

NATIONAL SURVEY ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AND LIFE EXPERIENCES IN CAMBODIA

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

introduction

Between 2014-2015 the Royal Government of Cambodia with support from the World Health Organization, UN Women and other national and international agencies conducted The National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Cambodia. The study aimed to produce national data on the prevalence and consequences of, different forms of violence against women in order to increase awareness, inform programmes and policies, and monitor progress towards the elimination of violence against women. The gold-standard, WHO multi-country study methodology was used for its reliability and international ethical and safety standards.

The study focused on women's experiences of physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence by a male intimate partner (usually current or former husband), as well as sexual and physical violence before and after the age of 15, by perpetrators (male and female) other than an intimate partner (further referred to as 'non-partners'). The study also investigated the health consequences of violence, women's coping strategies, and the factors that protect women from, or increase their risk of, intimate partner violence.

METHODS

A population based cross-sectional household survey was implemented with a nationally-representative sample of 3574 women aged 15-64 years in Cambodia in 2015. Trained interviewers conducted the survey using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

Women's experience of intimate partner violence and non-partner violence were measured by asking a series of behaviour specific questions (see Box 1 for the acts that were used to determine physical or sexual partner violence). At the time of the interview, 80% of all respondents were "ever-partnered" (defined as ever having been married, lived with a partner or had a dating relationship).

MAIN FINDINGS>

PREVALENCE OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

21% of ever-partnered women aged 15-64 reported having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime, and **8%** in the past 12 months.

3/4 of women who had experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence reported having experienced severe forms of violence.

36% of ever-partnered women reported having experienced at least one type of physical, sexual and/or emotional violence by a partner in their lifetime, and **20%** in the 12 months prior to the interview.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL AND/OR SEXUAL PARTNER VIOLENCE

Physical violence meant the woman had been: slapped, or had something thrown at her; pushed or shoved; hit with a fist or something else that could hurt; kicked, dragged or beaten up; choked or burnt; threatened with or had a weapon used against her. Sexual violence meant that the woman had been forced to have sexual intercourse; had sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do; had been forced to do something sexual she found degrading or humiliating.

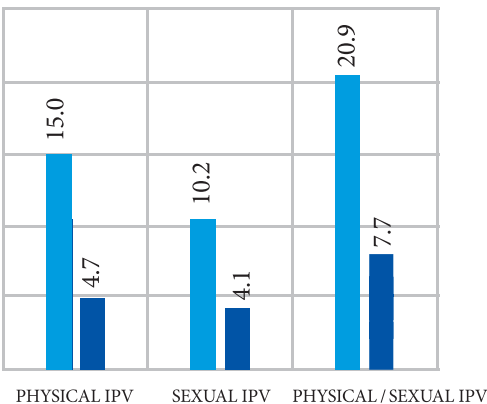
For all types of intimate partner violence, women were much more likely to have experienced frequent acts of violence rather than a one-off incident.

* Being hit with a fist or something else that could hurt her; kicked, dragged, beaten up, choked or burnt on purpose, or threatened with or had a weapon used against her.

>MAIN FINDINGS

Percentage of ever-partnered women aged 15-64, reporting different types of intimate partner violence by time period

■ Lifetime prevalence
■ 12 M prevalence (current)



PREVALENCE OF NON-PARTNER VIOLENCE

14% of women aged 15-64 reported having experienced physical violence by someone other than an intimate partner since the age of 15. 4% reported having experienced sexual violence by a non-partner and 2% reported having experienced childhood sexual abuse (before age of 15).

The perpetrators of non-partner violence were usually known to the victim – the most common perpetrators of non-partner physical violence were parents, siblings and friends or acquaintances; and the most common perpetrators of non-partner sexual violence were strangers, friends or acquaintances, and other family members.

INJURIES INFLICTED BY INTIMATE PARTNERS

25% of women who reported experiencing physical and/or sexual partner violence had sustained at least one injury in their lifetime from their partner's violence.

90% of women who reported being injured by their intimate partner reported that they had been hurt severely enough to need health care. However, only about half ever sought health care.

IMPACT OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH, THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR PRODUCTIVITY

Women who had ever experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence were significantly more likely to report current health problems, high levels of emotional distress, and suicidal ideation and attempts, in comparison to women who had not experienced partner violence.

Women in violent relationships were also significantly more likely to report that their children (aged 6-12 years) had emotional or behavioural problems, and difficulties at school.

Women who had experienced physical and/or sexual IPV were significantly more likely to have had an abortion, miscarriage, or an unplanned pregnancy.

One third of ever-partnered women who had experienced IPV reported missing at least one day of paid work in the previous 12 months due to their experiences of violence.

HELP-SEEKING AND COPING STRATEGIES BY WOMEN EXPERIENCING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Almost half of all respondents who had reported experiencing physical and/or sexual IPV had not told anyone about the violence. Women who did tell, told mostly relatives and neighbours.

Among women who had experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner, only 24% had sought help from a formal service. For those who did seek help, the majority went to either their local leader or to the police.

conclusion

The Study shows that violence against women is a prevalent issue in Cambodia and a major public health concern. In order to prevent and respond to violence against women the Study recommends a greater focus on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; challenging social norms related to the acceptability of violence; strengthening the role of the health and justice sectors; and promoting non-violence, among other strategies.