’s food”, forced to drink water in the toilet, etc. according to her memory. Rotha once got sick because she lacked oxygen inside the small crowded cell and so she fell down. What was worse, one time a police tied up her body with chain and fixed her to the cell bars. She was always scared and cried in the prison. She still feels afraid and angry when she recalls the bad experience.

At present, she attends an NGO’s daycare to learn literacy half day and the other half day she does the housework at home. On weekends, she goes to the Thai market to sell fish with her mother. She feels satisfied with her life now. But also Rotha wants

to go back to work every day in the market to help her mother because she is still worried about her family's poor situation.

3.1.3 Traffickers and Recruitment

Since job opportunities are temporary and unstable, it is observed that quite a many people in Poipet are actually involved in trafficking business. It is in fact easier and more profitable, that they deal with children and adults who wish to go across the border illegally and to seek for good amount of money or cash on hand. An NGO Director expressed the undeniable reality of the Poipet situation. He said, "Money is on the other side of the border; Poipet has none."¹¹

Traffickers usually approach poor families often with many children. They know the economic situation of the family as well as the number of children to be offered. In most of the cases, the crisis of families such as disease of household and its consequent indebtedness is recognized beforehand by traffickers. The fact is that more than a few families welcome the traffickers who assist them in finding good jobs to make money in Thailand. In other words, some parents do know that their children are being used as a labor and exploited or even sold to brothels.

Table 5: Circumstances when trafficked to Thailand

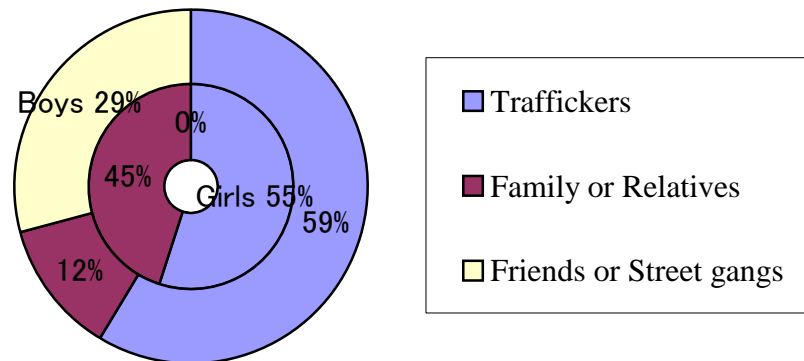
Circumstances	Boy	Girl	Total
Rented out	11	6	17
Sold	10	3	13
Went voluntarily	13	1	14
Forced to go with family	5	9	14
Forced to go with street gangs	2	0	2
Cheated by trafficker	0	1	1
Total	41	20	61

Evidentially, the fact was confirmed in Table 5 that renting out the children is the most common way nowadays in Cambodia. Parents or guardians rent their children to traffickers for 3-6 months or more so that the children can earn money temporarily in Thailand. Usually parents get up-front money to pay off the debt and then receive \$10-

¹¹ IOM (2002) *Review and Assessment of the Situation of the Returned Cambodian Children and Women Trafficked to Thailand and of the Assistance and Reintegration Mechanisms in Cambodia* Researched by Sonia M., Lath P.

20 monthly from the trafficker through telephone system if the traffickers are “trustworthy.”

Chart B: Persons accompanied to Thailand



In the case of parents who are desperate enough, they sell their son or daughter at a price of \$50-60. Some kidnapping cases are also reported. Some are deceived by traffickers, neighbors, guardians or friends. Younger children are sometimes forced to go with their family, relatives or elder gang boys. Many teenagers go voluntarily often with peers without any adult accompaniment as also revealed in Chart B. Nevertheless, it does not mean that they actually have a free choice for survival. They have no alternative way of earning money or are in need to escape from the difficult life that they are suffering from.

<Case Study>

Sovanna (17-year-old female)

After leaving Site II Camp, Sovanna’s family moved from one place to another. Her mother changed husband many times as she every time suffered from domestic violence. When her mother reached Poipet with 4 children, she found a place to stay inside a school or pagoda. She never had a happy memory spending time with her family, as she had to work hard all the time.

In Poipet, Sovanna used to help parents to carry goods from Cambodia side to the Thai market at the border. She went to school up to 3rd grade of primary school but she stopped going because she wanted to help her mother. She loves her mother but hates stepfather as he always beats her and her brothers and sisters.

One day she visited one of her girlfriends in the neighborhood. Then her friend was about to leave, so Sovanna asked her where she was going. Her friend answered, "I am going to Bangkok. I can earn 4,500 Bahts monthly there." Sovanna thought she was lucky to visit her friend that day. Therefore her friend introduced Sovanna to a man, who eventually turned out to be a trafficker. Sovanna and her friend followed the man to the Thai market at border. Suddenly the man pushed the two girls into a car. A Thai trafficker drove the car afterwards. Later the trafficker forced them to take a motorbike and arrived a house.

She saw many girls staying inside the house and realized that it was a brothel. For the following 3 days, they had to receive customers despite of their wills. Then, her friend managed to run away from the brothel to go back to Cambodia and then complained to the police of the perpetrators. Sovanna also tried to run away, however, the owner found her and took her back to the brothel. The owner threatened her over and over. Some kind neighbors helped her whenever the owner tried to beat her.

After the police arrested the perpetrator in Cambodia, however, all the girls who were locked up in the brothel got released. Then a Thai man offered her to give a ride to drive her back to the border. On the way back to Cambodia, however, when it was getting dark in the evening, the driver assaulted her. She ran away to wander around in the forest and found a car to finally return to the border.

When Sovanna reached home, her parents were frightened because the perpetrator threatened them not to tell anything to police. So she is currently sheltered in an NGO center located far from home. Sovanna does not want to return home yet. She wants to study more. She is just worried about her younger sister who she heard recently ran away from home.

<Case Study>

Anh (17-year-old male)

Anh was born in Oddor Meancheay Province where the Khmer Rouge army remained until recently. His family had a small farm, however, they always lacked of food to feed all the children. His father stepped on a mine and died and then his mother had a new husband. Anh did not like him. His family had a lot of debt from the neighbors, but he does not know how much it was.

He never attended school, as his family never affords it. Moreover, in the early 1990 the political situation was unstable and so his family had to move from one place to another to avoid conflicts between the Khmer Rouge and state army. Anh recalls that his stepfather used to beat him often and curse the children.

Anh was 8 years old when he left home. He first went to Sisophon, and moved to Siem Reapa and to Poipet. While in Poipet, he was working as a porter at the border. Then one woman came to ask Anh if he wanted to stay with her. He then lived with her for a few months. He had to help her selling groceries in the border market, but she was very kind to him. One day, however, the woman took him to another woman, received 2,000 Bahts from her and returned home. He then knew that he was sold to a trafficker, but he also wanted to know how the life was in Thailand.

The woman trafficker took him to Bangkok to work as a beggar. He worked very hard from morning until midnight. His daily income was 30-60 Baht, but the trafficker took all. He did not like it and so after a year he ran away from her to live on the street with other children. Since then he has been living on the street again. Anh lived on the street for 8 years in total. He learned to inhale yama, fought with street gangs, stole everything he saw such as clothes, shoes, tape recorders and wallet. Sometimes Anh was homesick, depressed and felt sad because he was homeless so long. For those times, he took drug and had a sex with street girls in order to forget about everything.

Anh came to join the “House for Youth” after completing rehabilitation program of one NGO in Poipet. He could recover from drug addiction there. He entered primary school at grade 2nd. He wanted to go to school because he had never been to,

however, he dropped out later. He first said that he wanted to learn music and so he went to one NGO that teaches traditional music. However, after a while he also stopped going. He then started following his friend everyday, who learns carpentry. Anh speaks like a small child. He likes singing but has short-temper. Many times he gets fighting or quarrels with the other boys. He does not have many friends. Anh says he feels different from the others and is ashamed of it. After he finishes carpentry skill, he wants to stay alone.

Traffickers themselves are relatively known among the local people and authorities as well especially in the border town like Poipet. There exist not only numerous social problems but also many corruptions as anywhere else. They have established a well-organized and profitable network. They are connected with mafia, brothel-owners or even police and army and form a criminal network through Cambodia to Thailand. There are also many guides to lead the illegal routes when crossing the border. Some are told to slip through the border gate, which is always busy with flow of porters, goods to carry, tourists and beggars. Some have to travel through forests, farms or pineapple fields to reach Thailand. Sometimes it is the children themselves or their families who take the initiative to migrate and approach recruiters.¹² The following Case Study describes a story of one girl who has a mother directly involving in trafficking.

<Case Study>

Ny (15-year-old female)

Ny's mother is in a prison now. Her mother is accused of trafficking children to Thailand and got a sentence for 3 years. Ny never believes that her mother committed a crime. She says that her mother wanted to help poor children and families and so sent them to Thailand to find money.

Ny says she loves her mother very much. However, she never felt happy when she was staying with her mother. She never received a good care but her mother threw bad words and beat Ny. Also her stepfather used to beat her mother. She once attended school at Grade 1st, however, she had to drop out after her mother got arrested.

Ny herself was trafficked to Thailand three times. First she went to Pataya when she was 14 years old. She wanted to help her mother who got a debt and also hoped to get a better life there than the one in Poipet. She saw her mother received 2,000 Bahts from a woman trafficker. A woman took her first to Pataya to sell candies and flowers on the street, beach, hotels or nightclubs. Sometimes Ny had to wear dirty clothes and sit on the street to beg for foreigners. She usually worked from 17:00 to 12:00 midnight. She could earn quite a good of money such as 2,000 – 3,000 Bahts per day and so the trafficker gave her some pocket money. The trafficker always came to watch her if she works hard all the time. She was also sent to Pukhet and Bangkok to do the same work. She could always earn lots of money as she is a pretty girl.

Ny came back to Cambodia when Thai police arrested her. However, she wanted to be away from stepfather and also to make money so as to release her mother from prison. Therefore again she went to Bangkok with a different trafficker as stepfather asked her go. She did not like the work in Thailand, but she was happy to feel responsible that she was supporting her family. Traffickers sometimes threatened but never beat her.

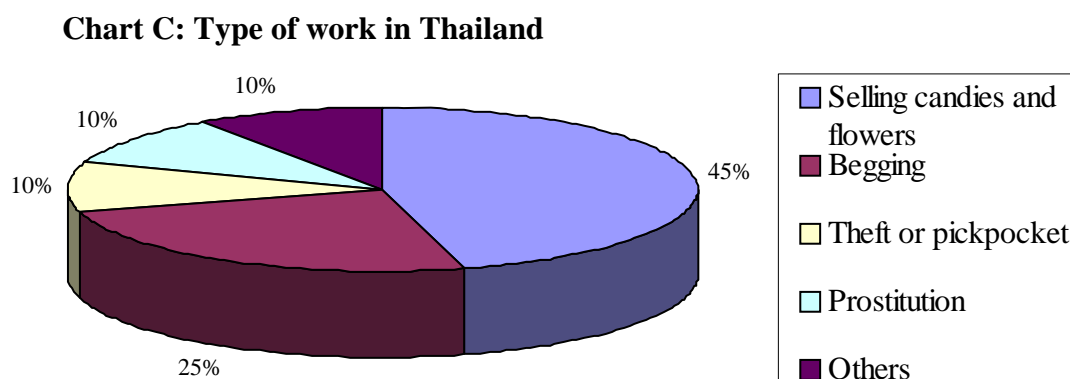
Now she joined the “House for Youth” and study at Grade 2nd of primary school. She has also started hairdressing skill training. She is satisfied with the present life. However, she misses and feels sorry for her mother staying in prison. She heard her mother can be released if they pay some amount of money to the prison, however, she became desperate when she heard her stepfather sold the house and land all. She is also worried about her younger sisters and brothers who stay with stepfather as he might abandon them. One baby stays with her mother in the prison. Now she tries not to think about her past and mother too much. In future, she wants to run a hair salon and live with her mother.

3.2 Tortured Life

Boys and girls usually end up in abusive circumstances wherever they reach up to in Thailand. The common places where the children and youths are forced to work are Pattaya, Bangkok, Pukhet, Aranyaprathet and Hua Hin in order. In those cities, not only local people but also foreign tourists appreciate bright lights of urban life or resorts.

¹² Panudda B. and June K. 'Trafficking of Children: The problem and responses worldwide'

Chart C shows the common work that the children were forced to do in Thailand. 45% were engaged in selling flowers and candies, and 25% in begging, which are most profitable ways of earning money. Very few were involved in farm or construction work. Since the network is well established among the traffickers and other perpetrators, they find no trouble to place the children and youths to work in those locations.



3.2.1 Destiny of Trafficked Children

The children led into Bangkok are mostly infants or handicapped since those are regarded as effective beggars having an advantage to move people with extra sympathy. Most of them go with elder family members or sold into a Thai mafia syndicate to be cruelly used in miserable conditions. There were two boys, who used to be trafficked to Bangkok, confessed to the interviewer as below.

“I know one friend who was handicapped by trafficker with a shot of injection.”

Those who reach Pattaya, Pukhet or Hua Hin, the fascinating beach resorts, easily get exposed at risk of sexual exploitation because sex industry linked with tourism is a thriving business in those cities. Some children are directly sold to brothels. Some become indirect or street-based sex-workers. They first sell flowers and candies on the streets, in restaurants, nightclubs, and seaside or serving beers in bars where they can find good customers or patrons. All the same, once some pedophile finds them, they are sexually harassed or forced to offer their bodies. The likelihood is that many of the trafficked children, who firstly work in any domestic work or service sector, may be later forced into prostitution.

<Case Study>

Lok (19-year-old male)

His origin is Site II Camp. After his family repatriated to Cambodia and his father died from chronic disease, their living was changed. Lok's mother started growing vegetables and selling groceries, but the earning was hardly enough. He had 7 siblings, but none of those had stable job to support family. His mother does not even know how many of her children are alive now and where the others. She says 2-3 children probably died. Eventually, Lok knew that his mother had a debt of 1,000-2,000 Baht from a villager. They owned a small house, but it is located far from the center.

Lok never went to school. As his mother was too busy, he often went to stay with his elder sister and her husband. Lok used to see many boys in his sister's house. They were smoking, playing cards and using yama all the time. They also gave yama to Lok. He often had a quarrel with his sister and her husband. Very often Lok went to look for a work in the Thai market at the border.

Lok was 10 years old when trafficked to Thailand for the first time. He was not afraid at all because his friends used to tell him about the life in Thailand. Since then he went to Thailand many times again and again. When Lok went alone, he met a foreigner who asked him to stay with in his nice condominium in Pattaya. The foreigner gave a mobile phone to Lok. Lok received about 1,500 Baht everyday. He had to have a sex with the foreign man, but he did not have to work at all. He had lots of free time while the foreigner was away from Pattaya to go to work somewhere else. He had many Cambodian friends in the same condominium. Each boy had a foreign partner. He saw some Cambodian girls in the same place.

Lok's life in Pattaya was fun. He went to play with friends, bought yama to inhale together in the room and went to brothels to have a sex. Sometimes the foreigners took him and his friends to the beach or nightclubs at night. There were so many things that they never saw in their hometowns. Lok enjoyed the beautiful beach, Thai pop songs, hamburgers, pizzas, and girls. The foreigner never harmed him. He was very kind to Lok, and so Lok liked the man. Lok felt the foreigner loved him. He could spend so much money for buying cigarettes and yama. Lok also sent some money to his mother in Poipet. He sometimes missed his family, and so he went back home every 2-3 months. The patron foreigner always allowed him to go. Since

he knew the illegal route to go across the border, it was easy for him to do so. When he was staying in his room with friends, Thai police found and arrested all the boys.

Right after joining “House for Youth”, Lok missed the life in Thailand so much. For the first one month, he felt very difficult to stay together with other boys. He forgot some Cambodian language and the culture looked so different from the one of Thailand. He always keeps Thai pop songbooks, collect photographs of Thai actors, and dances like Thai teenagers. Lok says that he feels ashamed to tell his story in Thailand. He wants to tell something but not all. However, whenever foreign visitors come to the “House for Youth”, he is never shy at them and approaches very closely to them with a friendly smile.

One day, two foreigners came to see him. They ran into the House compound by a car and found him who was playing with computer in the library. It was 12:00 noon that usually there are few staff to stand by in the House. They introduced themselves. One of the men who is tall, fat and bold, said he is from Finland; the other who is skinny, old with white hair, said he is from England. The latter man was the patron of Lok. The other man was the patron of his friend. While his friend looked embarrassed, Lok gave a big hug to the foreigner and kept holding his waist all the time.

Lok’s patron spoke both Thai and Cambodian very well. They asked to the boys. “Do you like staying in the House for Youth?” “When are you going back to Poipet?” “Do you want to go out for dinner tonight?” Lok was delighted to go out with them. So he got mad with the social worker who did not allow them to go and stopped talking with her for the following two weeks. Later, the incident was reported to the local authorities. They have never come back and Lok also remains in the House. However, his friend who joined with him disappeared a year after and Lok assumes that he went back to Pattaya to stay with the same foreigner.

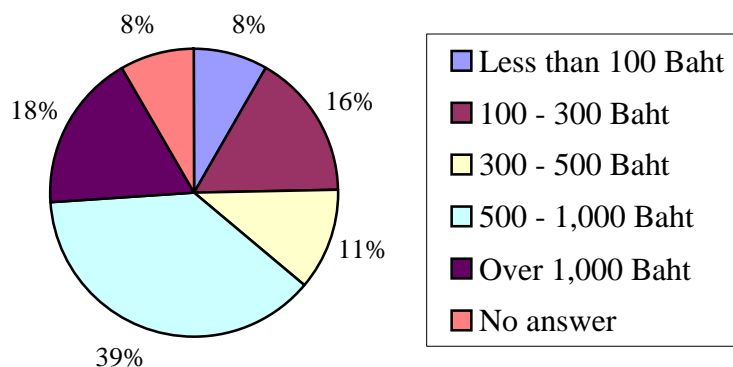
3.2.2 Slavery-like Conditions

While working in Thailand, those children have to obey traffickers or brothel/shop-owners, and bear terrible living conditions as well as abusive working standard. They are exposed at an unbearable and most likely life threatening experiences. They stay together with 5-6 peers and a brutal caretaker in a small space rented by trafficker or

owner without sufficient sanitation. Not to mention, they have no access to proper medical facilities. Some are not fed enough until they earn sufficient profits. One girl said that she was given only one meal a day and always starving.

Working hours vary depending on the type of work and place they are allocated. The beggars usually work all day from morning until night while many others work from late afternoon to morning of the next day. Those who were asked to sell flowers and candies worked mostly at night because they targeted tourists who were enjoying Thailand’s nightlife. Extremely long working hours is compulsory for most of the children. Over 80% of the youths said they had to work more than 10 hours a day. 10-12 hours per day is probably the norm. 72% of the interviewed children said that they did not like the work they engaged in Thailand. They had no weekend or any chance to enjoy a life as a normal child. Trafficker or owner mostly took away all the income the children gain. Although children earn quite a good money as Chart D, only 15% of the children can get some amount of pocket money or use the entire earning for their own.

Chart D: Amount of daily income



3.2.3 Painful Experiences

Violation of the child rights must be performed almost everywhere those trafficked children and youths end up. Shocking experiences are reported by many of those children and it was discovered that they suffered both physical and psychological abuse from traffickers. Needless to say, those experiences affect the mental health of the children to a great extent and obstruct the emotional development.

When they cannot earn sufficient profits or disobey the orders of the traffickers, they are beaten, pinched, hit with wires or sticks. Some are given electric shock as severe punishment. They have to live with the constant threat of violence at the hand of traffickers. Girls or even boys have to receive as many customers as possible, and for this purpose some are forced to take sexual stimulants, medicines or drugs so that they can be sexually active to offer good services to the customers. For trafficking to be successful, the trafficker must maintain control of the victim. Fear is used to force the victim into submission, and this may be done through violence, torture, rape and intimidation.¹³

<Case Study>

Dan (17-year-old male)

He liked his mother and father although they often fought each other at home. He was not forced, but he usually helped cooking, carrying water, and looking after younger brothers. The financial situation was bad, but he thought it is normal because many of his neighbors were in the same conditions. He cannot count how many times he went to Thailand, as he repeated going and coming back again and again. Sometimes he went with trafficker. The other many times, he went by himself. According to his memory, police arrested him nearly 50 times.

Dan went to Thailand with a trafficker 4 years ago for the first time. He spent about 3 years staying in Phuket. The trafficker rented a small house to accommodate him and other 3 boys. He remembers the monthly rent was 2,500 Baht. He also remembers clearly how much his mother received from the trafficker. It was 1,500 Baht. His parents also sold his younger brother to another trafficker, therefore they got totally 3,000 Baht. He took it for granted. He never rejected his parents' proposal.

As a matter of fact, it was inevitable since his parents were seriously sick at that time. Soon after he left home for Thailand, both of them died. He could never meet them at their deathbeds. His neighbors say that they died from HIV/AIDS. He never tells that to anyone though.

¹³ Anti-Slavery International website: www.stophumantrafficking.org

While in Pukhet, the trafficker forced Dan to sell candies and flowers from 6:00 in the evening until 6:00 in the morning. In the afternoon, he also had to go to work from 1:00 to 5:00. He hardly had an enough break to take meals or rest. Normally he earned 500-700 Baht a day, but he never had pocket money.

He was always afraid of trafficker. One day, he escaped from a duty for half an hour to play cards with his friends and lost 50 Baht of his earning while he was selling flowers. When he went back, the trafficker was waiting for him. He was beaten with a big wood stick. He got a cut on head and his finger swallowed. He then ran away from the trafficker for a few days, but found no other place to stay and so he returned and apologized to the trafficker. After some time, he was arrested by police and went back home, he told everything that happened in Thailand to his mother and said he did not want to go. However, his mother persuaded him to be patient and go again to Thailand. He did not have a choice. He went back to work in Pattaya by himself, and sold flowers again.

In Pattaya, some foreigners bought a plenty of roses from him with 500 Baht, which is fairly a high price. Later on he met one of those foreigners on the street once again. Then the foreigner invited him to go shopping together in a huge mall and bought a ring, necklace and some clothes for him. In the end of that day, the foreigner gave Dan a slip of paper that has a room number of a hotel nearby. The following day, he went to visit the foreigner at the hotel.

Dan is now staying in the “House for Youth.” He says, however, that he does not have much hope for future because he has no parents or relatives whom he can stay with. He ran away from the House once and went to Pattaya to make easy money and enjoy the fleeting life. But he was arrested in the end and came back to the House. Dan still misses the life in Thailand from time to time.

Furthermore, it should be also noted that numbers of the children were sexually harassed or assaulted by traffickers. As the traffickers dominantly control the situation, those victims are undoubtedly in a position of vulnerability. The perpetrators are not always traffickers. Traffickers’ spouses, brothel owners, and even foreign tourists can take advantage of those minor victims. However, it is impossible to count the cases, as the victims hesitate to confess all the realities. However, many of the youths shared

their distressing experiences with interviewers this time and gave stories, which most likely they do not tell their parents, as shown in Table 6 below and Case Study.

Table 6: Most frightening experiences or abuse cases

Type of Abuse	Boy	Girl	Total
Beaten by trafficker	13	8	21
Beaten and harassed by street gangs	8	1	9
Threatened by trafficker	2	2	4
Punished by police or in jail officials	3	1	4
Given electric shock by trafficker	3	1	4
Raped by foreigner	2	2	4
Tied with electric cord by trafficker	2	1	3
Forced to take drugs by trafficker	1	1	2
Sexually harrassment by trafficker	2	0	2
Ducked in water by trafficker	0	1	1
Raped by trafficker	0	1	1
Never	5	1	6
Grand Total	41	20	61

<Case Study>

Poch (16-year-old female)

Poch has an origin of Vietnamese. When she was very young, her mother was always kind and took good care of her. Her father used to go to jail often because of fighting with neighbors. But she was happy living with family quietly even though she could not eat well. However, she was forced to live a hard life after she moved to live with a Vietnamese woman. Poch calls that woman 'foster mother', but the fact is that her mother sold her to the woman according to her uncle. She did not know it, but she knew that the living was getting worse and worse right after her father died from HIV/AIDS.

Poch was 13 years old when the woman took her to Thailand for the first time. The woman told Poch's mother that she would take Poch to work in Thailand for three months because it is easy to earn money. Poch now tells that she was very scared when she first arrived in Thailand. She could not speak Thai. She did not know where she was. She missed her family very much and felt so lonely to be away from home. She did not make any friends there.

Poch never felt happy while she lived in Thailand. She lived with foster mother and father. First they arrived in Bangkok. Poch had to beg on the street, but she got arrested by Thai police and was sent back to Cambodia. Her foster mother knew the date she was deported and so she was waiting Poch at the border on the day of deportation. Then Poch had to go again with the same couple.

Next time they went to Hua Hin, one of the beach resorts, to get more money. There Poch worked mostly nighttime from evening until midnight. Her foster mother gave Poch a mountain of candies and flowers to sell in the beach and nightclubs. She walked around to sell them everyday and night. She could earn 2,000-3,000 Baths daily, but foster mother took all the money she made. She threatened Poch over and over to sell as many candies and flowers as possible. When Poch could not sell many, foster mother got so angry. They tied up Poch's hands and legs. Once she was almost drawn in a water bucket. She hates foster mother and her husband.

Most of the customers were western foreigners. Because Poch has adorable face of Vietnamese ethnics, many foreigners liked her in Hua Hin. They bought candies and flowers from her and paid more than US\$10 each time. Some invited her to go for a

walk together and gave her money. Some tried to touch her breasts or put their hands under her skirt. Poch did not know how to avoid it. She did not want to go to the nightclub, but she had to because the foster mother would beat her if she did not. One day, the foster mother told Poch to go for a walk with a foreigner. She was glad at the moment because she thought she did not have to work. The foreigner, however, took her to a hotel and so she had to sleep there with him for 5 days. She was afraid. She knew that one of her friends got HIV/AIDS in Hua Hin.

One day, she became sick and stayed at home. So the foster mother went to sell candies and flowers instead. Then her husband came close to Poch. He said he would take care of her and touched all over her body. She cried and struggled. However, she was too small and weak that the man could rape her again and again until his wife returned home. Then his wife blamed the man and her so badly. After a year of working, she decided to escape from them. She left Hua Hin and moved to live on the street in Bangkok. While on the street in Bangkok, police arrested her and sent her back to Cambodia.

While staying in the “House for Youth”, one day she happened to meet the foster mother in the market. The woman pulled her hands to take her, but she strongly rejected and the people nearby helped her not to go. She hates the woman, she says again and again.

Poch looks happy now. She has become a pretty girl, but still behaves like a 5-year-old child. She cries often, gets angry and always speaks unclearly. Also she had hard time in learning Cambodian language. Poch often feels ashamed because her friends make fun of her, saying that she is Vietnamese. Poch says she never wants to go back to Thailand and never wants to have a boyfriend.

The repatriation process can also traumatize trafficked children. Usually trafficked children are particularly afraid of police. In other words, they are often treated as illegal migrants who have committed a crime. It is reported that numbers of Thai police casually abuse the children with physical punishment. Since those children are illegally staying in Thailand, they have to hide themselves from the police, frightened all day long. Reportedly the police threaten and beat the children when they are found or arrested. Even after detained in the immigration detention center, for which all children call

“prison”, youths aged over 15 years old are regarded as adults and stay together in the same cell with adults. Inescapably criminals such as traffickers who were arrested together with the children can be detained in the same cell and consequently they are yet exposed at various dangers.

3.2.4 Dangerous Environment

While suffering from various mistreatment and abuse, the boys victims fight with Thai gangs on the street and get beaten up or injured. Sometimes they are targeted and robbed or given physical harassment. Many of the elder boys are invited to try drugs and become addicted to mostly amphetamine type substances called *yama*. They take drugs since they know that after having drug they can work more and also stand their severe circumstances. One fourth of the interviewed boys who are aged over 14 have ever tried *yama* in Thailand. It is envisaged that they may suffer from drug dependency afterwards.

“One of the Thai gangs killed my friend. He hit my friend’s head with a big stick. They came to revenge for the previous night’s fighting. We could not help him because we were sleeping all that night after sniffing 2 cans of glue.”

No matter how those children torture, they never receive affection or care. They have to put up with feelings of homesickness, desperation, isolation, or depression due to the difficult situation and long separation from family as well as homeland. Among 61 trafficked children, there were more than 20 youths who extremely missed home while staying in Thailand and 62% said that they were unhappy.

3.3 Family Problems

Every single family might answer “because of poverty or lack of food” when questioned the reason why they complied with trafficker to send their children. However, the word “poverty” does not adequately justify the exploited situation that victims endure or fully explain the emotional effects of those victims. In addition to the sufferings they faced in Thailand, the research remarked that the children also experienced critical situation even before going to Thailand, and those problems are common among the young

victims. Home, where children should grow up with lots of love given by family, sometimes turn out to be a root cause of the problems. It is believed that approximately 80% of the children exploited in the commercial sex industry suffer from psychological or physical abuse within their families.¹⁴

3.3.1 Broken Home

Many of the trafficked children's cases show that they had unstable family environments. 70% of the children we interviewed said that they do not have any happy memory with family in their childhood. Some mothers lost their spouse due to HIV/AIDS and remained widow. Others remarried to a man who eventually tried to rape her daughter. Some fathers had two wives who always quarrel each other. Others took new wife and abandoned ex-wife with children. The most common case is that one or both parents are drunkard who gamble and take drug from one day to another. It goes without saying that those parents depend much on the children's earnings and expect them to play an important role to maintain the household economy. Furthermore, according to the survey done by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), half of the sexual exploited children have suffered prior sexual abuse.

3.3.2 Domestic Violence

It was revealed that many of the victims lived in an unpleasant atmosphere at home or conflict within family. The Minister of MWVA also commented at an anti-trafficking convention, that 30 % of the trafficking women victims have been tortured by domestic violence at home before going to Thailand. Nearly 50 children among 110 including both trafficked children and street children said that they saw their father or stepfather beat her mother almost every night and sometimes he used knife or iron stick. One boy told the researcher.

“My mother died because of my father. He was so drunk one night and smashed her on head with ax. I was too small to help her.”

Children were not taken well care of, for which they definitely deserved, instead they were forced unsuitable labor, neglected or abused physically, sexually or mentally by

¹⁴ ECPAT International website: www.ecpat.net

real parents or stepparents. The in-depth interviews with youths revealed that half of the trafficked youths perceived themselves that they were abused or/and neglected by their parents while at home. 44% of all the children said that they were often beaten up, threatened or thrown curse words by parents. 45% felt that they lacked of love or were neglected at home. Those children inevitably had to escape from the abuse or extreme poverty. It is evident that those growing family problems may cause grave impact and consequent trauma on the children.

<Case Study>

Thouen (15-year-old male)

Before going to Thailand, Thouen lived with his mother, stepfather and 3 siblings in Prey Vein Province. He says he has never felt happy in his life. He had few friends because he never attended school. He helped his mother to do the housework everyday for nearly 10 hours. All the time his family was lack of food, but full of violence.

One day his elder brother told Thouen to go for a walk together. Out of his expectation, his brother took him to Bangkok. He was 11 years old then. During 2 months, he went to beg on the street whole day and made 500-800 Baht a day. His brother did not do anything but took all Thouen's earnings. Thouen usually slept on the street at night. He was always afraid of Thai police, his elder brother and street gangs who were mad because of glue sniffing.

One year before he left home, his real father committed suicide by hanging himself in Battambang Province. He does not know why his father did it. After his mother married stepfather, the home atmosphere changed. The conflict between mother and stepfather was everlasting. Stepfather always used bad words and beat mother. Since stepfather beat her so severely, he was always worried if her head splits open. Stepfather used to shout at children, but never beat them. On the other hand, his mother frequently beat Thoeun and his brothers and sisters. Sometimes he got injured on his head with lots of blood since his mother hit so hard.

Nowadays Thoeun is sheltered in an NGO, but he does not talk with other children often. He says he is afraid and angry with elder children in the center. He feels down

when he see other children who come from community and have parents. He says he feels a shame if others get to know his past history.

According to the observation made by a NGO staff, he is very different from the other boys. He misbehaves again and again in the center. He plays to bother the others; he uses sexual harassment words, masturbates in the garden, fingers other boys' genitals, and kisses young girls. His mother died recently and so he is so worried about his younger brothers and sisters. It has been nearly 4 years that he has not seen his family.

3.4 Psychosocial Consequences

3.4.1 Effects of the Trafficking Experiences

It is apparent that those, who come back with physical pains such as bruises on their bodies, pregnancies, STD or HIV infection, should be properly treated. However, it is also essential to set out that a large number of the trafficked children and youths have psychosocial problems owing to the negative experiences in Thailand as well as at home as mentioned in **3.2** and **3.3**. Moreover, those effects damage mental health both short and long term throughout their lives. It seems reasonable to presume that they still face several difficulties after returning to Cambodia especially when they start fitting themselves into society. After repatriation, those victims are reintegrated into home or sheltered at institutions, to our regret, however, it is not a small number who run away from shelter or home and repeat crossing the border or living on the street.

In general, manifestations of stress in children can appear in many different forms, depending on the severity of the experience and the personality of the child.¹⁵ The constant abuse and fearful experiences may be reflected by children's emotional and behavioral problems. The psychological impact of extreme loneliness or thirst for affection is also grave for mental growth of children. The Table 7 is the perception of youth victims about their psychosocial status after repatriation and while sheltered.

¹⁵ IOM (2002) A Study on the Situation of Cambodian Victims of Trafficking in Vietnam and Returned Victims of Trafficking from Vietnam to Cambodia Researched by SRDC

Table 7: Psychosocial status (Youths' self-perception)

Type of Abuse	Boy	Girl	Total
Loneliness	15	9	24
Anxiety	15	5	20
Hatred	6	10	16
Hopeless	10	5	15
Homesick	7	4	11
Difficulty in sleep	6	1	7
Fear	3	3	6
Anger	2	1	3

* Some answers double.

<Case Study>

Nara (17-year-old male)

Nara is a Vietnamese boy but born in Kompong Cham Province of Cambodia. His face expresses some kind of hostility. He looks irritated and looks around here and there. He shouted at some children who pass by and look at him a few times during the 20 minutes interview.

Nara lived in an extremely poor family. There are 8 members in his family, however, none of them had a job to afford family, and so he never had enough food to eat. He says many of his siblings and relatives have also left home to live on the street just as he did.

When his grandmother asked him to go to Thailand together, Nara was 13 years old. Grandmother took him and his nephew and arrived in Bangkok. She rented a small house, but he did not want to stay there and so he always slept outside on the street. He worked all day from 7:00 until 22:00. He everyday walked around the street, restaurants and bars to sell candies, flowers, lighters, glasses or telephone cards. Daily income was 200-300 Baht and he gave it all to his grandmother. He often had pains on his foot because he walked too much.

After a while Nara came back with grandmother and nephew to Cambodia, but as soon as he visited his family, again he returned back to Thailand because there was nothing to do at home nor food. He crossed the border with his nephew and stayed on the street in Thailand. He had to do many things then other than selling candies and flowers, but he sold drug *yama* or smuggled them from Thailand to Cambodia

numbers of time. Not to mention, Nara himself was addicted to drug. Also he had to fight with street gangs almost daily to survive on the street. Thai police arrested him countless times and he was badly beaten by them.

Nara had some terrible experiences that he does not really want to recall now. One day his nephew met a group of “mad people” in Thailand. He was harassed and eventually the fighting ended up with handicaps remained with his nephew after forced one shot of injection by those “mad people.” The other story is that foreign tourists raped him a couple of times. He was coerced to do anal and oral sex in a hotel. In the end he lived a street life for 2 years in total, repeating crossing border then moving from Poipet, Battambang lastly to Phnom Penh.

He sometimes comes to join a non-formal education provided on the street by an NGO. However, he is not very satisfied with the program because they do not give food, he says. He does not miss home now and wants to continue living on the street. He feels happy when he has money in his pocket, and unhappy when nothing left. He buys drugs whenever he has money.

3.4.2 Girl’s Humiliation

The cases of girls who were sold into brothels are extremely serious. A 2002 statistics of Neavea Thmey, World Vision, one of the leading NGOs to support girls who were victimized in sexual abuse or exploitation occurred both inside and outside of Cambodia, indicates that 87.5% of the sheltered girls showed mental problem including PTSD. Commercial sexual exploitation of children can result in serious, life-long or even life threatening consequences for the physical, psychological, moral, and social development of children.¹⁶ At brothels, girls have to receive 5-10 men in average per day. If they reject accepting clients, they are beaten or threatened with electric shock. They are coerced to sleep with men regardless of physical immaturity. The researcher heard one of the girls who were once trafficked into sex industry in Thailand.

“What I am afraid most is that my mother will know about my experience in Thailand. I don’t want her know that I was working as a prostitute. It is a shame.”

Her mother probably sold or rented her to a trafficker. She never tells the truth whenever her mother asks her what happened in Thailand. She must have tremendously hurt by sexual exploitation, however, she still has to suffer from a dominant feeling of humiliation. In Cambodia, girls are supposed to remain virgins until marriage and therefore, those who once have worked as prostitute, slept with boyfriend or even victimized of rape can be considered ‘ruined’. Accordingly, it is very difficult for them to return into the community where they used to live with family. These girls could hardly find future husbands, and sometimes opt to remain as prostitutes as long as they live.¹⁷

3.4.3 Traumas and Consequent Problems

The following symptoms were derived from the interviews with young victims and fifty social workers that take care of them. It was very difficult to obtain information on the psychosocial status of the children and youths sheltered in the other NGOs. Therefore, the researcher carried out close observations on the youths staying in the “House for Youth” and assessed the behaviors and emotional symptoms in a daily basis. Although it is not a clinical experiment, the result might set an alarm for those who support trafficking victims.

Behavioral Problems:

- Repetitive misbehavior;
- Inability to manage daily affairs;
- No sense of hygiene;
- Childish or over-dependent behavior;
- Use of many impolite words;
- Excessive submission to elder boys or girls;
- Tendency to threat or beat younger children;
- Inability to express own feelings;
- Telling a lie frequently;
- Self-destructive behaviour;
- Demonstration of foolish or insane behaviors;
- Poor communication skills and inability to make friends;

¹⁶ ECPAT International website: www.ecpat.net

- Frightened or too friendly toward adults or strangers;
- Extreme laziness in daily life, for studying, cleaning, bathing, washing, housekeeping etc.;
- Addiction to drugs or alcohol;
- Excessive smoking;
- Suicide attempts;
- Excessive sexual activities;
- Vulnerability to subsequent sexual abuse or exploitation;
- Sleeping difficulties or nightmares
- Tendency to harm their own bodies, e.g. cutting wrists, putting mark by cigarette, etc.;
- Missing prosperous life in Thailand;
- Tendency to run away from shelters;
- Tendency to escape from reality or stable life.
- Extreme slowness in learning language or various skills;
- Violent behavior;
- Delinquency.

Emotional Problems:

- Impatient or short-tempered or easily irritated;
- Frustration;
- Aggressive;
- No sense of responsibility;
- Anger and hostility;
- Demanding and lack of obedience to instructions;
- Distrust toward the others;
- Lack of self-confidence;
- Emotional instability, depression or stress;
- Feeling of isolation;
- Fear or anxiety;
- Low self-esteem and feeling of less value in oneself;
- Hopelessness or desperation for future;
- Severe homesickness and excessive worries about their family, etc.;

¹⁷ Yim P. 'CCPCR Addressing, the Sexual Exploitation of Girls IN CAMBODIA'

- Hatred towards family members or guardians, e.g. stepparents, etc.;
- Shame and guilt;
- Fear of returning home and to their homeland;
- Shame and guilt felt amongst their families or people in their place of origin because of their loss of virginity;
- Dissatisfaction with life;
- Negative attitude towards society;
- Abnormal view of sexual relationships;
- Loss of identity not knowing one's own name, age, birthplace or mother's face;
- Inability to adopt to Cambodian society and culture.

The above results show evidently that those effects make children further vulnerable and lead them into the risk of being re-trafficked. It is also interesting to know that about one fourth of the children of "House for Youth" have told distinctive stories each time when asked such as the occasions of intake interview, research, and in the daily activities, etc. From that fact, it is more likely said that they have unstable conditions of mental health and that they may have many awful stories that they cannot share. What is more, a psychologist states that those mental inadequacies might affect themselves to repeat the same tortures they had on their future children or spouses if they are not able to overcome those. As a result, appropriate assistance for the mental health is needed and it should be focused with high priority to be addressed.

<Case Study>

Chanthu (16-year-old male)

Chanthu does not know his real name. One orphanage staff named him Chanthu. He doesn't remember his childhood so much as he left home when he was 4 years old. He remembers he was born in a refugee camp at the Thai-Khmer border and then his family was sent back to Poipet. His mother was the breadwinner in his family. His father was a soldier. Chanthu never thought that his father loved mother as his father always beat her and threw bad words on her.

When he was 4 years old, his family moved to live in Bangkok to find a better life there. However, things did not go well as they expected. They could not find a good job and the living became worse. His parents had a quarrel every day and soon separated. As soon as the family broke up, Chanthu left home. While he was walking alone, a Thai man asked him if he wanted to live with the man in a big house. Then the man took Chanthu to his house.

He started living with the Thai man who was very kind to him from the beginning. Chanthu could go to primary school. The man gave lots of pocket money to Chanthu. Chanthu had many bad friends, too. He bought drugs like yama, marijuana, and heroin. He has sold yama a couple of times. He was 7 years old when he tried drug for the first time. The life was easy for 5-6 years. But when Chanthu made a problem at school, the man sent Chanthu to an orphanage in a province, and then the orphanage staff sent him back to Cambodia.

Here is another story of him.

Chanthu went to Thailand because he wanted to look for his family who was separated during the conflict between the Khmer Rouge and State army. But as he could not find them, he became a street child and joined one of the street gang groups. He moved from Bangkok to Pattaya and Phuket with them. Those children were Thai and so he spoke Thai language all the time and never used Khmer.

He worked very hard every day as shoe polisher, beggar, pickpocket, etc. from morning until midnight. He could earn 2,000 – 3,000 Baht a day and spend all for himself. He did not like the work, however, many things were new and impressed him such as beaches, lively streets, bright nightlife, etc. Sometimes Chanthu had to obey his gang friends. He knew that it was a crime, but he had no other choice. He

learned a technique to use a small cutter and pick people's pockets. They could earn quite a lot for that.

Very often he had fights with gang boys on the street. They used sticks or knives to threaten him. He also learned a sex from street friends and they sometimes went to buy girls at a brothel. There he had a freedom, as he was independent on the street. However, he felt scared when he heard that his friends were handicapped or raped by traffickers. Many times he got homesick and depressed. In addition to sniffing glue, one of his friends invited him to try yama, and he liked it because he could forget about the difficult life.

Thai police arrested him many times. They used to beat him by stick, belt or gun to threaten him. He was always sent to a jail where he met many elder street gangs who fought and threatened at him.

When he was repatriated, he could speak only Thai. He had never learned how to read and write Cambodian, and so it was very difficult in the beginning. He felt ashamed. He always stayed alone in the shelter. However, after a while he started playing with friends and learned the language little by little. One year later, he joined primary school at grade 2nd. He does not feel comfortable to study with smaller children. Many times he skips classes, wear dirty clothes like street children and threatens younger children at school. He often gets in a bad temper. He stays isolated from the others, looks down, and becomes violent. Sometimes, he goes to karaoke bar or brothel with friends.

Chanthu does not like the New Year's or Bon Festival holidays because he cannot visit home like the other children. He tells different stories each time when asked. Once he says he is a half blood. The other time, he says he was born in Thailand. He does not like talking about his family or homeland. It makes him feel bad. Chanthu often says, "I miss home" just as many of the other boys say. It is a taboo to ask him where he is from. Then he tells everybody, "I have home in Bangkok. My uncle waits for me." Chanthu now believes that his parents died. He can never trace his family with his few memories. He says his dream is to go back and live a peaceful life in Thailand, which is his "homeland."

<Case Study>

Srey (17-year-old male)

His family's living was not bad while in a refugee camp. However, after his father committed a double suicide his difficult life began. His father killed himself with his mother's sister. He actually saw them bombing themselves. After the repatriation, his mother took 4 children to live in Pursat Province. However, she did not have any job or land and so they could hardly eat. Srey never attended school.

Then one woman who lived nearby came and asked him, "Do you want to go to the water festival in Phnom Penh?" He followed the woman and since then Srey was separated from his mother. First they lived under a bridge at riverside in Phnom Penh. They made a living by selling cakes. The woman had a husband, who was a carpenter. But she frequently moved around with Srey to escape from his first wife's threat.

Then they moved to Kandal Province, and after a while they went back to Pursat Province, but Srey could not find his real mother and his siblings there. They had gone. Then the woman rented him out to a Vietnamese trafficker. Srey lived with the woman for 3 to 4 years in total till then.

The first and second time he went to Bangkok, he was with 4-5 adults and their children. Srey remembers that after they crossed the border through Papaya field, a Thai trafficker was waiting. The third time he reached Pattaya with trafficker. The trafficker forced him to sell candies in restaurants or nightclubs for foreigners, starting from 6:00 p.m. up to midnight or even until early morning same as all the other Cambodian children. He stayed together with about 10 Cambodian children in a hotel room. A Vietnamese trafficker used to get so angry when Srey didn't bring good money, and so he was always frightened. While he was in Pattaya, he earned B.500-1,500 per day, which was taken away by the trafficker. Srey says, "I missed home very much, but I had to tolerate because I had to support the 'foster mother'.

Once while he was in Pattaya, he escaped from the trafficker and went to Bangkok with a young boy. Then he became a scavenger in Bangkok and earned B.50-60 a day. They saved B.300 in 4-5 months in Bangkok and came back to the 'foster mother' in Pursat Province. Then he helped her selling cakes. After 3-4 months, he left home and went to Poypet with his friend. He stayed with a man who was

collecting garbage for a while and then again moved to Bangkok because he wanted to make money in order to look for his real mother.

Even after he was sheltered in the House for Youth, he kept saying, “I miss my mother.” He started skill training of woodcarving and joined literacy class of Grade 2nd. He looked like he enjoyed the life in the House. However, after 3 months, he suddenly ran away with a friend. They disappeared with 2 bicycles. A social worker went to look for him in Poipet and luckily found him in an NGO center. He said that he left the House because he wanted to go to Thailand to find money to look for his mother. Luckily, however, he failed because police found him. He agreed to return to the House and so the social worker took back him then.

Since then, he liked staying close with the social worker as much as possible. Probably he felt as if she was his mother who went to look for her son. When the social worker encouraged him to attend to school, he decided to go even though he never agreed to go before. Pretty soon, Srey became No. 2 in the class. He was also assigned as the class leader.

After 2 months, however, Srey had to struggle with trauma and himself. He suddenly stopped going training and school. He did not do anything. He stayed in front of TV but not really watching it or spent all day in the game center. One day he got violent with staff. The other day he cried in his room alone. He could not look at the others straight. He just kept saying, “I don’t know why, but I just don’t want to do anything.” As he also said many times that he missed his mother, the project staff took him and went to trace his family for a few times in Pursat and Kandal Province. Finally Srey met a doctor in his hometown who knew a woman most likely Srey’s mother. He said that the woman recently died from HIV/AIDS and left 3 daughters. There was no evidence that she was his mother. However, Srey finally accepted the fact that she was her mother and she died.

For a while, Srey skipped training and literacy class, but he drew many everyday. He did not do anything else. Then he made his mind. He decided to leave the “House for Youth” and stay in a training center for art crafts. It is a very small center without a good living environment, where children have to work so hard from morning until evening. But Srey insisted to go. Probably he had to go so as to change himself. Then he moved from the House to the center. He got sick a little because of lack of

nutrition but he tried hard for 3 months. Then he finally returned the House as it was his home.

Now he learns drawing and painting at a NGO center. He liked it very much. He has been making so much progress. He now says that he misses his younger sister. Now never says that he misses his mother. Now Srey smiles everyday.

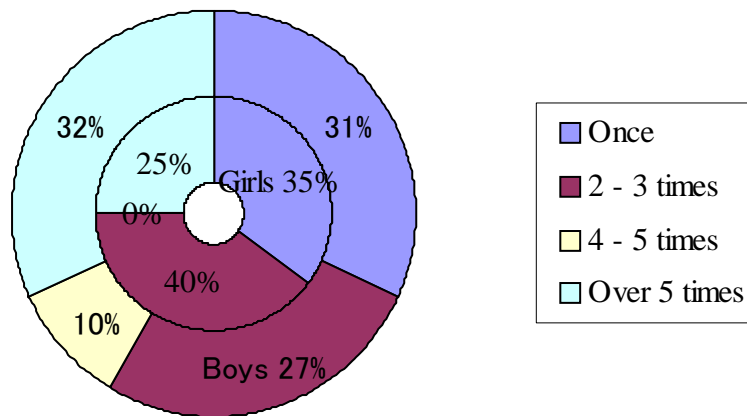
3.5 Difficulties and Constraints of Victims' Reintegration into Society

3.5.1 High Risk of Re-trafficking

In spite of tremendous efforts made by many governmental and non-governmental institutions, there are still an increasing number of children and youths who are trafficked to Thailand over and over again. A study of IOM shows that 56% of the children who are currently sheltered in the governmental or NGO centers were re-trafficked returnees. Especially teenagers repeat going on their own wish to Thailand after they become familiar with the route crossing border and life in Thailand. Some youths go with a desire to earn a better living in order to escape from poverty. Some go to run away from home due to the conflicts they have at home. Furthermore, among them there are many children expressed feelings of obligation to assist their families with their financial difficulties.

The others go because they are fascinated by the complete different world and wish to make good money as well as enjoy the urban easy life. About 26% of the interviewed youths said that they know the routes to cross the border. In fact, one fifth of the trafficked children stayed in the "House for Youth" have run away at least once. The more experience children have, the more independently they migrate; children could be trafficked under coercion the first time, but, having limited other opportunities they "voluntarily" remain in these intolerable jobs after that.¹⁸ Pressure from peers who returned from Thailand also takes a significant role to motivate the adolescents to cross the border. The Chart E summarizes the high rate of re-trafficking cases among the adolescents.

Chart E: Frequency of traveling to Thailand



3.5.2 Lack of psychosocial care and skilled staff

Despite of the crucial facts, we found out in the research that only two NGOs are quite aware of children’s trauma and provide sufficient treatment by having professional counselors at the shelters, and that most of the common shelters and long-term centers are in lack of qualified social workers, who are able to take care of the traumatized children and youths. We met many of the so-called experienced social workers that provide discipline or advice to the beneficiaries, which is not likely psychological counseling. Those who conduct counseling are not usually professional or well trained.

Furthermore, I assume that a mountain of Cambodians is actually traumatized because of suffering from the prolonged civil war and extreme poverty, and hence it is natural that people are not very conscious about victims’ psychosocial problems, which are not rare over the country.

¹⁸ ILO-IPEC website: www.ilo.org

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The information gathered and analyzed in this research can be summarized as follows. As typically seen in the bordering town of Poipet, a majority of people in Cambodia endures the very low standard of living without stable employment. The Thai-Cambodian border daily allows thousands of children and adults carrying heavy loads, begging on the street, and passing through the unofficial route. People are trafficked crossing the border with promises of a good job opportunity and a better living. Poverty, thus, easily pushes the children into vulnerable position and produces victims of human trafficking.

Most of the children are rented out or sold to trafficker who is relatively known in the village. No matter how they reach up to a place in Thailand, children are put in intolerable situation. 90% of the children who were trafficked were forced begging or selling flowers and candies on the street or busy locations such as nightclubs and seashores. During the break, they are usually confined in a small room of awful living conditions with the other children and it is compulsory for everyone to work long hours even though the earning is taken away all by trafficker.

It was inevitable for the children not only to work like a slave but also to suffer from various fears. Traffickers take advantage of children who do not have any other adults to depend on and therefore they use fear to control the children by physically and psychologically abusing. Sexual harassments and assaults are also common among both girls and boys by traffickers or foreign tourists. In addition, children have to be frightened at brutal policemen and street gangs who are usually intoxicated with drug. Those difficult circumstances make further susceptibilities for strong homesickness, feeling of isolation or depression while in Thailand.

Youth victims interviewed during the research could also express their feeling toward family and expose the problems they experienced at home, some timidly and some bravely. Numbers of them were not cared or loved but forced work, neglected or

abused in the worst cases. They also had to see with their one's eye the horrible situation of domestic violence frequently occurring at home.

To summarize, all the experiences, which the children and youths had at home as well as in Thailand, must have a significant impact. Therefore, it is undoubtedly concluded that those victims as a consequence face a high risk of developing psychosocial and emotional problems. Hence, psychosocial interventions are definitely needed to make a unique difference for the victims who try to be reintegrated into society. The reality is that, however, there are not enough skilled social workers that are able to conduct psychological counseling to adequately respond to the victims for their traumas and take care of sensitive issues.

4.2 Recommendations

4.2.1 Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Social Skills Development

It should be stressed that the victimized children and youths need an enough period for rehabilitation in a safe and reliable environment, given a sufficient psychosocial support, before re-entering into society. Since they have excluded from the community for a long time and lost their way, they remain instability. Once they are repatriated, they are provided with food, shelter, health care, schooling and vocational skill training. However, many of them are unable to appreciate the benefits provided at shelters and those services cannot be effective before their traumas are not yet alleviated. As a result, they repeat going back to Thailand.

In this regard, it is suggested that the following approaches yield positive results and therefore, should be focused additionally to the existent common programs. It is indispensable to support the victims for a long-term targeting at achieving successful reintegration into society.

- Provide psychological care individually and with group so that the children and youths can release trauma or learn how to accept it.
- Train the youths by promoting self-organizing groups and team building. They restore self-confidence and a sense of solid identity. By sharing the feelings with other peers also enables them to appreciate how to live with others.

- Help victims to recover social skills such as how to manage daily affairs, how to work together with peers, how to appreciate culture, how to dream and plan for future. Thus it enables them to be mature enough to maintain mental stability and positive attitude toward social life as a full citizen.

4.2.2 Training for Social Workers

Considering the fact that the concept of psychological counseling has not been established among the Cambodians, it is evident that there is a growing need to train social workers of local shelters to be fully equipped with skills to support the victimized children and youths who have been subjected to different pains.

Observing the children in various shelters, however, it can be hardly concluded that the best way to care traumatized children is to keep them in one place all the time and give full treatment. For instance, children do look happier where they stay close to a mother-type-social worker who lively encourages children but has no professional knowledge of psychology. The occidental system does not always fit to the situation regarding the psychosocial care in particular, and therefore it is essential that the Cambodian culture and its backgrounds should be fully taken into account at the same time.

4.3 Ways Forward - Empowerment of Youth Victims -

As the other countries in the South East Asia, Cambodia has an increasing ratio of youth population. Nevertheless, the nation has not been entirely realizing the fact or appreciating the value and potential of young people, who has great capacity and productivity as positive factor.

‘Child participation’ has been featured prominently among the major organizations concerned. For example, the Human Resources Development Section of ECPAT has been implementing a regional program combating sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and youth in Asia, focusing on capacity building of the local resources with an emphasis on the development of young people.

There is a variety of ways to involve youth to be applied as peer-based projects. In regard to recovery and reintegration process, however, it is recommended to take a most

practical way of youth's capacity building given that their integration into local community is the highest priority.

While the local communities and families are not well prepared to support the returned children and youths, it is strongly proposed to train young people, who used to be victimized, to become role models back in the community. They must be the ones who respond effectively to the problems confronted by children in their hometowns as they have great potential to actively commit themselves in identifying the local circumstances and needs, and to contribute to the community in building a supportive environment.

It can be assumed that incorporating the youths in positive activities will also benefit youths themselves to develop their own capacities by making feel responsibilities within their society and so restoring self-value. Consequently this challenging approach to empower the children and youths should be experimented at shelters with making the most of their abilities. In other words, people should be aware of their potentiality and recognize the children and youths not as victims but as potential peer supporters and facilitate their roles to be young leaders in the society.

5. Concluding Remarks

Child trafficking is indeed a complex issue. There are many causes that contribute to the phenomenon; there exist economic, social, cultural, political and legal factors and those are combined one another to produce much sensitivity and intricacy. Through the information studied up to here, it has been summarized that there is a gap between the existent programs and the crucial needs. Therefore the gap should be thoroughly addressed in order to further the quality of support to trafficking victims. KnK, as one of the NGOs to assist the youths at risk in Cambodia, will definitely commit herself to re-design the specific and comprehensive programs to enhance the project work so as to achieve the development of value in children and youth.

Glossary of Terms

Baht	Thai currency. US\$1 is equivalent to approximately 40 Baht.
CNCC	Cambodia National Council of Children
CWCC	Cambodian Women's Crisis Center
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Abuse and Torture
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
IDC	Immigration Detention Center
IOM	International Organization of Migration
KnK	Kokkyo naki Kodomotachi
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOSALVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation
MWVA	Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
<i>yama</i>	Cambodian for amphetamine type substance

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Appendix

Questions for in-depth interviews with youths

(The question items are listed below, however, interviewers actually tried to facilitate the interviewees to voluntarily speak up with open-ended questions.)

Interview date:

Interviewer's name:

1. Basic information on child

Name:

Sex:

Age:

Place of Birth:

NGO/Project name:

Period of stay in the project:

Characteristics in appearance/ethnics/language:

2. Situation before being trafficked to Thailand

Family situation

- Where were you staying before going to Thailand?
- Where was your family before moving to the above place? Did you frequently move?
- How many family members did you have?
- With whom did you stay? Do they live all together?
- In case you have no parents, who took care of you?
- Were there some family members who got ill?
- Are both parents alive? In case they died, do you know when and why?

Economic status of family

- What do your family members do?
- How was the living and financial situation of your family?
- Did your family own house, land, or any property?
- Did your family have a debt?

Relationship with family

- Do you like mother, father, siblings or any other family members?
- Do you have any happy memories with family?
- Did you ever have any problems or conflict within family?

Daily life of the child and difficulties experienced at home

- How was the life every day?
- Did you go to school?
- Did you have many friends to play with?
- Were you forced some kind of work? Did you look after siblings often?
- With whom did you spend most of your time?
- Did you ever receive bad words or get beaten at home?
- Do you think your parents were caring about you?
- Do your parents have a good relationship? Did they ever separate?
- Did you ever see any bad quarrel or fighting between parents?

3. Situation while staying in Thailand

Trafficking Circumstances

- When did you go to Thailand? How old were you?
- How long did you stay in Thailand?
- Where in Thailand did you stay?
- How did you travel to Thailand?
- Did you want to go or somebody forced you to go? Who was it?
- With whom did you go?
- Why did you go to Thailand?
- How many times have you ever been to Thailand?
- Where and with whom did you stay in Thailand?

Work conditions

- What kind of work do you do?
- Where do you work? Who are your customers?
- How many hours do you work per day?
- Who provided you with the work?
- How much was your daily income? Who kept your earnings?
- How did you spend money?
- Did you like the work?

Problems encountered in Thailand

- Did you like living and working in Thailand?
- What was most interesting thing for you?
- Did you go to school or receive any education in Thailand?
- Do you have any bad memories? Did you have any frightening experiences?
- How were the food, clothing, and lodging?
- Did you have any problem with your health?
- Did you use drug, sniffing glue or drink alcohol?
- Did you ever fight with street gangs or make bad friends?
- Have you been threatened, abused, punished or harassed by trafficker, foreigner or police?
- Were you involved in any crime such as pickpocket, thief or drug selling?
- Did you receive any care or affection? Were you ignored or neglected?
- How was your feeling?
- Were you homesick or worried about family?
- Did you have any contact with family?

Way to Repatriation

- Were you arrested by police and sent to a prison?
- Were you sent to an orphanage center in Thailand? How was the life there?
- Did police deport you to the border? Where did you go after?

4. Difficulties encountered after Repatriation to Cambodia

Present life and future plan

- What do you do everyday in the center?
- Do you like staying in the center? What do you like most?
- Are you satisfied with living, programs, and staff?
- What do you do when you have free time?
- What do you want to do especially now?
- Do you want to have a family in future?
- What kind of dream do you have? Do you have any future plan?

Separation with family

- Do you know if family is alive? Where are they?
- Do you want to go back to live with family?
- Do you miss family so much?
- When did you make the last contact with family? How was it?
- Do you think that your family welcomes you back home?
- Do you like homeland? Is it a nice homeland? How are the villagers?
- Do you want to go back to village? Are you afraid? Do you feel ashamed?
- How do you describe the characteristics of you village and people?

Psychosocial status (Emotional/behavioral problems)

- How is your studying, school, or training recently?
- Do you have close friends? Do you consult your problems with friends?
- Who do you like best?
- What is your hobby?
- Do you sleep well every day?
- When do you feel happy or unhappy?
- Do you often smoke or drink alcohol a lot?
- Do you use drug or sniff glue?
- Are you strong homesick? Are you worried about family?
- Who do you like best? Do you feel angry with somebody? If yes, why?
- Do you have any anxiety, fear or stress?
- Do you feel depressed or hopeless sometimes?
- Do you feel lonely or isolated sometimes?
- Do you feel uncertain for family ties for future?
- Do you feel ashamed of something?
- Do you feel like running away from shelter? Have you ever run away?
- Do you want to have a girlfriend or boyfriend in future?
- Do you have some interest in sexual activity?
- Do you want to have a wife/husband or children in future?
- Do you like Cambodian culture? Do you feel yourself different from Cambodians?
- Do you want to live in Cambodia forever?

Risk of re-trafficking

- Do you miss life in Thailand?
- Do you want to go back to Thailand?
- Have you ever gone back or reintegrated into home/village?
- How was family's reaction when you returned?
- While back home, what did you do?
- Why did you go to Thailand again?

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