



PROTECT – A Communication Strategy to End Violence against Children and Unnecessary Family Separation (Cambodia PROTECT)

Why is the intervention important?

Violence against children is a serious concern in Cambodia, with over half of all children in the country experiencing at least one form of violence before the age of 18 (CVACS 2013).

Children in Cambodia experience violence across all stages of childhood, in diverse settings, and often at the hands of the trusted individuals with whom they interact on a daily basis. Childhood violence occurs in many forms, including physical violence, emotional violence, sexual violence and abuse.

Violence against children is a violation of children's rights, enshrined in the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, ratified by Cambodia in 1992.

Violence has harmful lifelong impacts on children, their health, development and well-being, and negative social and economic costs for communities and the country overall.

Too often, Cambodian children are unnecessarily separated from their families and placed in institutional care, despite the government's Alternative Care Policy, which mandates that institutional care should be a last resort and a temporary solution. In 2015 a total of 26,187 children were living in residential care facilities (Mapping of

Residential Care Facilities, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation 2017). The institutionalization of children exposes them to greater risk of violence, exploitation and neglect and has been shown to cause a wide range of problems for their development, well-being and longer-term outcomes. There is compelling international evidence on how damaging institutional care is, especially for children under 3 years of age.

What is the intervention?

PROTECT- A Communication Strategy to End Violence and Unnecessary Family Separation in Cambodia (Cambodia PROTECT) is a five-year national communication-for-development strategy led by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), with UNICEF support.

The Cambodia PROTECT strategy aims to contribute to preventing and responding to violence against children and unnecessary family separation by addressing the social and cultural norms that legitimize violence against children and normalize the belief that residential care facilities are beneficial to a child. It intends to contribute to building the skills of parents, caregivers and communities to improve their protective behaviours. It targets children, parents, caregivers, community members, service providers, policy makers, the judiciary and the media.

Situation



1 out of 2
children experience
violence before turning 18



3 out of 4
children in residential
care institutions have at
least one living parent

What does Cambodia PROTECT stand for?

Promote
a culture of zero tolerance

Recognize
specific vulnerabilities

Orient
all duty bearers and rights holders

Transform
attitudes

Explore
options and alternative solutions

Commit
to end violence and family
separation

Take
positive action



Cambodia PROTECT builds on existing good practices in Cambodian culture, as well as global evidence, and is informed by INSPIRE Strategy Number 2 on 'Norms and Values'. Its approach combines universal theories of change with suggested practices or actions tailored for Cambodia. It is solution-oriented rather than problem-centred.

Cambodia PROTECT is a multi-layered and cross-sectoral strategy being implemented through four major channels: mass media; interactive communication technologies; community engagement; and advocacy.

It has a national scope, with focused implementation in the five provinces of Phnom Penh, Kandal, Preah Sihanouk, Battambang and Siem Reap, and in Cambodia's north-eastern provinces, home to ethnic minority groups.

A detailed monitoring and evaluation framework, built into the Cambodia PROTECT strategy, provides a roadmap of planned activities and tasks with specific directives on how the intervention can be evaluated and monitored over time. A baseline survey was conducted in 2018, and mid- and end-line surveys will be done, along with regular monitoring of activities.

Results in behavioural change, to be measured through surveys, will serve as an advocacy tool for integrating the Cambodia PROTECT campaign into the annual work plan of MoSVY and for allocating resources to continue the campaign in future.

What progress has been achieved?

- MoSVY established an inter-ministerial working group to lead and coordinate

The Cambodia PROTECT Strategy aligns with Strategic Area 2 of the Cambodia Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Children, which focuses on primary prevention and contributes to achieving Outcome 2 of the Plan, 'Increased media promotion of gender-equitable, non-violent social norms, images and messages'.

The Cambodia PROTECT Strategy links with 'Norms and Values' Strategy of the INSPIRE Framework 'Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children'.

the implementation of the Cambodia PROTECT Strategy.

- To support MoSVY to enhance the implementation of the strategy, UNICEF strengthened strategic partnerships with key NGO partners through a Memorandum of Understanding. This sets out the core principles and procedures to support the implementation of the Cambodia PROTECT Strategy. Partners can take on specific elements of the strategy and implement them in additional provinces, using the same package of branding, messages, materials and indicators that accompany the strategy.
- A survey was conducted in 2018 to establish a baseline for the Cambodia PROTECT campaign.
- A branding package, as well as communication materials for the mass media component were developed and finalized by MoSVY in consultation with NGO partners and five ministries. The package included TV spots; radio spots; a radio series; banners; posters; calendars; T-shirts; caps; and bracelets.
- Communication materials for the Interactive Communication Technology

component are being developed by MoSVY in consultation with NGO partners and five ministries. These include a campaign website, social media platform, short message services (SMS) and interactive voice recording (IVR).

Next steps

- The campaign is planned to be launched in the fourth quarter of 2019.
- Guidelines and resource tools for the advocacy component will be developed.
- Guidelines and tools for the community engagement component will be developed. They will be used for face-to-face interactive sessions with children, parents and caregivers as well as teachers, religious leaders, village and commune chiefs and members of Commune Committees for Women and Children (CCWC).
- Capacity building and training activities in Communication for Development will be conducted for government partners at national and sub-national levels, NGOs and academic institutions.

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