

KU LEUVEN

FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND  
EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

**School-related gender-based violence in Cambodia**

A baseline study in 20 VVOB target schools in Battambang

Master's thesis submitted for the  
degree of Master of Science in  
Educational Studies by  
**Karen Van Horen**

Supervisor: Ides Nicaise  
Co-supervisor: Sofie Cabus  
In collaboration with: VVOB – Education for Development

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## Summary

This thesis was drafted in the context of a cooperation between the KU Leuven and VVOB, the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance. VVOB's Cambodian branch and three partner NGOs are running a three-year programme to reduce gender-based violence in public education. The "Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER)" project aims at transforming forty Cambodian schools and one Teacher Education College into centres of excellence for gender-responsiveness. If the intervention proves to be efficient, the Cambodian government will upscale the project to all Cambodian schools. Thus, it is necessary to measure the impact of the intervention. The current thesis research serves as the pre-test for this effectiveness measurement in twenty of the forty target schools. Therefore, the main research question is "What is the prevalence of the different types of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in the twenty TIGER target schools?".

SRGBV refers to harmful behaviours, occurring in school-related contexts, directed at children because of their gender. The TIGER project focuses on three specific forms of SRGBV; gender-related bullying, corporal punishment and sexual violence. To determine the prevalence of these three types of SRGBV in the TIGER target schools, the current research used a mixed methods design. First, 29 key informants participated in open-ended interviews about gender equality in Cambodia and on how to do research in the Cambodian public education. Next, 4 principals, 10 teachers and 23 students of 4 different schools took part in semi-structured interviews about gender equality and SRGBV in Cambodian schools. The qualitative data informed the development of quantitative research instruments. Finally, 223 teachers and 579 students of the 20 target schools cooperated in quantitative surveys about the prevalence of SRGBV in their school. The research results show that the majority of children in the TIGER target schools claims to have been subject of bullying at some point, especially verbal violence has a high prevalence. Girls are bullied more often than boys, younger children more than older ones and poor children more than the rich. Second, the average child in the survey reports to experience corporal punishment seldom to sometimes. Boys are disciplined more often and more strongly than girls. There are indications that male teachers use more physical discipline than female teachers and older teachers use harsher disciplinary methods than young teachers. Third, children's self-reported experience of sexual violence is low, which may be due to the taboo surrounding this topic. The results show that, when it comes to sexual violence, boys encounter more physical harassment than girls, while girls are more often verbally harassed or forced to watch pornographic pictures than boys. Knowing that the TIGER target schools are more developed than the average Cambodian school, it can be assumed that all forms of SRGBV are less prevalent in the TIGER target schools. The author of this thesis recommends to increase training for teachers and school leaders about gender equality and violence against children and to implement awareness raising programmes for children and parents about these topics. The design of the trainings should take into account the abovementioned results.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout the course of this master thesis research. First, I am immensely grateful that VVOB, The Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance, gave me the opportunity to do research on one of their projects. I would like to thank the staff of VVOB Cambodia for leaving so much room for participation, so I could define the scope of the study myself within the context of VVOB's Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER) project. Thanks also for VVOB Cambodia's staff members for guiding me throughout the whole research project and for providing insight and expertise which greatly assisted my research. They also put a lot of trust in me and gave me many responsibilities. All these learning opportunities made my time in Cambodia an enlightening experience, which I will take with me in my further personal and professional life.

Not only VVOB, but many other people and organisations in Cambodia helped me throughout the course of my research. First of all, I would like to thank the staff members of KAPE, PKO and GADC, the NGOs who run the TIGER project together with VVOB, for their very open cooperation, passionate participation and input in the creation of the research instruments. Second, a word of thanks for all the key informants who participated in the qualitative interviews and provided invaluable information about gender equality in Cambodia and on how to do research in the Cambodian public education landscape. Third, I want to express my gratitude to the principals of this study's target schools for allowing me to perform research in their schools and for their willing cooperation in qualitative interviews. Next, many thanks to the teachers and students in the target schools who took time to cooperate voluntarily in interviews and surveys. Finally, my deepest gratitude to Hellina who became involved in this thesis research as a translator, but ended up doing so much more. She acted as a cultural liaison between myself and all Cambodian stakeholders, giving advice on how to conduct research in a culturally sensitive manner.

Next, I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Ides Nicaise and co-supervisor Dr. Sofie Cabus who greatly supported me throughout the course of this research. They consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered it in the right direction when deemed necessary. Whenever I ran into a trouble spot or when I had a question about my research or writing, I could count on them. They also put a lot of effort in proofreading this paper.

Last, I would like to acknowledge my parents and partner for their unlimited support during my studies. They were always there, listening to my reflections on the research and providing interesting insights. All these people helped my master thesis to become what it is today. My research project has been a period of intense learning, not only in the educational arena, but also on a professional and personal level.

Karen Van Horen

## Contributions

This thesis was drafted in the context of a cooperation between the KU Leuven and VVOB Cambodia. VVOB is the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance. VVOB's vision is to strive for a sustainable world based on equal opportunities through quality education. The organisation tries to achieve this by offering technical assistance that develops the capacity of local governments, education authorities, school leaders and teachers in eight developing countries. Cambodia is one of these target countries.

I set up the collaboration between VVOB Cambodia and the KU Leuven because of my prior studies and personal interest in education and international development. The aim was to find a thesis topic situated in the overlap between those two topics and I found the perfect partner to do so in VVOB. Out of VVOB's eight target countries, I chose to perform my thesis research in Cambodia because of my prior teaching experience in that country and other Asian nations and because of my interest in gender issues in education, which is one of the focal points of VVOB Cambodia.

VVOB Cambodia is currently running two programmes. The first project, Strengthening Math Results and Teaching (SMART), aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics for all children in primary schools and is funded by the Belgian development cooperation. The second programme, Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER), is funded by the European Union. It aims at protecting children from school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) and providing equal educational opportunities and treatment for boys and girls through teacher training on gender-responsiveness. The team of VVOB Cambodia and I decided together that my thesis research would serve as a baseline study for the TIGER project. Further information on the goals and working methods of this project can be found in chapter 1.1 of this thesis.

Because of his expertise in equal opportunities in education, I asked Professor Ides Nicaise to supervise my thesis research. It was later decided that he, and other researchers of the HIVA Research Institute for Work and Society of the KU Leuven, will support the TIGER project through monitoring and evaluation research until the project comes to an end in October 2020. The current study entails the first phase of this research programme. The cooperation between HIVA and VVOB Cambodia aligns with the long-term structural collaboration between VVOB and KU Leuven's faculty of psychology and educational sciences.

A number of people contributed to the different phases of the current thesis research. At the offset of the research project, I conducted a literature review and performed qualitative interviews with key informants. Based on these interviews and literature study, I drafted several research instruments. These interview and survey guides for teachers and children were revised by Professor Ides Nicaise and staff members of VVOB Cambodia and three other partner NGOs working on the TIGER project. After the research instruments were completed, I collected necessary research materials like tablets and recruited and trained a translator

and five research assistants, all of this under the supervision of VVOB Cambodia. Around the same time, staff members of VVOB and its partner NGOs arranged that I got approval to do research from the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS), the District Office of Education (DOE) and the principals of all the schools involved in the research. Then I collected data in twenty-four schools with the support of an interpreter and five trained research assistants. When all the data was collected, I analysed it. For the statistical analysis of the quantitative data, I got a lot of help from my co-supervisor, Dr. Sofie Cabus. In the final stage of the research, I wrote the research report. The proofreading of the report was done by two VVOB staff members, the co-supervisor and supervisor of this thesis and some of my personal relatives.

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## **List of abbreviations**

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEST	Battambang Education Support Team
CCWC	Commune/Sangkat Committee for Women and Children
CNCC	Cambodia National Council for Children
CVACS	Cambodian Violence Against Children Survey
DOE	District Office of Education
EFA	Education For All
EPSSEG	Education as a Preventive Strategy Against Sexual Exploitation of Girls
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
EVAC-GMS	Ending Violence Against Children in the Greater Mekong Sub-region
GADC	Gender And Development Cambodia
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HIVA	Research Institute for Work and Society
HRBAD	Human Rights-Based Approach to Development
i.a.	inter alia, among others
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KAPE	Kampuchean Action for Primary Education
LEAP	Law Enforcement Advancing Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoWA	Ministry of Women's affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
PDWA	Provincial Department of Women's Affairs
PKO	Puthi Komar Organization
POE	Provincial Office of Education
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RUPP	Royal University of Phnom Penh

S	Standard Deviation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SES	Socio-Economic Status
SMART	Strengthening Math Results and Teaching
SOGI	Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
SPGEWE	Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
SRGBV	School-Related Gender-Based Violence
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
TEC	Teacher Education College
TIGER	Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar
VAC	Violence Against Children
VVOB	The Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance
WCCC	Municipal/Provincial Women and Children Consultative Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 The TIGER project**

VVOB Cambodia believes education is critical in empowering and transforming the lives of young people. However, widespread school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) undermines the achievement of quality, inclusive and equitable education for girls and boys in Cambodia. Therefore, VVOB Cambodia aims to ensure that primary and lower secondary school children are protected from SRGBV and to improve gender equality in education through the Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER) project. This project is funded by the European Union and runs from October 2017 until October 2020. TIGER is a collaboration between VVOB Cambodia, taking the lead, and three other non-governmental organisations (NGOs), namely Puthi Komar Organisation (PKO), Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE) and Gender And Development Cambodia (GADC).

The TIGER programme aims at transforming forty schools and one Teacher Education College (TEC) in Battambang province into centres of excellence for gender-responsiveness. To achieve this, the TIGER project invests in capacity development for 30 teacher trainers and management staff members of the TEC and 480 teachers and school leaders within the forty target schools. The training for staff members of the TEC and twenty of the forty target schools will be organised by VVOB Cambodia. Meanwhile, VVOB will also organise capacity development for five third party civil society organisations, who in their turn will establish twenty additional gender-responsive schools. In this way, VVOB organises trickle down training to ensure durability.

The content of the TIGER intervention will be reflected in an action guide on the gender-responsive transformation of schools. This guide provides teachers and school leaders with tools to avoid SRGBV. It includes topics such as reporting and referral mechanisms for SRGBV, prevention of bullying, avoidance of gender stereotypes, gender-responsive pedagogy, and gender-neutral teaching materials (VVOB, 2017a). In order to test the effectiveness of the TIGER intervention, a pre-test and post-test measurement are necessary. The current thesis research contains exploratory qualitative data which was used to develop fitting quantitative measurement instruments for the pre- and post-tests. This thesis also includes the quantitative pre-test measurement for the twenty TIGER target schools that will receive training from VVOB Cambodia. After this thesis research is completed, the twenty schools that will receive training from the civil society organisations and twenty control schools will take part in a similar baseline study. At the end of the TIGER project, all forty intervention schools and twenty control schools will undergo a post-test measurement.

## 1.2 Relevance

Since this thesis involves the baseline study for the TIGER intervention, the research has predominantly a practical relevance for VVOB Cambodia and its partner NGOs. The results of the baseline study can pinpoint important issues the TIGER intervention needs to focus on, so this thesis will inform the design of the project. Further, during the study several research instruments were created which VVOB can reuse to perform the pre-test measurement in other schools and for the post-test measurements at the end of the project. Measuring the impact of the TIGER project is highly important. Especially because the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) promised to upscale the project to all public schools in the country if it proves to have a positive impact in the forty intervention schools.

Besides practical relevance for the TIGER project, this thesis has social and policy relevance as well. The study will add to the debate on how SRGBV can be avoided and gender equality in schools can be improved. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has made gender equality one of its two global priorities for the period 2014-2021. The organisation estimated that in 2013 59 million children of primary school age and 65 million adolescents of lower secondary school age, of whom girls remain the majority, were out of school. Further, many of those in school are not acquiring basic knowledge and skills. In 2013, 757 million adults worldwide, of whom two-thirds were women, were unable to read and write. And yet the benefits of literacy, in particular for women, are plentiful. They include greater participation in the labour market and higher wages, delayed marriage, and improved child and family health. Also, educated women have lower risks of experiencing gender-based violence because of their increased human capital and knowledge on non-traditional gender roles. In order to increase girls' access to education, it is necessary to ensure their safety in schools. School-related gender-based violence is a serious obstacle for achieving gender equality. The experience of SRGBV often results in poor performance and school dropout, making it a serious barrier in realising the right to education. Violence in schools reflects underlying social norms regarding authority and preconceived gender roles, the absence of effective mechanisms to keep these harmful gender norms in check allows for the continuation of SRGBV. Gender-responsive education is needed to ensure all children get equal educational opportunities. Trained gender-responsive teachers enable safe and learning-friendly environments for all children and can transform boys' and girls' attitudes and values, including their understanding of gender equality, non-violent behaviour and acceptance of differences. In this way, the younger generation learns to let go some of the entrenched gender roles and expectations, resulting in improved gender equality in the society as a whole. Making sure all boys and girls complete their education, and empowering all women and men to perform the jobs they aspire, implies a country can utilise its full potential human capital. In Cambodia, this will be necessary to achieve the country's goal to become an upper middle income country by 2030. This relation between education and development is in line with the human rights-based approach to development, which is explained in the

theoretical framework (chapter 3) of this thesis. Cambodia is in the process of rebuilding its education system which was shattered during the Khmer Rouge regime. With the assistance of international agencies, progress has been made over the last decade, but there is still considerable improvement needed, particularly in the areas of quality of education and gender equality (Booth, 2014; UNESCO, 2015a, 2015b). The Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) calls for research on how its public education system can be improved. The existing number of academic studies is insufficient. Especially mixed method research on gender equality in the Cambodian public education is lacking. Therefore, this thesis aims to help fill that research gap.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The main research question of the current thesis is “What is the prevalence of the different types of school-related gender-based violence in the twenty TIGER target schools?”. The aim of this question is to provide VVOB Cambodia and its partner NGOs with information on how prevalent gender-related bullying, corporal punishment and sexual violence currently are in the twenty schools that take part in the first phase of the TIGER project.

Besides the main research question, this thesis aims to answer some sub questions as well. The first sub question is “Do teachers and students report similar SRGBV prevalence?”. The purpose of this question is to check if teachers are aware about the SRGBV children in their school experience. The second sub question is “What are the determinants of SRGBV?”. The goal of this question is to find out to which extent children’s experience of SRGBV is related to their sex, age, socio-economic status (SES) and their parents’ literacy level. It also aims to determine if teachers’ use of corporal punishment is related to their own sex, age and childhood socio-economic status.

## **2. Background**

This chapter aims to give insight in the contextual background of the research and to explain some key concepts and theories relating to the topic of the thesis. Further, this chapter gives an overview of existing policy measures that are aimed at reducing gender inequality and gender-based violence (GBV) in schools. The information in this chapter is based on a literature review involving scientific literature and policy documents, but also webpages and conference reports. Relevant academic literature was collected by searching the following online libraries: Limo.libis, Elsevier and Taylor & Francis Online for studies published no earlier than the year 2000. Further, researchers at the KU Leuven and the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) shared suitable studies with the researcher. Relevant international policy documents were collected through the websites of the United Nations (UN), UNESCO, the World Health Organization (WHO) and Google. Also, VVOB Cambodia, UNICEF Cambodia and World Vision Cambodia shared documents relating to national policies in Cambodia or research that has been conducted by NGOs who are active in Cambodia.

Besides information from the literature, this chapter also includes elements of interviews with key informants, principals and teachers. In this way hands-on information about the Cambodian context supports the wider theoretical framing of literature. How the interviews with key informants, principals and teachers were conducted will be explained in the methods section (chapter 4) of this thesis.

This background chapter starts off with a brief history of Cambodian education. The second section zooms in on national and international policies to improve gender equality in education and reduce school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV). The third section includes a contextualisation of the research within the province of Battambang. The fourth and fifth sections give insight into the concepts of violence against children and gender issues, including school-related gender-based violence. The chapter ends with an overview of the current situation in Cambodia when it comes to gender equality.

### **2.1 A brief history of Cambodian education**

#### **2.1.1 Early days**

From the 9<sup>th</sup> until the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Cambodia was part of the Angkor or Khmer empire. During the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Khmer constructed Buddhist temples called pagodas, influenced by India. The pagodas served as educational institutions where primary education was offered by monks to (primarily elite) boys. The temple school curriculum focused mainly on Buddhist principles and moral and spiritual development, less on basic literacy and numeracy skills (Booth, 2014, p. 48; Dy, 2004, pp. 91–92; Stinson, 2017, pp. 3–4). Even after the decline of the Khmer empire in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, temple schools remained the general form of basic education, so education persisted to be only for boys (Peycam, 2010, p. 165).



### **2.1.2 Under French colonial rule (1863-1953)**

In 1863, the first French colonists arrived. Three decades later imperialism had led to the so called ‘French Indochina’ consisting of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (Duggan, 1996, p. 363; Haque, 2013, p. 57). Still, it was only in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the colonists ‘modernized’ the educational system, in which only a small group of children entered and were educated to serve the interest of the colony. Apart from that, barely any colonial resources were invested in education (Duggan, 1996, p. 363; Dy, 2004, p. 92; Stinson, 2017, p. 4).

Colonial formal education did allow girls to receive basic education for the first time, which in turn had its own consequences. Boys and girls were now required to study gender-specific codes of conduct. The ‘Chbap Pros’ and ‘Chbap Srey’ taught boys and girls respectively to become proper Khmer men and women. To a certain extent, the Chbap Pros was the continuation of a part of the temple schools’ curriculum, whereas the Chbap Srey was the first instance of formally educated female codes of conduct (Dy, 2004, p. 93; Stinson, 2017, p. 4).

Towards the end of the French colonial period, basic education became compulsory for children aged 6 to 13. However, since it was not free, boys remained the main beneficiaries of education. This was due to traditional gender roles and the cost-benefit analysis made by the parents when choosing between enrolling their sons or daughters (Stinson, 2017, p. 4).

### **2.1.3 After French colonial rule (1953-1975)**

In 1953, France officially recognized king Sihanouk’s sovereignty. From this point on, education became a strong national interest with annual expenditures consisting of more than 20% of the annual national budget. The number of teacher training colleges and secondary schools in the provincial capitals increased rapidly and in the 1960s several universities were founded. Their numbers continued to grow when it was noticed that higher education acted as a catalyst for development. However, education was strongly biased towards urban areas, leaving rural provinces with a high percentage of illiterate adults of whom the majority were women. Neglected rural areas continued to have temple schools providing rudimentary schooling that mainly taught the skills required for agrarian life. Although the enrolment of children rose from 130 000 in 1950 to more than one million children in the late 1960s and the enrolment percentage for girls increased from 9% to 39%, the literacy rate only reached 45% in 1966 for a population of 6,2 million. Relatively speaking though, Prince Sihanouk’s efforts paid off since claims were made during the 1960s that Cambodia had one of the highest literacy rates and most progressive education systems in Southeast Asia (Duggan, 1996, pp. 363–364; Dy, 2004, p. 94; Haque, 2013, p. 57).

#### **2.1.4 Under Khmer Rouge rule (1975-1979)**

In March 1970, General Lon Nol seized control of Cambodia in a coup, overthrowing Prince Sihanouk who was accused of supporting Communist Vietnam. Lon Nol was supported by the United States which attempted to stifle any assumptions of communism. The coup led to the creation of the Khmer Republic, which marked the beginning of great civil conflict. In 1975 the Cambodian Civil war ended when the Khmer Rouge communist regime overthrew the military dictatorship of the Khmer Republic and installed their own government Democratic Kampuchea, led by Pol Pot. The Khmer Rouge planned to create a form of agrarian socialism, a collective peasant society. To do so, the entire population was forced into either army camps or collective farms. The Khmer Rouge carried out a genocide in which an estimated two million people died (Stinson, 2017, p. 5).

When the Khmer Rouge came to power in 1975, traditional education was cast aside because it was deemed irrelevant in an agrarian communist society. Existing schools were closed and children were denied their right to education. The Khmer Rouge destroyed ninety percent of all school buildings, emptied libraries and burned their contents (Clayton, 1998, pp. 6–10). Before the schools were closed, they became sites of political violence where armed groups attacked students and teachers. As the regime became increasingly paranoid of losing control, the educated community was identified as a threat to the revolution and targeted in the killings. An estimated 75% of teachers, 67% of school pupils and 96% of university students lost their lives (De Walque, 2006, p. 223; Klutetz, 2015, p. 166). According to Duncankudos (2014) “teachers were routinely rounded up, often in front of their students who later reported hearing rifle shots in nearby fields. Their beloved teachers never returned” (para. 2).

After most qualified teachers were slaughtered and schools were closed, the new educational system was installed, employing carefully selected teachers. The Khmer Rouge Party’s Four-Year Plan for education stated “We must choose people with backgrounds that adhere to the revolutionary movement and have the quality to grasp the Party’s educational line” (as cited in Chigas & Mosyakov, 2016). Teaching quality was low since most teachers were peasants, appointed on the basis of their revolutionary attitude instead of prior education or teaching experience (Clayton, 1998, pp. 6–10).

The curriculum during the Khmer Rouge era focused strongly on politics and agriculture. “Only some basic primary schools with a curriculum centred on ‘political education’ and agricultural skills rather than academic subjects were open” (De Walque, 2006, p. 229). During the Khmer Rouge era “the ideology of radical social change was embedded in the curriculum itself” (Clayton, 1998, p. 9). Children learned about the Party’s politics and the revolutionary struggle for democracy and socialism. They sang revolutionary songs, learned to love ‘Angkar’ and were indoctrinated into socialist morality. Arithmetic and science classes were reduced to the bare minimum. Literacy education was reformed so that students would learn

the correct, peasant way to read and write, that is in an uncritical and passive way (Ayres, 1999, p. 214; Chigas & Mosyakov, 2016). Duncankudos (2014) states that:

The educational policy of the Khmer Rouge was also very strong on ‘technical skills’ namely the skills required to grow rice, to fish, to farm, as well as to share simple medical knowledge. The new school system was designed to teach not only through classroom activities but through physical labour. The goals were not about personal advancement but, rather, the advancement of the collective. (para. 7)

The objective of collective learning also resulted in the abolition of examinations and certificates, to reduce academic competition. The teachers’ actions and the curriculum, aimed at eradicating critical thinking, contributed to the autocracy of the Khmer Rouge. Furthermore, the teachers promoted intolerance and identified children from ‘intelligentsia’ in their classrooms, so the parents could be targeted by the revolutionary soldiers (Warshauer Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy, & Longman, 2008, p. 665).

To sum up, the conflict strongly disrupted the provision of education because the Khmer Rouge abolished the formal school system when they came to power. Schools themselves became sites of violence when the schooling infrastructure was destroyed and teachers were actively targeted and killed. The new education system installed by the Khmer Rouge firmly contributed to the conflict. The curriculum was heavily politicised and children were indoctrinated by unqualified peasant teachers adhering to the revolution who actively brought violence into the classroom. After four long years, the ‘Killing Fields’ era ended in 1979 when Vietnam invaded Cambodia.

### **2.1.5 After the Khmer Rouge era**

The Khmer Rouge policy had large long-term effects on the educational attainment of the Cambodian population. Those who were of school age in the late 1970s had less secondary education than the preceding and subsequent birth cohorts. Since the school infrastructure was destroyed and qualified teachers were decimated, rebuilding the educational system was challenging at least. In 1979 there were only a few hundred teachers for the whole country (De Walque, 2006, p. 229). “After the end of the regime and the subsequent transition periods, baby boom followed. This baby-boom generation youth had difficulty in finding qualified teachers at schools” (Jeong, 2014, p. 1). Only 6% of that generation obtained more than a secondary education and many suffered from long-term post-traumatic stress disorder (Stinson, 2017, p. 9).

Although the quality of education was lacking, the positive psychosocial effects of the rapid reinstatement of the education system cannot be underestimated. Winthrop and Kirk (2008) define four ways in which schooling can shape children’s well-being after conflict. First, education can restore a sense of normalcy and provide children a much needed routine amidst an otherwise unpredictable and often chaotic environment. Second, schooling can be a mechanism of socialization. Encounters with peers and teachers

allow students to develop appropriate social behaviours and build positive relationships. Third, schooling can provide a safe, protective and nurturing environment for children. Fourth, education can be an instrument for coping and hoping. Education can help children to deal with the difficulties in their lives and find reasons to believe in a better future (pp. 640–658). The above holds true for Cambodia as well. Duggan (1996) states that “formal schooling conducted by 'traditional' teachers assisted children and adolescents to recreate the normality of everyday life lost under the Khmer Rouge” (p. 367). Since the Khmer Rouge was overthrown, the Cambodian government worked hard to rebuild the schooling system and include peace education in the curriculum, with the aid of NGOs and international support. (Global Peace Foundation, 2015; Youth for Peace, 2012).

Elisabeth King (2011) states that “in the aftermath of conflict, some countries endeavour not just to reconstruct their schools and educational systems, but to improve them” (p. 145). Save the Children (2010) confirms that countries which are rebuilding the school system after crisis have the opportunity to ‘build back better’ (p. 8). The Cambodian government aimed for this as well. Before the Khmer Rouge, formal education in Cambodia was largely restricted to urban areas (Duggan, 1996, pp. 363–364). After the Khmer Rouge era, old schools were reopened at a high pace and new schools were built, not only in the cities but in the countryside as well. From this point of view the conflict provided an opportunity for educational change, since the access to education for all improved. However, “data suggesting a rapid escalation in enrolments must be balanced against very poor teaching standards, unqualified teachers and low quality in the provision of a standardised curriculum, texts and facilities” (Duggan, 1996, p. 367). So although more children had access to education after the Khmer Rouge period than before, the quality of education did not improve, on the contrary.

To conclude, education showed its positive face in Cambodia in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge conflict. After the Khmer Rouge era more children had access to schooling than before. The reopening of the schools provided children with a sense of normalcy, promoted their well-being and contributed to the restoration of peace. Yet, the quality of education was poor due to the lack of trained teachers. Since the 1990’s, the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) has prioritised teacher training to improve the quality of education (Duggan, 1996, p. 362). But recovery takes time, although the Khmer Rouge fell almost forty years ago, its legacy will continue to have a long-lasting impact on the educational system. The dean of the education faculty at the Royal University of Phnom Penh stated during an interview that “the corrupt mindset is still there, so rebuilding the system goes slowly”.

### 2.1.6 Contemporary education

In 1991, the Paris Peace Accords were signed. Since then, Cambodian educational development focuses on building a ‘modern’ education system, mimicking Western systems. Both the curriculum and structure of the school system have been largely influenced by foreign donors (Stinson, 2017, p. 6).

In the current public education system, schooling is offered from the age of 3. Pre-school is not compulsory, but strongly encouraged. Basic compulsory education starts at the age of 6 and consists of 9 years, broken down into primary school (grades 1-6) and lower secondary (grades 7-9). Upper secondary education (grades 10-12) is not compulsory but strongly promoted. Adolescents who complete upper secondary school can continue into higher education. Youngsters who do not go to upper secondary school can attend Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) after grade 9 (Booth, 2014, p. 42). Presently, 97.7% of children enrol in primary education. Although 78.7% of children complete primary school, only 41.9% enrol in lower secondary school and just 26.5% of all youngsters move into upper secondary school. Only 14% of the population enrol in higher education (VVOB Cambodia, 2016, 2017). Figure 1 gives an overview of the stages of education offered in Cambodia and the relative enrolment of students in each stage, it illustrates the high drop-out rates.

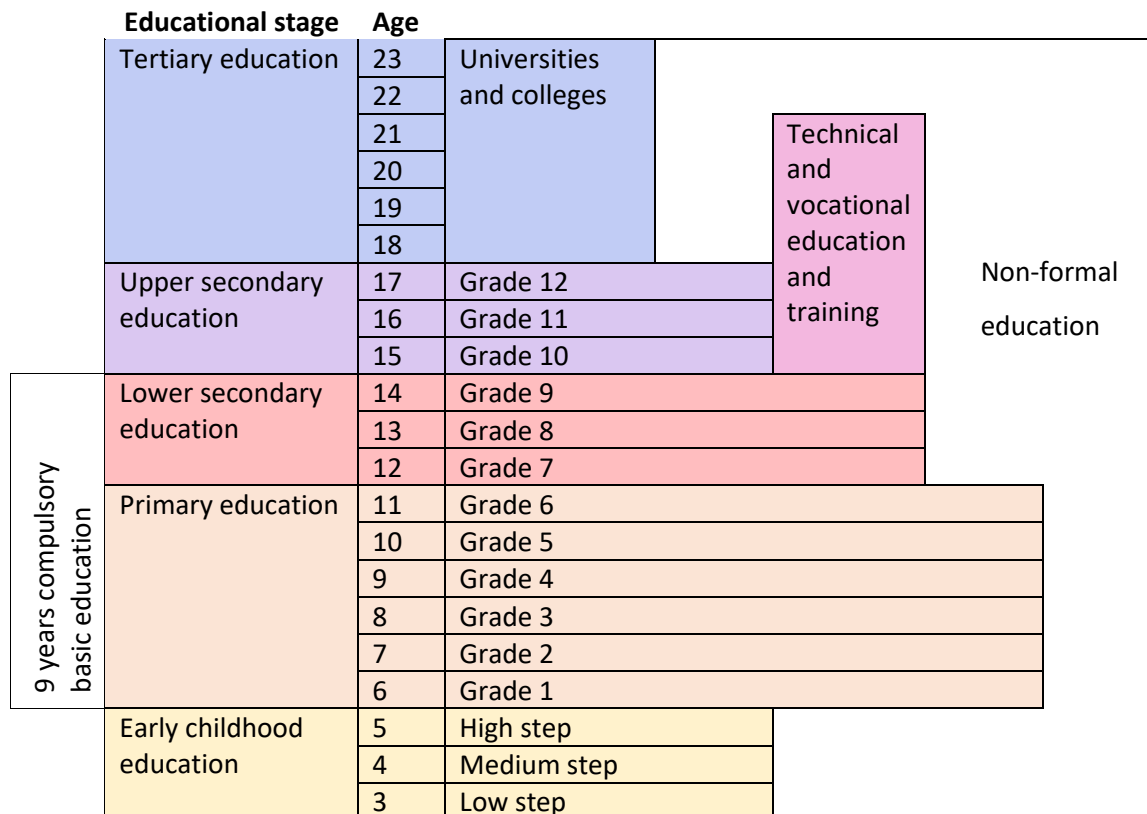


Figure 1: Stages within the Cambodian educational system

In 2003, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) entered UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) program, which aimed at equal access to education for all children and youth by 2015. In 2005 the MoEYS released its Education Strategic Plan (ESP) for the period 2006-2010, which was strongly aligned with the EFA goals and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The plan encompassed four priority education policies to be fulfilled by 2015: (1) Ensuring equitable access to education, with the goal to have all children completing nine years of basic education by 2015. This target included the elimination of gender inequality in both urban and rural areas; (2) Providing scholarships for poor children; (3) Reducing drop-out from school; and (4) Increasing teacher salaries and schools' operational budgets. Since the early 2000s, expansion of education has been the top priority of the MoEYS, resulting in some considerable advancements. Whereas in 2003 only 1.8% of Cambodia's GDP was allotted to education, this figure had risen to 3.09% by 2009. Some improvements worth mentioning include the building of new schools, the abolishment of school fees and provision of scholarships, decreased gender gaps in school enrolment rates, increased teacher salaries, and the expansion of early childhood education. Many of these improvements were made thanks to support of NGOs, donor countries and multilateral organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank (Booth, 2014, pp. 42–44; Stinson, 2017, pp. 5–8).

Although the progress in the state of public education cannot be underestimated, there are still huge problems to overcome. Booth (2014) states that:

There is a serious lack of materials, equipment and infrastructure. Many of the new school buildings that MoEYS counts as completed in their reports are temporary structures, with dirt floors, few desks and few to no materials. To get to these ill-equipped schools, many children have to travel by foot or bike for 5 miles or more, often leading to high absenteeism and resulting in high repetition rates. This is especially troublesome for girls, who are socially more constrained than boys in terms of traveling. (p. 43)

Furthermore, teacher salaries are still too low, which led to the common practice of teachers taking bribes in the classroom. Some teachers even withhold essential information during class and then charge for 'tutoring' after school where the lesson is explained. Many poor families cannot pay this form of private education, which leads to a higher failure rate for poor children. Low salaries also contribute to a shortness of people interested in becoming a teacher. For those who do aspire to be teachers, the quality of teacher training remains on the low side. The combination of limited resources, high numbers of students in one class and lack of qualified teachers results in teacher-centred learning activities, with students copying from books and performing rote memorization (Booth, 2014, pp. 44–45).

Many of the aforementioned problems in public schools cause parents to enrol their children in private education. Private schools claim to offer student-centred learning methods, low student-teacher ratios, modern facilities and learning materials, and highly trained (often foreign) teachers. However, this all comes

at a price. School fees for the most reputable private schools go up to 30.000USD/year, resulting in huge inequalities in access to high quality education and making educational attainment strongly dependent on socio-economic status (SES). However, since this research focuses on gender equality in public education, elaborating any further on the differences between public and private education goes beyond the scope of this research.

The good news is that the quality of public education is also on the rise. The MoEYS keeps investing in school facilities and increasing teacher salaries year by year, giving hope for a brighter future. Furthermore, there is a strong focus on improving the quality of teacher training now that pre-service teacher training is changing from a two year training program to a four year bachelor study. Duncankudos (2014) claims that today the education system in Cambodia is developing fast since the number of teachers who received teacher training continues to grow. A large cohort of trained teachers and well-equipped schools are highly necessary to teach all children in Cambodia because, due to the deaths of the previous generations, more than 70% of the current population is under the age of 25 (Stinson, 2017, p. 9).

## **2.2 Policy**

### **2.2.1 International policy**

The current developments within Cambodia's educational system are in line with both national and international educational policies. In the year 2000, the United Nations established eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Two of those goals were related to the topic of this research: "MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education" and "MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women". In the same year, UNESCO formulated six Education For All (EFA) goals. Especially the fifth EFA goal is relevant for this research: "Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality" (UNESCO, 2000).

Since the MDGs and EFA goals were established in 2000, the world has made remarkable progress in education. However, the goals were not reached by the 2015 deadline and thus continued action is needed. In 2015, the United Nations established seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that should be reached worldwide by 2030. SDG4 focuses on quality education for all and has two sub-targets that are highly relevant for this thesis: "Target 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations" and "Target 4.A: Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all". SDG5 focuses on gender equality and has one sub-target with high relevance for this research: "Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation". Also, the second target of SDG16 "End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children" is related to this study (United Nations, 2015).

SDG4 is also referred to as "Education 2030". In the "Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action", UNESCO (2015a) states that the world has set very ambitious education goals for the period from 2015 to 2030 and thus "every effort must be made to guarantee that this time the goal and targets are achieved" (p. 5).

Since gender equality is a key feature of Education 2030, some of the goals in the Incheon Declaration are highly relevant for this thesis:

- Governments should put in place comprehensive and cohesive gender-sensitive policies and make sure gender is mainstreamed into education sector plans and budgets in their implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up.



- States should review curricula, textbooks and teacher training manuals so that they are free of gender stereotypes. Only then schools can create gender-sensitive learning environments and promote equality, non-discrimination and human rights.
- States should eliminate gender-based discrimination resulting from social and cultural attitudes in schools to ensure that teaching and learning have an equal impact on girls and boys. Therefore, education systems must act explicitly to end gender bias.
- Stakeholders should ensure that schools are protected as peace zones, free from violence, including school-related gender-based violence. Special measures should be put in place to protect girls and women. Schools and the routes to and from them should be free from attack, kidnapping and sexual violence. Actions must be taken to end impunity for persons that attack school children.
- Countries should develop policies and programmes that reinforce girls to study in the STEM fields, including specific scholarships.
- Governments should aim to eliminate gender-based barriers in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education because wide disparities in access to these forms of education remain (UNESCO, 2015a).

Also in 2015, fifty eight countries signed the first ever UN resolution on school-related gender-based violence. The “Learning without fear” resolution invites UNESCO member states to condemn gender-based violence (GBV) in all its forms, create national policies and action plans to eliminate SRGBV and promote the creation of safe and effective learning environments for all girls and boys (Education International, 2015). In the “Learning without fear” resolution, UNESCO (2015b) encourages member state governments to adopt measures such as:

- the development and enhancement of legal frameworks to put an end to impunity for perpetrators of violence
- the guarantee of safe and gender-sensitive school environments through the revision of educational approaches such as alternative disciplinary measures, content, education programmes and manuals
- the development of pre- and in-service training curricula for educational staff to raise awareness about gender inequality and GBV in schools
- the involvement of community members through participatory educational programmes, mentoring and outreach campaigns on non-violence, children’s rights and gender equality
- the establishment of monitoring mechanisms on GBV both inside and outside school, to measure the results of the taken violence prevention activities

In 2015, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) established the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. The “ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together” declaration underlines its complementarity to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By 2025, the ASEAN Community undertakes to realise an inclusive community that ensures people enjoy fundamental freedoms and human rights as well as thrive in a just, democratic, harmonious and gender-sensitive environment. Moreover, the ASEAN envisions a community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children and youth. To achieve these aims, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025 lists several strategic measures, some of which are related to the topic of this thesis (ASEAN, 2015):

- “Work towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” (p. 106).
- “Reduce inequality and promote equitable access to social protection and enjoyment of human rights by all and participation in societies, such as developing and implementing frameworks, guidelines and mechanisms for elimination of all forms of discrimination, violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect” (p. 107)
- “Develop regional strategies and enhance institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming in ASEAN policies, programmes and budgets across pillars and sectors” (p. 108)
- “Promote equitable opportunities to quality education and access to information with priority given to the advancement of universal access to education” (p. 109)
- “Enhance regional initiatives to promote and protect the rights of women and children” (p. 109)
- “Enhance regional initiatives and stakeholder participation to promote the elimination of all forms of discrimination—institutionalised or otherwise—exploitation, trafficking, harmful practices, and violence and abuse against children” (p. 109)

The ASEAN vision 2025 emphasizes a rules-based, people oriented and people centred ASEAN Community. The vision is guided by broad goals like ensuring fundamental freedoms and human rights for all ASEAN people, which is in line with the human rights-based approach to development explained in the theoretical framework of this thesis. Save the Children (2016) comments on the ASEAN vision 2025:

For a region where democracy seems to be in deficit in a majority of the member states and where human rights violations are rampant, the post-2015 vision is ambitious. Nevertheless, the fact that human rights and fundamental freedoms have become cross-cutting through all three communities could be a step towards a more human rights friendly community, including for children. (p. 67)

### **2.2.2 National policy**

#### ***Existing policies***

Since the year 2000, the Cambodian government has developed multiple policies regarding gender equality in education. This evolution has been largely influenced by international development targets such as Education For All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and several Human Rights treaties. These international targets have brought gender equality to the forefront in Cambodian education policy making (Stinson, 2017).

Several Cambodian laws and strategic plans aim at gender equality in education and the reduction of violence against children. First and foremost, some articles in the constitution are directed towards this aim. Article 48 of the constitution states that “the state shall protect the rights of children as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the right to life, education, protection during wartime, and from economic or sexual exploitation”. Further, article 45 prohibits discrimination against women and focuses on gender neutral legislation (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011).

Second, the Education Strategic Plans (ESPs) also focus on gender equality in education. The first ESP was active from 2006 until 2010, it put emphasis on all children completing primary schooling by 2010. Although gender equality was not central to the plan, some measures to eliminate gender inequality (especially in rural areas) were included. The current ESP runs from 2014 until 2018. This plan explicitly includes reducing gender gaps and gender mainstreaming implementation as priorities. The current ESP goes hand in hand with the Five Years Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (SPGEWE) 2014-2018. This plan aims at better access and opportunities for girls in education and better social attitudes and favourable conditions for the participation of women at all levels and in all sectors. The ESP and SPGEWE plans connect increasing girls’ access to education as a measure of increasing gender equality (Stinson, 2017).

Third, the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2009-2013 shows the commitment of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to combat violence against children. Many sections of the document refer to children’s rights, thereby highlighting it as a crosscutting issue of concern (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011).

Fourth, the Education Law 2007 and the Codes of Conduct 2008 issued to educational personnel prohibit physical or mental violence or any form of corporal punishment within educational settings. These policies are accompanied by the Child Friendly School Policy and Master Plan 2007 of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) which encourages participatory learning and non-violent teaching methods (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011).

Fifth, social workers have an obligation to report sexual abuse, labour exploitation, child abandonment, domestic violence resulting in physical injury and children in conflict with the law. Unfortunately, there is

no similar professional obligation on health care staff, educators, prison staff or justice officials (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011).

Other relevant policy documents include “Education as a Preventive Strategy Against Sexual Exploitation of Girls (EPSSEG)” which looked at gender and education through the same lens, the “National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2009-2013”, the “Strategic Policy and Action Plan on Violence Against Children”, the “Gender Mainstreaming Strategic Plan for Education 2006-2010” of the MoEYS, the “Law Enforcement Advancing Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons (LEAP) 2011-2015” and the “National Plan on Education for All 2003-2015” which offers scholarships to poor girls (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011; Stinson, 2017).

### ***Existing institutions***

Besides laws and other policy documents, the Cambodian government also installed several organisations to combat gender inequality and violence against children. First and foremost, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) established the Cambodia National Council for Children (CNCC) as a secretariat to monitor and implement child rights. The CNCC has a specialised child protection and monitoring unit that reports on the implementation on all policies relating to children. The CNCC also has child rights working groups within each ministry. To ensure the child protection network spreads vertically from national to village level, the CNCC has local departments at the level of the province, municipality and commune. The Municipal/Provincial Women and Children Consultative Committee (WCCC) advises and makes recommendations to the Municipal/Provincial Council on matters related to gender equity, women, youth and children. The Commune/Sangkat Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) advises the Commune Council on matters related to women and children. CCWCs also have a duty to collect and report information on violence. The main goal is data collection, but the CCWC can also report cases to police or other child protection services. The WCCCs and CCWCs are the key structures responsible for monitoring the welfare of children at a local level. They have the responsibility to raise awareness on policies relating to women and children’s rights to the people in the community (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011). World Vision Cambodia gathered data on how many people are aware of the work done by the CCWCs. In the research they found that the majority of community members knows about the awareness raising work the CCWC does on physical violence (71.1%), emotional violence (65.5%) and child trafficking (60.0%). However, only 4% of the respondents knew that the CCWC is also involved in child protection cases and that a child can go to the CCWC for help in case it is suffering (World Vision Cambodia, 2018).

Victims of violence can go to the CCWC for help, but they can also call one of the seven telephone hotlines the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and several NGOs have set up. The hotlines are the primary mode by which

complaints can be made and suspected cases of violence against or exploitation of children can be reported. There is also coordination between the different hotlines (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011).

### ***Existing trainings***

The Cambodian government has worked hard to establish policies and specialised institutions to protect children's rights and combat gender inequality. Further, the government also focuses on in-service training for teachers and school principals. For example, between 2007 and 2009 the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWa) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) provided training on domestic violence for 129 school directors and teachers in Phnom Penh and three provincial capitals. The MoEYS also organises capacity development programs on gender mainstreaming and how to respond to gender discrimination for 2000-2500 primary school teachers per year. Most trainings organised by the MoEYS are conducted by MoEYS staff members together with staff members of NGOs that are appointed by the MoEYS. Furthermore, many NGOs run specific programs on gender equality in education and/or violence against children, often involving specific training for teachers and school principals as well (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011; Stinson, 2017).

### ***Gender mainstreaming***

All existing policies, institutions and trainings are milestones on the road to achieving gender-equal and violence-free schools in Cambodia. These milestones have increased attention on gender issues and created a positive climate of change that puts gender in the centre of the education agenda (Velasco, 2004). This positive climate opens the doors for gender mainstreaming throughout the whole Cambodian government and educational system. Gender mainstreaming can be defined as the development and evaluation of policy processes, so that gender equality perspectives are embedded in the design, implementation and evaluation of all policies at all levels (Stinson, 2017). Nowadays, gender mainstreaming action groups exist in at least twenty-five Cambodian ministries and institutions. All provincial and district offices of education have a gender focal point. Further, the MoEYS has a gender working group and there exists an inter-ministerial child justice working group (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011). However, in her research on education and gender in Cambodia, Booth (2014) found that "when it came to gender mainstreaming, the responsibility for the development of a gender policy was shifted from one agency to the next, without complete resolution" and that many goals that were set by the MoEYS were never implemented (p. 44).

### ***Improvements made***

During the interviews, key informants, principals and teachers were asked which improvements regarding gender equality have been made thanks to national policies. Many people pointed out that the creation of

more schools in rural areas decreased children's travel distance to schools, making the way to school more safe for girls. Further, several people pointed out the sanitary provisions in some schools improved, so girls no longer stay home from school when they are on their period. Also, 60% of the official scholarships are appointed to girls, stimulating poor girls to remain in school instead of dropping out to start a family or get a job. Last, nowadays each public school is required to have a female student representative committee, concerning itself with issues girls encounter in school.

It is striking to see that all mentioned improvements regarding gender equality are strongly directed at girls. Although it is true that for a long time girls were strongly disadvantaged in Cambodia, nowadays they are closing the gap and sometimes already overtaking boys. It is important to remember true gender equality in schools is not only a girls' issue, boys deserve the same support. Scholarships should be divided equally and male student representative committees could be introduced. The equation of gender equality and women's issues is not only apparent in education but also in society at large. The majority of policies and institutions mentioned above are focused on women. Lisa, a female VVOB staff member suggested the following:

The Strategic Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment could simply be called Strategic Plan for Gender Equality. The Municipal/Provincial Women and Children Consultative Committee (WCCC) and Commune/Sangkat Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) could be renamed to Municipal/Provincial Families Consultative Committee and Commune/Sangkat Committee for families. Finally, the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWa) should be called Ministry of Gender Equality.

Second, it is noteworthy that the improvements made thanks to national policies are strongly focused on equal access to education for boys and girls. Practical measures to improve safety in schools and on the way to school and actions to achieve gender parity are important, but should not stand alone. True gender equality goes beyond this, more focus on equal treatment of boys and girls in class and gender-responsive education is needed. Stinson (2017) confirms that "many education development policies have been largely donor-driven, with a focus on access, lacking address to the causes of the gender gap itself" (p. 31). Further, the author states that "access is still largely equated to parity. Practical implementations illustrate this through such things as drop out 'control' measures, girl commissions, and stating how many teachers/students are women and girls" (p. 54).

### ***Room for improvement***

Despite the creation of numerous policies, institution and trainings, according to the literature, there is still room for improvement when it comes to assuring gender equality in education. First and foremost, the Cambodian government should update the school curriculum to be gender-responsive. Velasco (2004) states

that “the current curriculum content and its implementing guideline can be described as gender blind” (p. 42). Stinson (2017) confirms there are only a few examples of curricula that are developed from a gendered analysis of society in Cambodian education, despite the national education policies clearly subscribing to international discourses of gender equality. The Cambodia National Council for Children (2011) states that although the Chbap Srey and Chbap Pros are no longer officially included in the school curriculum, the ethos of those codes remains embedded throughout Cambodian society and the implicit school curriculum. Further, Velasco (2004) found that the majority of textbook writers and reviewers in Cambodia are men and that most curriculum developers and writers of textbooks and teacher manuals do not have sufficient qualifications and training to undertake these responsibilities.

Second, despite the efforts of the MoEYS, the MoWA and numerous NGOs, many Cambodian teachers never received training on gender equality in education. Stinson (2017) found that teachers and school principals in rural areas received the least training. Further, she discovered that mainly school principals and sometimes deputy principals receive training, but that it is rare for (student) teachers to be included in training. Therefore, the success of the training is highly dependent on school principals. Stinson also found that most (deputy) principals in Cambodia are men. She states this is significant because gender equality is largely equated to a women’s issue in Cambodia, thus the transfer of knowledge from principals to (student) teachers is largely dependent on how much importance men find in ‘women’s issues’.

Third, there is a lack of counselling services for victims of violence in Cambodia, the government should aim to increase access to counselling for children who became the victim of violence. The Cambodia National Council for Children (2011) writes that:

Counselling is not a traditional response to trauma in Cambodia, and suffering calamity in silence has long been a survival mechanism for many Cambodians. The professions of psychologist, psychiatrist or counsellor are not formally established in Cambodia. There is no right to free counselling services for victims contained in current Cambodian legislation. (p. 40)

Fourth, although the Cambodian government took multiple measures to improve gender equality in education and reduce violence against children, the implementation of these laws could be improved. Booth (2014) states that the Cambodian government has enacted a number of gender equality promoting laws under international pressure but that “signing something into law is where it has stopped. In the hierarchical and male-dominated government, lawmakers have a history of referring to cultural norms as being a possible stumbling block. They occasionally pass a relevant law, but these lack enforcement” (p. 46). Samsaren, a male VVOB staff member, confirmed that “the government has a gender policy and wants to build knowledge on gender, they have a policy but it is often difficult to implement”. Phoung, a female VVOB staff member, agrees that “the government has a lot of plans and policies on everything, but the implementation is often not going well”. Thoroughly implementing laws requires funding, the Cambodian

budget spent on gender issues is not sufficient. Many school principals, especially in rural minority-populated areas, fail to implement gender mainstreaming due to a lack of resources (Booth, 2014; Stinson, 2017). The implementation of gender equality laws is not only hindered by a lack of resources, but also a lack of transparency.

Cambodia is rife with corruption which leads to even further inability to progress in gender mainstreaming. In 2013, Cambodia ranked at 160 out of 175 on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. Given Cambodia's very high corruption rating, it is not surprising that it is extremely difficult to accomplish goals and maintain high standards for a majority of the people, including in the educational sphere. (Booth, 2014, p. 47)

Fifth, there is a need for a bottom-up approach to address gender inequality in education. Booth (2014) states that the MoEYS has a strongly hierarchical top-down approach and that most solutions to improve education focus on working with the top level of the MoEYS. She finds this approach has been successful in “pressuring the Cambodian government to build schools, create laws regarding gender parity, hire more teachers, and initiate a small number of other programs” (p. 47) but that it does not seem to be working to improve gender equality or the education quality or to create a gender-sensitive curriculum. Luckily, the author believes there is hope for a bottom-up approach which involves NGOs, teachers, school leaders and the community, supported by international donors and development partners.



## 2.3 Context of the research: Battambang

The current study took place in Battambang, a province in the north-west of Cambodia, a country with fourteen million inhabitants situated in Southeast Asia. Battambang is a multicultural province with a tropical climate. With around one million inhabitants, it is the third most populous province in the country. Battambang province consists of fourteen districts, which are further divided into 96 communes. Battambang city is the capital district of Battambang



Figure 2: Geographical situation of Battambang province

province. Battambang city has about 200 000 inhabitants, making it the second most populous city in Cambodia, following the capital Phnom Penh.

Although Battambang is a large and highly populated province, it is totally different from the capital Phnom Penh. Whereas Phnom Penh is mainly a service society, Battambang has an agricultural economy. Outside Battambang city, most people in the province live in rural areas. Because of its fertile rice fields the province is often referred to as ‘the rice bowl of Cambodia’. Also, Battambang is known for growing the country’s most delicious oranges. Seventy five percent of the land surface consists of jungles and mountains, offering a lot of natural resources like timber, phosphate, limestone gems and salt. Although agriculture and mining are good business, the average income/head in Battambang is lower than in Phnom Penh (Angkor Focus, n.d.; Wikipedia, 2018).

According to Kolab, the director of the Provincial Department of Women’s Affairs (PDWA), each commune has one women’s representative who concerns herself with gender issues in the community. Furthermore, there are forty-one people working in the department of women’s affairs on the provincial and district levels. According to Channary, a staff member at the Provincial Office of Education (POE), Battambang province’s public schools include 334 kindergartens, 631 primary schools, 93 lower secondary schools and 25 high schools. In these 1083 schools there are 9190 people working in total, 4908 of which are women.

It is important to note that many children in Battambang are not raised by their parents. Because of the province’s location near to the Thai border, many inhabitants are working and living in Thailand. Most

parents who stay in Thailand to work leave their children under the care of grandparents or other relatives, because enrolling children in Thai schools is difficult for immigrant workers. As a result, many children in Battambang are living with relatives instead of parents, this may influence their school attendance and attainment. Furthermore, some youngsters that drop out of school go to work in Thailand themselves.

The qualitative research underlying this thesis was carried out in four schools in the Sangkae district. One primary and one secondary school were located in a very rural area of the district, far from Battambang city. The other primary and secondary school were located in a commune on the outskirts of Battambang city.

The quantitative research of this thesis took place in all schools that are targeted in the first phase of the TIGER project, including 11 primary and 9 lower secondary schools. All of these are teacher training practice schools, also called demonstration schools. This means that the schools work in close cooperation with a teacher training college because all student teachers have to do their traineeships in a demonstration school. This implies that the practice schools have more chances to develop and adopt modern teaching methods, since they receive more training and support than other schools. For practical reasons, the government selects only urban schools to become demonstration schools. Therefore, the quantitative research only took place in urban schools, sixteen in the Battambang city district and four in the Sangkae district. Figure 3 shows the schools' locations in and around Battambang city.



*Figure 3: Geographical situation of 20 TIGER target schools. The orange pins represent primary schools, the green pins are secondary schools.*

The specific context of the research implies that the results cannot be generalised to all schools in Cambodia. All TIGER schools are located in the urban area of Battambang, a highly populated city. Furthermore, because the target schools are demonstration schools it can be assumed they are more developed than other schools. Since the aim of the research is to provide a baseline for the TIGER project, this study can only draw a realistic picture for the TIGER target schools, not the average Cambodian school.

## 2.4 Violence against children

### 2.4.1 Definition

Although freedom from violence is a fundamental right of the child (United Nations, 1989), every year over one billion children (aged 2-17) experience some form of physical, sexual and/or emotional violence or neglect. In Asia, 64% of the children in this age group suffer violence, making it the continent with the highest number of children at risk (Hillis, Mercy, Amobi, & Kress, 2016, pp. 6–9). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence against children (VAC) as “all forms of violence against people under 18 years old, whether perpetrated by parents or other caregivers, peers, romantic partners, or strangers” (WHO, 2018). This definition considers six types of violence:

- **Maltreatment** includes physical, sexual and emotional violence and neglect of children by parents and other caregivers. It occurs most often at home but also in settings such as schools, where violent punishment is a common form of maltreatment.
- **Bullying** is defined as unwanted aggressive behaviour by another child or group of children who are neither siblings nor in a romantic relationship with the victim. It involves repeated physical, psychological or social harm. It often takes place in settings where children gather like schools and online, where it is referred to as cyber-bullying.
- **Youth violence** involves young adults aged 10–29 years, it occurs most often in community settings between acquaintances and strangers. It includes bullying and physical assault with or without weapons, and may involve gang violence.
- **Intimate partner violence** involves physical, sexual and emotional violence by an intimate partner or ex-partner. It commonly occurs against girls within early and/or forced marriages.
- **Sexual violence** refers to non-consensual (attempted) sexual contact and acts of a sexual nature not involving contact (such as voyeurism or sexual harassment), but also to acts of forced sexual trafficking and online exploitation.
- **Emotional or psychological violence** includes restricting a child’s movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment (WHO, 2018).

World Vision includes the above forms into their definition of violence against children as “all forms of physical, sexual and emotional violence, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, harm or abuse, including commercial sexual exploitation, trafficking, child labour and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation/cutting, child marriage and negative discipline” (World Vision Cambodia, 2017).

### **2.4.2 Impact**

Violence has lifelong impacts on children's health and well-being. Violence against children can (1) lead to severe injuries, due to physical fighting and assault; (2) result in death in the worst cases; (3) impair the physical development with lifelong consequences; (4) contribute to a wide range of chronic diseases as children grow older; (5) result in negative coping and health risk behaviours; (6) lead to unintended pregnancies, induced abortions, gynaecological problems, and sexually transmitted infections; and (7) impact opportunities in education and work, thereby affecting future generations (Tharp, Simon, & Saul, 2012; WHO, 2018). World Vision (2017) summarises that violence against children is a thief that robs children of their childhoods, happiness, dignity, human-rights and a future. Further, it costs trillions of dollars and slows economic growth. In Cambodia, the economic burden of violence against children (VAC) caused by health consequences and health risk behaviours is estimated at 168 million USD, the loss of productivity due to VAC is around 83.3 million USD (UNICEF Cambodia, 2016).

### **2.4.3 Risk factors**

A child's risk to experience violence can be increased by different factors such as gender, age, sexuality, disability, poverty, exposure to alcohol and drugs, poor parenting, family dysfunction, early or forced marriage, a social climate in which violence is normalised, inadequate policies and weak governance (Tharp et al., 2012; WHO, 2018). Many of these factors play a role in Cambodia. UNICEF Cambodia (2016) found that poor, female and young children are more likely to experience physical violence at home than rich, male and older children respectively. However, in school older boys experience more physical violence than young girls. Poverty is also a strong determinant for physical violence at school. When it comes to emotional violence, poor and disabled children living in rural areas are most at risk, both at home and in school. Moreover, alcohol consumption by the child's father increases the risks of the child being hurt or witnessing intimate partner violence between the parents, which is considered a form of emotional abuse. Both physical and emotional violence are more likely in families with larger numbers of children. Furthermore, parents who were victim of violence during their childhood are more likely to perpetrate violence against their own children. Last, well-educated mothers are less likely to neglect their children than low-educated mothers.

### **2.4.4 Prevention and response**

Tharp et al. (2012) state that "the field of violence prevention has come a long way and we can now say with confidence that violence can be prevented" and that there are multiple examples of programs that have been rigorously evaluated and shown to be effective in preventing violence against children. The authors found that preventing and responding to VAC requires systematically addressing risk and protective factors at the levels of the individual, relationship, community and society. It has been proven that reducing violence

against children is possible, the World Health Organisation (WHO) developed a set of seven evidence-based solutions called INSPIRE. Each letter of the word INSPIRE stands for one strategy, most of which have shown to have preventive effects across several types of violence, as well as benefits in areas like mental health, education and crime reduction. The strategies are:

- **Implementation and enforcement of laws and policies:** For example by banning violent discipline by parents and teachers and restricting access to alcohol and firearms.
- **Norms and values change:** For example by promoting positive discipline and positive parenting and not tolerating harmful social and gender roles.
- **Safe environments:** Identifying neighbourhood “hot spots” for violence and then addressing the local causes can create safe environments at home, school and the broader community.
- **Parent and caregiver support:** Organising training, counselling, peer-support and home-visits can support caregivers in several issues, such as alternatives to violent discipline.
- **Income and economic strengthening:** For example by giving scholarships to vulnerable children, this can reduce the need for withdrawing children from school, migrating and leaving children behind.
- **Response and support services:** Governments and NGOs should aim at providing effective emergency care and appropriate psychosocial support for children who experience violence.
- **Educating children:** Awareness raising campaigns and life skills training can teach children how to protect themselves and their peers from violence and can help in ensuring that children attend school.

The INSPIRE strategy set aims to help countries and communities achieve SDG targets 16.2 (End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children) and 5.2 (Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres). The inclusion of these two targets in the SDGs shows the world’s recognition of violence as a global development issue and illustrates the growing global movement to end violence against children (Hillis et al., 2018; WHO, 2018; World Vision Cambodia, 2017).

#### **2.4.5 Prevalence in Cambodia**

In 2013, the nationwide Cambodian Violence Against Children Survey (CVACS) showed that more than 50% of all children experience physical violence and 25% experience emotional violence. Furthermore, the study showed that at home the most likely perpetrator is the mother and outside the home the most likely perpetrators are teachers. This may be because at home children spend most time with their mother, because fathers often go out to work, and outside the home children spend a lot of their time with teachers (UNICEF Cambodia, 2016).

Apart from the 2013 survey, contemporary studies on violence against children in Cambodia are scarce. However, some NGOs are running projects to reduce VAC which involve a research component. World Vision Cambodia is one of the bigger NGOs working on violence against children in Cambodia. World Vision launched a campaign called “It Takes a World to End Violence Against Children”. This campaign currently targets 400 schools in 10 provinces (including Battambang) and started with a baseline survey in 2017, involving 1015 children and 500 adults. The main finding of this survey was that there is a wide and strong acceptance of physical and psychological violence, common in all layers of society, across genders and regardless of age. For example, it is very common for children to hit or push each other while playing. Second, the World Vision study found that many people (children and adults) find it difficult to distinguish between discipline and violence because there are prevailing cultural norms that endorse physical punishment as an acceptable form of discipline. People in positions of authority are generally considered to have the right to use violence, as long as the motive is to educate or provide moral/behavioural instruction to a child. Physical punishment and emotional violence are widely believed to be effective ways to promote learning and ‘right’ behaviour. Many children in the World Vision study agreed that physical punishment helped them to learn faster and remember better. One of the most common forms of physical punishment used by teachers is hitting children with a bamboo stick on their bottom, shoulders or the palm of their hands. During an interview for the current study, the director of the education department at the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MoWa) confirmed that physical violence is part of the traditional Cambodian way of raising children. Also, the current generation of parents and grandparents were children during the Khmer Rouge regime and suffered a great deal of violence during their young life, leaving them with no good examples on how to discipline children (Cambodia National Council for Children, 2011). Plan Cambodia (2012) adds that “corporal punishment has a complex social, cultural and historical embedding in Cambodian society” (p. 4). In the old days, monks used violent methods of education in the pagoda schools. Parents encouraged the practice of corporal punishment through the saying “I leave you my child to educate, just keep us his eyes and bones”. This saying also reflects the strong sense of superiority of adults over children, the relationship between teacher and student is often highly authoritarian (Plan Cambodia, 2012). Although physical punishment is considered an acceptable form of discipline in Cambodia, World Vision’s survey showed that there is one clear boundary on what is considered to be acceptable discipline: only when there is blood or broken bones involved, people consider the disciplinary measures to be too violent and unacceptable. UNICEF Cambodia (2016) confirms that “lack of understanding about the potentially serious consequences of physical punishment appears to be widespread amongst Cambodian parents: only violence resulting in serious injury is deemed inappropriate” (p. 7).

Plan Cambodia runs a project on reducing corporal punishment in schools, the programme started with a baseline study in 18 schools in 2012. In the first three grades of primary school, 83% of children claimed

having experienced corporal punishment in school (85.7% of boys, 80% of girls). The research showed that the top three corporal punishments are: (1) beating a child (29.8%), mostly with stick, hand or ruler; (2) make a child run rounds (17%); and (3) pinching, twisting ears, pulling hairs or making a child stand on one foot (16.4%). The findings also revealed that a higher proportion of female teachers (12.1%) than male teachers (10.6%) punish students in school. However, male teachers use more corporal punishments like beating with a stick, while female teachers use more coercive labour as punishment. When it comes to mental punishment, male teachers are much more practicing insult, humiliation and mockery than the female teachers, while female teachers threaten children with various forms of punishment. The research by Plan also showed some teachers' motives to abstain from using corporal punishment. Over 35% of teachers named fear of violation of the education law and child rights as the main motive, while only 12% recognise that there is no need to use corporal punishment because there are alternative pedagogical methods. Finally, the study by Plan Cambodia showed that lack of access to information on child rights hampers any engagement of teachers and school management to better support the enforcement of child rights in their schools (Plan Cambodia, 2012).

UNICEF Cambodia has a project to train teachers to adopt positive discipline measures. Aika, a child protection officer at UNICEF, explained during an interview that the project started with a baseline study in 2015. This study involved 24 principals, 150 teachers and 1200 students in 12 intervention schools and 12 control schools, spread over three provinces. The research showed that violent punishment is often caused by a lack of anger management skills. When children misbehave, teachers feel frustrated and do not know how to handle these feelings in a soft way, so they respond in a violent way. Teachers generally perceive boys as being naughtier than girls, this may explain why boys are more likely to experience violence committed by school staff members than girls. The survey also showed that adults believe female teachers use more violent disciplinary measures than male teachers, while children claim to experience more violent discipline carried out by male teachers. When UNICEF's baseline study was completed, the teachers in the intervention schools received in-service training on positive discipline, conducted by trainers of UNICEF and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). After the intervention, an end-line study was administered which showed that the intervention was effective. Therefore, the MoEYS decided to upscale the project to 800 schools by the end of 2018. The end-line study also showed that the in-service training had more impact on female than male teachers, this may be related to the fact that male teachers are more likely to use violent discipline.

In addition to the abovementioned baseline study conducted in 10 provinces, World Vision Cambodia also conducted a more detailed study on violence against children in Preah Vihear province in the context of a regional project, "Ending Violence Against Children in the Greater Mekong Sub-region Project (EVAC-GMS)". That study involved 380 adults and 364 children. In the research, one in three children reported

having experienced some form of physical violence in the past 12 months, with 38.5% of boys and 28.7% of girls. 87.9% of adults said they had used physical discipline one time or more in the last year. According to children, emotional violence is more common than physical violence, 41.2% of children reported being shouted at in the past 12 months and 56.3% had been sworn at or called names. The research clearly showed that children are more likely to experience violence from people they know than from strangers: 78.0% of the children who had experienced violence named the father, mother, or a relative as the perpetrators. Furthermore, the most vulnerable children in the study experienced significantly more violence and felt less safe in their homes and communities than other children. World Vision found that there is a tight association between poverty and violence and that poverty can be extremely stressful, leaving the poor at the end of their ropes, prone to binge drinking and violent outbursts. Most adults in the study perceived domestic violence to be the result of alcohol use. They typically saw the wife as the primary victim and children as caught in the middle of the fight between their parents, as collateral damage. Finally, World Vision found that child protection law enforcement is weak and coordination between the national, provincial and district levels is low. Furthermore, most people believe communities are safe for children and when exceptional cases happen, civilians should not become involved, handling with violence is a matter for local authorities like police. Both adults and children do not believe NGOs, teachers and health workers have an important role to play in child protection (World Vision Cambodia, 2018). The Cambodia National Council for Children (2011) adds that decades of civil war and internal conflict left Cambodia with few trained judges, lawyers and social workers, leaving the country ill-equipped to respond to the needs of children who come into contact with the law as victims, witnesses or offenders. Services are often provided by NGOs, which have been vital to Cambodia's regeneration but these services cannot fully meet the actual needs. UNICEF Cambodia (2016) adds that "lack of accountability for violence perpetration, lack of awareness about relevant laws amongst victims and perpetrators, and low levels of reporting perpetuate physical violence against children in Cambodia" (p. 8).



## **2.5 Gender issues**

### **2.5.1 Defining gender**

The terms ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ are closely related, yet they are not synonyms. The word ‘sex’ is used to refer to natural biological differences between men and women. The term ‘gender’ is used in connection to the attitudes and behaviour of men and women and refers to the cultural, socially-constructed differences between them. It is related to the way a society encourages and teaches the two sexes to behave in different ways through socialisation, so it includes the different expectations that society and individuals themselves hold with regard to the appropriate behaviours of men and women. Viewing gender as a socially-constructed phenomenon implies that gender, contrary to sex, is not the same all over the world. It varies between and within societies and it can change over time. Furthermore, whereas it is difficult to change one’s biological sex, it is easier to change one’s gender identity. Whereas sex is a binary distinction of being either female or male, gender can be placed on a spectrum of identities from female to male, including those associating themselves as transgender, or gender non-conforming. One’s gender identity refers to the internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to one’s biological sex (Cambodian Center for Human Rights, 2015; Stinson, 2017; University of Mauritius, n.d.-b).

### **2.5.2 Gender equality**

Gender equality refers to equal access for men and women to social goods, services and resources. It implies equal opportunities for all people to realise their human rights in all spheres of life, independent of one’s sex and gender identity. Although women are more likely to be disadvantaged and marginalised, it is important to note that men can be negatively impacted by gender inequality as well. Therefore, gender equality is the concern of all and changes must be brought about for people on the whole spectrum of gender identities (Stinson, 2017; University of Mauritius, n.d.-a).

Gender equality, as defined above, does not automatically result in equal outcomes for women and men. Being given the same opportunities in life is not sufficient to bring about true equality, it is merely the first step. The second step is to accommodate for the differences in needs and experiences of (people who identify as) men and women. This is where gender equity comes into play. Gender equity refers to equal treatment of all people, so that they have the means to benefit from their equality of opportunities and access. It takes into consideration the different life experiences and needs of men and women and compensates for women's historical and social disadvantages. Gender equity thus levels the playing field between men and women. Therefore, we can say that equity is essential to achieve true equality (Payne & Doyal, 2010; University of Mauritius, n.d.-a).

Another important term often used in relation to gender equality in education is ‘gender parity’. Gender parity in education refers to equal numbers of boys and girls in school. UNESCO’s Gender Parity Index

(GPI) is a socioeconomic index to measure the relative access to education of boys and girls. In its simplest form, it is calculated as the ratio of female-to-male children in each stage of education (Wikipedia, 2017). Thus, the GPI actually studies the ratio of both sexes, not of the different genders on the spectrum. All over the world, gender parity in education has improved significantly since the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, by 2015 only 69% of countries were projected to achieve gender parity in access at the primary level and 48% at the secondary level (UNESCO, 2015a).

While gender parity is useful as a measurement of progress, it does not adequately reflect true gender equality. The female-to-male ratio of enrollment in school does not reveal unequal power relations and treatment in school. The nature of education for boys and girls, or children who identify as third gender, may still be different. Equality is a more ambitious goal than parity: it means that all children have equal opportunity to enjoy high quality education, are offered the teaching methods and curricula unaffected by gender bias, achieve at equal levels and enjoy equal benefits from education (Harber, 2014; UNESCO, 2015a).

Although access to education improved all around the globe in recent years and gender parity was achieved in some countries, there is still a long way to go in achieving worldwide gender equality in education. Many factors influence the inequality between boys and girls in schools.

Although boys are sometimes disadvantaged too, most inequalities are at the expense of girls. Parental attitudes are a main barrier keeping girls out of school, many parents find education a poor investment of time and money for girls. Furthermore, in rural areas there is often a lack of schools within reasonable travelling distance. Although this hinders both boys and girls from being educated, the dangers on the way to school are often perceived to be higher for girls, thus affecting girls' access to education more. Also, the danger of violence in school can keep children away from school. The effect of gender-based violence in school cannot be underestimated. Even when boys and girls have equal access to education, in many countries girls have a greater inclination to drop out. Absence of private toilets in schools, lack of access to sanitary pads, hygiene-related stigma when girls begin menstruating, child marriage, early pregnancy and heavy household workloads are major reasons for girls to drop out. All of the above factors are influenced by a child's socio-economic status since it has been proven that poverty widens gender gaps (Harber, 2014; UNESCO, 2015a).

Gender inequality in education often mirrors prevailing gender roles and discrimination in the broader society. Therefore, policies aimed at overcoming inequality in education are most effective when they are aligned with policies in other departments like health and justice. Policies should aim at creating gender-responsive school environments, so that all children receive the physical and mental support they need in school, independent of their sex and gender identity. Only in this way true gender equality in education, that goes beyond mere parity, can be achieved (UNESCO, 2015a; VVOB, 2017b).

### **2.5.3 School-related gender-based violence**

There are many definitions of gender-based violence (GBV), but all agree on the fact that it includes harmful behaviour, both physical and psychological, directed at people because of their gender and/or affecting a certain gender disproportionately. GBV is most often directed to women, but it is not limited to violence against women. Some examples of GBV acts are sexual assault; female genital mutilation; honour killings; trafficking and forced prostitution; intimate partner violence; intimidation and discrimination at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; and prenatal sex-selection or infanticide in favour of a particular gender (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottmoeller, 2002; Renzetti, 2005; Walby, Towers, & Francis, 2014).

School-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) involves all forms of GBV occurring in school-related contexts. It may be inflicted by pupils, teachers or other members of the educational community and can occur on the school grounds; on the way to school; during extracurricular activities; or through the widespread use of ICT (cyber-bullying, sexual harassment via mobile phones and so forth). SRGBV may be of a physical, sexual or psychological nature and may involve intimidation, punishment, corporal punishment, bullying, humiliation, degrading treatment, harassment and sexual abuse and exploitation. Although both boys and girls can be targets, girls are the most exposed, particularly to sexual violence. Boys are most often subject to severe corporal punishment and gang violence. School-related gender-based violence may have serious long-term consequences, such as: weakened self-esteem, lowered physical and mental health, unintended pregnancy, poor academic performance, absenteeism and dropout. These consequences make SRGBV a major obstacle in achieving education for all. SRGBV particularly affects children in vulnerable circumstances, such as conflict, migration, refugee camps, extreme poverty and disability and children from ethnic minorities (Harber, 2014; UNESCO, 2015b).

While SRGBV remains largely invisible and unpunished, it is estimated that 246 million pupils may be subject to harassment or attack either on the way to school or within the school each year, and this number is rising alarmingly. SRGBV is an expression of gender-based stereotypes and gender inequalities in the broader society. Therefore it is often tolerated and sustained by the very institutions that are supposed to fight against it, leaving it largely unreported and unpunished because of victims' fear of being stigmatized (UNESCO, 2015a, 2015b).

### **2.5.4 The preventive role of education**

GBV holds many women from fully participating in society. In turn, these women are more vulnerable to gender-based victimisation. In order to break this cycle, empowerment of women is pivotal (The Lancet, 2012). According to Simister (2013), education can be a strong tool to empower women, since it exposes women to non-traditional role models and ideas, and because it leads to greater human capital and potential for better employment. So more educated women are less likely to become victims of GBV. Harber (1997)

adds that education “increases a woman's ability to participate in society, to improve her quality of life and her standard of living” (p. 42).

In this perspective, education for girls is important for development. Achieving gender equality in education has immense personal and social benefits. It improves livelihoods and people’s health and enhances civic responsibility. It is an affordable investment with high pay-offs. The United Nations considers gender equality as an important indicator of development. Therefore, the gender inequality index is part of the Human Development Index (HDI) (Harber, 2014). The relation between education, gender equality and development is in line with the human rights-based approach to development, as explained in chapter 3 of this thesis.

Achieving gender equality in education improves a country’s overall development. But education can also aid in attaining gender equality in the society as a whole. During an interview, the director of the education department at the Cambodian Ministry of Women’s Affairs stated that “schools can and should provide good role models, teaching children about gender equality”. VVOB (2017b) (VVOB, 2017b)(VVOB, 2017b)(VVOB, 2017b)(VVOB, 2017b)(VVOB, 2017b)(VVOB, 2017b)believes young children can develop a gender-sensitive attitude if their education is gender-responsive and gender stereotypes are approached critically in class.

Gender-responsive education can improve a society’s gender equality and reduce gender-based violence. Storer, Casey, Carlson, Edleson and Tolman (2016) state that school-based prevention activities with children and youth are a good strategy to reduce GBV. The authors stress that it is important to engage boys and men in the prevention of GBV. Keller et al. (2017) agree on this: “GBV needs to be addressed simultaneously with boys, targeting the knowledge, attitudes, and social norms that contribute to sexual violence” (p. 537).

Although education can help prevent GBV, schools can also set a bad example. Teachers are role models, for better or for worse. Traditional gender roles can be transmitted from teacher to student (Harber, 2014). Further, a school’s actions can have strong influences within the community. If, for example, a rape victim is excluded from school because of honour issues, the school reinforces the existing taboo within the broader community. This allows the victim to be further stigmatised and the perpetrator to go unpunished.

Training for teachers and principals can aid schools in setting good, rather than bad, examples so gender equality can be improved and SRGBV can be reduced. UNESCO (2015b) states that a detailed understanding of gender-based violence, and the stereotypes and structural inequalities on which it is based, is essential to enabling educational institutions to prevent such acts, protect children and help change attitudes.

## **2.6 Gender and education in Cambodia**

### **2.6.1 Gender roles**

Stinson (2017) explains that gender roles are “sets of socio-cultural norms that shape gender identities which are negotiated by both men and women” (p. 10). Haque (2013) adds that masculinity and femininity refer to sets of traits or patterns of behaviour that in a given society are considered typical of men and women respectively. In Cambodia, the traditional gender roles are written down in two books. The Chbap Srey describes how women should behave, the Chbap Pros lists typical masculine traits and behaviours. “The Chbap Srey and Chbap Pros are traditional codes of conduct that, in regards to gender, encourage a ‘good man’ to be courageous, responsible, and hardworking, and for a ‘good woman’ to be caring, reserved, and quiet” (Stinson, 2017, p. 4). In the Chbaps, specific qualities that women and men should have are outlined as rules. These rule books used to be part of the official public school curriculum. Although nowadays the Chbaps are no longer included in the curriculum, some teachers still integrate them into their classes. The Chbap guidelines conceptualize men as strong as opposed to women who are considered weak. Traditionally in Cambodia, men should study and work hard so they can provide for their family, while women should stay home to take care of the household and look after the children. Many people still consider strong leadership to be a male trait, this is why most school principals are men. Women who wish to take up leading roles experience a strong glass ceiling (Stinson, 2017).

### **2.6.2 Perceived meaning of the word gender**

During the interviews it became clear that most people do not know there is a difference between sex and gender. Only Phoung, a female VVOB staff member, mentioned that “some people in Cambodia confuse sex and gender. Sex is something biological, referring to men and women. Gender goes beyond that, it also refers to stereotypes”. All other interviewees were not able to explain the difference between gender and sex.

Further, many Cambodians confuse gender with gender issues. Veasna, a staff member of Gender And Development Cambodia (GADC), explained that “many people in Cambodia think gender refers to women’s rights or to an equal number of girls and boys in school and men and women at work”. The issues most commonly referred to during the interviews with teachers and principals were unequal opportunities for men and women and traditional gender roles defined in the Chbap Srey and Chbap Pros.

In Cambodia, gender issues are perceived to be the same as women’s issues, there is no focus on the gender-related issues men encounter. When asked about the meaning of the word gender, many interviewees said it means women should get the same rights and opportunities as men. Rangsei, a law school graduate with experience in gender research, said that “in Cambodia people believe gender refers to women having rights, they forget men have rights as well”. The strong focus on women’s issues became apparent in several policy

measures taken in Cambodia: 60% of scholarships for poor children are reserved for girls; all schools should have a girls committee, not a boys committee; all principals should be able to report the number of girls in school at any moment, not the number of boys; the ministry concerned with gender equality is called the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA); and all ministries and governmental organisations have gender focal points, the vast majority of these focal points are women. Although it is definitely true that most gender inequalities in Cambodia are at the expense of women, the issues men encounter are strongly overlooked. Further, there should also be more focus on equal rights and opportunities for people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT). Most Cambodians believe that being gay and being transgender are one and the same thing, they do not know the difference between the spectra of sexuality and gender identities. Everybody who behaves slightly different from traditional gender norms is referred to as gay, and often excluded from regular societal life (Stinson, 2017).

### **2.6.3 Enrolment of boys and girls in school**

In the past, a large enrolment gap between boys and girls existed. Multiple key informants explained during interviews that girls used to be kept at home because of traditional gender roles, education was considered to be unnecessary for girls since they were supposed to become housewives. Therefore, if parents could not afford to let all of their children go to school, they would prioritise boys' education over that of girls, especially in the later stages of education. Also, girls would be kept at home because the way to school was long and unsafe. Further, girls dropped out of school more than boys because of lacking sanitary provisions in schools, early marriage and pregnancy, or the financial need to start working at an early age, often in garment factories.

In recent years, girls started to close the enrolment gap. At first there was only equal enrolment in the early years of primary school. In later stages of education, girls would still drop out more than boys because of the obstacles mentioned above. Although girls are now no longer dropping out more than boys, many people believe this dropout gap still exists today. Phirun, a male VVOB staff member, said that "school enrolment is lower for girls than boys, especially for older girls. This can be because parents keep girls home to work, but also because of the lacking sanitary provisions in school or unsafe roads to school". However, the gender focal person at the Provincial Office of Education (POE) in Battambang province stated that during the centralised exams in July 2017, 54% of the grade 9 examinees and 55% of the grade 12 examinees were girls. Knowing that the Cambodian population consists for 52,5% of women this means that girls have closed the gap in primary and secondary education and are on the way to overtake boys.

Although girls have closed the enrolment gap in primary and secondary education, students' choice of educational tracks is still highly gender stereotyped. In higher secondary education pupils can choose some elective subjects. Veasna, a GADC staff member, said that "when it comes to elective subjects boys study

technical subjects like carpeting, while girls learn to sew and cook. Teachers and children make choices like this because of gender stereotypes. If children choose the ‘wrong’ subject they will get bullied”. Phoung, a female VVOB staff member, added that:

There are not so many girls taking STEM subjects in school and studying science later on, the gender stereotype says that scientist is a men’s job that girls cannot do. Cambodian girls are too afraid to study sciences. We need more role models for girls in schools, like female mathematics and science teachers. In kindergarten and primary school there are plenty of female teachers, but the higher the teaching status, the less women we see. In secondary school there are very few female teachers, especially in STEM subjects. The school management also consists mainly of men. We need more women doing high status jobs.

Also in higher education the gender stereotypes are apparent, almost no girls study architecture and almost no boys train to be a nursery school teacher. Samsaren, a male VVOB staff member, explained that boys are expected to do studies that prepare them for ‘high status’ jobs like management, marketing and engineering. Kannitha, a staff member of KAPE, added that “in STEM programmes in university there are only 14% girls. Boys want to be engineers, math teachers, doctors and architect, but girls think they cannot do that”.

#### **2.6.4 Performance of boys and girls in school**

Principals, teachers, children and key informants stated during the interviews that girls generally perform better in school than boys. The vast majority of the interviewed teachers stated that girls work harder in class than boys because boys are more easily distracted than girls. Veasna, a male GADC staff member, explained that “girls perform higher than boys because they are more punctual, come on time and study harder than boys”. Vireak, a journalist who did a lot of research on gender in Cambodia, added that “boys can go out more than girls and have hobbies while girls can only go out to go to school. Boys have more distractions in life, keeping them from their school work. Girls focus more on their education”. Phoung, a female VVOB staff member concluded that:

Girls perform better than boys in all grades and all subjects. There are national assessments on mathematics, physics and Khmer literature in grades 3, 6, 9 to test the quality of education. There are also transition exams at the end of each stage of education (grades 6, 9 and 13). Both the exams and assessments show that girls perform higher.

Although in the past Cambodian education was strongly male-oriented, girls are overtaking boys at the moment. This is a worldwide trend, in many countries positive discrimination in favour of girls has led to girls overtaking boys. Also, the fact that many contemporary educational systems are girl-oriented, meaning they fit girls’ learning style better than boys’, results in boys struggling more than girls.

### **2.6.5 Equal opportunities in class for boys and girls**

No indications were found that the average Cambodian teacher consciously gives a preferential treatment to either boys or girls. However, during the interviews it became clear that due to a general lack of class management skills, many teachers feel like they cannot give equal attention to all children in class, especially since there are often fifty pupils in one group. Therefore, teachers often choose to give their attention to the high achieving students and to neglect the low achieving students, who they consider to be 'lost cases'. As noted above, the highest achieving students in class are almost always girls. Thus, since teachers give more attention to the students who perform best and this group consists mainly of girls, an indirect gender bias exists and boys and girls are often treated differently in class. Phirun, a male VVOB staff member confirmed that "some teachers are biased towards high performing students, often these are girls, so there is an indirect gender bias". Rangsei, a female law school graduate who did a lot of research on gender in Cambodia, added that "teachers give more opportunities to high achieving students. In most classes girls perform better than boys. Teachers also think that girls have a nicer character than boys. So teachers give more opportunities to girls because of their achievement and character". This all results in teachers giving more chances to girls to answer questions in class or make an exercise on the board. Boys are generally considered to be naughtier than girls and may be reprimanded more often.

Currently, the awareness about equal treatment of boys and girls in class is on the rise in Cambodia. The government created guidelines that aim to eliminate the gender boundary in class. As Else-Quest and Peterca (2015) point out, the advantages of mixed-sex schooling over single-sex schooling are the subject of contentious debate within academic literature, there are as many proponents as opponents. Supporters of mixed-sex schooling claim that stimulating interaction between boys and girls at school-age improves gender equality in the society at large. The Cambodian MoEYS chooses to align its policies with the literature provided by these advocates. During the semi-structured interviews for the current thesis research, several teachers explained that they should now make sure boys and girls are not seated on opposite sides of the classroom but according to a 'mixed seating schedule'. Further, group assignments should be carried out in mixed groups and all elective subjects should be open for both boys and girls to take. However, not all teachers are implementing these policies yet.

Although teachers do not actively choose to give preferential treatment to either boys or girls, and awareness about equal opportunities in class for boys and girls is on the rise, the roles children take up in class are still strongly gender stereotyped. Veasna, a male GADC staff member, explained that during the class monitor elections there are often more male candidates, since class monitor is considered to be a job which requires strong leadership skills, a trait commonly attributed to boys. Also during group activities it can often be observed that boys take a leading role while girls are responsible for taking notes and creating the assignment report. Even when boys and girls are forced to interact, traditional gender roles sometimes still hinder them



from talking to each other openly. Gender stereotypes keep boys and girls apart, from a very young age they learned not to talk to each other too much, leaving them shy to interact freely. This also explains why boys and girls are rarely observed playing together on the playground. The games children play are highly gender stereotyped, while boys often play sports like football and volleyball, girls often do more ‘soft’ activities like handclapping games and hopscotch.

Teachers have a strong influence on gender issues occurring in schools. Stinson (2017) states that “teacher attitudes and beliefs are implicitly connected to goals of gender equality” (p. 30) and that the hidden curriculum can reinforce traditional gender roles. However, teachers can also set positive examples, treat both genders equally and stimulate boys and girls to interact with each other so they learn to respect the opposite sex. Therefore, pre- and in-service training on gender equality is highly important in Cambodia.

#### **2.6.6 Gender neutral learning materials**

All textbooks in Cambodia are created and provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS). Although the books currently in use are more gender neutral than the previous batch, still many gender stereotypes remain in the official learning materials used in public education. Phoung, a female staff member of VVOB, stated that “in the textbooks there are a lot of gender-stereotyped pictures, like a lady that is cooking and a man doing income-generating activities. We really need gender sensitive textbooks and teaching materials that are interesting to both boys and girls”. However, many teachers do not realise the learning materials they use are not gender sensitive. Kim, a World Vision staff member, explained how her organisation did a survey with teachers and found that the majority of teachers believe the textbooks are perfect. They suppose the books must be good in all aspects, since they were developed by the MoEYS. Of course, even for materials developed by the MoEYS there is room for improvement. Sopheap, a male VVOB staff member, said:

The ministry has a plan to renew the textbooks so there will be more focus on practical and student-centred learning and on teaching children both hard and soft skills. The creation of these new books would be a good opportunity to make the learning materials more gender sensitive, but I don’t know if the ministry is planning on taking this opportunity.

#### **2.6.7 School-related gender-based violence**

SRGBV is not a well-known concept in Cambodia. Only some of the interviewees, mainly researchers and staff members of NGOs and government institutions working on gender equality in education, knew what school-related gender-based violence means. SRGBV has many faces, different organisations often focus on different forms of GBV happening in schools. The TIGER project puts its focus on three specific forms; gender-related bullying, corporal punishment and sexual violence.

### ***Gender-related bullying***

UNICEF Cambodia (2016) defines bullying as a distinct form of violence which may include elements of physical and emotional violence. It is a unique sub-category of aggression, which is characterized by intentionality, repetition and an imbalance of power. This means a person is being bullied when he or she is repeatedly exposed to intentional negative actions on the part of one or more other persons.

Bullying has many faces, Cambodian children who are bullied experience all sorts of negative actions. The most common types of bullying include:

- **Verbal harassment:** children who make fun of each other, call each other bad names or curse at one another.
- **Physical harassment:** children often hit or push each other or pull on each other's hair and ears.
- **Exclusion:** bullies can convince other children to exclude a certain child from social activities, in this case children often also gossip about the child in question.
- **Taking personal items:** sometimes children who are bullied have their personal things taken away from them, these items may then be temporarily hid from them or in the worst case stolen or destroyed.
- **Cyberbullying:** when bullying not only happens in school but extends to social media it can be called cyberbullying. Harmful behaviours in this case include posting rumours, threats, sexual remarks, a victim's personal information or hate speech.

Of course, not all bullying happening in schools can be regarded as SRGBV. A girl who bullies another girl because she is overweight or wears glasses is not an example of gender-related bullying. Boys who laugh about girls, take things from them and call them weak are inflicting GBV because they show harmful behaviour directed at the girls because of their gender, based on the gender stereotype that boys are stronger than girls.

Further, bullying of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students because of their sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) can also be regarded as SRGBV. The Cambodian Center for Human Rights (2015) found in their study on LGBT bullying in Cambodia that LGBT children regularly face serious problems with bullying because of their SOGI. The study provides evidence that SOGI-related bullying is more prevalent inside the school environment than outside of it, thus Cambodian schools are failing in their duty to provide a safe space for LGBT students and may even be contributing to the bullying students face. In the study, the majority (68%) of LGBT students were bullied by male students. Only 14% were bullied mainly by female students. It is worrisome that more children were bullied by teachers (17%) and police members (21%), meaning that schools and state entities themselves are responsible for SOGI-related bullying. This type of bullying happening to students during the most vulnerable and formative period of

their lives has long term effects on the lives of LGBT people in Cambodia. Openly identifying as LGBT remains a taboo in Cambodia. In order to prevent being bullied and socially excluded, many people never come out of the closet. In the survey linked to this research, both teachers and students were asked to identify their gender, choosing from male, female and third gender. None of the 223 teachers identified as third gender and out of 579 students only two boys and one girl identified as third gender, the 576 other children's gender identity aligned with their biological sex. The low number of respondents identifying openly as third gender illustrates the taboo that exists around being LGBT in Cambodia.

Although bullying happens mainly amongst students, sometimes teachers bully children too. Especially verbal harassment towards children is highly prevalent amongst teachers. Several interviewees explained that teachers verbally harass or laugh about children who do not meet their expectations. For example, boys are expected to be better in STEM subjects than girls. Two interviewed boys said that their teacher shouts at them that they are so bad at mathematics, they must be girls.

### ***Corporal punishment***

As explained in chapter 2.4.5 on violence against children, hitting children with a stick is a commonly used traditional disciplinary method in Cambodia. Also other forms of corporal punishment like pinching, slapping, twisting ears and forcing a child to hit its knuckles on the table are common. All these forms are transmitted from one generation to the next.

The author of this thesis observed that Cambodian children are not only punished when they misbehave, but also for giving wrong answers in class or making mistakes in their homework. This leaves many children scared to make mistakes and shy to cooperate in class, hindering them to learn. Also, children are not only punished by teachers. Several interviewed children explained that when a teacher needs to leave the classroom he/she leaves the class monitor in charge of keeping order in the classroom. This elected student then has the authority to discipline other children. Some interviewed children complained that their class monitor uses even harsher disciplinary methods than their teacher.

During several interviews with teachers it became clear there is a perceived difference in corporal punishment between urban and rural areas. The general idea is that urban schools apply more modern teaching methods than rural schools. Teachers in urban schools have more access to information regarding contemporary didactical methods. They believe that rural schools generally use more backwards methods, thus more traditional disciplinary measures, including corporal punishment. However, thorough research on this perceived difference is missing.

Not all corporal punishment is gender-related. However, in Cambodia male teachers use more harsh disciplinary measures than females and boys are punished more often and stronger than girls (Plan

Cambodia, 2012; UNICEF Cambodia, 2018). Therefore, it is important to include corporal punishment in studies on SRGBV in Cambodia.

### ***Sexual violence***

School-related sexual violence has many faces. Students can face verbal sexual harassment, be threatened with sexual assault by other students, touched against their will, offered higher marks by teachers in return for sexual favours, face sexual exploitation, or raped in or on the way to school. The threat of sexual violence is a reason for many children worldwide, mainly girls, to be kept out of school, drop out of school, or not participate fully in school (Harber, 2014).

Education international (2015) found that 10% of adolescent girls in low and middle income countries experience forced sexual intercourse or other sexual acts. UNICEF's Cambodian Violence Against Children Survey (CVACS) showed that "sexual violence affects around 5.5% of Cambodian children aged 13-17" (UNICEF Cambodia, 2016, p. 10). This self-reported prevalence lies significantly lower than the average prevalence for low and middle income countries. Due to the strong cultural stigma associated with sexual violence in Cambodia, these prevalence statistics may underestimate the true extent of sexual violence against Cambodian children.

In Cambodia, people generally believe all victims of sexual violence are female and all perpetrators are male. Although it is probably true that most sexual violence occurs at the expense of girls, male victims should not be forgotten.

UNICEF Cambodia (2016) looked into the determinants of sexual violence and found several factors that contribute to sexual violence in Cambodia:

- Discriminatory gender norms are the main underlying drivers of both perpetration of, and impunity for, sexual violence in Cambodia.
- Violent masculinities amongst some groups of male youths in Cambodia in which alcohol and drug use and sexual violence perpetration are regarded as forms of entertainment and socialisation and expressions of masculine dominance.
- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are at increased risk of becoming both victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse.
- Childhood victimisation is an important determinant of sexual violence perpetration later in life.
- People with a disability have a higher risk of being exposed to sexual abuse.
- Many Cambodians believe the increased availability of pornography is a facilitative factor for sexual violence, because it normalises violent and abusive sexual scripts. However, several studies point out that sexual abuse existed well before the widespread introduction of pornography in

Cambodia. People may perceive sexual violence to be increasing, but this is probably due to the fact that it is more reported nowadays than in the past.

- Impunity for perpetrators acts as an underlying driver of sexual violence in Cambodia. There is a lack of effective investigation and corruption in law enforcement is widespread. The police is often subject to bribery, allowing perpetrators to walk free. Further, there is a tendency to settle sexual violence cases outside of court through the payment of compensation to the victim's family. Also, many Cambodians believe that a rape case can be "solved" by the rapist marrying the victim. Widespread impunity reinforces the idea that sexual violence is acceptable and 'normal', leaving perpetrators of sexual violence free to commit further abuse.

### 3. Theoretical framework

#### 3.1 Relations between education, development and human rights

This thesis uses a human rights-based approach to development (HRBAD) to study gender issues in Cambodian education. As mentioned in the background chapters of this thesis, education, development and human rights are inextricably linked. They are like three interdependent components influencing each other, when one is strengthened the other two could improve as well.

Figure 4 shows the three relations between the components:

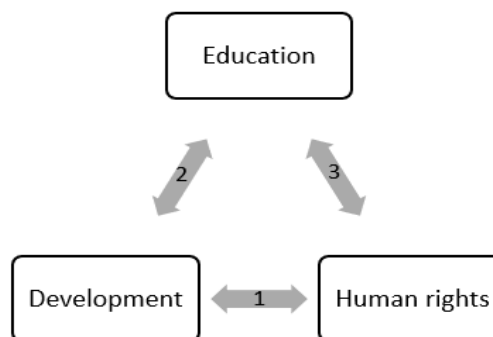


Figure 4: Independent relations between education, development and human rights

(1) First of all, development and human rights are interrelated. On the one hand, development can create the conditions under which human rights can be realised. Hamm (2001) states that the “preconditions of the realization of human rights are adequate political and socio-economic conditions, implying that the relationship between human rights and development is beyond question” (p. 1008). Amartya Sen theorises:

The purpose of development is to improve human lives by expanding the range of things that a person can be and do, such as being healthy and well nourished, knowledgeable and an active citizen. So, development is about removing obstacles to what a person values and can do in life, obstacles such as illiteracy, bad health, lack of access to resources or lack of civil and political freedoms. (as cited in Harber, 1997, p. 87)

On the other hand, the achievement of human rights can be an objective of development, using human rights treaties as a guideline in the development process. This human-rights based approach to development (HRBAD) starts from the idea that “the logic of human rights in development is inescapable” (Malone & Belshaw, 2003, p. 78) and will be explained in further detail below.

(2) Second, improving education advances the overall development of a country and vice versa. “Education is both a goal of development and a means to its achievement” (Harber, 2014, p. 42). UNESCO (2015b) states that “education plays a fundamental role in human, social and economic development” (Add p1). Improved education and development can have positive effects on a country’s health care, work conditions, democracy, sustainability and so on. Education can provide people with the skills they need to help themselves out of poverty. In many low-income countries, one additional year of schooling results in 10% higher wages. These earnings contribute to national economic growth (Harber, 2014, p. 17). In its turn, economic development can provide governments with the necessary resources to improve the access to and quality of education.

(3) Third, education is related to human rights. Education is a fundamental right in itself, so improving human rights conditions in a country implies increasing access to education. Furthermore, education helps

to guarantee the realization of other rights. Schooling can promote respect for human rights by teaching critical thinking, tolerance, citizenship and democracy (Davies, 2010, p. 463). Harber (1997) confirms that “education supports the growth of civil society, democracy and political stability allowing people to know their rights and acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to exercise them” (pp. 17-18). Bush and Saltarelli (2000) add that “formal education can shape the understandings, attitudes, and ultimately, the behaviour of individuals” (p. 9).

### **3.2 Socialisation in education**

The school can be understood as a mirror of society at large. For example, prevailing gender roles in society are also visible in school. Stinson (2017) confirms this by stating that “if we are accepting that societies are often structured along gender lines (and all the other intersecting levels of inequality), one of society’s fundamental institutions, the school institution may very well be a strong reflection of this structuring” (p. 24).

The strong link between life in school and society at large allows education to be used as a solution to social and societal issues. Schools can socialise messages about, for example, gender, race, religion, economic systems, equality and inequality and political participation through the selection and content of subjects and textbooks, through teaching methods and behaviour of teachers, through structures and symbols used in school and so on (Harber, 2014, p. 89). Stromquist (2006) argues that education is an effort with consequences that manifest in the long term instead of the near future. Changes through education tend to be peaceful and show concern for large groups of people (p. 159). UNESCO (2015a) adds that:

Evidence of education’s unmatched power to improve lives, particularly for girls and women continues to accumulate. [...] Education is the most powerful means of achieving gender equality, of enabling girls and women to fully participate socially and politically, and of empowering them economically [...] Achieving gender equality requires a rights-based approach that ensures that girls and boys, men and women not only gain access to and complete education cycles, but are empowered equally in and through education. (pp. 7-8)

### **3.3 The Human Rights-Based Approach to Development (HRBAD)**

This thesis starts from the perspective that reducing school-related gender-based violence and achieving gender equality in Cambodian education improves multiple human rights conditions, which in its turn can be beneficial for the overall development of the country. This perspective is in line with the human rights-based approach to development (HRBAD).

The HRBAD sets the achievement of human rights as an objective of development. While this goal is generally agreed upon, many scholars and institutions have different opinions on how the goal should be

achieved. However, there are some common factors: (1) Reference to and starting from human rights treaties; (2) Non-discrimination, special focus on disadvantaged groups, explicitly women and children; (3) Participation and empowerment; and (4) Good governance (Hamm, 2001, p. 1011).

Before explaining the advantages of the HRBAD within the scope of this thesis, some historical context is in order. The origins of the HRBAD can be traced back to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. Article 28 points out that development and social progress are indispensable for the realisation of human rights by stating that “everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized” (United Nations, 1948). Within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there are several articles that are strongly related to the subject of this thesis. The rights to equality (Article 1) and freedom from discrimination (Article 2) are related to gender equality in schools and the broader society. Reducing school-related gender-based violence improves the children’s right to personal security (Article 3) in school and on the way to school. Training teachers to stop using corporal punishment secures children’s right to freedom from torture and degrading treatment (Article 5). But above all, eliminating gender barriers in education makes a great contribution to ensuring all children can fulfil their right to education (Article 26).

Since 1986, the Declaration on the Right to Development stands at the centre of the HRBAD. Article 1 states that “the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized”. Article 3 puts states in the driver’s seat for the development process within the country: “States have the primary responsibility for the creation of national and international conditions favourable to the realization of the right to development” (United Nations, 1986).

Besides the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Right to Development, the HRBAD builds on several other UN treaties concerned with development objectives. Those most relevant to this thesis are (1) the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) which aims at eliminating any restrictions given to children belonging to a particular group, so that all children can receive equal access to and quality of education; (2) the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) which strives for the full development and advancement of women and the achievement of gender equality in all layers of society, including education; and (3) the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) which includes children’s right to equal treatment in education and protection from all forms of physical or mental violence. Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is especially relevant to this study and states that:

States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or



negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child. (p. 5)

In 1997 UNICEF officially adopted a HRBAD, declaring that its work from then on would be based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Finally, the HRBAD became a global norm in 2003 when the UN adopted the Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming. Since then, human rights should be mainstreamed throughout all UN agencies (Schmitz, 2012, p. 524).

The advantages of reframing development challenges in the language of human rights are plentiful. Both development and human rights stand to gain from a HRBAD. On the one hand, development gains because infusing human rights into the development discourse fundamentally transforms relations between donors, NGOs, local governments, and beneficiaries. All actors have the legal obligation to follow a development policy based on human rights. This makes states accountable for their development policy and increases its continuity and stability since human rights are beyond the specific interests of donor countries and receiving governments. Furthermore, recipient countries are no longer passive aid receivers, but become primary duty bearers. And development organizations no longer focus on service delivery and charity but on facilitating a relationship of accountability between rulers and the ruled (Hamm, 2001, p. 1030; Schmitz, 2012, p. 528). Malone and Belshaw (2003) conclude that “the promotion of human rights within the development context should enhance the effect of development programmes” (p. 88).

On the other hand, human rights gain because the HRBAD strengthens human rights by:

working for their implementation and realization, by using them as the benchmark for development policy, and by orienting the policy dialogue towards human rights. In addition, the use of human rights as the common language in development increases the universal acceptance of human rights. (Hamm, 2001, p. 1031)

The HRBAD is founded on broad international validity since states voluntarily adopt human rights standards by joining the UN and accepting the principles of the Charter (Hamm, 2001, pp. 1013–1014).

Keeping the benefits of a HRBAD in mind, this thesis aims to determine the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence in Cambodia. The data can then be used in VVOB’s TIGER project to improve gender equality in education, thereby contributing to the achievement of multiple human rights conditions and the overall development of the country.

## **4. Methods**

The current research is a mixed methods study, including both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Mixed methods approaches provide the possibility to investigate the same question from different perspectives. In the current research it was important to use these different perspectives so that a complete picture could be drawn about the current presence and prevalence of SRGBV in Cambodia. Furthermore, the combination of different data collection methods aided in overcoming part of the language barrier in this study since surveys could be conducted in Khmer whereas interviews required real time translation. The quantitative data provide a baseline for the TIGER intervention in 20 schools, the qualitative data give more insight into why certain forms of SRGBV are present in Cambodia and how they could be reduced. The dean of the education faculty at the Royal University of Phnom Penh stated that “more mixed methods research is necessary in Cambodian education, nowadays there is too much focus on the numbers alone, we need flesh to the bone to really understand what is going on in our schools”.

This study used a sequential exploratory mixed methods design, meaning that an initial phase of qualitative data collection and analysis was followed by a phase of quantitative data collection and analysis. The results of the exploratory qualitative research inform the quantitative research.

### **4.1 Qualitative research**

#### **4.1.1 Interviews with key informants**

The first phase of the study involved interviews with twenty-nine key informants. Fifteen of the respondents worked for different NGOs that focus on gender equality, improvement of education and/or violence against children. They were selected because they could provide information about the current situation regarding gender equality in education and violence against children in Cambodia. They also provided insight into ongoing NGO projects targeting these issues. Nine interviewees were government officials from the departments of education and women’s affairs, at the district, provincial and national levels. They mainly added information regarding national and regional policy measures to the research. Further, five local researchers working on gender and/or education were interviewed, including two staff members of the Royal University Phnom Penh (RUPP) and a journalist. They were involved in the research because they could give valuable tips on how to do research in Cambodian schools and give insight into their own research results. A detailed list of the key informants can be found in appendix 1.

All interviews were open-ended and covered a broad range of topics. Firstly, the interviews focused on gender equality in Cambodian education. In this stage the researcher gathered information about local perceptions of the word gender, the enrolment and achievement of boys and girls in school, the gender sensitivity of commonly used learning materials, to which extent boys and girls are treated equally in class, and the persistence of traditional gender roles in school. Secondly, the interviews zoomed in more

specifically on school-related gender-based violence. The researcher asked about the experiences of the key informants (and their children) in this regard. The interviews focused mainly on which forms of SRGBV exist in Cambodia, divided in four categories: sexual violence, corporal punishment, gender-related bullying and verbal harassment. Thirdly, the interviews concerned children's general safety. This refers i.a. to the building conditions and the presence and cleanliness of toilets in school, but also road conditions around the school and any type of violence children may experience in or on the way to school. Fourthly, the interviews focused on the existing local policies relating to gender equality and children's safety in schools. Finally, the key informants gave tips on how to do research about gender in education in Cambodia. Many key informants gladly shared their experience on which type of questions to ask and how to formulate them in Khmer, how to get consent for interviewing school children and so on.

#### **4.1.2 Interviews in schools**

In late November 2017, the researcher conducted interviews with principals, teachers and students in four schools in Battambang province. The answers provided during the interviews in these schools would later be used to create the survey guide for the quantitative phase of the research. The group of four schools included one urban primary school, one urban lower secondary, one rural primary and one rural lower secondary school. In November the 20 target schools for the TIGER project were yet to be selected. Later it turned out that from the four schools only the rural lower secondary school would take part in the TIGER project. However, since the interviews conducted in these schools functioned as exploratory research, their content had a strong added value for the study, even though three of the schools would not take part in later research phases.

Before the interviews were carried out, the school principal provided written consent to let all school members participate in the research. The bilingual consent form used during the research can be found in appendix 2. Teachers and students were asked personally to participate in the research and gave their consent orally before starting the interview. Obtaining written consent from all participants (and their parents) is uncommon and unfeasible in the Cambodian school context. Children's literacy skills are often too low to give written consent. This also holds true for some of the parents. Furthermore, considering the possibility that the parents themselves are responsible for the violence in a child's life, it would be unwise to ask for their consent to let a child participate. Moreover, many parents are reluctant to sign a form, out of fear that their personal information may be misused. The latter may be especially relevant during the months leading up to the elections in a fragile democracy. This is also the reason why teachers participating in the research preferred oral over written consent, there is a strong anxiety relating to formal paperwork in Cambodia. In consequence of the above, it is common practice in Cambodia to let the school principal provide written consent for the participation of all school members.

All interviews in the four schools were conducted face to face with the help of an interpreter. The interpreter not only reduced the language barrier between the researcher and the participants, she also functioned as a cultural liaison. She assisted in framing the questions in a culturally appropriate way and could interpret the respondents' answers and explain them to the researcher with the local context in mind. Furthermore, speaking with a Khmer person brought a dimension of familiarity and comfort to the participants, stimulating them to speak more openly.

In total, thirty-seven people were interviewed in the four participating schools, including four principals, ten teachers and twenty-three students. An overview of all participants can be found in appendix 3. To obtain a representative sample, the teachers and students were selected randomly. This increased the chance of including both teachers who seldom use violent disciplinary measures and teachers who use them more often. Also, in this way, children with varying degrees of SRGBV experiences were included.

All interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner. Some of the questions were based on information gathered during the interviews with key informants. Therefore, the interviews in schools focused on similar topics as the interviews with key informants; gender equality, the different types of SRGBV and general safety in schools. Within each of these topics, the interview questions distinguished between personal experiences, perceptions (of the self, other stakeholders and society), attitudes and policy measures. Appendix 4 includes a matrix which gives an overview of the abovementioned themes. The code given to each theme within the matrix recurs in the interview guides for principals, teachers and students which can be found in appendices 5, 6 and 7 respectively. Not all questions in the interview guides were asked during each interview, the questions were divided amongst the participants. Interviews with principals and teachers took about one hour, students were interviewed for about half an hour. Secondary school students were interviewed individually, but some primary school students were too shy for this and participated together with a friend, that is why there are more primary school students than secondary school students in the sample.

## **4.2 Quantitative research**

In February 2018, quantitative surveys were conducted with teachers and students (grades 4-9) in the 20 schools that take part in the first phase of the TIGER project. An overview of the total population from which the sample was drawn can be found in appendix 8.

The aim of the surveys was to determine the prevalence of SRGBV in all 20 TIGER schools, as a baseline study for the teacher training intervention that will be conducted by VVOB in the following years. The survey questions were developed in cooperation with the TIGER staff members and were based on literature and the qualitative data gathered in earlier stages of the research. The survey guides for teachers and students

are attached in appendices 9 and 10 respectively. An online version of the surveys was created with a software package called SurveyLegend.

Like during the qualitative phase of the research, the school principals provided written consent so all school members could participate. Teachers and students participated on a voluntary basis and gave their consent orally.

Teachers were selected through convenience sampling, based on how many teachers were available to take part in the research. Most schools put a strong effort in rescheduling daily activities to allow as many teachers as possible to participate. All teachers who had the time decided to fill in the survey, there was no nonresponse for other reasons than “no time”. However, how many teachers were available strongly differed from school to school, the response rate ranged from 8,5% of all teachers in one school to 100% in another. In total, 225 teachers participated. However, due to a technical error in the SurveyLegend software, the data of 2 teachers was incomplete. So after data cleaning the sample consisted of 223 teachers.

Most teachers used a smartphone or tablet to fill in the online version of the survey. Some teachers lacked the digital skills to fill in the survey online and preferred a paper version, these surveys were later digitalised by the researcher.

Students were sampled randomly, using a random number generator to pick class numbers. When a child’s number was called it got the chance to withdraw from the research, in that case another child was sampled. About 5% of the children in the initial sample did not participate, all for the same reason of being too shy to answer questions. The aim was to sample 30 students in each school, 5 boys and 5 girls in each participating grade (4-6 for primary, 7-9 for secondary), so 600 students in total. However, in one very small primary school only 19 children of grades 4-6 were present on the day of the research visit, luckily all of them volunteered to participate. Furthermore, in another school one child who was not selected managed to participate. Therefore, the total number of students who participated was 590. Due to technical problems with the SurveyLegend software, the data of one child went missing and for ten children the data was incomplete, so after data cleaning the sample consisted of 579 children.

Due to low literacy, the students did not fill in the survey by themselves. Instead, they were questioned by one of the six trained interviewers. These research assistants asked the survey questions in Khmer and filled in the children’s answers in the online version of the survey, which was created using the SurveyLegend software.

Because of the sensitivity of the topic, a procedure was in place to offer psychosocial support to participating students if necessary. Fifty-six children showed signs of mental discomfort during the interview (crying, refusing to answer certain questions) or indicated past experiences with SRGBV. These children were offered to meet with a professional psychosocial worker. Ten children took this offer, all ten had been confronted with pornographic pictures against their will, most often by classmates. They all met a VVOB

staff member with experience in child counselling. This counsellor listened to the children's stories and gave them advice on how to handle similar situations in the future. She was also ready to put the children in touch with a psychologist, social worker or police officer, but this turned out to be unnecessary.

When all data was collected the researcher started the statistical analysis of the data. First, descriptive statistics were used to give insight in the prevalence of different forms of SRGBV (gender-related bullying, corporal punishment, sexual violence) and to determine how students and teachers react to these forms of SRGBV. Descriptive statistics were also used to determine which other safety issues in school and on the way to school children are concerned about and to look into existing preventive measures (such as teacher training, awareness raising for children and existing school policies). When the descriptive analysis of the data was completed, multivariate regression analysis was used to examine the correlates of SRGBV. Multivariate regression analysis allows to determine the influence of multiple independent variables on a single dependent variable, while taking into account the correlation between the different independent variables. In the current study, this provided insight into how children's sex, age, self-reported socio-economic status (SES) and their parents' literacy level are correlated with their experience of SRGBV. Multivariate regression analysis was also used to determine how teachers' sex, age and childhood SES are correlated with their self-reported use of corporal punishment. All multivariate regression analyses used multilevel models in order to control for clusters on the level of the schools, since the participants are nested in twenty different schools. For each regression model, an intraclass correlation coefficient was calculated to estimate the percentage of variance in the regression explained by unobserved school effects. It is important to note that each multivariate regression model involved a dependent variable based on a 5-point Likert scale, resulting in a rather limited variance in the dependent variables.

## **5. Participants**

Before the research findings will be described, the current chapter gives insight into the sample of participants taking part in this research. Several participant characteristics like age, gender, job status and career path and socio-economic status (SES) are described.

### **5.1 Qualitative research**

#### **5.1.1 Key informants**

Of the twenty-nine key informants taking part in the open interviews, fifteen worked for NGOs that focus on gender equality, improvement of education and/or violence against children. The NGOs were VVOB, the Battambang Education Support Team (BEST), Gender And Development Cambodia (GADC), Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE), Puthi Komar Organization (PKO), See Beyond Borders, UNICEF Cambodia and World Vision Cambodia. This group of NGO staff members included seven men and seven women. Nine interviewees were government officials from the departments of education and women's affairs, at the district, provincial and federal levels. Five of these government staff members were men, four were women. Further, five researchers working on gender and/or education were interviewed, two of them were women.

#### **5.1.2 Principals**

In four schools, semi-structured interviews were conducted. In each school the principal participated. One of the principals was a woman of 58 years old. The three male principals were 38, 43 and 51 years old. All of them had been working as principal for two to four years. Before they became principal, all four were working in the education sector. The female principal had been working at the District Office of Education (DOE). The men had started their careers as teachers and later moved on to administrative school staff member or deputy principal before becoming principal.

#### **5.1.3 Teachers**

Ten teachers took part in the semi-structured interviews. In the two primary schools, three male and three female teachers participated. In the secondary schools, two women and two men joined the research. All teachers were between 21 and 55 years old, the mean age was 37.5.

### 5.1.4 Students

Twenty-three students participated in the semi-structured interviews. This group included fifteen primary school students of grades 4-6. Eight of them were boys and seven were girls. Also eight secondary school students of grades 7-9 participated, three boys and five girls. All children were between 9 and 16 years old. In the four schools where the semi-structured interviews took place, 53% of the enrolled primary school children and 57% of the secondary school children are girls. This seems to confirm the statement, made in the background section of this thesis, that girls have closed the enrolment gap in primary and secondary education in Cambodia and are on the way to overtake boys.

## 5.2 Quantitative research

### 5.2.1 Teachers

The quantitative part of this research took place in twenty schools in Battambang, including eleven primary and nine secondary schools. The survey sample included ( $N_T=223$ ) teachers, their background characteristics can be found in table 1. The sample consisted of 158 women and 65 men, thus 29% of the participants were male. All teachers were between 23 and 59 years old, with a mean age of 41.2. They had been teaching for at least 2 years and maximum 38 years, the mean career length was 20.6 years. The majority of teachers started teaching around the age of 20.

When asked about their childhood socio-economic status (SES) on a scale from very poor (1) to very rich (5), 56.1% of teachers answered they had a comfortable life as a child (3) and 38.1% identified as very poor (1) or poor (2). Only 5.8% of teachers responded rich (4) or very rich (5). Since Battambang is an agricultural area and many teachers were children during the Khmer Rouge time, it was to be expected that only a minority of teachers identified their childhood SES as rich (4) or very rich (5). Further, social desirability may have resulted in the majority of teachers indicating an average childhood SES (3), especially since everybody was supposed to have a similar SES under the communist Khmer Rouge rule. Therefore, great caution is required when drawing conclusions regarding teachers' childhood SES and their use of violent disciplinary measures.

*Table 1: Characteristics of teachers taking part in the survey*

Variable	Obs	Mean	S	Min	Max
Male	223	0.29	0.46	0	1
Age	223	41.20	7.56	23	59
Years of teaching	223	20.60	8.25	2	38
Starting age of teaching	223	20.61	2.83	16	42
Self-reported childhood socio-economic status	223	2.61	0.74	1	5



### 5.2.2 Students

In the twenty TIGER target schools where the survey took place, the average enrolment ratio of boys and girls was 50/50, so there was no enrolment gap in these schools. The survey sample included ( $N_S=579$ ) students, 288 girls and 291 boys. All children were between 8 and 21 years old, with a mean age of 12.61. This was to be expected since children of grades 4-9 are normally between 9 and 15 years old. Three children were only 8 years old, they probably started school early. 34 children were over 15, they probably started school late or had to retake a grade. One boy was 21 years old, since he was blind he went to special education before starting grade 1 at the age of 11. When asked if their parents could read, 90% of the children answered their father could read and 83% of the children confirmed their mother could read. An overview of the students' background characteristics can be found in table 2.

*Table 2: Characteristics of students taking part in the survey*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Male	579	0.50	0.50	0	1
Age	579	12.61	1.95	8	21
Grade	579	6.37	1.71	4	9
Self-reported socio-economic status	579	3.16	0.74	1	5
Father can read	579	0.90	0.30	0	1
Mother can read	579	0.83	0.38	0	1

## 6. Results

This chapter describes the findings regarding the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence in the 20 TIGER target schools. The research includes qualitative data to explain the quantitative results. The first section describes the results regarding the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence, first for gender-related bullying, then for corporal punishment and finally for sexual violence. The second section gives an overview of other safety issues children might encounter on the way to school and in school. The third and final section describes findings regarding preventive measures taken by schools and government.

### 6.1 School-related gender-based violence

#### 6.1.1 Gender-related bullying

This section provides an overview of the qualitative and quantitative results regarding gender-related bullying in the target schools. First, the prevalence and determinants of two types of gender-related bullying will be described, namely bullying between boys and girls and bullying of children who cross the border formed by gender stereotypes. Next, the subsection zooms in on who children talk to when they feel bullied, who they go to for support. Finally, the results about teachers' reactions when they witness children being bullied are presented.

##### *Boys and girls bully each other*

Gender-related bullying in Cambodia involves first of all boys and girls bullying each other, often strongly influenced by traditional gender roles and stereotypes. For example, boys insult girls and make fun of them because boys consider them to be weak. On the other hand, girls often find boys lazy or naughty and bully them because of this. During the interviews, several children stated they are regularly pushed, kicked, cursed at or called insulting names by children of the opposite sex.

The survey asked girls how often they are bullied by boys and vice versa. The teachers were asked how often they witness boys and girls bullying each other. Each of the three groups got three questions regarding the prevalence of verbal violence (insulting, calling bad names, making fun...), physical violence (pushing, punching, kicking...) and taking personal things to hide or destroy them. Each question contained a Likert scale from never (=1) to very often (=5). Table 3 gives an overview of the data for these questions. The results show that for both boys and girls verbal violence is the most prevalent form of bullying. Further, teachers report a higher prevalence of bullying between boys and girls than the children themselves. This may be because teachers witness the children's interaction from a distance. Some behaviours that children perceive as playful actions, teachers may classify as bullying. Further, teachers report on the behaviour of a whole class of children, while students respond about their own personal experience.

Table 3: Prevalence of bullying between boys and girls

	Verbal violence		Physical violence		Taking things	
	Mean	S	Mean	S	Mean	S
Girls stating they are bullied by boys (288 obs.)	2.35	1.20	1.89	1.10	1.91	1.05
Boys stating they are bullied by girls (291 obs.)	2.13	1.08	1.86	1.10	1.53	0.88
Teachers stating boys and girls bully each other (223 obs.)	2.43	0.97	2.09	0.92	1.93	0.87

Table 4: Multilevel regression analysis predicting being bullied by the opposite sex

	<b>Model 1</b> <b>Bullying</b>	<b>Model 2</b> <b>Bullying</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <b>Bullying</b>
Male	-0.615*** (0.189)	-0.580*** (0.188)	-0.565*** (0.188)
Age	-0.116** (0.055)	-0.130** (0.056)	-0.141** (0.057)
Socio-economic status (Ref. = Poor)			
Comfortable household status		-0.804*** (0.286)	-0.749** (0.301)
Rich household status		-0.930*** (0.319)	-0.871** (0.336)
Father can read			-0.397 (0.322)
Mother can read			-0.036 (0.273)
Observations	579	579	579
$\rho$	0.04	0.04	0.04

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

Standard error between brackets

Table 3 also shows that girls experience all three types of bullying more than boys, so boys are perceived to bully girls more than vice versa. This is confirmed in table 4, which depicts the multilevel regression analysis predicting between-sex bullying, a dependent variable with a 5-point Likert scale. It shows that boys bully girls more than that girls bully boys. This difference is significant at the 1 percent level. The regression coefficient for sex predicting bullying is robust when other control variables are added.

Furthermore, table 4 shows that bullying significantly decreases with age, the older children get the less bullying by the opposite sex they experience. This correlation is significant at the 5 percent level and when other control variables are added the coefficient is robust.

Another strong determinant of being bullied by the opposite sex is children's self-reported socio-economic status (SES) of their household. This independent variable involves a 3-point Likert scale, with poor being the reference category. Table 4 shows that a child with a comfortable household status is less likely to be bullied by the opposite sex than a poor child. A child with a self-reported rich household status has an even smaller likelihood to be bullied by the opposite sex, in comparison with a poor child. In model 2, both

coefficients are significant at the 1 percent level. Thus, the richer a child feels, the less likely it is to be bullied by the opposite sex.

Fourth, table 4 also shows that the literacy levels of father and mothers have no significant association with children's experience of being bullied by the opposite sex. This may be due to the low variance in these two independent variables.

Using multilevel modelling techniques that account for clusters at the school level, a rho-value of 0.04 is estimated. This value indicates that school clusters can account for 4% of the variance of the estimated models in table 4, which is rather low. This means unobserved school effects are not significantly introducing a bias in the estimated correlations.

It can be concluded that gender-related bullying between boys and girls is prevalent in Cambodian schools. Verbal violence is the most prevalent form of bullying between both sex groups. Girls are bullied more by boys than boys are bullied by girls. Further, young children experience more bullying than older children and poor children are bullied more by the opposite sex than rich children.

### ***Children who behave like the opposite sex are bullied***

Besides boys and girls bullying each other, children are also bullied when they cross the border formed by gender stereotypes. For example, when a boy wants to play a game that is traditionally done by girls or a girl wants to join a boys' game this child can be bullied. During the interviews, some girls stated the boys never allow them to join a game of football, the boys would say they cannot kick the ball straight and always cry when the ball hits them. When a child wants to do something that is traditionally done by the opposite sex, often it will not only be bullied by the opposite sex but by both gender groups at the same time. Girls who want to play football are also made fun of by other girls, who believe playing football is not proper female behaviour.

In the survey, children were asked if boys can play games that are traditionally done by girls and vice versa. Table 5 gives an overview of the number of students who believe children should not play the opposite gender's games. The results show that gender roles in games are stronger for girls than boys. It also illustrates that crossing the gender stereotype border in games is more accepted in secondary school than in primary education.

*Table 5: Number of students who believe children should not play the opposite gender's games (579 observations)*

	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Girls should not be allowed to play boys' games	45%	31%	38%
Boys should not be allowed to play girls' games	33%	23%	28%

Children are not only bullied when they want to play games that are traditionally for the other gender, but also when they choose 'wrong' school tracks. As mentioned before, STEM jobs are considered to be for

men only in Cambodia. During the interviews, it was confirmed that girls who take STEM subjects are often bullied because they do not comply to the gender stereotype. Teachers reinforce this traditional gender role, their attitudes and actions may steer girls away from STEM subjects and put a high pressure on boys to perform well in STEM subjects. During the interviews, two boys said their teacher verbally harassed them by calling them girls because they were not performing well in science and mathematics.

Children who cross the gender stereotype border may be laughed about, physically hurt or called ‘sim-pi’. This term means a phone with two SIM-cards in Khmer but is often used to refer to people who have ‘two sexes inside them’, this is how many Khmer would describe being gay or transgender.

In the survey, teachers were asked how often children experience different types of bullying when they want to do an activity that is traditionally done by the other gender. 27% of teachers stated that children who cross the gender stereotype border experience verbal violence, 24% believed these children are excluded and gossiped about, 17% stated those children experience physical violence and 14% claimed the children would have their personal things taken away. So verbal violence is not only the most prevalent form of bullying between boys and girls, but also towards children who behave too much like the opposite sex.

### ***Support for children who are bullied***

The surveyed children were asked who they talk to when they feel mistreated by another child, they were allowed to give multiple answers. Most children said to confide in a teacher (59%) when they feel bullied. Second, children talk to a friend from school (44%). Family members rank third (35%).

In primary school, children report bullying more to a teacher than in secondary school (68% vs 48%). In secondary school on the other hand, students confide most in a friend (55% vs 34%). This difference may mean tattling to a teacher is considered childish in secondary school and it contradicts the implicit code of conduct amongst students. During an interview, a grade 7 student stated “I often feel like telling the teacher when they gossip about me or when we have small fights, but I never do it because then the others would not talk to me anymore”.

Figure 5 shows the difference in boys’ and girls’ reactions when they feel bullied. Boys seem to go to a teacher more often than girls, while girls talk more to family members and school friends. This may mean boys prefer to talk to someone who has the power to discipline the bullies, while girls are more looking for someone to confide in, someone to comfort them.

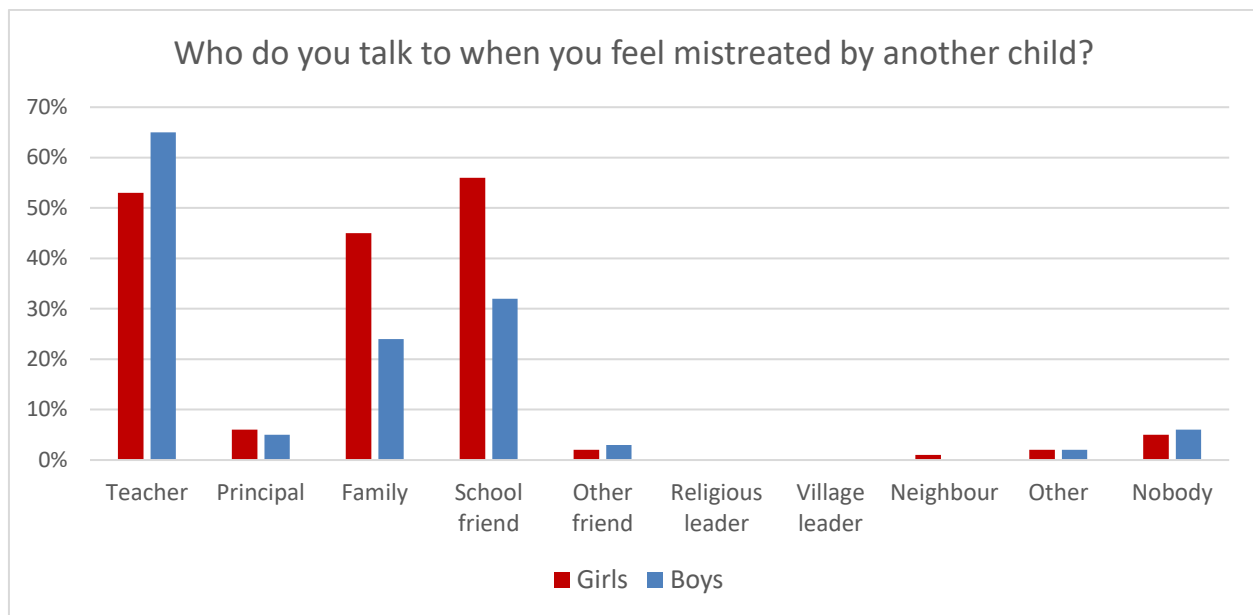


Figure 5: Who do boys and girls confide in when they feel bullied (579 observations, 288 girls and 291 boys)

### ***Teachers' reaction to bullying***

The teachers were asked in the survey how they react when noticing children are being bullied. The vast majority (95%) of teachers stated they talk to the bullies to educate them about good behaviour and showing respect. Further, the teachers also state to often send bullies to the principal (59%) and contact the bullies' parents (53%). The self-reported prevalence of shouting at bullies (6%), punishing them (4%) or doing nothing (1%) was very low. This large difference in self-reported prevalence of positive and negative disciplinary measures may be strongly influenced by social desirability.

When the surveyed teachers are divided into age categories, the results show that the youngest teachers are most inclined to educate children on how to behave well. When it comes to shouting at bullies, the eldest teachers are more prone to doing this than their younger counterparts. Older teachers have used traditional violent disciplinary measures for years and may find it hard to change their methods. Younger teachers went to teacher training college more recently, the current teacher training curriculum includes positive discipline so these teachers might use more up to date disciplinary methods.

Figure 6 gives an overview of the answers for male and female teachers separately. It shows men and women take similar actions when children are being bullied, but female teachers react a bit more often than male teachers.

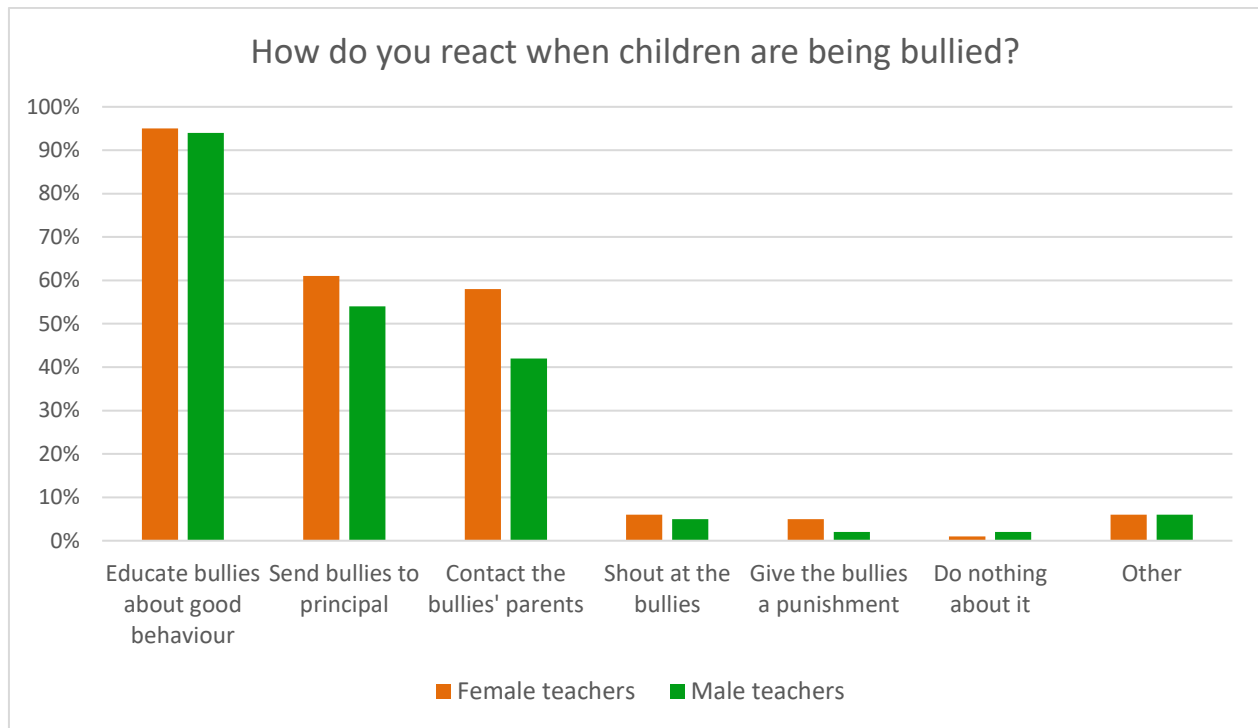


Figure 6: Teachers' reaction to children bullying each other (223 observations, 158 women and 65 men)

### 6.1.2 Corporal punishment

The current section provides insight into the results regarding the second type of SRGBV, namely corporal punishment. Again, the quantitative data are explained by means of qualitative results. First, the prevalence of different disciplinary measures will be described, with a focus on physical discipline. Next, the chapter zooms in on determinants for corporal punishment, first within students and then within teachers. Further, the results regarding who children confide in when they feel mistreated by a teacher are presented. The section ends with an overview of the results about teachers' reactions when they witness children being mistreated by their fellow teachers.

#### *Prevalence of positive and negative disciplinary measures*

In the survey, children were asked to indicate how often they experience ten different disciplinary measures on a Likert scale (from 1 = never to 5 = very often). The same ten types of discipline were presented to teachers, they had to indicate how acceptable they find each form of discipline (from 1 = very unacceptable to 5 = very acceptable) and how often they use it themselves (from 1 = never to 5 = very often). Table 6 shows the data for these three sets of questions, ordered according to prevalence as reported by students.

Table 6: Prevalence of different disciplinary measures, according to students and teachers, and acceptance by teachers

Disciplinary measure	Child experience (579 obs.)		Teacher acceptance (223 obs.)		Teacher use (223 obs.)		Min	Max
	Mean	S	Mean	S	Mean	S		
Educate a child about good behaviour	3.11	1.20	3.85	1.01	4.00	0.74	1	5
Make a child do extra school work	2.30	1.27	3.52	1.12	2.87	0.98	1	5
Hurt a child, e.g. by hitting the child	1.62	0.86	2.15	0.84	1.48	0.68	1	5
Make a child do chores	1.60	0.88	3.27	1.01	2.41	0.88	1	5
Make a child hurt itself	1.48	0.78	2.41	0.99	1.61	0.78	1	5
Deduct marks from tests or homework	1.47	0.81	2.70	1.11	1.89	1.00	1	5
Collect a fine from a child	1.33	0.67	1.79	0.89	1.17	0.48	1	5
Use verbal violence towards a child	1.27	0.63	1.71	0.85	1.15	0.43	1	5
Contact a child's parents or guardians	1.26	0.62	3.69	1.08	2.90	0.93	1	4
Make a child stand up or run rounds	1.19	0.54	2.22	0.89	1.35	0.65	1	5

The results show that children state that 'being educated about good behaviour' is the most common form of discipline. Teachers agree that this is the most acceptable and most used disciplinary measure. Children experience 'receiving extra school work' as being the second most common. Teachers agree this type of discipline happens regularly, together with 'contacting children's parents'. The three abovementioned types are positive disciplinary measures. Although it may be influenced by social desirability, it is good news that the types of discipline with the highest self-reported prevalence are positive measures.

However, the fourth, fifth and sixth most prevalent forms of discipline according to children are all physical punishments. 'Making a child do chores' is a rather neutral measure, but 'hurting a child' and 'making a child hurt itself' are negative types of discipline. Teachers report a similar prevalence for these two disciplinary measures, but they state they use other forms more often (i.e. making a child do chores like picking up rubbish and deducting marks).

It is striking that for most types of discipline, teachers' acceptance is higher than their self-reported use of a certain form. This could mean some teachers do not feel the need to use a certain disciplinary measure as often as they find acceptable. Another possibility is that, to a certain extent, the acceptance scale reflects teachers' real use of the different forms of discipline, while the self-reported use results are lower due to social desirability. However, more research would be necessary to verify this relation.

### *Student-specific determinants for corporal punishment*

The survey aimed to determine if the discipline children experience from teachers is gender biased. Both students and teachers were asked if one gender group of children is disciplined more often than another. Table 7 shows the answers to these questions. Two thirds of students (67.7%) stated that boys are disciplined



most often. One third of the teachers (33.2%) agrees they discipline boys more often than girls. During the interviews several teachers stated that girls perform and behave better in class while boys are more naughty. Therefore some teachers claim they need to punish boys more often than girls. Two thirds of the surveyed teachers (65.5%) state that they discipline boys and girls equally often. This is probably true for some of them, but others may have answered this due to social desirability. Since the majority of children and one third of teachers agreed boys are disciplined more often it is safe to assume this is the case in reality.

*Table 7: Which gender group of students experiences most disciplinary measures, according to students and teachers*

	<b>Students 579 obs.</b>	<b>Teachers 223 obs.</b>
Boys are disciplined most often	67.7%	33.2%
Girls are disciplined most often	4.5%	0.4%
Children of the third gender are disciplined most often	0.2%	0.9%
All children are disciplined equally often	27.6%	65.5%

The children in the survey were also asked if one gender group is punished more strongly than another, i.e. if a boy and a girl who misbehave in the same way would get different disciplinary measures. Over half of the students (52.8%) stated that all children get the same sort of discipline for the same misbehaviour. Another large group of children (44.4%) said that boys are disciplined most strongly. Only a small majority of children said that girls (2.2%) or children of the third gender (0.6%) are disciplined most strongly. Taking the abovementioned into account, we can conclude boys are disciplined more often and differently than girls. Teachers perceive boys to be generally more naughty and easily distracted than girls. Therefore teachers may feel the need to discipline boys more often than girls, in order to force them to concentrate on their school work. The fact that boys are sometimes also punished more strongly than girls may also be related to gender stereotypes. Girls are considered to be soft while boys should be strong. Thus, some teachers feel girls cannot handle hard discipline while boys should be able to do so. If they cannot take it they are considered weak. Therefore, boys experience violent disciplinary measures like being verbally or physically harassed by a teacher or having to hurt themselves more often than girls. Girls on the other hand need to pay a fine or do chores more often than boys. Many children believe this gender stereotype is true, that girls really are weaker than boys. During an interview, a boy in grade 4 said “boys are tougher so they can get harder punishments than girls”.

Table 8: Multilevel regression analysis predicting experiencing corporal punishment

	<b>Model 1</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>	<b>Model 2</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>
Male	0.335*** (0.128)	0.345*** (0.128)	0.358*** (0.128)
Age	-0.022 (0.039)	-0.029 (0.040)	-0.041 (0.041)
Socio-economic status (Ref. = Poor)			
Comfortable household status		-0.189 (0.196)	-0.101 (0.205)
Rich household status		-0.284 (0.218)	-0.183 (0.230)
Father can read			-0.263 (0.220)
Mother can read			-0.188 (0.186)
Observations	579	579	579
$\rho$	0.05	0.05	0.05

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

Standard error between brackets

Table 8 summarizes the results of the multilevel regression analysis predicting children experiencing corporal punishment by teachers, a dependent variable based on a 5-point Likert scale. The results confirm that boys experience significantly more negative physical punishment than girls. The difference is significant on the 10 percent level and the regression coefficient for sex predicting corporal punishment is robust when other control variables are added.

Further, table 8 shows that the age of a child, its self-reported socio-economic status and the literacy level of the parents have no significant correlation with a child's experience of corporal punishment in school.

Using multilevel modelling techniques that account for clusters at the school level, a rho-value of 0.05 is estimated. This value indicates that school clusters can account for 5% of the variance of the estimated models in table 8, which is fairly low.

### ***Teacher-specific determinants for corporal punishment***

Both children and teachers were asked if male and female teachers use different disciplinary methods. Table 9 shows the answers to these questions. Over half of the students (51.1%) and teachers (55.6%) said they did not have an answer to this question. Many children said they had only male or only female teachers and thus could not compare the disciplinary methods of both genders. Teachers said they never observe the classes of their colleagues and thus do not know how others discipline their children. The latter may be true for some teachers, while for others it may be an easy answer to avoid talking about the disciplinary methods of colleagues, which may be considered a sensitive topic. This influence of social desirability might also

hold true for the one third (31.8%) of teachers who state that male and female teachers use similar disciplinary methods. Yet 18.7% of children said that male teachers discipline more strongly than female teachers, while only 16.6% stated the opposite. Also the proportion of teachers who stated that male teachers punish most strongly (6.7%) was higher than those who stated the opposite (5.8%). Thus, based on the quantitative data, there is a weak indication that male teachers tend to use harsher disciplinary measures than female teachers. During the qualitative interviews however, many children confirmed that male teachers use more corporal punishment, while female teachers use more other disciplinary methods like making a child do chores or giving extra homework. This may be due to the gender stereotype that supposes men to be strong and fierce, while women are expected to be more gentle.

*Table 9: Which gender group of teachers uses the strongest disciplinary measures, according to students and teachers*

	<b>Students 579 obs.</b>	<b>Teachers 223 obs.</b>
Female teachers discipline more strongly	16.6%	5.8%
Male teachers discipline more strongly	18.7%	6.7%
Female and male teachers use similar discipline	13.6%	31.8%
I do not know	51.1%	55.6%

During the qualitative interviews, some teachers and children were asked if they notice any difference in how younger and older teachers discipline their students. The majority of interviewees stated that young teachers are more inclined to adopt positive disciplinary measures, while older teachers tend to be more conservative in their choice of punishments.

Although qualitative interviews and surveys with students suggest that male teachers use more corporal punishment than female teachers and older teachers use more harsh disciplinary measures than young teachers, table 10 shows no significant correlation between teachers' sex or age and their use of corporal punishment. The lack of significant determinants is probably due to the fact that table 10 includes teachers' self-reported use of physical punishment as dependent variable, based on a 5-point Likert scale. The scores on this variable were very low, which is probably due to social desirability. Further, the relatively low number of respondents (223) makes it hard to find significant determinants, owing to lack of statistical power. Further, table 10 shows that teachers' self-reported childhood socio-economic status, an independent variable based on a 5-point Likert scale, does not have a strong association with their self-reported use of corporal punishment. This may be due to the fact that most teachers were children during the Khmer Rouge time, when the majority of families were poor and there was no great variance in socio-economic status. This lack of variance in SES calls for great caution when drawing conclusions regarding the influence of teachers' childhood SES on their use of violent disciplinary measures.

When performing multilevel modelling to account for clusters at the school level, a rho-value of 0.09 was estimated. This implies that school clusters can explain 9% of the variance of the estimated models.

Table 10: Multilevel regression analysis predicting teachers using corporal punishment

	<b>Model 1</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>	<b>Model 2</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>	<b>Model 3</b> <b>Corporal</b> <b>punishment</b>
Male	-0.104 (0.226)	-0.092 (0.226)	-0.068 (0.227)
Age		-0.015 (0.014)	-0.017 (0.014)
Childhood socio-economic status (Ref. = Poor)			
Comfortable household status			0.381* (0.214)
Rich household status			0.324 (0.455)
Observations	223	223	223
$\rho$	0.09	0.09	0.09

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

Standard error between brackets

### ***Support for children who are mistreated by teachers***

The surveyed children were asked who they talk to when they feel mistreated by a teacher, they were allowed to give multiple answers. Most children (54%) said to confide in a family member. Especially in primary school the majority of children (58%) confide in their family, in secondary education almost half of the students (49%) talk to a family member in the case of teacher misconduct. Besides family members, a lot of children (36%) confide in a friend from school when they feel mistreated by a teacher. Especially in secondary school, students talk primarily to a friend (54%), for primary school children it is the second source of comfort (21%).

For all children, talking to a teacher gets a rather low prevalence (9%), especially when compared to how often children confide in a teacher when they feel bullied by another child (59%). It seems children are more hesitant to report maltreatment to a teacher if it is inflicted by another teacher than by a child. Yet, students are more inclined to report injustice to the principal when it is inflicted by a teacher, rather than by a child (14% vs 5%). However, when mistreated by a teacher, students are also more prone to keep it to themselves than when they are bullied by a fellow student (14% vs 5%).

Figure 7 shows the difference in boys' and girls' reactions when they feel mistreated by a teacher. Girls again confide more in family members and school friends, while boys talk a bit more to the principal, who has the authority to penalise a teacher. Boys are also more inclined to keep it to themselves when a teacher maltreats them than girls.

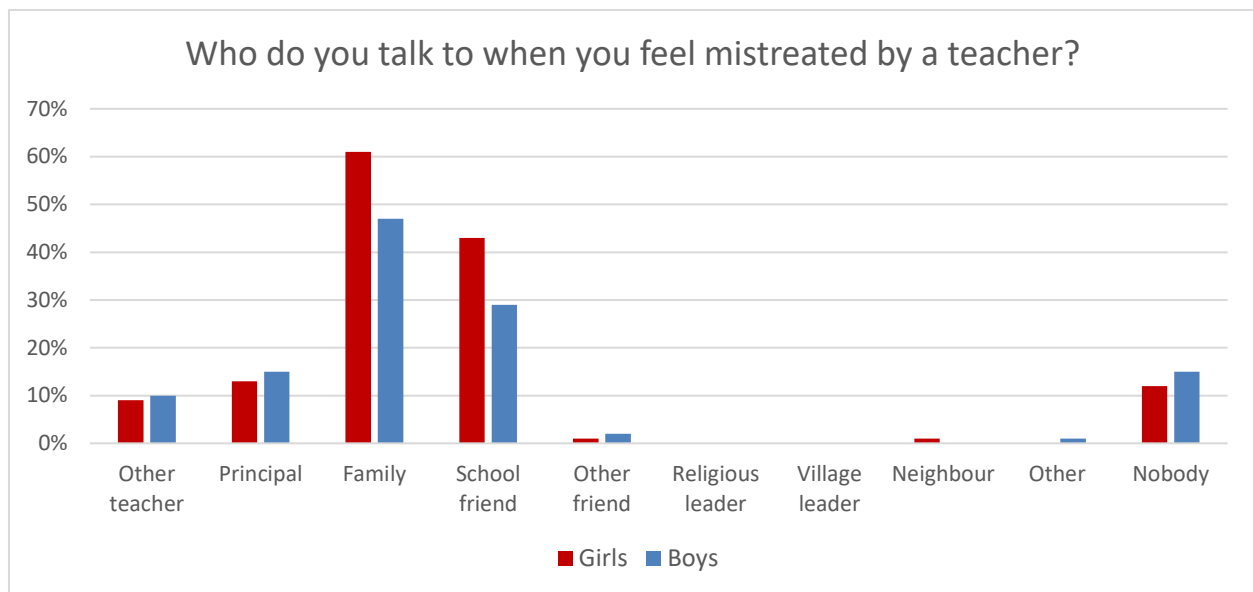


Figure 7: Who do boys and girls confide in when they feel mistreated by a teacher (579 observations, 288 girls and 291 boys)

### ***Teachers' reaction to misconduct***

The surveyed teachers were asked how they react when noticing another teacher uses an unacceptable form of discipline. The majority (60%) of teachers stated that they talk to the colleague in question. Almost half (48%) of the teachers also state to report the misconduct to the principal. The self-reported prevalence of doing nothing about it (7%) was low. This may be due to social desirability.

Figure 8 gives an overview of the answers for male and female teachers separately. Again men and women say to react to mistreatment in similar ways, however male teachers react a bit more often than female teachers.

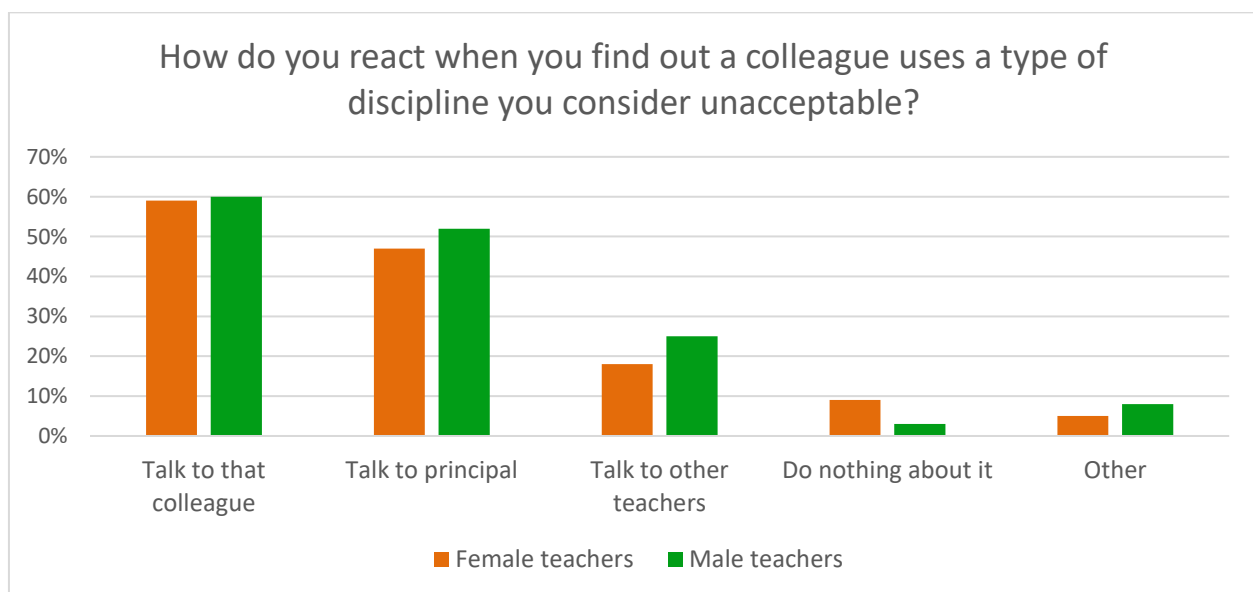


Figure 8: Teachers' reaction to misconduct of colleagues (223 observations, 158 women and 65 men)

### 6.1.3 Sexual violence

The current section describes the results regarding a third type of SRGBV, namely sexual violence. Below, the data regarding the prevalence, determinants and perceived threat of sexual violence are presented.

In the survey, children were asked how often they experience two types of sexual violence (on a Likert scale from 1 = never to 5 = very often). Table 11 gives an overview of the results. For each question, the mean lies between 1 (never) and 2 (seldom). So children's self-reported experience of sexual violence is low. This may explain why the multilevel regression analysis depicted in table 12 shows no significant determinants for sexual violence. The lack of respondents indicating experiencing sexual violence makes it hard to find significant determinants owing to lack of statistical power. Children may be scared to report sexual violence due to the taboo surrounding the topic. Further, children might not realise certain events that happened to them could be considered sexual violence. Therefore, the actual prevalence of sexual violence might be higher than the data suggest.

*Table 11: Prevalence of sexual violence*

<b>Students' experience of sexual violence</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Children being verbally harassed or shown pornographic pictures against their will	579	1.24	0.61	1	5
- Boys	291	1.21	0.57	1	5
- Girls	288	1.26	0.65	1	5
Children being physically harassed or touched in any unwanted manner	579	1.25	0.58	1	5
- Boys	291	1.34	0.66	1	5
- Girls	288	1.17	0.47	1	4

*Table 12: Multilevel regression analysis predicting experiencing sexual violence*

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>
	<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>Sexual violence</b>	<b>Sexual violence</b>
Male	0.121 (0.080)	0.120 (0.080)	0.121 (0.080)
Age	-0.008 (0.020)	-0.002 (0.021)	-0.001 (0.021)
Socio-economic status (Ref. = Poor)			
Comfortable household status		-0.038 (0.121)	-0.070 (0.127)
Rich household status		0.065 (0.134)	0.025 (0.142)
Father can read			-0.099 (0.136)
Mother can read			0.127 (0.115)
Observations	579	579	579
$\rho$	0.00	0.00	0.00

\* $p < 0.10$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

Standard error between brackets

Although table 12 shows no significant difference in prevalence of sexual violence for boys and girls, table 11 shows some difference in the type of sexual violence boys and girls experience. Boys encounter more physical harassment than girls. Several boys complained that other boys pull or touch their penis against their will, often during games. Girls are more often verbally harassed or forced to watch pornographic pictures than boys. Some girls said boys download these pictures and then make the girls watch them as a joke. This behaviour was prevalent in all age groups of the sample. One girl in grade 4 reported that the boys in her class hid pornographic pictures in her school books so she would be confronted with them while studying. This can be considered troublesome behaviour for children aged 8 or 9.

Children confronting other children with pornographic pictures against their will seems to be the most common form of sexual violence happening in schools. During the research, children who showed signs of mental discomfort or trauma were offered to meet a psychosocial worker. Ten children took this offer, all because of mild experiences of sexual violence like being shown pornographic pictures or movies unwillingly. More children experienced the same thing but did not require counselling for it.

Although mild forms of sexual violence happen regularly in Cambodian schools and more severe cases happen occasionally, the perceived threat of sexual violence against children in school is very low. Only 2% of the surveyed teachers believed it happens at least sometimes in their school. Only 3% of teachers said sexual violence happens to children from their school when they are on the way from home to school or back. Also, when asked about what scares them on the way to school in the survey, not one child answered sexual violence. This contradicts the fact that some parents keep their daughters from going to school because of the risk of sexual violence on the way to school. Especially in rural areas, parents believe girls could get sexually harassed on the way to school. Therefore, many girls are brought to school or should always travel in groups and cannot stay out after dark.

## 6.2 Safety in and around schools

### 6.2.1 Dangers on the way to school

During the qualitative interviews, nineteen children were asked if they ever feel afraid on the way to school. Eight children indicated they sometimes feel afraid. However, of the eleven that said they do not feel afraid, five secondary school girls said they always cycle to school in a group, otherwise they would be afraid of kidnapping and other violence.

In the survey, 174 out of 579 children (30.1%) indicated feeling unsafe on the way to school. An overview of what these 174 children fear the most can be found in table 13.

*Table 13: Dangers children experience on the way to school*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Obs.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max</b>
Feeling unsafe on the way to school	579	0.30	0.46	0	1
- Traffic	174	0.59	0.49	0	1
- Kidnapping	174	0.30	0.46	0	1
- Drug addicts or gang violence	174	0.16	0.37	0	1
- Robbery	174	0.11	0.31	0	1
- Wild animals	174	0.05	0.21	0	1
- Ghosts	174	0.03	0.18	0	1
- Bad road conditions	174	0.02	0.15	0	1
- Bad weather	174	0.01	0.08	0	1
- Sexual violence	174	0.00	0.00	0	0

The main danger for the 174 children who indicated feeling unsafe on the way to school was traffic (59.2%). Also during the interviews traffic turned out to be the most relevant danger on the way to school. Second, 29.9% of the children who feel afraid on the way to school fear kidnapping, this was also mentioned during the interviews. Cambodian children tell all sorts of wild stories about kidnappers selling children to foreign countries or killing children to steal their organs. In reality this happens rarely. In third and fourth place, children fear encountering drug addicts and gangs or being robbed on the way to school, these two items are strongly related. Many Cambodians claim that drug and alcohol abuse increased in recent decades, which they relate to the perceived increase in gang violence, stalkers and ‘mad’ people who are under influence along the roads. Further, in both the survey and interviews, a few children were afraid of wild animals like snakes and dogs; unfriendly ghosts on the way to school; angry teachers when arriving late in school; and dangerous road conditions because of bad weather. No children indicated sexual violence on the way to school as something they are afraid of.



### 6.2.2 Dangers in school

During the interviews the vast majority of children said they always feel safe in school. In the survey 93 children (16.1%) indicated they sometimes feel unsafe in school. An overview of what these children fear the most can be found in table 14.

*Table 14: Dangers children experience in school*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Obs</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Feeling unsafe in school	579	0.16	0.37	0	1
- Physical violence by other child	93	0.29	0.46	0	1
- Drug addicts or gang violence	93	0.18	0.39	0	1
- Physical violence by teacher	93	0.16	0.37	0	1
- Psychological violence by other child	93	0.14	0.45	0	1
- Psychological violence by teacher	93	0.12	0.33	0	1
- Thievery	93	0.12	0.33	0	1
- Sexual violence	93	0.01	0.10	0	1
- Dangerous building conditions	93	0.00	0.00	0	0
- No decent toilets	93	0.00	0.00	0	0

Out of the 93 children who indicated they sometimes feel unsafe in school, 29% indicated to be afraid of physical violence by fellow students and 18.3% was afraid of gang violence in school, often referring to groups of older children forming a gang. Third, children were afraid of teachers using physical violence (16.1%). Psychological violence by fellow students and teachers ranked fourth and fifth, respectively. Being stolen from came sixth with 11.8%. Three children were afraid of being kidnapped in school and two children feared exams and tests. Only one child said to be afraid of sexual violence in school. No children indicated dangerous building conditions or bad toilets as one of the safety issues that concerns them. During the interviews all children said there were separate toilets for boys and girls in school with doors that can be locked. The majority of children also thought the school toilets were clean enough. Some of these children may not realise that the sanitary provisions in school are not ideal and are therefore not concerned about it. Other children probably do not see it as an issue, thanks to the strong efforts NGOs and the Cambodian government put in the improvement of sanitary provisions in schools in recent years. A third group of children does not really care about toilets in school. Since they only go to school for a couple of hours per day, many children never use the school toilets. This appears to be at odds with the strong focus policy makers and school principals put on improving schools' sanitary facilities. When asked about important safety issues in schools, these people most often refer to the lack of proper school toilets, and the hygiene problems that come with it. They almost never named physical and emotional violence in school, which seem to be the main issues concerning children. It seems that policy makers and school leaders should shift their focus towards children's most pressing concerns.

## **6.3 Prevention**

### **6.3.1 Teacher training**

This chapter presents quantitative and qualitative findings regarding existing teacher trainings about gender equality and violence against children. The current pre-service teacher training curriculum includes chapters about gender equality and positive discipline. However, older teachers did not receive training on these topics in their days. Younger teachers said during the interviews that they only learned about gender equality and violence against children for a couple of hours during their pre-service training. Neary, an educational researcher at the Royal University of Phnom Penh, confirmed that the current teacher training programme includes only fifteen teaching hours about gender equality. Thus the implementation of the curriculum could be improved.

In-service teacher training in Cambodia is not provided by the state. Most in-service trainings are organised by NGOs who cooperate with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. For example, UNICEF has run many trainings on gender equality and violence against children in Battambang province. The majority of teachers who took part in the semi-structured interviews attended a training about positive discipline which was organised by UNICEF. Some of these teachers fully agreed to what they learned during the training and are using positive disciplinary measures at the moment. One teacher said that:

Once teachers switch their teaching methods towards positive discipline, they will realise it improves the relation between teacher and children. I find it very beneficial to be more friendly to children, we have a better relationship now. In this positive environment they can learn more because they are not afraid to make mistakes.

However, not all teachers see the benefits of positive discipline, many still use the stick regularly because they believe it is the most efficient method to make children pay attention and learn. A 32 year old female teacher said that “if the teacher is too soft, the children don’t listen and don’t learn a lot”. During the qualitative interviews, fifteen children were asked if their teachers give physical punishments (i.e. hitting a child or making a child hurt itself). Although twelve of these students answered yes, only two of the interviewed teachers admitted using physical disciplinary methods. This low self-reported prevalence is probably due to social desirability since most interviewed teachers claimed to be aware that it is against the law to hit children with a stick.

A third group of teachers changed their methods of discipline slightly, but not completely after the UNICEF training. According to some interviewed children, their teachers no longer use a stick since they followed the training, but they still hurt children in other ways or moved on to making children hurt themselves. It seems like these teachers did not completely grasp the content of the training regarding the benefits of positive discipline. They may only remember learning using the stick is not allowed, but not that all negative discipline can have detrimental effects on students.

Of the teachers who took part in the quantitative survey, 60% remember receiving a pre- or in-service training on gender equality, violence against children or both. However, only 40% of those teachers got the training less than 5 years ago. Another 38% received the training between 5 and 10 years ago. For 22% of these teachers the training was more than 10 years ago, making the current relevance of these trainings questionable.

Of the teachers who received training, 73% agreed or strongly agreed to the content of the training. However, 86% find it at least moderately difficult to apply what they learned during the training in their teaching. Traditional norms and values within the school culture, lack of understanding regarding the training content and a lack of resources may be hindering teachers from applying what they learned during the trainings. The interviewed teachers agree more resources and training are needed, one female 21 year old teacher said “we would need some books or documents about gender equality, or more teacher-training on it”.

### **6.3.2 Awareness raising for children**

The primary and secondary school curricula explicitly include gender equality and violence against children. Teachers need to educate children on these topics during social studies, morality and/or health lessons. During the interviews a male 55 year old teacher said “I try to teach my students about problems for women, empowering girls, equality for boys and girls”. All children who were asked in an interview if they learned about gender equality and violence against children answered yes. In the survey, 70% of the students stated to have learned about gender equality in the previous school year and 75% had learned about violence against children during the previous year.

However, during the qualitative interviews it became clear that children often do not really grasp the concepts of gender equality and violence reduction, or mix up both concepts. This may be because the teachers themselves have misconceptions about these concepts. A 42 year old female teacher said “I think gender equality means I cannot hit children with a stick” and “I attended a training about gender about a year ago but I forgot what it was about”. Some teachers also do not believe in the value of teaching about gender equality. One 50 year old female teacher said that:

There is too much equality between boys and girls nowadays. It results in boys and girls being too close to each other and not respecting the traditional gender roles anymore. Many societal problems would be solved if the Chbap Srey and Chbap Pros would be taught more again. I don’t think we should teach the gender equality that is in the curriculum.

The school curricula also include sexual education. However, it is focused on the reproductive system only. Not on the social aspects of sexuality like giving consent before sexual intercourse; gender identities; sexual orientation and so on. Therefore, this part of the curriculum is not related to gender equality teaching.

### 6.3.3 School policies

In the survey, teachers were asked if their school has policies on four topics relevant to this thesis. Table 15 shows that most teachers know school policies exist on gender equality, bullying and acceptable types of discipline. Less schools have policies on how to respond when a child experiences sexual violence, or less teachers know about the existence of such guidelines. However, within the group of teachers who know about the policies, the vast majority finds them at least moderately difficult to apply, sometimes even very difficult. Again, traditional school cultures and a lack of knowledge, skills and resources may keep teachers from applying the school guidelines. Improved teacher training would be beneficial to compensate for this lack of knowledge and skills. Recommendations on how to achieve this can be found in the following section of this thesis.

*Table 15: Teachers' knowledge on school policies*

	<b>Knowing about an existing school policy (223 observations)</b>	<b>Finding it difficult to apply</b>
Assuring gender equality in school	72%	87%
How to respond to bullying	70%	83%
Acceptable forms of discipline	83%	85%
How to respond to sexual violence	53%	86%

## **7. Discussion**

### **7.1 Summary of findings**

This chapter takes off with a summary of the results described in chapter 6. The paragraphs below aim to answer the following research questions for each type of school-related gender-based violence: What is the prevalence of the different types of school-related gender-based violence in the twenty TIGER target schools? Do teachers and students report similar SRGBV prevalence? What are the determinants of SRGBV?

#### **7.1.1 Gender-related bullying**

The first type of SRGBV that was analysed in the light of the abovementioned questions is gender-related bullying. In Cambodia, gender-related bullying involves first of all boys and girls bullying each other, often strongly influenced by traditional gender roles and stereotypes. The qualitative data show that boys and girls regularly make fun of each other, or push, kick, curse or exclude children of the opposite sex. The quantitative results show that the average child is bullied sometimes to often by the opposite sex. Besides between-sex bullying, Cambodian children are also bullied when they cross the border formed by gender stereotypes, for example by playing games or taking elective subjects that are traditionally done by the other gender. In this case, the victim is not only bullied by the opposite sex but by both gender groups at the same time. The survey results show that one third of the students believes that children should not play the opposite gender's games. The quantitative results also show that verbal violence is the most prevalent form of bullying, in comparison with physical violence and children taking each other's personal things. This holds true for bullying between boys and girls, but also towards children who cross the gender stereotype border. This finding is in line with the results of a study by World Vision Cambodia (2018) which shows that Cambodian children experience more verbal than physical violence.

The survey data show that teachers report a higher prevalence of bullying between boys and girls than the children themselves. This may be because teachers witness the children's interaction from a distance and report on the behaviour of the student group as a whole, while students respond about their own personal experience.

Several child-specific determinants of experiencing bullying were found in this study. Sex is a strong determinant for bullying. Girls experience all types of bullying more than boys. Age is a second significant determinant of gender-related bullying; the older children get, the less they are bullied. Third, children's self-reported socio-economic status (SES) is related to their experience of bullying. The richer a child feels, the less likely it is to be bullied by the opposite sex. This finding is in line with the statement by UNESCO (2015b) that poverty increases a child's experience of SRGBV and the study of UNICEF Cambodia (2016) which shows that in Cambodia poverty is a strong determinant for children experiencing violence at school.

Thus, three of the four variables tested in the current study have proven to determine children's experience of bullying, only the literacy level of parents has no significant association with children's experience of being bullied.

### **7.1.2 Corporal punishment**

The survey results show that the average child experiences negative physical discipline seldom to sometimes. Corporal punishment measures are less prevalent than giving children extra school work, but more prevalent than for example deducting marks from tests or shouting at children.

The quantitative data show that teachers and children agree on the prevalence of physical punishment in the twenty TIGER target schools. However, during the qualitative interviews the vast majority of children claimed to have experienced corporal punishment, while most teachers in the same schools insisted that physical punishment never happened in their school. This is in line with the finding of UNICEF Cambodia (2016) that students report more cases of violence committed by teachers than teachers themselves.

The survey results show one child-specific determinant of corporal punishment, namely sex. Boys are disciplined more often and more strongly than girls. This confirms the findings of UNICEF Cambodia (2016) and Plan Cambodia (2012) which were explained in chapter 2.4.5 of the current paper. The results of the current study show no significant correlation between a child's experience of corporal punishment and its age, its parents' literacy level and its self-reported socio-economic status. This contradicts the finding by UNESCO (2015b) that poverty increases a child's experience of SRGBV, this difference in results may be due to the fact that in the current study children had to self-report on their SES.

The qualitative data suggest two teacher-specific determinants of physical discipline, namely sex and age. There are indications that male teachers use more corporal punishment, while female teachers are more inclined to use other disciplinary methods like making a child do chores or giving extra homework. These findings confirm the results of the study conducted by Plan Cambodia (2012) on corporal punishment in Cambodian schools which were explained in section 2.4.5 of this thesis. During the interviews, the majority of children and teachers also stated that young teachers are more inclined to adopt positive disciplinary measures, while older teachers tend to be more conservative in their choice of punishments. They have used traditional violent disciplinary measures for years and may find it hard to change their methods. Knowing that younger teachers, who went through teacher training recently, seem to use more positive discipline than older teachers suggests a positive trend not to be underestimated. Although the qualitative data suggest that male teachers use more corporal punishment than female teachers and older teachers use more harsh disciplinary measures than young teachers, the quantitative results show no significant correlation between teachers' sex or age and their use of corporal punishment. This may be because the quantitative data are based on teachers' self-reported use of physical discipline, which may be underreported due to social

desirability. The same data also show no strong association between teachers' self-reported childhood socio-economic status and their self-reported use of corporal punishment.

### **7.1.3 Sexual violence**

Children's self-reported experience of sexual violence is low. The vast majority of children in the survey claimed they never or seldom experience sexual violence. However, talking about sexual violence is considered taboo in Cambodia and children may not realise certain events that happened to them could be considered sexual violence. Therefore, the actual prevalence of sexual violence might be higher than the survey results suggest. Although the quantitative data suggest a rather low prevalence of sexual violence, the qualitative data give some insight in the types of sexual violence that are most prevalent. During the interviews it became clear that the most common form of sexual violence happening in schools is children confronting other children with pornographic pictures against their will.

Both teachers and children perceive the threat of sexual violence against children in school and on the way to school to be low. So children and teachers agree on the prevalence of school-related sexual violence.

The quantitative data show no significant child-specific determinants of sexual violence. This may be due to lack of statistical power because of the low self-reported prevalence of sexual violence. This lack in variance may explain why the results contradict the finding of UNICEF Cambodia (2016) that children from disadvantaged backgrounds have a higher risk to become victim of sexual abuse. Although the current study found no significant correlation between children's sex and how often they experience sexual violence, the survey data give some insight into the types of sexual violence boys and girls encounter. Boys encounter more physical harassment than girls, while girls are more often verbally harassed or forced to watch pornographic pictures than boys.

## **7.2 Interpretation**

Overall, the quantitative results above show a rather low prevalence of all forms of SRGBV in the TIGER target schools, compared to data found by other organisations in Cambodia. For example, Plan Cambodia (2012) found that 83% of primary school children in Cambodia experience corporal punishment, while in the current study 'only' 46% of primary school children had been hurt by a teacher. As mentioned in chapter 2.3 of this thesis, all TIGER target schools are demonstration schools. These schools are situated in urban areas and work in close cooperation with a teacher training college, leaving them with more chances to develop and adopt modern teaching methods. This may explain the relatively low prevalence of SRGBV in the TIGER target schools, in comparison with the average Cambodian school. Although the quantitative results show a relatively low prevalence of SRGBV, the author is confident that the qualitative data offer valuable insights into the social dynamics which lay the foundations for the occurrence of SRGBV in

Cambodia. The most important of these dynamics is the wide and strong acceptance of physical and psychological violence, common in all layers of the Cambodian society. The general acceptance of violence showed itself in the baseline survey of World Vision's "It Takes a World to End Violence Against Children" campaign, as explained in section 2.4.5 of this thesis. The wide acceptance of violence was also confirmed repeatedly during the current thesis research, for example when the author witnessed how a group of children was playing a game on the school playground which involved girls and boys taking turns hitting each other with a whip.

When comparing the results of the current research with worldwide findings, several conclusions can be drawn. First, UNESCO (2015a) claims that worldwide most inequalities in education are at the expense of girls. The current study confirms that in Cambodia girls experience more gender-related bullying than boys and that gender norms are stricter for girls than for boys. Booth (2014) confirms that in Cambodia girls are socially more constrained than boys and the codes of conduct are stricter for women than for men. This aligns with the finding of Harber (2014) that parental attitudes and social constraints worldwide affect girls' access to education more than boys'. Second, even though UNESCO (2015a) states that worldwide girls experience more disadvantage in education than boys, the current study clearly shows that in Cambodia boys experience more corporal punishment than girls.

### **7.3 Limitations**

A first limitation of the current study lies in the fact that the interview and survey questions ask about self-reported behaviour, leaving room for subjective interpretations of the respondents' own behaviour. This especially holds true for sensitive topics like teachers' own use of corporal punishment or children's experience of sexual violence.

A second limitation is the high degree of social desirability. Students and especially teachers probably often provided social desirable answers to the interview and survey questions. The current study covers some sensitive topics, often shrouded in silence. Some respondents may not have been forthright in their answers, because they felt unsafe, ashamed or answering was too painful. This issue affects all research on sensitive topics, this is why it is important to triangulate survey results with qualitative data. It is important there are enough interviews to ensure a critical mass of frank responses, the author is confident this was achieved.

The third limitation of this research lies in the language barrier the author encountered while working with respondents who speak only Khmer. Even though a highly skilled interpreter was involved in the research, it remains difficult to fully grasp all nuances the respondents put in their answers to the interview questions in Khmer.

The fourth limitation is the fact that the research results cannot be generalised to schools outside the target group. The twenty schools that took part in this research are all demonstration schools which are located in



the urban area of Battambang. It is safe to assume they are more developed and use more modern teaching methods than the average Cambodian school. This may have an impact on the prevalence of SRGBV in these schools, making it impossible to draw a realistic picture about the occurrence of SRGBV in the average Cambodian school based on the available results. However, this poses no limitation to the value of the current research. The aim of the study was to provide a pre-test measurement for the TIGER intervention in twenty of its target schools, which was achieved.

## **7.4 Recommendations for policy and practice**

Even though the current study is only the first phase of a broader research project, the author can recommend certain adaptations to policy and practice in Cambodia in order to improve gender equality in education and reduce school-related gender-based violence. Following the recommendations can bring Cambodia closer to achieving the educational targets set in international and national policy documents, which are mentioned in the policy framework (chapter 2.2) of this thesis. Looking through the lens of the human rights-based approach to development, the author is confident that achieving the recommended improvements in education can add to the development of the country as a whole, bringing it one step closer to its goal of becoming an upper middle-income country by 2030.

### **7.4.1 Improve teacher training**

First and foremost, since the research results show that the majority of teachers find it hard to implement the preventive policies regarding SRGBV in their teaching, capacity development for teachers and school leaders on gender equality, positive discipline and violence against children is crucial. UNESCO (2015b) states that schools can help to prevent SRGBV if the school staff members have a detailed understanding of gender-based violence, and the stereotypes and structural inequalities on which it is based.

The current pre-service teacher training curriculum includes only a short chapter about these topics, the number of teaching hours spent on these subjects should be increased. The Cambodian pre-service teacher training system is currently being reorganised. The existing two-year training programme will be turned into a four-year bachelor study. This shift requires a redevelopment of the curriculum, the author recommends taking this opportunity to expand the chapters on gender equality and violence against children. Not only pre-service teacher training, but also in-service training on gender equality and violence against children should be increased. Several NGOs are running programmes about these topics. However, they remain to be a drop in the ocean. Hopefully, some of them prove to be efficient, so the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) decides to upscale them, because wider implementation of in-service training projects is paramount to ensure that the majority of Cambodian teachers can benefit from these programmes.

### **7.4.2 Recommendations for the TIGER intervention**

One of the programmes that will hopefully be upscaled by the MoEYS is the TIGER intervention. The author of this thesis has some recommendations for the training programme run by VVOB Cambodia and its partner NGOs.

Most importantly, the teachers and school leaders who take part in the capacity development programme should learn about the impact SRGBV has on children's health and well-being (which is explained in section 2.4.2 of this paper). Many school staff members are not aware of the physical and psychological effects of violence against children and may perceive certain violent behaviours as normal and acceptable within the Cambodian society. However, the results show that children are concerned about physical and psychological violence occurring in school.

Second, when it comes to bullying, the training should inform teachers about which types of gender-related bullying occur in schools. This study found that both bullying between boys and girls and bullying of children who cross the border formed by gender stereotypes occur in the TIGER target schools. Both of these forms of bullying include verbal and physical violent acts. It is important teachers are taught to recognise the different types of bullying and react adequately to them. The results show that verbal violence is the most prevalent form of gender-related bullying. For teachers, who are observing children's behaviour from a distance, verbal violence amongst children may be less obvious than physical violence. Knowing that the most prevalent form of bullying is the hardest to detect leaves a challenge for teachers, who should be trained in paying attention to verbal bullying. Further, teachers and school leaders should be informed about the fact that girls experience more gender-related bullying than boys and that the richer a child feels the less it is bullied. The school staff should learn to protect all children from bullying, but specific attention to girls and poor children on this matter would be beneficial. Finally, the training should take into account that younger children experience more bullying than older children, so maybe the trainings for teachers and school leaders in primary school can have a stronger focus on bullying than those for secondary school staff. Third, when it comes to corporal punishment, teachers should be trained in using positive discipline. They should learn which forms of discipline can be considered corporal punishment and why they have detrimental effects on children. But more importantly, they should be coached in using positive discipline. Many teachers are willing to change their disciplinary methods but find themselves lacking the skills to do so, they turn to physical punishments because they do not know how to efficiently discipline children in another way. As World Vision's study (which is explained in section 2.4.5) confirms, physical punishment is widely believed to be an effective way to make children learn. The TIGER training should provide teachers with sufficient feasible alternatives. Further, the intervention can inform teachers about the fact that this study found that boys are disciplined more often and stronger than girls. According to the traditional gender stereotype boys should be strong and able to handle physical punishments. Teachers should learn

that, despite what this stereotype makes them believe, corporal punishment is harmful for all children, boys and girls alike. Further, the training should convince male teachers that they do not need to comply with the gender stereotype which expects them to be fierce, male teachers can use positive discipline just as well as women. UNICEF Cambodia found that trainings on positive discipline have more impact on women than men, this is important to keep in mind in the design of the TIGER training. Finally, the training should inform teachers and school leaders that this study found that children are not really inclined to report corporal punishment to other teachers. School staff members should learn that it is not because children do not come to talk about a teacher using corporal punishment that they are not experiencing violent discipline. So school leaders and teachers should learn to recognise the signals for themselves, instead of waiting for children to report teacher misconduct.

Fourth, regarding sexual violence, teachers should learn which types of sexual violence occur in schools, so they can be trained in responding in an appropriate manner. Many teachers believe sexual violence entails only rape, they may not be aware that milder forms of sexual violence occur within the school's boundaries. Some children touch other children's private parts against their will or force them to watch pornographic pictures. Teachers may not know this occurs in school or they may perceive it as playful behaviour, not realising the impact it may have on the victims and thus not responding in a suitable manner.

Fifth, the intervention should provide teachers with general information about gender inequality and violence against children. During the interviews it became clear that many teachers believe these two concepts are one and the same thing. Although it is true that they are strongly related, and thus trainings should include both topics, they are not the same and teachers should learn about the difference.

Sixth, since this study found that girls are less inclined to confide in a teacher or school principal when they experience violence than boys, school staff members should learn to watch for other signals that a girl is suffering. It is important that teachers and school leaders do not draw the conclusion they cannot help a child, just because the child does not take the step to report violence.

Finally, the author advises VVOB to organise a follow-up coaching for the teachers and school leaders who participate in the training in the months after the training sessions. A coaching moment where participants can reflect on how they are implementing what they learned during the training is vital because the quantitative results show that the vast majority (86%) of teachers find it hard to apply knowledge they gathered during in-service trainings. During feedback sessions all participants can learn from each other's experiences. Such sessions would also allow VVOB to conduct some sort of formative assessment to check if the participants fully grasped the content of the training. This is vital because the qualitative results show that several teachers who received training on positive discipline in the past did not completely grasp the content of the training and moved on to forcing children to hurt themselves, leaving the training with an adverse effect.

### **7.4.3 Mentoring programmes**

Although capacity development for teachers and school leaders is crucial, trainings alone are not enough. It is paramount that school members who went to a training share their knowledge with colleagues. One should not assume all participants will do this automatically, structural mentoring programmes should be set up to follow up with the teachers who took part in the training on how they spread the word. Mentoring programmes increase the influence of an intervention, especially in the Cambodian context where teachers change schools regularly. A mentoring programme involving a peer-to-peer feedback system would allow teachers to learn from each other's methods. Peer-to-peer feedback systems can only work within a school-wide open-door culture, where teachers are free to walk into each other's class and observe each other's teaching. Besides offering plenty of learning opportunities, such an open-door culture also allows for social control regarding corporal punishment. Teachers observing each other can compensate for the fact that children are not really inclined to report corporal punishment to another teacher.

### **7.4.4 Awareness raising for children**

Not only teachers and school leaders, but also children should learn more about gender equality and violence against children. As mentioned in section 2.4.4 of this thesis, the World Health Organisation (WHO) developed a set of seven strategies to reduce violence against children, referred to as INSPIRE. The seventh strategy focuses on educating children in how to protect themselves and their peers from violence. Several authors confirm that schools can socialise messages about gender, equality and respect and that school-based prevention activities with children and youth are a good strategy to reduce gender-based violence (Harber, 2014; Storer et al., 2016; Stromquist, 2006; UNESCO, 2015a).

In Cambodia, gender equality and violence against children are specifically mentioned in the curriculum, but only briefly. An increase in teaching hours spent on these subjects is vital. Especially gender-related bullying should be included in the curriculum, so children are taught not to bully others and how to respond when they are bullied themselves. Further, the sexual education curriculum should be widened in scope. Currently, it is strongly focused on how the reproductive system works, the social aspects of sex are barely mentioned. Sex is a taboo topic in Cambodia. Therefore, almost everything youngsters know about it, they learned from watching pornographic videos. They may not realise that porn does not draw a realistic image about intimate relations. The sexual education curriculum should teach children about the importance of safe sex, free will in sexual relations and giving consent. Children may not know that certain behaviours could be considered sexual violence, they may think these actions are normal and unwillingly undergo them. Further, Cambodian students have barely any notion about the spectra of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). Including information about these spectra in the curriculum could stimulate children to let go some of the traditional gender roles and fully accept people with a SOGI different from what is considered

to be ‘normal’ in Cambodia. Finally, it is important to make sure children understand what they are taught about gender equality and violence against children through formative assessment activities.

#### **7.4.5 Awareness raising for parents**

Besides teachers, school leaders and children, parents and other caregivers are an important target group for awareness raising campaigns. The fourth focal point of the INSPIRE strategy set is parent and caregiver support. In this strategy, the WHO states that training, counselling, peer-support and home-visits can help caregivers in adopting alternatives to violent discipline and supporting children who become victim of violence. In Cambodia, parents and other caregivers should be educated about the impact of SRGBV on children and on how to notice signs that a child experiences violence. It is important to inform parents that in this study it became clear children encounter more bullying and corporal punishment than sexual violence, even though parents may be most concerned about their children encountering sexual violence. Thus parents may need to learn how to respond appropriately when their child becomes victim of gender-related bullying or corporal punishment.

#### **7.4.6 Reporting mechanisms within the student counsel**

Further, the author of this thesis recommends installing new reporting mechanisms for corporal punishment in Cambodian public schools. Currently, each school should have a counselling teacher. However, the results of this study show that children are more inclined to talk to school friends than teachers or the principal when they feel mistreated by a teacher. Therefore, it may be relevant to create a reporting mechanism within the school’s student counsel as well, thereby lowering the threshold for children to speak about teacher misconduct.

#### **7.4.7 Psychosocial support**

Last, based on the results, the author recommends improving psychosocial support for victims of violence in Cambodia. Currently, caregivers and teachers are often not aware of the psychological impact violence has on children. This is reflected in the traditional saying “I leave you my child to educate, just keep us his eyes and bones” which shows that people consider disciplinary measures to be too violent when there is blood or broken bones involved, but not when children suffer emotionally. Mental health is not a well-known concept in the Cambodian society and mental health care is scarce. More psychosocial support institutions with trained therapists are needed. They should be easily accessible and cooperate with public schools. In this way, children who experience SRGBV and other forms of violence in school can be referred to people with the necessary expertise for support. Currently, the Municipal/Provincial Women and Children Consultative Committee (WCCC) and the Commune/Sangkat Committee for Women and Children

(CCWC) are responsible for monitoring the welfare of children at a local level. The WCCCs and CCWCs raise awareness about violence against children in the communities, but victims can also go to these institutions to report a case of violence. However, World Vision Cambodia (2018) found that only 4% of Cambodians are aware of the WCCCs' and CCWCs' involvement in child protection cases. It would be relevant to inform teachers and school leaders about this function of the WCCCs and CCWCs, so that school staff members can refer children who become victim of violence to one of these institutions. Finally, the results of this thesis show that boys who experience SRGBV are inclined to report the issue to someone with authority to handle the problem, while girls search for emotional support and someone to confide in. Therefore, an improved psychosocial support system would be especially relevant for girls.

## **7.5 Recommendations for future research**

### **7.5.1 Adaptations to the survey guide**

The current study will be copied in twenty more intervention schools and twenty control schools. The author of this thesis recommends making a few adaptations to the existing survey guide. First of all, it would be valuable to establish a connection between the surveys of students and teachers. To allow for more thorough data analysis it would be necessary to let children answer some questions regarding the profile of their teachers, so a link can be made between the student and teacher data.

Second, the question that asks teachers to report their childhood socio-economic status (SES) should be adapted. Since most teachers were children during the Khmer Rouge regime, there is not enough variance in the answers to this question. This hinders drawing conclusions about the correlation between teachers' childhood SES and their own use of corporal punishment. It may be more valuable to pose questions on how much violence teachers experienced when they were young, or about their current SES.

Third, it may be relevant to add some questions to the survey to fathom children's wellbeing in school. The current survey guide contains one question about wellbeing. The aim of this question was to check if there is a correlation between children's experience of SRGBV and their wellbeing in school. However, the variance in this wellbeing variable was too low to draw any conclusions. More and better survey questions about children's wellbeing in school might solve this problem.

### **7.5.2 Further studies**

Besides the suggested adaptations to the survey guide, the author also has some proposals for future research studies. First of all, it would be valuable to do research in the forty TIGER target schools and twenty control schools which goes beyond SRGBV, but focuses on gender equality in general. The TIGER project has a broader focus than SRGBV alone, but it was beyond the scope of this thesis to do a baseline study which

includes the whole scope of the TIGER project. The author advises to invest in research to look into the gender-responsiveness of learning materials and teaching methods in the TIGER target schools.

Second, it might be relevant to do research on the prevalence of gender-based violence in Cambodia that is not school-related but happens at home or in the community. It would be interesting to study if schools who received training on gender-responsiveness can have a positive impact on the occurrence of non-school-related gender-based violence within the community.

Third, the current study involved key informants, school principals, teachers and students. It may be valuable to include other important stakeholders like parents and student teachers.

Last but not least, the author advises to conduct longitudinal research to study the impact of the TIGER project in its target schools but also the spill-over effect in the communities and other schools in Battambang province. It is advisable to investigate not only the change in prevalence of SRGBV but also the change in attitudes towards gender equality and violence against children. However, it is important to keep in mind that many Cambodian teachers change schools regularly. This means the post-test cohort may differ strongly from the pre-test cohort and teachers who do not take part in the TIGER in-service training may end up in the post-test cohort. Further, when performing longitudinal research with a difference-in-difference approach, one must keep in mind that the schools in the control group might not have the exact same circumstances as the intervention schools. The number of NGOs working in Cambodian education is very large, many schools are targeted by several NGO programmes at the same time. Some of these programmes might focus on similar topics as the TIGER project, making it hard to determine the effect of the TIGER project alone for schools where this is the case. This may influence the results of the longitudinal research studying the effectiveness of the TIGER project.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Participant list interviews with key informants

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Job / Position</b>	<b>Sex</b>
<i>NGO staff</i>		
Munny	BEST network director	Male
Veasna	GADC staff member	Male
Kannitha	Kape staff member	Female
Savady	Kape staff member	Female
Raksmei	PKO staff member	Male
Sara	See beyond borders staff member	Female
Nhean	See beyond borders staff member	Male
Aika	UNICEF Cambodia staff member	Female
Phirun	VVOB staff member	Male
Jorani	VVOB staff member	Female
Samsaren	VVOB staff member	Male
Sopheap	VVOB staff member	Male
Phoung	VVOB staff member	Female
Lisa	VVOB staff member	Female
Kim	World Vision staff member	Female
<i>Government staff</i>		
Samnang	Secretary of state of education policy and planning, chair of the gender working group within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and national SDG4 coordinator	Male
Nimith	Director of the Teacher Training Department of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	Male
Chea	Director of the Provincial Office of Education in Battambang province	Male
Channary	Gender focal person at the Provincial Office of Education in Battambang province	Female
Sathea	Director of the Sangkae District Office of Education, Battambang province	Male
Leakena	Director of the education department at the Ministry of Women's Affairs	Female
Nuon	Deputy director of the education department at the Ministry of Women's Affairs	Female
Leap	Deputy director of the education department at the Ministry of Women's Affairs	Male
Kolab	Director of the Provincial Department of Women's Affairs	Female
<i>Educational staff</i>		
Rith	Dean of the faculty of education at the Royal University Phnom Penh	Male
Neary	Vice dean of the faculty of education at the Royal University Phnom Penh	Female
Ponleak	Principal at a primary Teacher Training demonstration school	Male
<i>Others</i>		
Vireak	Journalist with experience in gender research	Male
Rangsei	Law school graduate with experience in gender research	Female

## Appendix 2: Consent form for research in schools

<i>Informed consent លិខិតអនុញ្ញាតិ</i>
<p>Title of the research project: Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER)</p> <p>Name and contact details of the researcher:</p> <p>Karen Van Horen, +855 885 931 402, kaat.vanhoren@student.kuleuven.be</p> <p>Research leader: Prof. Dr. Ides Nicaise, +32 16 323337, ides.nicaise@kuleuven.be</p> <p>Goal and methodology of the research:</p> <p>The TIGER project aims at improving gender equality and responsiveness in Cambodian schools through teacher training. The TIGER project will take place from 2017 until 2020. To support the project, interviews and surveys will be conducted in the schools that participate in the TIGER project.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>ចំណងជើងគម្រោងស្រាវជ្រាវ៖</p> <p>ការឆ្លើយតបនឹងសមធម៌យេនឌ័រក្នុងការបង្រៀន និងរៀន(TIGER)</p> <p>Teaching for Improved Gender Equality and Responsiveness (TIGER)</p> <p>ឈ្មោះ និងព័ត៌មានលម្អិតរបស់អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ៖</p> <p>Karen Van Horen, +855 885 931 402, kaat.vanhoren@student.kuleuven.be</p> <p>ឈ្មោះ និងព័ត៌មានលម្អិតរបស់អ្នកដឹកនាំការស្រាវជ្រាវ៖</p> <p>សាស្ត្រាចារ្យ បណ្ឌិត Ides Nicaise, +32 16323337, ides.nicaise@kuleuven.be</p> <p>គោលបំណង និងវិធីសាស្ត្រនៃការស្រាវជ្រាវ៖ គម្រោងការឆ្លើយតបនឹងសមធម៌យេនឌ័រក្នុងការបង្រៀន និងរៀន មានគោលបំណងដើម្បីធ្វើឱ្យប្រសើរឡើងលើការឆ្លើយតបសមធម៌យេនឌ័រនៅសាលារៀនក្នុងប្រទេសកម្ពុជា តាមរយៈការផ្តល់វគ្គបំប៉នដល់គ្រូបង្រៀន។ គម្រោង TIGER នឹងចាប់ផ្តើមដំណើរការពីឆ្នាំ២០១៧ ដល់២០២០។ ដើម្បីជួយគាំទ្រដល់គម្រោង កិច្ចសម្ភាសន៍និងការស្ទាបស្ទង់មតិនឹងប្រព្រឹត្តទៅនៅសាលាដែលសហការជាមួយ គម្រោង TIGER។</p>

I, ....., the principal of ....., agree to let all my school members, including pupils and staff, participate in a research project led by Prof. Dr. Ides Nicaise from the KULeuven university, Belgium. The purpose of this document is to specify the terms of my school's participation in the project.

ខ្ញុំបាទ/នាងខ្ញុំឈ្មោះ.....ជានាយកនៃសាលា.....យល់ព្រមឱ្យលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ បុគ្គលិក និងសិស្សចូលរួមនៅក្នុងគម្រោងសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវដែលដឹកនាំដោយសាស្ត្រាចារ្យ បណ្ឌិត Ides Nicaise មកពីសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ KULeuven ប្រទេសប៊ែលហ្ស៊ិក។ លិខិតនេះបញ្ជាក់អំពីខ្លឹមសារដូចខាងក្រោម៖

- I understand that the purpose of this study is to improve gender equality and responsiveness in Cambodian schools.
- ខ្ញុំបានយល់អំពីគោលបំណងនៃការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវគឺដើម្បីធ្វើឱ្យប្រសើរឡើងនូវការឆ្លើយតបនឹងសមធម៌យេនឌ័រនៅតាមសាលារៀននៅក្នុងប្រទេសកម្ពុជា។

- I am aware that I, the teachers and pupils at my school will be participating in interviews and surveys to determine the level of gender responsiveness of the school. Participation in interviews and surveys is completely voluntary. My school members have the right not to answer any of the questions and withdraw from taking part in interviews and surveys at any point in time.

- ខ្ញុំបានដឹងថាខ្លួនខ្ញុំផ្ទាល់ លោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ និងសិស្សានុសិស្សទាំងអស់នៅសាលារបស់ខ្ញុំ នឹងចូលរួមកិច្ចសម្ភាសន៍

ការស្ទាបស្ទង់មតិដើម្បីកំណត់អំពីកម្រិតនៃការឆ្លើយតបផ្នែកយេនឌ័រនៅក្នុងសាលារៀនរបស់ខ្ញុំ។

ការចូលរួមនៅក្នុងការសម្ភាសន៍ និងបំពេញកម្រងសំណួរទាំងឡាយនឹងធ្វើឡើងតាមគោលការណ៍ស្ម័គ្រចិត្ត។

អ្នកចូលរួមទាំងអស់មានសិទ្ធិមិនឆ្លើយសំណួរណាមួយ ឬបញ្ឈប់កិច្ចសម្ភាសន៍បានគ្រប់ពេល។

- Participation in interviews involves being interviewed by a researcher from the KULeuven. The interviews will last approximately 60 minutes. I allow the researcher to take written notes during the interviews. I also allow the recording by audio tape of the interviews. In case any of the participants does not want the interview to be taped there will be no recording.

- កិច្ចសម្ភាសន៍នេះធ្វើឡើងដោយអ្នកសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវមកពីសាកលវិទ្យាល័យ KULeuven

ហើយគ្រប់ការសម្ភាសន៍មានរយៈពេលប្រហែល៦០នាទី។ ខ្ញុំអនុញ្ញាតិឱ្យកត់ត្រា

និងថតសម្លេងទុកក្នុងអំឡុង ពេលសម្ភាសន៍ផងដែរ។

ក្នុងករណីដែលអ្នកចូលរួមមិនអនុញ្ញាតិឱ្យថតសម្លេង សូមកុំថតសម្លេងរបស់គាត់។

- Participation in surveys involves answering closed-ended questionnaires. Participating in the survey will take approximately 15 minutes.

- ការចូលរួមនៅក្នុងការស្ទាបស្ទង់មតិនេះក៏មានការបំពេញកម្រងសំណួរ

ដែលមានរយៈពេលប្រហែល១៥នាទី។

- I hereby grant the permission to VVOB Cambodia, its representatives and employees the right to take and use photographs of the children in my school for use in news releases and/or educational materials.

- ខ្ញុំបានអនុញ្ញាតិឱ្យតំណាង ឬបុគ្គលិកអង្គការ VVOB ថតរូប សិស្សនៅសាលារបស់ខ្ញុំ

ហើយអាចប្រើប្រាស់រូបទាំងនេះនៅក្នុងរបាយការណ៍

និងផ្សព្វផ្សាយផ្សេងៗដែលបម្រើឱ្យការងារអប់រំ។

- My school may benefit from participating in this study because teacher training on gender responsive education will be provided.

- សាលារៀនរបស់ខ្ញុំអាចទទួលបាននូវផលប្រយោជន៍ល្អពីការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ

តាមរយៈវគ្គបំប៉នសមត្ថភាព លើការឆ្លើយតបនឹងយេនឌ័រ។

- The results of this study can be used for scientific purposes and can be published. My school members' names will not be published and confidentiality of the data is maintained at each stage of the research.
- លទ្ធផលដែលបានមកពីការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវអាចនឹងវិភាគតាមបែបវិទ្យាសាស្ត្រ និងបោះពុម្ពផ្សព្វផ្សាយ។  
ប៉ុន្តែឈ្មោះអ្នកចូលរួមផ្តល់ចម្លើយទាំងឡាយនឹងត្រូវបានរក្សាជាការសម្ងាត់។
- For any questions, complaints or further information on the study, I know that I can contact Karen Van Horen at kaat.vanhoren@student.kuleuven.be or the research leader, Prof. Dr. Ides Nicaise at ides.nicaise@kuleuven.be
- រាល់សំណួរ ឬការតវ៉ាផ្សេងៗទាក់ទងនឹងការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ ខ្ញុំអាចទាក់ទង កញ្ញា Karen Van Horen តាមរយៈអ៊ីម៉ែល kaat.vanhoren@student.kuleuven.be ឬអ្នកដឹកនាំការស្រាវជ្រាវ សាស្ត្រាចារ្យ បណ្ឌិត Ides Nicaise តាម អ៊ីម៉ែល ides.nicaise@kuleuven.be
- I have read and understood the points and statements of this form. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to let all my school members participate in this study.
- ខ្ញុំបានអាននិងយល់ព្រមគ្រប់ចំណុចទាំងអស់ក្នុងឯកសារនេះ ហើយខ្ញុំស្ម័គ្រចិត្តយល់ព្រមឱ្យលោកគ្រូ អ្នកគ្រូ សិស្សានុសិស្សនៅក្នុងសាលាទាំងអស់របស់ខ្ញុំចូលរួមនៅក្នុងការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវនេះ។
- I have been given a copy of this consent form co-signed by the researcher.
- ខ្ញុំបានទទួលលិខិតអនុញ្ញាតិឱ្យធ្វើការសិក្សាស្រាវជ្រាវចំនួន០១ច្បាប់  
ហើយលិខិតមានការចុះហត្ថលេខារួមគ្នា  
ជាមួយអ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ។

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's name and signature  
ឈ្មោះនាយកសាលា និងហត្ថលេខា

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
ធ្វើនៅថ្ងៃទី

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's name and signature  
ឈ្មោះអ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ និងហត្ថលេខា

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
ធ្វើនៅថ្ងៃទី



### Appendix 3: Participants of the exploratory interviews in schools

Pseudonym	Function	Sex	Age	School
Atith	Principal	Male	38	Rural primary
Pisey	Principal	Male	43	Urban primary
Rathanak	Principal	Male	51	Urban secondary
Arunny	Principal	Female	58	Rural secondary
Chamroeun	Teacher Khmer	Male	30	Urban secondary
Bunroeun	Teacher grade 6	Male	33	Rural primary
Sov	Teacher grade 6	Male	34	Urban primary
Davuth	Teacher grade 5	Male	37	Rural primary
Khean	Teacher Morality	Male	55	Rural secondary
Rotha	Teacher English	Female	21	Rural secondary
Kaliyanei	Teacher grade 4	Female	32	Rural primary
Tevy	Teacher grade 5	Female	41	Urban primary
Champey	Teacher grade 1	Female	42	Urban primary
Kesor	Teacher Geography	Female	50	Urban secondary
Kiry	Student grade 4	Male	10	Urban primary
Sokun	Student grade 4	Male	10	Urban primary
Piseth	Student grade 5	Male	10	Rural primary
Montha	Student grade 4	Male	12	Rural primary
Boran	Student grade 4	Male	12	Rural primary
Narith	Student grade 6	Male	12	Urban primary
Kravann	Student grade 6	Male	12	Urban primary
Darany	Student grade 7	Male	13	Urban secondary
Kosal	Student grade 8	Male	13	Rural secondary
Nimol	Student grade 5	Male	14	Rural primary
Phala	Student grade 9	Male	15	Rural secondary
Maly	Student grade 4	Female	9	Rural primary
Kunthea	Student grade 4	Female	10	Rural primary
Sothira	Student grade 4	Female	10	Rural primary
Rachany	Student grade 5	Female	10	Urban primary
Kolthida	Student grade 5	Female	12	Urban primary
Sokha	Student grade 6	Female	12	Rural primary
Chanly	Student grade 7	Female	12	Rural secondary
Kalyan	Student grade 8	Female	12	Urban secondary
Sovanna	Student grade 6	Female	13	Rural primary
Punthea	Student grade 7	Female	15	Urban secondary
Sreynu	Student grade 9	Female	16	Urban secondary
Chantav	Student grade 9	Female	16	Rural secondary

#### Appendix 4: Matrix of interview questions

	Gender equality	Bullying	Verbal harassment	Corporal punishment	Sexual violence	Safety in and around schools
Experiences in the personal environment	EXGE	EXBU	EXVH	EXCP	EXSV	EXSA
Perceptions						
- Personal	PPGE	PPBU	PPVH	PPCP	PPSV	PPSA
- Other stakeholders	OPGE	OPBU	OPVH	OPCP	OPSV	OPSA
- Society	SPGE	SPBU	SPVH	SPCP	SPSV	SPSA
Attitudes	ATGE	ATBU	ATVH	ATCP	ATSV	ATSA
Policy measures	POGE	POBU	POVH	POCP	POSV	POSA

## Appendix 5: Interview guide for principals

### *Introduction*

Hello, my name is Kaat and I am in Cambodia to do research about differences in treatment and behaviour between boys and girls and the presence of different form of violence in Cambodian schools. Would you like to answer some questions about your own experiences and ideas? Participation is completely voluntary and highly appreciated.

If teacher agrees to participate: This interview is very important for my research, so you can freely share your thoughts on the subject. I would like to get an insight to your personal opinions and experiences, so please don't just stick to what the policy says. Nobody will get insight into your answers, the answers will only be used anonymously in my research which is in no way related to the government.

### *General questions to get the conversation going*

How old are you?

How long have you been a principal here? Did you work in other schools before? (if so) how long?

How many teachers are there in your school? How many of them are men/women?

How many students are there in your school? How many of them are boys/girls?

Which grades go to school in the morning shift? And in the afternoon shift?

### *Questions relating to the matrix*

<b>PPGE</b>	1.	Could you explain in your own words what you think gender means? And gender equality?
<b>SPGE</b>	2.	Can you give examples of Cambodian traditional gender roles that are in place in society (regarding jobs, life, education...)?
	3.	Is it hard to talk about this sort of things in Cambodian society?
<b>OPGE</b>	4.	Which challenges do you think boys and girls in Cambodia face? In school? And outside school?
	5.	Which challenges do you think female and male teachers face?
<b>PPGE</b>	6.	Which challenges/opportunities do you get, being a man/woman in Cambodia?
	7.	Do you think boys and girls have different abilities? If so, what are they? Who performs better?
	8.	Do you have children?
		If yes: What future would you see for your son/daughter?
<b>OPGE</b>	9.	How do you think most parents think about the future of their sons and daughters nowadays?
	10.	Has this view changed a lot in recent years?
<b>PPGE</b>	11.	Do you think boys and girls are treated the same in school?
		If yes: In which way? Why do you think there is a difference in treatment?
		➔ Possible probes: answering questions in class, leading/presenting group assignments, coming to the board, being ignored in class
<b>POGE</b>	12.	Do you know what the government expects from teachers when it comes to incorporating gender into their teaching? And from the school management? Do you organise gender training for teachers?
	13.	Have you ever received gender training (pre-service and/or in-service)?
		If yes: When was that? Do you have examples of things you learned in gender training? Do you apply this in your school management? How?
	14.	Which (human) resources and policies would be/are essential to incorporate gender teaching in your school?

<b>EXBU</b>	15.	Do children in Cambodian schools sometimes get bullied because of their gender (bullying refers to people calling each other names or pushing/pulling/punching each other or destroying each other's stuff or gossiping, and this happening multiple times by the same people)? Who gets bullied? By who? When? How?
	16.	Does it happen in this school too? Who gets bullied? By who? When? How? → Example situations to probe the conversation: - Boys that want to play rope skipping get bullied, they are called transgender or girls, the same happens to girls that want to play football. - Boys that show their emotions are bullied for acting too weak, like a girl. - Cyberbullying.
<b>POBU</b>	17.	How do you feel when children are bullied? How would you feel/react when it happens?
<b>PPBU</b>	18.	Why do you think this sort of gender related bullying happens?
<b>POBU</b>	19.	Is there a policy in place about bullying in school? If yes: How are teachers informed about this policy? How are children informed about this policy? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What happens when someone does not follow it? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?
<b>EXVH</b>	20.	Do children in Cambodian schools sometimes get verbally harassed/called bad names because of their gender? Who gets harassed? By who? When? How?
	21.	Does it happen in this school too? Who gets harassed? By who? When? How? → Example situations to probe the conversation: - Boys that say girls are weak, girls that say boys are stupid. - Girls who have male friends are called "bad/naughty/slutty girl" in Khmer. - Teachers expect boys to be good at mathematics and girls at art, if not the teacher calls them bad names.
<b>PPVH</b>	22.	Why do you think boys and girls experience verbal harassment?
<b>ATVH</b>	23.	How do you feel when children are verbally harassed? How would you feel/react when it happens in this school?
<b>EXCP</b>	24.	What are the most common forms of punishment when students misbehave in this school?
	28.	Is physical punishment frequently used in Cambodian schools? And in this school? Can you give example situations?
	29.	Do you think there is a difference in how most teachers punish boys and girls?
<b>PPCP</b>	30.	Why do you think some teachers use physical punishment?
<b>ATCP</b>	31.	When a pupil is acting disrespectful or misbehaving in school, what do you see as acceptable and unacceptable discipline measures?
	32.	Do you feel like certain forms of physical punishment are acceptable? If so, which forms?
	33.	How would you feel/react if a teacher uses a form of discipline that you find unacceptable?
<b>POCP</b>	34.	Is there a policy in place about acceptable forms of punishment and the use of physical discipline in the school? If yes: How are the teachers informed about this policy? How do you make sure they follow this policy? What happens when they don't not follow it? How are children informed about this policy? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?

<b>EXSV</b>	35.	My research also deals with violence against boys and girls in school. This includes many forms of violence, like everything we talked about before (bullying, verbal harassment and physical punishment) but also sexual violence. This includes unwanted sexual comments, unwanted touching and only in worst cases rape. Do you know about Cambodian children that ever experienced sexual violence in school or on the way to school? What happened? Where did it happen (on the way to school, in school, where in school)? Who was involved (pupils, staff members, strangers outside school)?
	36.	Did it ever happen to a child of this school?
<b>PPSV</b>	37.	Why do you think (boys and) girls experience sexual violence?
<b>ATSV</b>	38.	How do you feel when children experience sexual violence in school/on the way to school?
	39.	How would you react when it happens?
<b>POSV</b>	40.	Is there a policy in place about sexual violence in school? If yes: How are the teachers and children informed about this policy? What happens when someone does not follow it? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?

Thank you very much for the interview, this was very useful for my research. Everything you said will remain between us.

## Appendix 6: Interview guide for teachers

### *Introduction*

Hello, my name is Kaat and I am in Cambodia to do research about differences in treatment and behaviour between boys and girls and the presence of different form of violence in Cambodian schools. Would you like to answer some questions about your own experiences and ideas? Participation is completely voluntary and highly appreciated.

If teacher agrees to participate: This interview is very important for my research, so you can freely share your thoughts on the subject. I would like to get an insight to your personal opinions and experiences, so please don't just stick to what the policy says. Nobody will get insight into your answers, the answers will only be used anonymously in my research which is in no way related to the government.

### *General questions to get the conversation going*

How old are you?

How long have you been a teacher here? Did you work in other schools before? (if so) how long?

Which subjects do you teach? In which grades? Do boys or girls generally perform better?

How many children are there in your class(es), how many boys, how many girls?

### *Questions relating to the matrix*

<b>PPGE</b>	1.	Could you explain in your own words what you think gender means? And gender equality?
<b>SPGE</b>	2.	Can you give examples of Cambodian traditional gender roles that are in place in society (regarding jobs, life, education...)?
	3.	Is it hard to talk about this sort of things in Cambodian society?
<b>OPGE</b>	4.	Which challenges do you think boys and girls in Cambodia face? In school? And outside school?
	5.	Which challenges do you think female and male school staff members face?
<b>PPGE</b>	6.	Which challenges/opportunities do you get, being a man/woman in Cambodia?
	7.	Do you think boys and girls have different abilities? If so, what are they?
	8.	Do you have children? If yes: What future would you see for your son/daughter?
<b>OPGE</b>	9.	How do you think most parents think about the future of their sons and daughters nowadays?
	10.	Is this view changing?
<b>PPGE</b>	11.	Do you think boys and girls are treated the same in school? If no: In which way? Why do you think there is a difference in treatment? ➔ Possible probes: answering questions in class, leading/presenting group assignments, coming to the board, being ignored in class
<b>POGE</b>	12.	Do you know what the government expects from you when it comes to incorporating gender into your teaching?
	13.	Have you ever received training (pre-service and/or in-service) about gender issues and/or violence against children? If yes: When was that? Do you have examples of things you learned in gender training? Do you apply this when you are teaching? How?
	14.	Which (human) resources and policies would be/are essential to incorporate gender teaching in your teaching?

<b>EXBU</b>	15.	Do children in Cambodian schools sometimes get bullied because of their gender (bullying refers to people calling each other names or pushing/pulling/punching each other or destroying each other's stuff or gossiping, and this happening multiple times by the same people)? Who gets bullied? By who? When? How?
	16.	Does it happen in this school too? Who gets bullied? By who? When? How? → Example situations to probe the conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boys that want to play rope skipping get bullied, they are called transgender or girls, the same happens to girls that want to play football.</li> <li>- Boys that show their emotions are bullied for acting too weak, like a girl.</li> <li>- Cyberbullying.</li> </ul>
<b>POBU</b>	17.	How do you feel when children are bullied? How would you feel/react when it happens?
<b>PPBU</b>	18.	Why do you think this sort of gender related bullying happens?
<b>POBU</b>	19.	Is there a policy in place about bullying in school? If yes: How were you informed about this policy? How are children informed about this policy? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What happens when someone does not follow it? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?
<b>EXVH</b>	20.	Do children in Cambodian schools sometimes get verbally harassed/called bad names because of their gender? Who gets harassed? By who? When? How?
	21.	Does it happen in this school too? Who gets harassed? By who? When? How? → Example situations to probe the conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boys that say girls are weak, girls that say boys are stupid.</li> <li>- Girls who have male friends are called "bad/naughty/slutty girl" in Khmer.</li> <li>- Teachers expect boys to be good at mathematics and girls at art, if not the teacher calls them bad names.</li> </ul>
<b>PPVH</b>	22.	Why do you think boys and girls experience verbal harassment?
<b>ATVH</b>	23.	How do you feel when children are verbally harassed? How would you feel/react when it happens?
<b>EXCP</b>	24.	When a pupil is not respecting you/shouting in the class/acting out, what do you do?
	25.	Is there a difference on how boys and girls are punished in your class? Why or why not?
	26.	Have you ever felt like you had to use physical punishment? If yes: When was that? Was it effective when you did?
	27.	Have you ever seen another staff member use physical punishment? If yes: Who was it to (boy or girl)? What happened?
	28.	Is physical punishment frequently used in Cambodian schools? And in this school?
	29.	Do you think there is a difference in how most teachers punish boys and girls?
<b>PPCP</b>	30.	Why do you think some teachers use physical punishment?
<b>ATCP</b>	31.	When a pupil is acting disrespectful or misbehaving in school, what do you see as acceptable and unacceptable discipline measures? (sometimes give examples and ask to give an acceptability score) Do you feel like certain forms of physical punishment are acceptable? If so, which forms? (sometimes give examples and ask to give an acceptability score)
	32.	How would you feel/react if another teacher uses a form of discipline that you find unacceptable?
	33.	

<b>POCP</b>	34.	Is there a policy in place about acceptable forms of punishment and the use of physical discipline in the school? If yes: How were you informed about this policy? How do you make sure you follow this policy? What happens when you don't follow it? How are children informed about this policy? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?
<b>EXSV</b>	35.	My research also deals with violence against boys and girls in school. This includes many forms of violence, like everything we talked about before (bullying, verbal harassment and physical punishment) but also sexual violence. This includes unwanted sexual comments, unwanted touching and only in worst cases rape. Do you know about Cambodian children that ever experienced sexual violence in school or on the way to school? What happened? Where did it happen (on the way to school, in school, where in school)? Who was involved (pupils, staff members, strangers outside school)?
	36.	Did it ever happen to a child of this school?
<b>PPSV</b>	37.	Why do you think (boys and) girls experience sexual violence?
<b>ATSV</b>	38.	How do you feel when children experience sexual violence in school/on the way to school?
	39.	How would you react when it happens?
<b>POSV</b>	40.	Is there a policy in place about sexual violence in school? If yes: How were you informed about this policy? What happens when someone does not follow it? How are children informed about this policy? Are there preventive campaigns about this? What can children do if they feel like they are victim? How are the children helped? What are the sanctions?

Thank you very much for the interview, this was very useful for my research. Everything you said will remain between us.



## Appendix 7: Interview guide for students

### *Introduction*

Hello, my name is Kaat and I am here to learn about the behaviour of boys and girls and teachers in and around school. Would you like to answer some questions about your own experiences and ideas? You are free to say no, you can choose if you want to join the interview.

If child agrees to participate: This interview is very important for my study, so you can say anything you think about, all answers are good, this is not like a test, I would like to get insight into your personal ideas and experiences. Nobody will get insight into your answers, the answers will only be used anonymously in my research, the principal and teachers and parents will never get to see your answers.

### *General questions to get the conversation going*

How old are you?

What grade are you in?

How many children are there in your class? How many boys and girls are there in your class?

What are the best things about being at school? What do you like about school?

### *Questions relating to the matrix*

<b>EXBU</b>	1.	What are your favourite activities during recess time? Do you do these activities/games with boys and girls, or only boys/girls? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- If game is played with own gender only: How would you react if a child of the other sex would like to join?</li><li>- If game is played mostly by opposite gender: How do the children react if you (want to) play this?</li></ul>
	2.	What is your favourite school subject? Who generally performs better at this subject, boys or girls?
<b>PPGE</b>	3.	Do you think girls can play football? Do you think boys can play rope skipping?
	4.	Are there games or favourite subjects that are only for boys/girls?
	5.	What is your dream job, what would you love to do when you grow up? Are there many men/women doing this job? How do your parents feel about your dream job?
	6.	Have you ever heard about the word gender? If yes: Could you explain in your own words what you think it means?
<b>ATGE</b>	7.	Do you think men/boys and women/girls can do the same things? Why (not)? Where did you learn this idea (books, parents, teachers...)?
	8.	Do you think women can be architects? Do you think men can stay at home to take care of the children?
<b>SPGE</b>	9.	How do the people in your community talk about the differences between boys and girls?
	10.	Can you give examples of activities/jobs that are considered to be for boys/girls only?

<b>EXBU</b>	11.	What happens when a boy wants to play a girls' game or a girl wants to play a boys' game? Or if a girl likes a boys' subject and a boy likes a girls' subject? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does that boy/girl get called names/laughed with/pointed at...? (verbal)</li> <li>- Does that boy/girl get pushed/pulled/punched...? (physical)</li> <li>- Does that boy/girl get gossiped about/things taken away or destroyed from?</li> </ul>
	12.	Has this happened to you? Have you ever seen this happening to another boy/girl? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If yes: What did the other children do or say? Did it happen more than one time? Was it always the same children? Who was involved, boys and/or girls?</li> </ul>
	13.	Have you ever been called names or had bad things said to you or about you through Facebook, Messenger, text message, Line? What happened?
	14.	Do you know of boys/girls that have had this happen? What happened?
<b>POBU</b>	15.	Are there school rules about bullying (calling bad names, pushing, pulling)?
	16.	How did you learn about these rules?
	17.	What happens when someone does not follow the rules?
	18.	Who can you go to when someone calls you names or pushes/pulls/punches you or says bad things online or takes things away from you or gossips about you?
<b>EXVH</b>	19.	Did you ever hear someone call someone else bad names because he is a boy/she is a girl? If yes: Who was it? A teacher or a pupil? A boy or a girl? ➔ Example situations to probe the conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boys that say girls are weak, girls that say boys are stupid.</li> <li>- Girls who have male friends are called "bad/naughty/slutty girl" in Khmer.</li> </ul>
	20.	Did a teacher ever pick on you/a friend of you because of being a boy/girl? ➔ Example situations to probe the conversation: Teachers expect boys to be good at mathematics and girls at art, if not the teacher calls them bad names.
<b>ATGE</b>	21.	Do you think teachers should treat boys and girls the same? Why (not)?
<b>OPGE</b>	22.	Do you feel like the teachers treat boys and girls the same in class? Why (not)? ➔ Probe for answering questions in class, coming to the board, presenting group work
<b>EXCP</b>	23.	Do the teachers sometimes punish children that are misbehaving? When do they punish? Which sort of punishment for which sort of behaviour?
	24.	Have you ever seen a child getting physical punishment? What happened?
	25.	Did you ever get physical punishment yourself? What happened?
<b>OPCP</b>	26.	Why do you think some teachers use physical punishment?
<b>EXCP</b>	27.	Do the teachers use different forms of punishment for boys and girls?
<b>POCP</b>	28.	If yes on previous question: Why do you think some teachers use different forms of physical punishment for boys and girls?
<b>ATCP</b>	29.	Do you think boys and girls should get the same type of punishment if they misbehave? Why (not)?
<b>POCP</b>	30.	Are there school rules about physical punishment?
	31.	How did you learn about these rules?
	32.	What happens when a teacher does not follow the rules?
	33.	Who can you go to if you feel like a teacher does not treat you well?

<b>PPSA</b>	34. 35. 36. 37.	How do you come to school, by which means of transport? How long does it take you to get from your house to school? Do you ever feel unsafe on the way to school? If yes: What do you think could happen on the way to school? Have you ever stayed home from school because you felt unsafe at school/on the way to school?
<b>EXSA</b>	38.	Do you know about children that had something bad happen to them on their way to school? What happened? Was it a boy or a girl?
<b>PPSA</b>	39.	Do you ever feel unsafe (like something bad can happen to you) in school? If yes: What makes you feel unsafe in school? Where in school do you feel unsafe?
<b>EXSA</b>	40.	Do you know about children that had something bad happen to them in school? What happened? Was it a boy or a girl?
<b>POSA</b>	41. 42. 43. 44.	Are there any toilets in school? Are they separated for boys and girls? Are the toilets clean? Can you lock the toilet doors?
<b>EXSA</b>	45.	For girls: did you already have your period? If yes: How do you feel about using the school toilets when you are on it? Do boys call you names or anything else because you have your period?
<b>EXSV</b>	46.        47.	Did someone ever say things to you/show you images that were related to sex that you did not like to hear/see? Or do you have examples of this sort of situations that happened to your friends? If yes: Who was it (teacher/pupil, male/female)? Where did it happen (on the way to school/place in school)? What did he/she say/show? How did you/your friend react? Did someone ever try to touch a part of your body that you don't like to be touched on? Or do you have examples of this sort of situations that happened to your friends? If yes: Who was it (teacher/pupil, male/female)? Where did it happen (on the way to school/place in school)? What did he/she do? How did you/your friend react?
<b>POSV</b>	48. 49. 50.	Are there school rules about sexual violence? How did you learn about these rules? What happens when someone does not follow the rules?
<b>POGE</b>	51.	Are there sometimes lessons/campaigns about gender equality?
<b>POSA</b>	52.	Are there sometimes lessons/campaigns about violence in school?

Thank you very much for the interview, this was very useful for my research. Everything you said will remain between us.

## XVI

Target schools Tiger Project (Phase 1)																									
No	Khmer school name	English school name																							
Primary schools			G4 classes						G5 classes						G6 classes										
1	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាអន្លង់វាល	Along vil Primary School	G4 F	G4 M	G4 Total	G5 F	G5 M	G5 Total	G6 F	G6 M	G6 Total	Total classes	Total F	Total M	School Total	Teachers F	Teachers M	Teachers Total	Teachers sample F	Teachers sample M	Teachers sample total	Teachers sample %			
2	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាបង្កើត	2 Thnou Primary School	12 285	95 179	5 102	88 190	5 88	74 162	15 274	257	531		82	10	92	13 5	18	19,6%	3 18	19,6%	54,5%	19,6%			
3	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាសម្តេច ពាន់ សុំ Samdach Cheasin Primary School		6 119	136 235	6 110	112 222	6 112	106 218	18 341	354	695		41	8	49	12 2	14	28,6%	12 2	14	28,6%	28,6%			
4	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាទី១៣មករា	13 Makara Primary School	1 9	11 20	1 4	8 12	1 3	2 5	3 16	21	37		4	2	6	4 2	6	100,0%	4 2	6	100,0%	100,0%			
5	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាអនុភូមិ	Anuvut Primary School	2 19	26 45	1 12	17 29	2 29	25 54	5 60	68	128		11	0	11	9 0	9	81,8%	9 0	9	81,8%	81,8%			
6	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាអូរតាខ័យ	Otakam 2 Primary School	2 34	23 57	2 22	20 42	2 19	22 41	6 75	65	140		10	2	12	6 1	7	58,3%	6 1	7	58,3%	58,3%			
7	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាមិត្តភាព	Mittaphseap Primary School	3 40	40 80	3 54	50 104	2 42	30 72	8 136	120	256		14	5	19	5 1	6	31,6%	5 1	6	31,6%	31,6%			
8	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាគោគ:	Rothanak Primary School	2 19	38 57	2 28	31 59	2 15	30 45	6 62	99	161		9	3	12	5 4	9	75,0%	5 4	9	75,0%	75,0%			
9	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាផ្លូវដែក	Wat Kampeng Primary School	4 56	50 106	3 45	47 92	4 53	52 105	11 154	149	303		34	6	40	6 0	6	15,0%	6 0	6	15,0%	15,0%			
10	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាបឹង លែងអូរ Hun Sen Ochar Primary School		5 67	75 142	5 78	73 151	4 55	70 125	14 200	218	418		27	3	30	12 1	13	43,3%	12 1	13	43,3%	43,3%			
11	សាលាបឋមសិក្សាពោធិ៍សាត់	Pothvong Primary School	3 76	73 149	4 60	74 134	3 55	63 118	10 191	210	401		16	6	22	8 4	12	54,5%	8 4	12	54,5%	54,5%			
Total primary			45 808	860 1668	44 789	814 1603	42 707	724 1431	131 2304	2398	4702		273	53	326	95 23	118	51,1%	95 23	118	51,1%	51,1%			
Secondary schools			G7 classes						G8 classes						G9 classes										
12	វិទ្យាល័យព្រះមុនីវង្ស	Monivong High School	G7 F	G7 M	G7 Total	G8 F	G8 M	G8 Total	G9 F	G9 M	G9 Total	Total classes	Total F	Total M	School Total	Teachers F	Teachers M	Teachers Total	Teachers sample F	Teachers sample M	Teachers sample total	Teachers sample %			
13	វិទ្យាល័យឧត្តមវង្ស	Net Yang High School	5 92	98 190	3 84	73 157	4 118	98 216	12 294	269	563		48	29	77	19 7	26	35,8%	19 7	26	35,8%	35,8%			
14	វិទ្យាល័យសាលាដ៏	Samdach Euv High School	5 92	122 214	4 89	98 187	4 110	96 206	13 291	316	607		38	16	54	7 3	10	18,5%	7 3	10	18,5%	18,5%			
15	អនុវិទ្យាល័យសៅហ៊ុំ	Sor Her Lower Secondary School	11 237	242 479	9 184	241 425	7 185	159 344	27 606	642	1248		41	24	65	10 5	15	23,1%	10 5	15	23,1%	23,1%			
16	អនុវិទ្យាល័យវត្តគោ	Wat Kor Lower Secondary School	3 43	43 86	2 34	43 77	2 31	33 64	7 108	119	227		8	18	26	2 6	8	30,8%	2 6	8	30,8%	30,8%			
17	អនុវិទ្យាល័យអនុវត្ត	Anuvut Lower Secondary School	3 65	66 131	3 68	79 147	2 45	43 88	8 178	188	366		11	7	18	6 1	7	38,9%	6 1	7	38,9%	38,9%			
18	វិទ្យាល័យអន្លង់វាល	Anlong vil High School	7 156	165 321	6 162	150 312	4 133	121 254	17 451	436	887		33	29	62	8 7	15	24,2%	8 7	15	24,2%	24,2%			
19	អនុវិទ្យាល័យអូរដំបង	Odorn Bang Mnouy Lower Secondary School	3 71	50 121	3 52	36 88	3 39	36 75	9 162	122	284		27	10	37	5 3	8	21,6%	5 3	8	21,6%	21,6%			
20	អនុវិទ្យាល័យវត្តតាមីម	Wat Tamim Lower Secondary School	5 109	72 181	5 118	91 209	3 71	60 131	13 298	223	521		12	27	39	6 5	11	28,2%	6 5	11	28,2%	28,2%			
Total secondary			50 1087	1092 2179	43 1001	1002 2003	37 919	825 1744	130 3007	2919	5926		255	182	437	63 42	105	25,3%	63 42	105	25,3%	25,3%			
Overall total			95 1895	1952 3847	87 1790	1816 3606	79 1626	1549 3175	261 5311	5317	10628		528	235	763	158 65	223	38,2%	158 65	223	38,2%	38,2%			

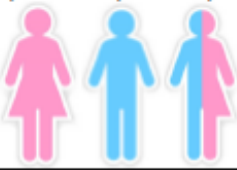
## Appendix 9: Survey questionnaire for teachers

### Guidelines:

... write down answer

xx / xx circle one answer


☐ tick at least one option, multiple answers allowed

Question	Answer options
1. School name	Write down school name: ...
2. What is your gender?	a)Female / b) Male / c)Third gender 
3. How old are you?	... years old
4. How many years have you been a teacher?	... years
5. If you think back about your childhood, how would you describe the status of your household at that time?	a)very poor / b)poor / c)comfortable / d)rich / e)very rich
6. On which of these topics did you receive training?	a)gender equality / b)violence against children / c)both / d)none of the above
7. If 6 ≠ "none": How many years ago was the most recent training on the topic(s)?	... years ago
8. If 6 ≠ "none": How strongly did you agree to the things you learned during this most recent training?	a)strongly disagree / b)disagree / c)neutral / d)agree / e)strongly agree
9. If 6 ≠ "none": How difficult do you find it to apply what you learned during this most recent training in your teaching?	a)very easy / b)easy / c)moderate / d)difficult / e)very difficult
10. Is there a school policy on gender equality?	a)yes / b)no / c)I don't know
11. If 10 = "Yes": How difficult do you find it to implement this policy in your teaching?	a)very easy / b)easy / c)moderate / d)difficult / e)very difficult
12. When a child wants to do something that is traditionally done by the other gender (eg: girl wants to play football, boy wants to play "treh"), how often do the other children ... - laugh at that child, call him or her insulting names, exclude the child? (12.1) - push, punch, kick or slap the child? (12.2) - gossip about the child? (12.3) - take, hide or destroy the child's things? (12.4)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often
13. How often do boys and girls ... - insult each other (Eg: boys say that girls are weak, girls say that boys are naughty, call each other names like "mee" or "aah, laugh about each other) (13.1) - push, punch, kick or slap each other (13.2) - take, hide or destroy each other's things (13.3)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often
14. How do you react if you notice children are bullying other children?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Talk to them to explain about good behaviour and respect <input type="checkbox"/> B)Send the bullies to the principal or another school management staff member <input type="checkbox"/> C>Contact the bullies' parents or guardians <input type="checkbox"/> D)Shout at the bullies <input type="checkbox"/> E)Give a punishment to the bullies <input type="checkbox"/> F)Let the children sort it out for themselves <input type="checkbox"/> G)Other
15. Is there a school policy on bullying?	a)yes / b)no / c)I don't know
16. If 15 = "Yes": How difficult do you find it to implement this policy in your teaching?	a)very easy / b)easy / c)moderate / d)difficult / e)very difficult

<p>17. How acceptable are the following forms of discipline to you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make a child do chores (Eg: pick up rubbish, water flowers, clean toilets) (17.1)</li> <li>- Talk to a child about good behaviour and respect (17.2)</li> <li>- Make a child hurt itself (Eg: by hitting its knuckles on the table, standing on one leg for a long time) (17.3)</li> <li>- Hurt a child (Eg: pull its ears, hit with your hand, a ruler, stick or rolled up paper) (17.4)</li> <li>- Make a child write lines or give extra homework (17.5)</li> <li>- Make a child stand in the front of the classroom or run rounds on the playground (17.6)</li> <li>- Deduct marks from tests or homework (17.7)</li> <li>- Collect a fine from a child or make it buy things (17.8)</li> <li>- Contact a child's parents or guardians (17.9)</li> <li>- Shout or curse at a child, call it names like "monkey" or "cow", laugh about a child (17.10)</li> </ul>	<p>I think this disciplinary measure is...</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p> <p>a)very bad / b)bad / c)neutral / d)good / e)very good</p>
<p>18. How often do you use the following forms of discipline yourself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make a child do chores (Eg: pick up rubbish, water flowers, clean toilets) (18.1)</li> <li>- Talk to a child about good behaviour and respect (18.2)</li> <li>- Make a child hurt itself (Eg: by hitting its knuckles on the table, standing on one leg for a long time) (18.3)</li> <li>- Hurt a child (Eg: pull its ears, hit with your hand, a ruler, stick or rolled up paper) (18.4)</li> <li>- Make a child write lines or give extra homework (18.5)</li> <li>- Make a child stand in the front of the classroom or run rounds on the school ground (18.6)</li> <li>- Deduct marks from tests or homework (18.7)</li> <li>- Collect a fine from a child or make it buy things (18.8)</li> <li>- Contact a child's parents or guardians (18.9)</li> <li>- Shout or curse at a child, call it names like "monkey" or "cow", laugh about a child (18.10)</li> </ul>	<p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p> <p>a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often</p>
<p>19. What would you do if you found out another teacher uses a type of discipline you consider unacceptable?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A)Talk to that teacher about his or her behaviour</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B)Talk to other teachers</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C)Talk to the principal or other school management staff</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D)Don't do anything about it</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> E)Other</p>
<p>20. Who uses the strongest disciplinary measures (think about all measures in question 18)?</p>	<p>a)female teachers / b)male teachers /</p> <p>c)female and male teachers use similar disciplinary measures /</p> <p>d) I don't know how other teachers discipline their children</p>
<p>21. Who do you have to discipline most often?</p>	<p>a)boys / b)girls / c)third gender /</p> <p>d)all children are disciplined equally often</p>
<p>22. What is your opinion on the following statement: Boys and girls should get a different disciplinary measure for the same misbehaviour.</p>	<p>a)I strongly agree to the statement / b) I agree to the statement /</p> <p>c) I feel neutral about the statement / d)I disagree to the statement /</p> <p>e) I strongly disagree to the statement</p>
<p>23. Is there a school policy on acceptable forms of discipline?</p>	<p>a)yes / b)no / c)I don't know</p>
<p>24. If 23 = "Yes": How difficult do you find it to implement this policy in your teaching?</p>	<p>a)very easy / b)easy / c)moderate / d)difficult / e)very difficult</p>
<p>25. How often did children of this school experience sexual violence (including unwanted sexual comments, unwanted touching, rape, forced sex) since the start of this school year?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At home (25.1)</li> <li>- On the way to school (25.2)</li> <li>- In school, committed by another student (25.3)</li> <li>- In school, committed by an adult (25.4)</li> </ul>	<p>a)never / b)one or two times / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often /</p> <p>f) I don't know</p> <p>a)never / b)one or two times / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often /</p> <p>f) I don't know</p> <p>a)never / b)one or two times / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often /</p> <p>f) I don't know</p> <p>a)never / b)one or two times / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often /</p> <p>f) I don't know</p>
<p>26. Is there a school policy on which actions should be taken when a child of this school experiences sexual violence?</p>	<p>a)yes / b)no / c)I don't know</p>
<p>27. If 26 = "Yes": How difficult do you find it to implement this policy?</p>	<p>a)very easy / b)easy / c)moderate / d)difficult / e)very difficult</p>
<p>28. Is there anything else you would like to share with us in relation to the topic of this survey?</p>	<p>...</p>





## Appendix 10: Survey questionnaire for students

Question	Answer possibilities	Instructions for research assistant
1. Research assistant	Write down your code:	Click before the interview starts
2. School name	Write down school name:	Click before the interview starts
3. Biological sex	a)Female / b) Male	Click by looking at the child, do not ask the child
4. What is your gender?	a)Female / b)Male / c)Third gender 	Let the child choose a picture on paper and then click on the chosen answer.
5. How old are you?	...	Ask the child and then fill in the number.
6. In which grade are you?	4/5/6/7/8/9	Ask the child and then fill in the number.
7. What do you do most often during recess?	a)Football / b)Play with say / c)Volleyball / d)Talk with friends / e)Read, study or make homework / f)Rope skipping / g)Jump over elastic rope / h)Play hand clapping games / i)Play treh / j)Play tag / k)Clean the school environment / l)Eat something / m)Other	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
8. With who do you do this activity?	a)With only children of my own gender / b)In a mixed group / c)Alone	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option
9. If a girl wants to play a boy's game (like football), how do the other children react?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Laugh at that girl <input type="checkbox"/> B)Call her bad names <input type="checkbox"/> C)Say she cannot join the game <input type="checkbox"/> D)Say it is ok to join <input type="checkbox"/> E)Adapt the activity so that the girl can join <input type="checkbox"/> F)Push the girl away <input type="checkbox"/> G)Fight with the girl <input type="checkbox"/> H)Say the girl can only join if she knows how to play the game <input type="checkbox"/> I)Gossip about the girl <input type="checkbox"/> J)Take the girl's personal things <input type="checkbox"/> K)That never happens in this school so I don't know how children would react <input type="checkbox"/> L)Other	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says
10. If a boy wants to play a girl's game (like treh), how do the other children react?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Laugh at that boy <input type="checkbox"/> B)Call him bad names <input type="checkbox"/> C)Say he cannot join the game <input type="checkbox"/> D)Say it is ok to join <input type="checkbox"/> E)Adapt the activity so that the boy can join <input type="checkbox"/> F)Push the boy away <input type="checkbox"/> G)Fight with the boy <input type="checkbox"/> H)Say the boy can only join if he knows how to play the game <input type="checkbox"/> I)Gossip about the boy <input type="checkbox"/> J)Take the boy's personal things <input type="checkbox"/> K)That never happens in this school so I don't know how children would react <input type="checkbox"/> L)Other	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says
11. If 3 = "Female": How often do boys ... - insult you because you are a girl (Eg: Say that girls are weak, call you "mee", laugh about you)? (11.1) - push, punch, kick, slap you or pull on your hair because you are a girl? (11.2) - take, hide or destroy your things to annoy you? (11.3)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option. Explain that the following questions will work with a similar scale.
12. If 3 = "Male": How often do girls ... - insult you because you are a boy (Eg: Say that boys are naughty, call you "aah", laugh about you)? (12.1) - push, punch, kick or slap you because you are a boy? (12.2) - take, hide or destroy your things to annoy you? (12.3)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option. Explain that the following questions will work with a similar scale.

13. Who do you talk to when you feel that another child did not treat you well?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> B)Principal or other school management staff member <input type="checkbox"/> C)Family member <input type="checkbox"/> D)Friend from school <input type="checkbox"/> E)Friend from outside school <input type="checkbox"/> F)Religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> G)Village leader <input type="checkbox"/> H)Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> I)Other person <input type="checkbox"/> J)I keep it to myself	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says
14. During this school year, how often did a teacher discipline you by ... - Making you do chores (Eg: pick up rubbish, water flowers, clean the classroom or toilets) (14.1) - Talking to you about good behaviour and respect (14.2) - Making you hurt yourself (Eg: hit your knuckles on the table, make you stand on one leg for a long time) (14.3) - Hurting you (Eg: pull your ears, hit you with hand, ruler, stick, rolled up paper) (14.4) - Making you write lines or giving extra homework (14.5) - Making you stand in the front of the classroom or run rounds on the school ground (14.6) - Deducting marks from your tests or homework (14.7) - Collecting a fine from you or making you buy things (14.8) - Contacting your parents or guardians (14.9) - Shouting or cursing at you, calling you names like "monkey" or "cow" or laughing at you (14.10)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
15. Who gets disciplined most often?	a)Boys / b)Girls / c)Third gender / d)all children are disciplined equally often	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
16. If a boy and a girl misbehave in the same way, who gets the strongest disciplinary measure?	a)Boy / b)Girl / c)Third gender / d)all children get the same sort of discipline for the same behaviour	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
17. Who gives the hardest disciplinary measure?	a)Female teachers / b)Male teachers / c)Female and male teachers use equally hard disciplinary measures / d) I don't know	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
18. Who do you talk to when you feel that a teacher did not treat you well?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Another teacher <input type="checkbox"/> B)Principal or another school management staff member <input type="checkbox"/> C)Family member <input type="checkbox"/> D)Friend from school <input type="checkbox"/> E)Friend from outside school <input type="checkbox"/> F)Religious leader <input type="checkbox"/> G)Village leader <input type="checkbox"/> H)Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/> I)Other person <input type="checkbox"/> J)I keep it to myself	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
19. Do you ever feel unsafe on the way to school?	a)Yes / b)No	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
20. If 19 = "Yes": What makes you feel unsafe on the way to school?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)Animals <input type="checkbox"/> B)Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> C)Ghosts <input type="checkbox"/> D)Bad weather <input type="checkbox"/> E)Vehicle breakdown <input type="checkbox"/> F)Robbery <input type="checkbox"/> G)Kidnapping <input type="checkbox"/> H)Men who want to touch me <input type="checkbox"/> I)Bad road conditions <input type="checkbox"/> J)Drug addicts or gang violence <input type="checkbox"/> K)Other: ...	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.



21. Do you ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable in school?	a)Yes / b)No	Ask as an open question and click on the answer(s) most similar to what the child says.
22. If 21 = "Yes": What makes you feel unsafe in school?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)A teacher might hurt me physically <input type="checkbox"/> B)A teacher might hurt me mentally <input type="checkbox"/> C)A child might hurt me physically <input type="checkbox"/> D)A child might hurt me mentally <input type="checkbox"/> E)Someone could steal from me <input type="checkbox"/> F)Dangerous building conditions <input type="checkbox"/> G)No good toilet to use <input type="checkbox"/> H)Drug addicts or gang violence <input type="checkbox"/> I)Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/> J)Other	Ask as an open question and click on the answer(s) most similar to what the child says.
23. How often did someone ... - say things to you or show you images that were related to sex that you did not like? (23.1) - try to touch a part of your body that you do not like to be touched on? (23.2)	a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often a)never / b)seldom / c)sometimes / d)often / e)very often	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
24. Did you learn about the equality between males and females during the previous school year?	a)Yes / b)No	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
25. Did you learn about violence during the previous school year?	a)Yes / b)No	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
26. How do you like going to this school?	 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Let the child choose one smiley on paper and then click on the corresponding number.
27. How would you describe your household?	a)very poor / b)poor / c)comfortable / d)rich / e)very rich	Read all options to the child and let the child choose one option.
28. In your household, do you have...?	<input type="checkbox"/> A)A car <input type="checkbox"/> B)A TV <input type="checkbox"/> C)A house made of bricks <input type="checkbox"/> D)A gas stove <input type="checkbox"/> E)Air conditioning <input type="checkbox"/> F)A Fridge <input type="checkbox"/> G)Separate bedrooms for children and parents <input type="checkbox"/> H)Three meals every day <input type="checkbox"/> I)Electricity <input type="checkbox"/> J)Internet access	Read each options to the child and let the child answer yes or no.
29. Can your father read and/or write?	a)Yes / b)No / c)I Don't know	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
30. Can your mother read and/or write?	a)Yes / b)No / c)I Don't know	Ask as an open question and click on the answer most similar to what the child says.
31. Is there anything else you would like to share with us in relation to the topic of this survey?	...	Ask as an open question and type in a short text what the child says.
32. How do you feel at this moment, after talking about this topic to us?	 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5	Let the child choose one smiley on paper and then click on the corresponding number.