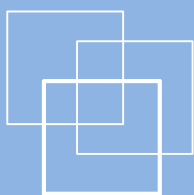




International  
Labour  
Organization

# **Rapid assessment on child labour in the sugarcane sector in selected areas in Cambodia: A comparative analysis**

Prepared by the Cambodia Institute of Development Study (CIDS)  
For the International Labour Organization (ILO)



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ILO Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic

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## Foreword

Worldwide, agriculture is the sector where by far the largest share of working children is found — nearly 60 percent. Over 98 million girls and boys aged 5 to 17 years old work in crop and livestock production, helping supply some of the food and drink we consume and the fibres and raw materials we use to make other products. In Cambodia, 90 per cent of all child labourers live in rural areas and the agricultural sector accounts for just over 50 per cent of all economically active children. Over 80 per cent of all child labourers are 12–18 years of age.

Child labour in farming is particularly difficult to tackle due to factors such as seasonality of agricultural production, migration, lack of technology, workplace hazards, limited access to schools, minimal regulations and enforcement, and ingrained attitudes about the roles of children in rural areas. Work in the sugar cane sector, particularly in harvesting cane, is hazardous work that is unsuitable for children. Indeed, several countries have included work in sugar cane in their lists of worst forms of child labour (WFCL) at the national level, classifying it as prohibited for children under the age of 18.

Child labour exists in the sugar cane sector of Cambodia, both in plantations and in smallholder farms. The ILO commissioned this rapid assessment study in 2014 in order to fill a glaring knowledge gap on the nature of child labour in sugar cane production in Cambodia. It is our hope that the findings of this report, as well as its recommendations, will inspire better informed, responsive, and sustainable action by a cross-section of local (and international) actors in the immediate future. The research certainly does not claim to represent a picture of child labour in sugar cane nationwide. Rather it offers a close glimpse at a number of household level factors that push and pull children into child labour, the hazardous conditions they endure in the work they perform, and the distinctions in the nature of child labour between small holder farms and plantations. The recommendations it offers moving forward are not directed at any one party, as the solution to child labour in the sugar cane supply chain lies in a multi-stakeholder effort focused around at least three immediate areas – policy, knowledge, and sensitisation.

The issue of progressively eliminating child labour has been central to the International Labour Organisation's mandate. The ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour, 199 (No. 182) and Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) define and articulate child labour as a core concern requiring determined and concerted action. Cambodia has ratified both these Conventions, and has made significant policy level efforts towards its elimination. Armed with this additional knowledge on the nature of child labour in the sugarcane sector in selected areas of Cambodia, the Government in collaboration with workers and employers, as well as civil society and buyers can begin to take steps to end the use of child labour in sugarcane production. Increased efforts to prevent children from hazardous work through labour inspection in both formal and informal settings, while making efforts to better retain children in schools, particularly at the secondary level are some such critical measures. It is our collective responsibility to act.

I wish to thank the research team at CIDS led by Dannet Liv, the editor Carol Ackers, and the ILO technical reviewers Simrin Singh and Bijoy Raychaudhuri for their hard work in finalising this report. I also wish to acknowledge the useful contributions from the ILO's national tripartite constituents who provided valuable inputs towards the finalisation of this report.

Maurizio Bussi



Director

ILO Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia and Lao People's Democratic Republic

## Table of contents

Foreword.....	2
Executive summary .....	5
1 Introduction .....	12
1.1 Defining child labour.....	14
1.2 Research methodology .....	16
1.3 Coverage area .....	16
1.4 Sample and data collection tools.....	18
2 The industry .....	19
3 Findings .....	22
3.1 How children enter the sugarcane workforce.....	22
3.2 Working conditions of children .....	24
3.3 Characteristics of working children .....	30
3.4 Characteristics of households.....	33
3.5 Socio-cultural context.....	35
4 Conclusions and Recommendations.....	35
5 Bibliography.....	41

## List of Figures and Tables

### Figures

Figure 1: Definition of child labour .....	15
Figure 2: Child labour in Cambodia 2012.....	16
Figure 3: Children at work in the sugarcane industry.....	25
Figure 4: Percentage of children working more than the legal hours permitted by type of farm and gender .....	26
Figure 5: Average hours worked per week by gender and type of farm.....	27
Figure 6: Average hours worked per week by age group and school attendance .....	28
Figure 7: School attendance of working children by gender .....	31

### Tables

Table 1: Profile of potential and selected survey locations.....	17
Table 2: Overview of survey locations .....	18
Table 3: Sample size .....	19
Table 4: Annual sugarcane production in Cambodia.....	19
Table 5: List of sugar investments in Cambodia .....	21
Table 6: Who gives consent for child to work?.....	22
Table 7: Number of hours worked per week by age group in both smallholder farms and plantations.....	28
Table 8: Reasons why working children ages 15–17 years are not in school.....	32
Table 9: Household characteristics .....	34

### Appendices

Appendix I.....	43
Appendix II.....	44
Appendix III.....	45
Appendix IV.....	47

## Executive Summary

### Objective

The objective of this study is to advance knowledge on the use of child labour within the sugarcane sector of Cambodia to shape policy, and inspire practice to address it. There is very little publically available information on this subject.

### Introduction

Cambodia has ratified the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and ILO Convention on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138). The ILO together with the Royal Government of Cambodia, trade unions, employers and other partners has been working intensively on the issue of child labour in Cambodia since the mid-1990s. Progress has been made, however, challenges remain in the effective application of the ILO Conventions with as many as one in ten children remaining in child labour.<sup>1</sup>

The agricultural sector in Cambodia accounts for approximately 33.3 per cent of Cambodia's labour force, while as much as 50.4 per cent of children in child labour are working in this sector. Sugarcane plantations and refineries are a source of seasonal employment for rural people. Close to 96,000 men and women aged 15 years and above work in the growing and production of sugar, 60 per cent being male. Four provinces account for 60 per cent of those employed: Kampong Chhnang, Kandal Kampong Thom and Kampong Speu. Employment in the sector can be classified as highly vulnerable, with more than 4 in 5 either an own-account worker or contributing family worker. Workers have low education attainment: 62.6 per cent have not completed primary education.<sup>2</sup>

### Research methodology

A rapid assessment methodology was used, including a desk review, quantitative household survey, and qualitative focus group discussions (FGDs). Fieldwork was carried out from June 23, 2014 to July 1, 2014. Areas within Kampong Chhnang and Pursat provinces were selected, because of an overall higher prevalence of child labour<sup>3</sup> and due to ease of access.

### Key findings

#### How Children Enter the Work Force

- It is usually a mother's decision to send her child to work, especially in smallholder farms.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Planning, National Institute of Statistics and ILO: "Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey 2012", in *Child labour report* (Phnom Penh), November 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Due to the time at which the survey was conducted (low season for agriculture), employment figures in the sugar industry may represent an underestimate.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



- A working child starts to work in the fields at the age of 10–11. Most parents and community leaders feel this is too young, but they say there are no alternatives because the household is poor and needs extra help on the farm.
- While most children voiced that it was their choice to work in the sugarcane fields, socio-cultural expectations are deeply embedded in their minds from a very young age.
- While foremen on plantations and their companies are aware that the law forbids child labour, they sometimes succumb to pressure from poor households.
- Children on smallholder farms usually work as unpaid family labour due to communal consensus on reciprocity.

### **Working conditions**

Children begin to assist their parents in the fields after school and during weekends and holidays. During harvests children will work four or five days every week; combining school with work part time. The youngest children (5 to 11 years old) usually start with tasks such as clearing the fields with big cutting knives, planting and applying fertilizers. Boys aged 15–17 years perform heavy work such as loading the canes while the girls and younger children clean, strip and bind the bundles.

### **Working Hours**

Of the total number of children in employment, 54 per cent work more than the legally permitted hours. While girls are more likely to work more than the legally permitted hours on family farms, 82 per cent of the total children are boys who mainly work on plantations. On average, children work 23.5 hours per week. Child contract labourers on plantations tend to work more hours than those on smallholder farms – 41.4 hours per week versus 15 hours. Children who are not in school work 32.5 hours per week on average, compared to 19.2 hours for those combining work with school.

### **Wages**

Almost all children working on the plantations are paid as casual workers, while those on smallholder farms are unpaid family workers. Daily rates in plantations, are 14,000–15,000 riel (KHR) per day (US\$3.50-3.75). The income is nearly always given to the mother.

### **Hazards**

Children are exposed to extreme temperatures and high humidity from working out in the sun and report breathing difficulties, headaches and dizziness. They work with pesticides and big cutting knives and suffering cuts, bee stings and 65 per cent suffer from skin infections.

### **Characteristics of working Children**

From the statistics available for working children, 67 per cent combined work with school, while 33 per cent are not in school. Some of the children aged 11 or less would be late to enroll in school because they were working. All 12–14 year old working children in the sample were attending school, typically working after school or on weekends and holidays.

In the case of 15–17 year olds one observes a sharp school dropout pattern, notably higher for girls (72 per cent) than boys (56 per cent). Nearly half of the parents stated that their child, especially boys, did not want to go to school. 30 per cent of parents said they could not afford to send their child to school, while 72 per cent said the school was too far from home, especially for girls. A recent study by USAID shows that the need to earn money is a major determinant of drop out, especially in lower secondary school.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Key differences between smallholder farms and plantations were observed:**

- Smallholder farms have a higher prevalence of working children than commercial plantations (64 compared to 26 per cent). Smallholder farms use younger children than commercial plantations (average age of 12 compared to 15).
- A higher percentage of children working on commercial plantations are not attending school (47 per cent and 28 per cent respectively).
- Children working on plantations tend to be paid casual workers (67 per cent), while those on smallholder farms are unpaid family workers (97 per cent).
- Children on smallholder farms are fed by their families while they are not provided with lunch on the plantations.
- Of the households with contract labourers, 44 per cent felt that their income was insufficient to meet household needs, while only 17 per cent of those on smallholder farms felt this way.

#### **Household Characteristics**

- Households that engage in contract labour reveal deeper poverty than those working on smallholder farms. Households with children working on commercial plantations have a lower monthly expenditure than smallholders –US\$130 compared to US\$192 (US\$23 per capita versus US\$38). They have a higher percentage of IDPoor cards and find it harder to meet household income needs.<sup>5</sup>
- The quality of housing of contract labourers is significantly worse than for those working in smallholder farms (only 2 per cent have access to latrines and none to electricity).
- In terms of debt, a higher percentage of households that work as smallholders have outstanding loans with an average debt value of (US\$1,403).

#### **Socio-cultural context**

There are ingrained attitudes about the role of children. According to parents and community leaders, it is normal for children to start helping with agricultural work at the age of 7–8. The main reasons being that the family needs the income, and the lack

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<sup>4</sup> USAID. 2012. “School drop out prevention pilot programme: Cambodia programme overview”, 19 Sep. Available at: <http://schooldropoutprevention.com/country-data-activities/cambodia/> [2 Dec 2014].

<sup>5</sup> IDPoor is a government programme under the Ministry of Planning that identifies “poor” households, issues identification cards to these households, which they can use to benefit from social protection schemes or services where available. Further information can be found at <http://www.mop.gov.kh/Projects/IDPoor/tabid/154/Default.aspx>.



of labour supply (for own farm). However, 74 per cent of parents are not happy about

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***“Every family has a child working in the fields”***

***“There are no other options”***

*Focus Group Discussions with Parents in Kampong Chhnang and Pursat*

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sending their child to work and would not do so if they earned enough income, and/or had enough land for farming and money for their children’s education. Poverty and vulnerability are fundamental push factors leading to child labour and reduced school participation rates.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This analysis provides the basis for some initial recommendations in terms of policy, research, and sensitization which are as follows:

### Research:

**Key knowledge gaps need to be urgently filled.** Key stakeholders will be better placed to work effectively towards the elimination of child labour if served by more accurate, timely and in-depth data on the nature and extent of child labour within the sugar cane supply chain, specific recommendations are:

- **A macro level industry supply chain analysis** of the sugarcane sector to identify and analyze the factors that nurture the use of child labour and gaps to be addressed in mitigating these problems.
- **An analysis of linkages between familial enterprises in smallholder farms and subcontracting arrangements** to enrich our understanding of benefits and disbenefits of this system and how issues raised by it can be better addressed.
- **A comprehensive gender perspective** to deepen our understanding of the social pressures for boys and girls to engage in work and the impact that it has on education and future prospects.
- **An occupational safety and health (OSH) “risk assessment”** for children working in the industrial crop sector to generate recommendations for reducing risks and to help the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training update their list of hazardous occupations for children. Existing Ministerial regulations (*Prakas*) don’t take into account the specificities of the sugarcane sector.
- **The impact on children’s nutritional status and longer term development and well-being should also be investigated.** Children are not provided with lunch on plantations. Household survey data on nutritional status in rural Cambodia reveals high levels of stunting (25.4 per cent).<sup>6</sup>

### Policy:

While poor rural households may be dependent on the labour of their children; an immediate, outright ban on child labour without access to suitable alternatives may

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<sup>6</sup> McDonald, C.M. et al.: “Household food insecurity and dietary diversity as correlates of maternal and child undernutrition in rural Cambodia” in *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (Vancouver, BC, University of British Columbia, 2014), Vol. 69, Aug, pp. 242-246.

have negative repercussions on children. However the following actions are recommended:

- **Formulation of a Ministerial Regulation governing hazardous work for children in the sector.** While pursuing this, alternatives in the interim could include: making the work environment less hazardous for children, providing sufficient clean drinking water and meals, and setting up accessible cooling stations during hot periods.
- **Organising smallholder farmers to form cooperatives may be strategies to consider.**<sup>2</sup> Cooperatives may offer greater income security, protection, promote gender equality and economic opportunity for these vulnerable rural households.
- **Policies to promote quality and relevant education and end inter-generational poverty are critical to lessening reliance on child labour.** Parents, community leaders and children all believe that better education opportunities can help lift them out of poverty. Measures could also include: adjusting school holidays to seasonal agricultural calendars, providing school meals, starter kits for entrepreneurial graduates, and creating linkages with potential employers to deliver vocational training to older children.
- **A child labour monitoring and referral system needs developing.** This should be in consultation with workers, employers, recruiters, labour inspectors, schools, and other relevant local governance authorities.
- **The outreach of social protection services should be prioritized** through the IDPoor scheme to communities working in the sugarcane sector and surroundings.

#### Sensitisation:

Sensitisation on the negative aspects of child labour needs to be enhanced focussing on the following:

- **Families and parents:** need to strive for alternatives to excessive child labour in the long term interests of their children whilst recognizing the positive dimensions for children within these rich cultural traditions. Awareness on health and safety risks could serve as an immediate entry point to address the more complex social and behavioral changes that are desirable for sustainable change.
- **Key community and government duty bearers:** should be further sensitized on the need to control and monitor child labour issues and ensure that their access to education and other services is not jeopardized.
- **Employers:** should be sensitised on the need to mitigate the impact of child labour by ensuring that it is safe and does not impinge negatively on access to education and other services, including the health and wellbeing of children.

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<sup>2</sup> A cooperative is defined by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) as “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.” <http://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles> [visited December 2014]. See also ILO, “Cooperating out of child labour: Harnessing the untapped potential of cooperatives and the cooperative movement to eliminate child labour”, 2009.

- **Innovation and change:** innovative approaches to information sharing should be explored including use of social media to help monitor and phase out child labour over time and mitigate its effects in the short term.

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**“Children working in the sugarcane sector qualify as child labour”**

*Conclusion of research team*

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## Acronyms

EBA	Everything But Arms
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
IDPoor	Identification of Poor Households Programme
ILO	International Labour Organization
KHR	Cambodian riel
KSL	Khon Kaen Sugar Company Limited
LDCs	least developed countries
LFP	labour force participation
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

# 1 Introduction

The issue of progressively eliminating child labour is central to the International Labour Organization's (ILO) mandate. ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182 define and articulate child labour as an unacceptable form of work that requires urgent, determined and concerted action to eliminate. The Conventions define hazardous work by children as any activity or occupation, "which by its nature or circumstances under which it is carried out" has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health (physical or mental), and moral development. Hazards can include excessive workload, physical conditions of work, and work intensity in terms of duration of work even where the activity is known to be non-hazardous or 'safe'.

Cambodia has ratified both ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182 indicating its commitment to eliminating child labour. The ILO together with the the Royal Government of Cambodia, trade unions, employers and their associations, non-governmental organizations, media, academia, spiritual leaders/monks and other third sector organizations, has been working intensively on the issue of child labour in Cambodia since the mid-1990s. Sustained engagement has led to better laws and regulations, with time-bound national plans and policies enacted. Apart from greater societal awareness on the issue, the material impact of creating quality lives and livelihoods is evinced.

## Box 1

### **ILO Convention 182, Recommendation No. 190 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination Worst Forms of Child Labour 1999:**

(3) In determining the types of work referred to under Article 3(d) of the Convention, and in identifying where they exist, consideration should be given, inter alia, to:

- (a) work which exposes children to physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- (b) work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;
- (c) work with dangerous machinery, equipment and tools, or which involves the manual handling or transport of heavy loads;
- (d) work in an unhealthy environment which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes, or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
- (e) work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work where the child is unreasonably confined to the premises of the employer.

In 2012 the Government adopted a child labour monitoring system and trained government officials, including those from the national, provincial, and commune levels, on the system's implementation and management.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the Government trained over 2,500 tour guides and law enforcement officials on preventing child sexual exploitation, child protection, trafficking, and children's rights.<sup>4</sup> However, challenges to the effective application of the recommendations of the Conventions remain, with just over one in every ten children still engaged in child labour.

<sup>3</sup> ILO-IPEC and Winrock International. 2012. Paper on *A Child Labour Monitoring System for Cambodia*.

<sup>4</sup> United States Department of Labor. 2013. "2013 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor – Cambodia", 7 October 2014, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5448a5d30.html> [accessed 2 December, 2014]

The agricultural sector in Cambodia continues to be important in terms of employment, accounting for approximately 33.3 per cent of Cambodia's labour force.<sup>5</sup> Child labour is also most prevalent in agriculture with 50.4 per cent of economically active children working in this sector,<sup>6</sup> though data on prevalence rates in the various agricultural sub-sectors (such as sugarcane) is not available. Nine out of 10 child labourers live in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> Over 80 per cent of all child labourers are 12–18 years of age, and slightly more boys than girls are engaged.

In Cambodia, sugarcane is an increasingly important agricultural growth industry for the country. Large tracts of land grow sugar cane, with more than 80 per cent of production concentrated in five provinces: Kampong Speu, Koh Kong, Svay Rieng, Kratie and Kampong Chhnang. Sugar cane is produced for both the domestic and export market. It is used to extract juice, and to produce sugar. The processing of sugarcane into sugar is largely carried out after export.

Sugar refining is also an emerging industry in Cambodia – there are seven refineries according to the registry of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, although only a few are operational. Under the EU's Everything But Arms (EBA) trade scheme, preferential access to the European market for products from least developed countries (LDCs) were granted, waiving all tariffs and quotas for exporting sugar since 2009. This trade policy has significantly opened up export markets for Cambodia, with the value of Cambodia's annual sugar exports (both raw and refined) rising significantly between 2009 and 2013.<sup>8</sup>

With this backdrop, the aim of this study is to collect credible data and generate a better understanding of the status of child labour in the sugarcane industry in order to inform policy and formulate effective interventions to progressively eliminate child labour so that the development of this agro-industry benefits communities and pro-poor growth.

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<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Planning, National Institute of Statistics and ILO: "Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey 2012", in *Child labour report* (Phnom Penh), November 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> ITC calculation based on UN COMTRADE Statistics. Export figures for 2013 for raw sugar and cane were not publically available at the time of this study.



## 1.1 Defining child labour

Child labour is defined based on a child's age, hours and conditions of work and activities performed. Child labour threatens to damage children's health, education and overall development. In the context of rural family farming and other contexts, it is important to recognize that some light participation of children in productive activities not affecting their health, schooling or personal development can be regarded as acceptable and thus contribute to the inter-generational transfer of skills.

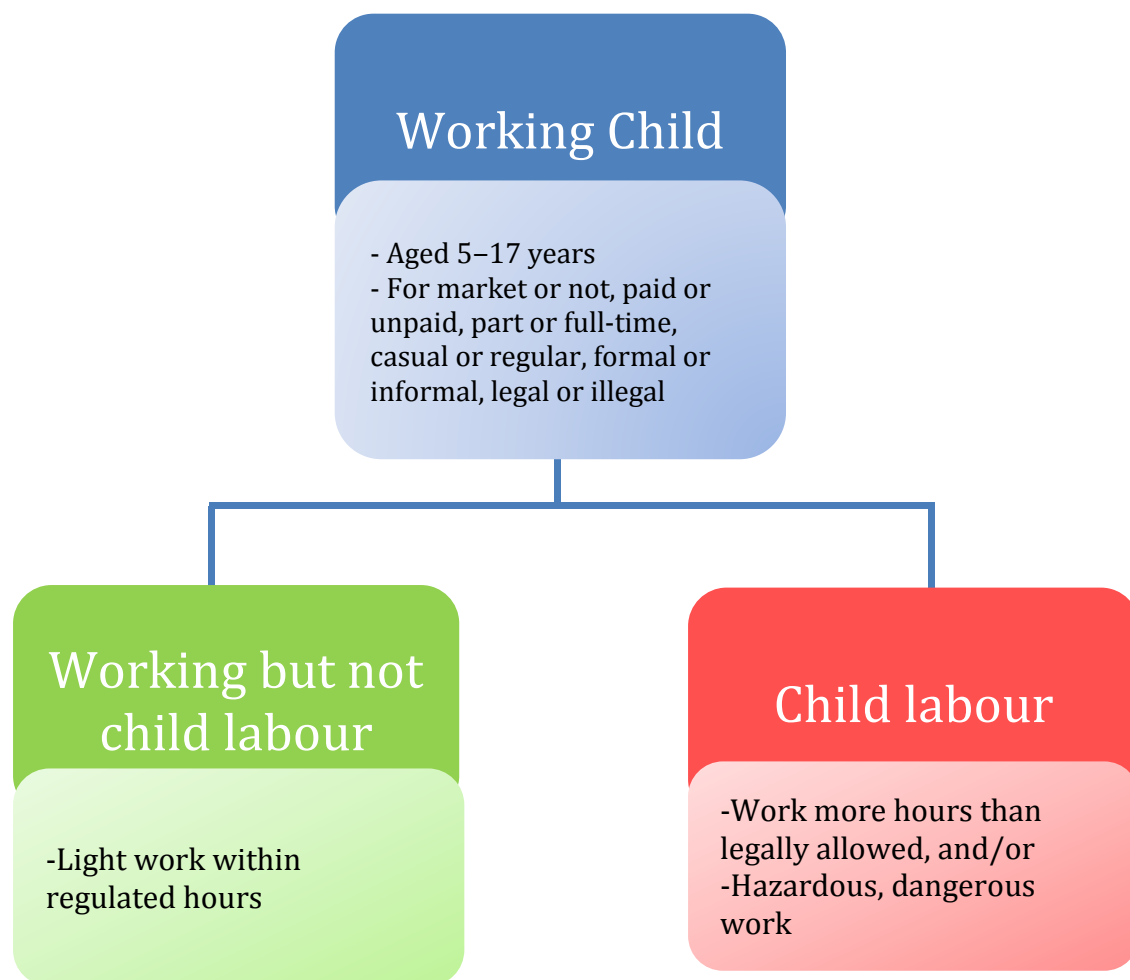
According to the 2008 Resolution II, adopted during the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians,<sup>9</sup> the term 'child labour' covers:

- The worst forms of child labour, including slavery; prostitution and pornography; illicit activities; and work likely to harm children's health, safety or morals, as defined in ILO Convention No. 182.
- Employment below the minimum age of 15, as established in ILO Convention No. 138.
- Hazardous unpaid household services, including household chores performed for long hours, in an unhealthy environment, in dangerous locations, and involving unsafe equipment or heavy loads.
- In its strictest sense, however, child labour does not refer merely to any form of economic activity, as described above, but to a form of economic exploitation damaging to the child.

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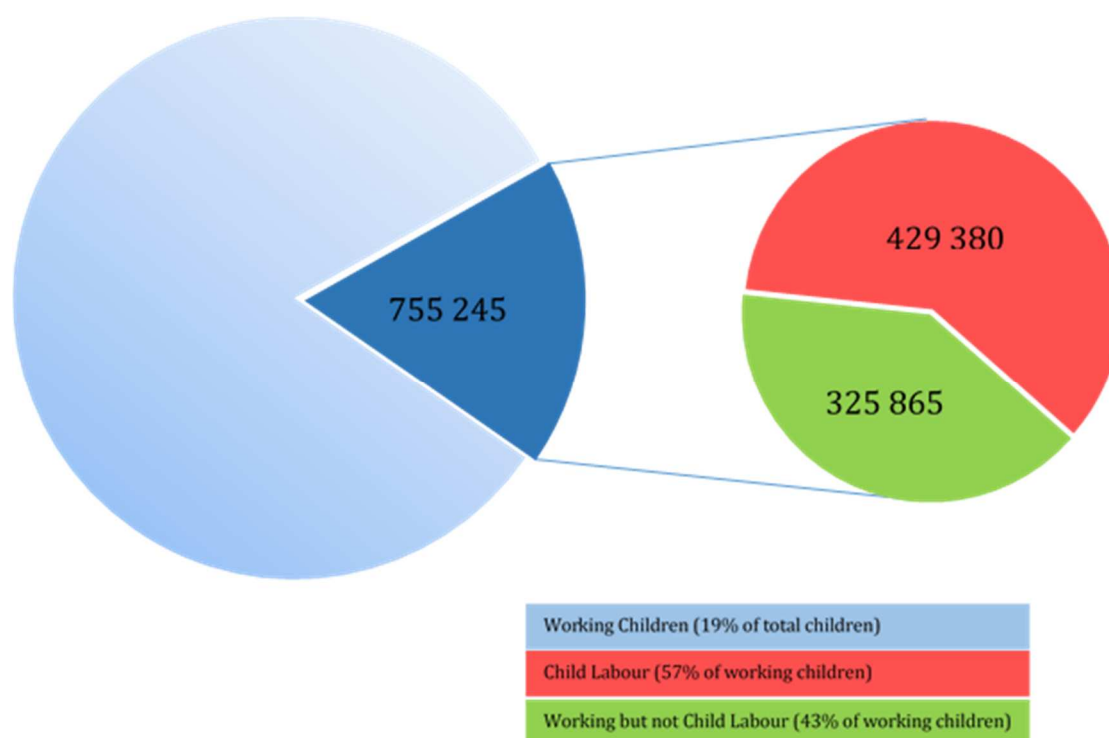
<sup>9</sup> ILO: *Child labour statistics*, 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 24 Nov. - 5 Dec. 2008.

Figure 1: Definition of child labour



According to the Cambodian Child Labour Survey 2012, there are 3.9 million children in the country, of which 755,245 or 19 per cent are currently working or economically active. Among the working children, 57 per cent is considered child labour according to the ILO's definition above, of which 26 per cent are classified as child labour due to excessive working hours and 31 per cent because the work is hazardous (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Child Labour in Cambodia 2012**



## 1.2 Research methodology

This Rapid Assessment of child labour in the sugarcane sector in Cambodia combines several research methods simultaneously to develop a well-rounded picture of the current situation.<sup>10</sup> The fieldwork was conducted from 23 June, 2014 to 1 July, 2014. The subject of child labour, particularly in the rural sector of a developing society is difficult to research due to its often disguised forms sustained through economic and sociocultural rationalizations. The issue of child labour moreover is a sensitive one requiring flexible and dynamic tools of data collection that are attentive to situational factors. This current study included a quantitative household survey, a number of qualitative focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, which included life histories of working children. This allowed for greater triangulation and richness of the research findings.

## 1.3 Coverage area

For a rigorous and objective analysis of child labour, the study needed to consider the overall economic and socio-cultural context. Companies, plantations, and households do not operate in a vacuum and their interactions affect the lives of children. For this reason, our survey tried to present a general picture by examining different types of sugarcane plantations to understand the differences and similarities between large, commercial plantations and smallholder farms, typically family-operated farms but

<sup>10</sup> This Rapid Assessment followed methodological guidance from the ILO and UNICEF, *Manual on Child Labour Rapid Assessment Methodology*, December, 2005.

producing for the market rather than subsistence. The criteria for selecting the geographical areas to conduct the research were:

- Existence of sugarcane production and plantations
- Prevalence of child labour and poverty levels
- Willingness of local authorities to cooperate (security issues)
- Travel requirements as it relates to the cost and time constraints

**Table 1: Profile of potential and selected survey locations**

Province	Sugarcane cultivated area (HA)	Sugarcane production (Tons)	% of Total cultivated Area	% of Total production	% of Child labour	Poverty rate (IDPoor)
Kampong Speu	19 857	635 424	41	40	9	21
Svay Rieng	4 896	305 685	10	19	7	21
Koh Kong	5 414	297 770	11	19	14	42
Kratie	3 217	106 659	7	7	14	36
Kampong Chhnang	7 485	69 961	15	4	37	37
Pursat	470	7 286	1	0	31	34

Sources: Ministry of Planning, National Institute of Statistics, *Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey 2012: Child Labour Report 2012*; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, *Annual Agricultural Statistics 2012-2013*; and Ministry of Planning, *IDPoor Atlas*, August 2012.

Table 2 lists some of the provinces that fit with the selection criteria. Among this list, Kampong Chhnang and Pursat were selected, despite their lower sugarcane production volumes, because of a higher prevalence of child labour and because the team was able to safely access workers and children for interviews. Households in Kampong Chhnang province are recruited to work on sugarcane plantations in Kampong Chhnang and Kampong Speu provinces. Households in Pursat are smallholder sugarcane farmers who utilize household child labour and also hire or exchange labourers during the peak period of planting and harvesting. Brief overviews of the two provinces are as follows:

#### Kampong Chhnang:

- Communes in this province were selected for the study because residents there tend to migrate to work in various sugarcane plantations in Kampong Speu province, as well as to plantations within the province during peak season.
- Approximately 90 per cent of villagers in the survey villages are, or have been, employed on the plantations.
- These plantations produce crystal sugarcane –the type used to produce cane sugar.
- The respondents work in two sugarcane planting locations:
  - A plantation in Teuk Phos district, Kampong Chhnang province. Locals are not sure about the nationality of the plantation owner. The sugarcane is cut by machines and only by hand if the machine is broken.
  - A plantation in Oral district, Kampong Speu province. Sugarcane is cut by hand.

Pursat:

- Communes in this province were selected because there is a presence of smallholder sugarcane plantations, which primarily produce for the domestic market. The average parcel of land for sugarcane is around 0.5 hectares. Farmers can earn around KHR3–4 million per season selling to traders from Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and retailers in Pursat.
- Produces mainly chewing sugarcane, which is used for juice extraction.

**Table 2: Overview of survey locations**

Province	District	Commune	Village	Remarks
Kampong Chhnang	Teuk Phos	Kbal Tek	Prey Chroev	90% of 226 households in the village work for pay, in the sugarcane fields, including children, usually aged between 15–17 years. The fields are located in Teuk Phos district, Kampong Chhnang.
Kampong Chhnang	Teuk Phos	Kbal Tek	Thnal Kaeng	90% of 257 households in the village work for pay, in the fields, including children, usually aged between 15–17 years. The sugarcane fields are in Teuk Phos district, Kampong Chhnang.
Pursat	Bakan	Trapeang Chong	Srae Lvea	90% of 243 households in the village own and operate sugarcane fields (family enterprise). Children in about 70% of the households engage with the work, starting from the age of 7.
Pursat	Bakan	Trapeang Chong	Kandoeng Meas	30% of 280 households in the village are involved in sugarcane planting (family enterprise). Children in about 70% of households engage with work, starting from age 7.
Pursat	Bakan	Snam Preah	Thnuoh Ta Chab	90% of 283 households in the village own and operate sugarcane fields (family enterprise). Children in about 70% of the households engage with the work, starting from age 7.

## 1.4 Sample and data collection tools

The quantitative and qualitative data used for the analysis was gathered through various tools, which comprised: open-ended household questionnaires, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews (including life histories). In total, 93 households were interviewed for the open-ended survey (comprising 218 children, of which 43 per cent or 94 are working children). In addition, nine focus group discussions were conducted with three different groups:

- Working children aged 5–12 years.
- Working children aged 13–17 years.
- Parents and community leaders. This was further complemented with 14 in-depth interviews with various stakeholders such as working children, labour recruiters, commune chiefs, parents and teachers (Table 3).

**Table 3: Sample size**

Tool	Achieved		
	Kampong Chhnang	Pursat	Total
Open-Ended Questionnaire	45	48	93
Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)	4	5	9
Group 1: Age 5–12	0	2	2
Group 2: Age 13–17	3	2	5
Group 3: Parents & Leaders	1	1	2
In-depth interviews	8	6	14
Life histories	3	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>122</b>

## 2 The industry

Close to 96,000 men and women aged 15 years and above work in the growing and production of sugar, with men (nearly 59,000) accounting for 60 per cent of those employed in this sector.<sup>11</sup> Nearly 23 per cent of employment in this sector is based in the Province of Kampong Chhnang, followed by Kandal (15 per cent), Kampong Thom (11 per cent) and Kampong Speu (11 per cent). Employment in the sector can be classified as highly vulnerable, with more than four in five of those employed as either an own-account worker or contributing family worker. Overall, workers in the sugar industry have low educational attainment: 62.6 per cent have not completed primary education, and only 10 per cent have completed lower secondary schooling. Based on indications from labour recruiters during the course of this research, roughly 30 per cent of fieldworkers are children.

**Table 4: Annual sugarcane production in Cambodia**

Year	Harvested area (Ha)	Production (Ton)	Yield (t/h)
2005	4 498	90 193	20.05
2006	8 336	176 740	21.20
2007	10 458	286 811	27.43
2008	13 297	385 238	28.97
2009	10 842	385 238	35.53
2010	11 004	350 155	31.82
2011	19 361	468 738	24.21
2012	42 463	1 576 472	37.06

Source: Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, *Annual Agricultural Statistics*, 2012–2013.

Sugarcane production has increased significantly over recent years, from just 4,498 hectares of harvested land in 2005, up to 42,463 hectares in 2013. Total production reached over 1.5 million tons in 2012 from just 90,000 tons in 2005 (Table 4). The top

<sup>11</sup> Data are based on the 2012 Cambodia Labour Force Survey. Due to the timing when the survey was conducted (low season for agriculture), employment figures in the sugar industry may represent an underestimate.



sugar cane producing provinces in Cambodia in terms of volume are: Kampong Speu, Svay Rieng, Koh Kong, Kratie, and Kampong Chhnang.

A total of 120,271 hectares of land has been granted to private companies in economic land concessions for sugarcane production since 2006. Most of these large commercial plantations are located in Koh Kong, Kampong Speu, Oddar Meanchey, Preah Vihear, Kratie and Svay Rieng. A list of registered economic land concessions for sugar production can be found in Appendix 1.

The last sugar mill operated in the 1960s and was destroyed during the civil war. In 2010, the first sugar-processing plant in more than 40 years began operation in Koh Kong province. There are two adjoining sugarcane concessions in the province covering over 10,000 hectares of land. The concessions were granted by the Government in August 2006 to two companies, Koh Kong Plantation Co. Ltd and Koh Kong Sugar Co. Ltd. Senator Ly Yong Phat was named the Director of the Koh Kong Plantation Co., and Mr. Chamroon Chinthammit, CEO of Thailand's only listed sugar producer Khon Kaen Sugar (KSL) was named Director of the Koh Kong Sugar Co. Ltd. Both companies form a single sugarcane growing and milling operation. Initially, the joint venture comprised of KSL (50 per cent), Taiwanese firm Ve Wong Corporation (30 per cent) and Cambodian Senator Ly Young Phat (20 per cent). In its 2010 annual report, KSL indicates that it obtained Ly Yong Phat's share, giving it a controlling 70 per cent interest in the company.<sup>12</sup> The total production capacity is 70,000 tons of raw sugar per year.

Subsequently, in the province of Kampong Speu, the Kampong Speu Sugar Co. opened in 2010 under the ownership of Senator Ly Young Phat. The first sugar mill was inaugurated here in late December 2012 under its sister company named Phnom Penh Sugar Co. Ltd.<sup>13</sup> According to the company's website, the factory is able to crush 6,000 tons of sugarcane per day and the total crushing capacity per year is 1 million tons of cane. Further, the factory has capacity to refine raw sugar of up to 600 tons per day. The company claims to have generated more than 2,500 jobs in the sugarcane sector.<sup>14</sup>

To date, there are seven sugar processing factories listed on the registry of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. These factories are located in Koh Kong, Kampong Speu, Oddar Meanchey, and Kratie provinces. The main products include raw sugar and refined white sugar (Appendix 2).

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<sup>12</sup> Clean Sugar Campaign, 2012, <http://www.boycottbloodsugar.net/the-companies/the-producers/> [Accessed 2 Dec 2014]. See also Bridges Across Borders Cambodia, "Bittersweet: A Briefing Paper on Industrial Sugar Production, Trade and Human Rights in Cambodia" 3 September 2010, available at <http://babcbombodia.org/developmentwatch/cleansugarcampaign/bittersweet.pdf> [accessed 15 Mar. 2013].

<sup>13</sup> OpenDevelopment, <http://www.opendevdevelopmentcambodia.net/company-profiles/economic-land-concessions>, 2014, [accessed November 2014]; agra-net, <https://agra-net.com/portal2/home.jsp?template=pubarticle&artid=1360344418824&pubid=ag077> [accessed Dec. 2014]

<sup>14</sup> Phnom Penh Sugar Ltd.Co., 2009, <http://phnompenhsugar.com> and <http://phnompenhsugar.com/community/employmentopportunity.html> [accessed December 2014]

**Table 5: List of sugar investments in Cambodia**

Concessionaire name	Province(s)	District(s)	Investor country
1. Koh Kong Sugar Industry Company Limited	Koh Kong	Srae Ambel	Thailand (Khon Kaen Sugar); Taiwan (Ve Wong Corporation, 30%)
2. Kampong Speu Sugar Co.	Kampong Speu	Oral	Cambodia (Ly Yong Phat)
3. Phnom Penh Sugar Co. LTD	Kampong Speu	Thpong	Cambodia (Ly Yong Phat)
4. (Cambodia) Cane and Sugar Valley	Oddar Meanchey	Samraong	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)
5. Angkor Sugar	Oddar Meanchey	Samraong	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)
6. River Sugar cane	Oddar Meanchey	Chongkal	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)
7. Carmadeno Venture (Cambodia) Limited	Kratie	Sambour	Vietnam

Source: OpenDevelopment, 2013

According to one of the largest refineries in Cambodia, 80 per cent of its present production is for domestic supply while 20 per cent is for exports.<sup>15</sup> “Cambodia is traditionally a net importer of sugar. In 2012, more than US\$8.5 million was spent on importing nearly 20,000 tons, down from 31,000 tons in 2011, thanks to an increase in domestic supply”.<sup>16</sup>

Under the EU’s Everything But Arms (EBA) trade scheme, preferential access to the European market for products from least developed countries (LDCs) were granted. This has meant the waiving of all tariffs and quotas for exporting sugar since 2009.

Since then, Cambodian sugar production and exports have been on the rise. For example, the rate of increase in the export value of refined sugar saw a dramatic rise from US\$ 37,000 in 2010 to nearly US\$9.5 million in 2013, while raw sugar and cane export values also witnessed an increase from US\$4.5 million in 2010 to US\$10.1 million in 2012.<sup>17</sup> About 92 per cent of Cambodia’s sugar exports are estimated to be for the EU market.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> D. de Carteret: “A refined approach?” in *The Phnom Penh Post*, 11 March, 2014.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> ITC calculation based on UN COMTRADE Statistics. Note: export figures for 2013 for raw sugar and cane were not publically available at the time of this study.

<sup>18</sup> During the period 2009-2011. Equitable Cambodia and Inclusive Development International: “Bittersweet Harvest: A Human Rights Impact Assessment of the European Union’s Everything But Arms Initiative in Cambodia”, 2013, pg. 22. *The Guardian* reports a higher percentage of EU imports of Cambodian sugar - 97 per cent - in 2012. See K. Hodal, “Cambodia’s sugar rush leaves farmers feeling bitter at ‘land grab’”, in *The Guardian*, 9 July 2013.

## 3 Findings

### 3.1 How children enter the sugarcane workforce

It is usually the mother who decides to send the child to work, with the occurrence higher in smallholder farms than in commercial plantations – 71 per cent compared to 57 per cent. According to feedback from parents from the household survey, most children working on commercial plantations made their own decision to work there. On average, a child starts to work in the sugarcane fields at the age of 10–11 years old. Most parents and community leaders feel this age is too young for a child to start working, but they say there are no alternatives because the household is poor and extra help is needed on the farm.

**Table 6: Who gives consent for a child to work?**

Consent by:	Plantation	Smallholder	Total
Mother (%)	57	71	66
Self (%)	43	12	22
Father (%)	0	11	7
Grandparents (%)	0	6	4
<b>TOTAL (%)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

Twenty-two per cent of the parents stated that the child made the choice to enter work, particularly for contractual work on a plantation –43 per cent versus 12 per cent on smallholder farms. During focus group discussions with children aged 13–17 years old, most children reiterated that it was their choice to work in the sugarcane fields. However, this is a deeply interwoven socio-cultural context where the child's choice is a reflection of parental, community and social pressures from a very young age, especially among children working on family farms. During focus group discussions, children voiced that they can never stop working on the family farm because it is a family enterprise and it is their obligation to reduce the workload of their parents.

Many of the children working on the plantations said they would work there again because the work was not difficult and was close to home. They also felt the income helps out their family a lot as work provides food. Some said they prefer to go to school and will not come back. All the children, regardless of where they worked, believe that it is important to help their family generate income.

**For commercial plantations,** foremen in the villages typically recruit labourers for the sugarcane plantations, which occurs twice a year – during cutting/harvesting season (April–May) and replanting (June–July). A foreman is typically in charge of a group of 30 people he/she recruits. There are about five groups (five foremen per village). The plantation hires around 1,500 labourers during the peak season. Thus, there are around 50 small groups on an average plantation. Sometimes the parents of children or children themselves ask to work, and in some cases, they will come and substitute for their parents. During an interview with a foreman, he mentioned that it is sometimes very hard to refuse a request for work by a child (usually made by the

child's parents) because the household is extremely poor and other villagers will reproach him if he does not help out the family. This is especially the case if the household has no farmland of their own. The social pressure from the community to support the household economy is a major challenge to eliminating child labour and reinforces the tradition of child labour that perpetuates poverty.

The foreman described that when the sector was starting out in 2009–2010, there were a lot of children working in the plantations, around 30 per cent of the workforce. Schools were quiet during that time as children flocked to work instead of school. Teachers and local authorities made a complaint to the companies, and since then, there has been a ban on child labour in the sugarcane plantations. According to the foreman interviewed, the company will fine the foreman if they catch a child working in the fields. But child labour still exists because some foremen are able to sneak the children in past the company security guards when they are not watching.

Indeed, the Phnom Penh Sugar Company announced in January 2013 that it had amended its hiring policy to forbid contractors from employing children. *The Phnom Penh Post* reports that “The company warned contractors responsible for hiring plantation labourers that anyone caught hiring persons under the age of 18 would be fined KHR50,000 (US\$12.50) on their first offence, and have their contract terminated on their second offense.”<sup>19</sup>

**For smallholder farms**, children enter the workforce as unpaid family labour either working on their own parents' farms or going with their parents to work on neighbors' farms. A social norm in rural areas is to “borrow hands”, in which villagers will give each other a hand during the planting of sugarcane (or any main crop) for free. This is a communal consensus of reciprocity, which is tacit and implicit, hence difficult to challenge. For the cutting of sugarcane, however, the common arrangement is for the buyers to hire their own labour to do the work and the farmers have no responsibility. This occurs once per year during harvest time.

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<sup>19</sup> M. Titthara and S. White, “Sugar company axes child labour” in *Phnom Penh Post*, 15 Jan. 2013.

### 3.2 Working conditions of children

The work process in the sugarcane industry in Cambodia relies heavily on manual labour. Sugarcane is commonly harvested by hand, with some plantations using special machinery, during the months of May–July. For hand harvesting, the field is first set on fire. The fire burns dry leaves, and chases away or kills any lurking venomous snakes, without harming the stalks and roots. Harvesters then cut the cane just above ground-level using cane knives or machetes. These stalks measure from 1.25 to 7.25 centimeters in diameter and reach 6 to 7 metres in height. After cutting, the cane is stripped, topped and bound in bundles of 8–15 stalks for loading. Harvested cane must be sent to the mill within 24–48 hours of cutting, since later transportation will result in sugar loss.

Children working in the fields perform the same activities as adults to a certain extent, which includes:

- (1) Clearing fields, cutting grass, picking up tree roots;
- (2) Ploughing the land with hand tractors;
- (3) Planting Sugarcane;
- (4) Tending the cane by applying fertilizers and raising ridges along rows;
- (5) Cutting sugarcane by hand;
- (6) Collecting the cut sugarcane;
- (7) Cleaning sugarcane and stripping and binding.

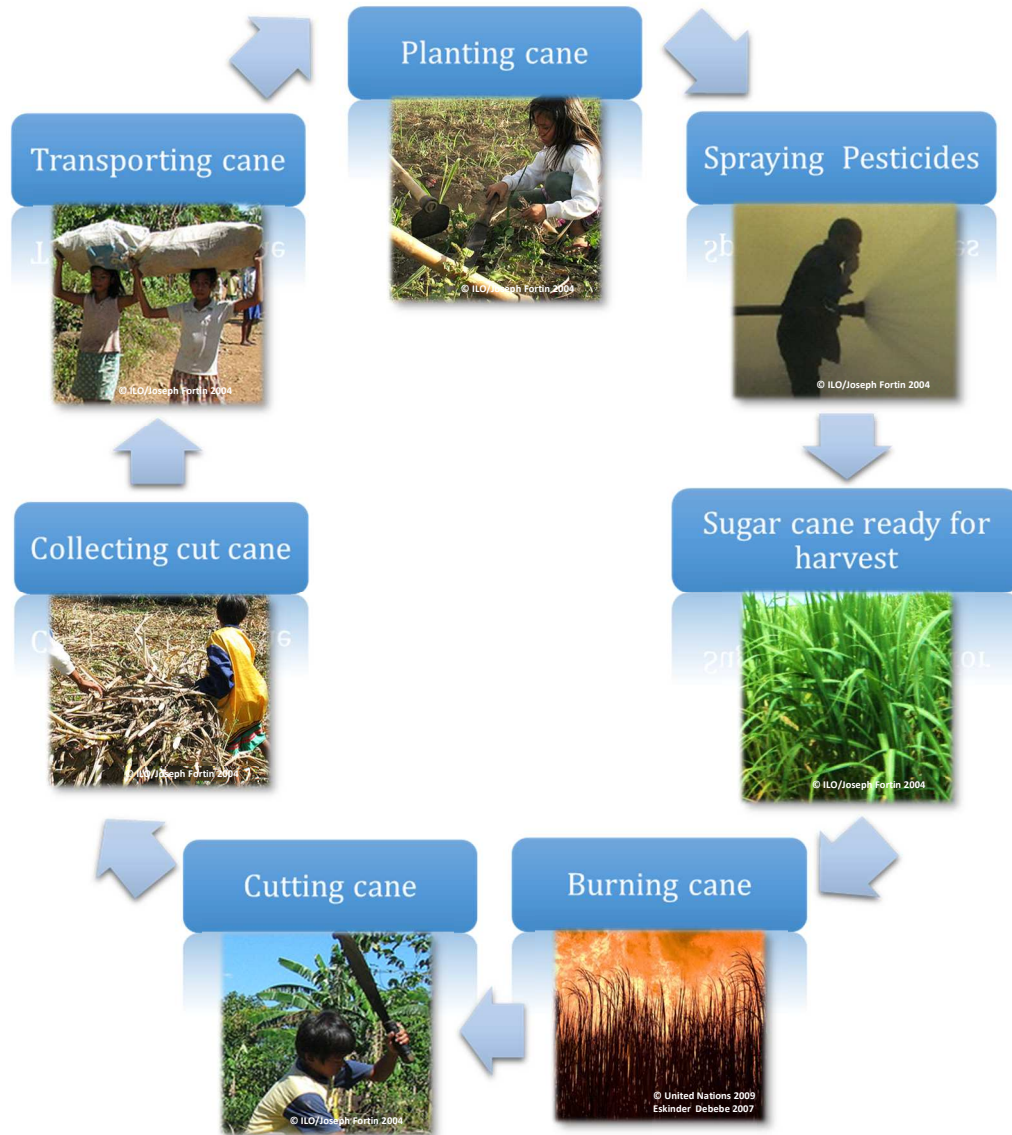
At the age of about eight, children start to help their parents in the fields after school and during weekends and holidays. When harvest season is at its peak, children will work four or five days every week; most of them try to combine school and work by working part time.

The youngest children (5 to 11 years old) usually start with the tasks of clearing the fields of grass and weeds, planting the cane, and applying fertilizers. Parents perceive that children can do this work since it is simple and not as heavy as some other tasks, like harvesting. The children clear the fields of grasses and weeds using big cutting knives.

Harvest time is when all labour is needed to cut the cane and carry it to the trucks that will bring it to the sugar mills. Harvesting and carrying the cane is heavy work and is usually only performed by older children 15–17 years, largely male, and adults. Younger children and girls do not participate in the loading of sugarcane because they are not deemed strong enough. Rather, they are responsible for the cleaning activities such as stripping the tops of the cane and binding the canes. After the harvest, the fields need to be cleared in order to be able to plant new cane. This task is also done by children.

In the focus group discussions, some of the children stated that the work is physically hard but most feel that it requires moderate levels of effort. Children who work on the plantations, in particular, communicated that they do not enjoy the working

Figure 3: Children at work in the sugarcane industry



conditions because it is very hot and humid during the day, which they find suffocating.

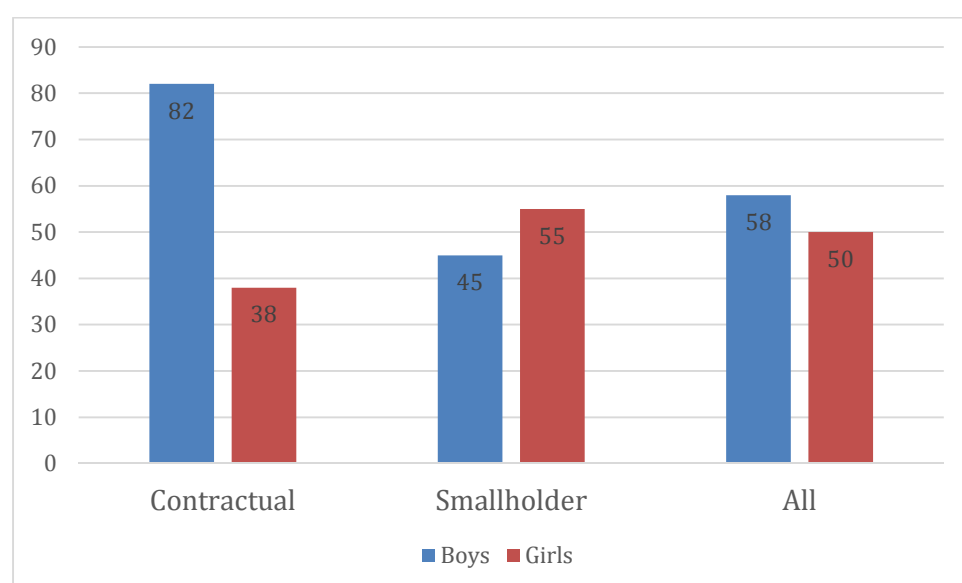
Parents of children working on commercial plantations observe that their children are moderately tired after a day's work (60 per cent of children are believed to be moderately tired), while parents of children working on smallholder farms observe that their children are usually not very tired after working (63 per cent).



### Working hours

According to Cambodian Labour Law, children between the ages of 5–11 can work up to one hour per week; those 12–14 years can work up to 12 hours; and those between 15–17 years can work up to 48 hours per week, provided that the work is permissible and non-hazardous. Survey findings show that an average of 54 per cent of the children working in sugarcane fields work more than the legally permitted hours (Figure 4). For boys, the situation is most prevalent on contractual plantations where 82 per cent of boys work more hours than legally permissible across all three age groups. On the other hand, girls working on family farms are more likely to work excessive hours (55 per cent).

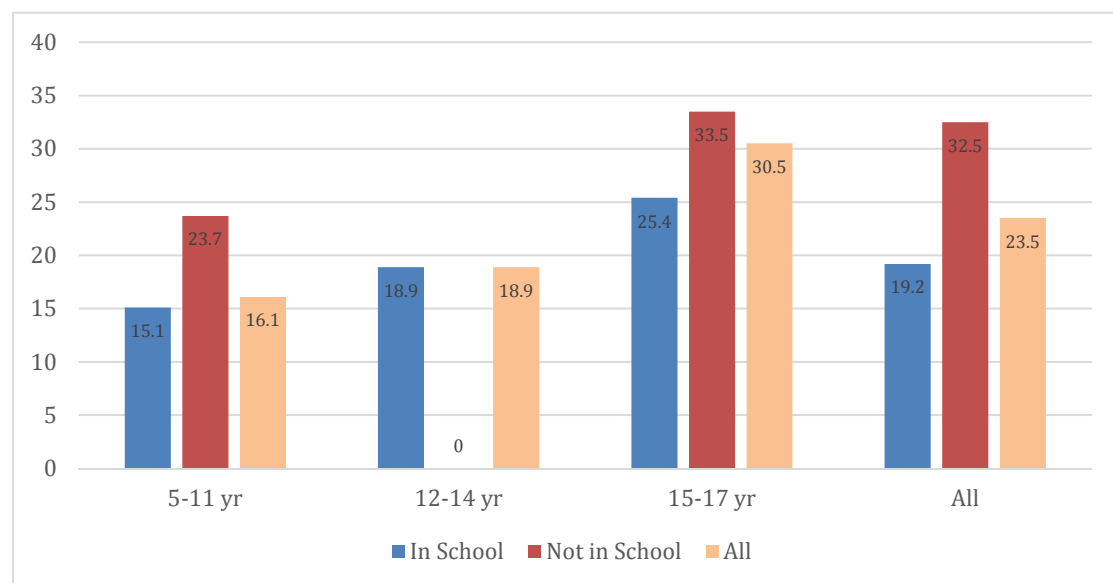
**Figure 4: Percentage of children working more than the legal Hours permitted by type of farm and gender**



Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

**On average, the children worked 23.5 hours per week on the farms** (Figure 5). Children working on commercial plantations as contract labour tend to work more hours than those on smallholder farms – 41.4 hours per week versus 15 hours. Boys work more hours than girls on plantations (48 hours versus 32.8 hours), while girls work more hours on family farms (15.5 hours compared to 14.4 hours).

Figure 5: Average hours worked per week by age group and school attendance

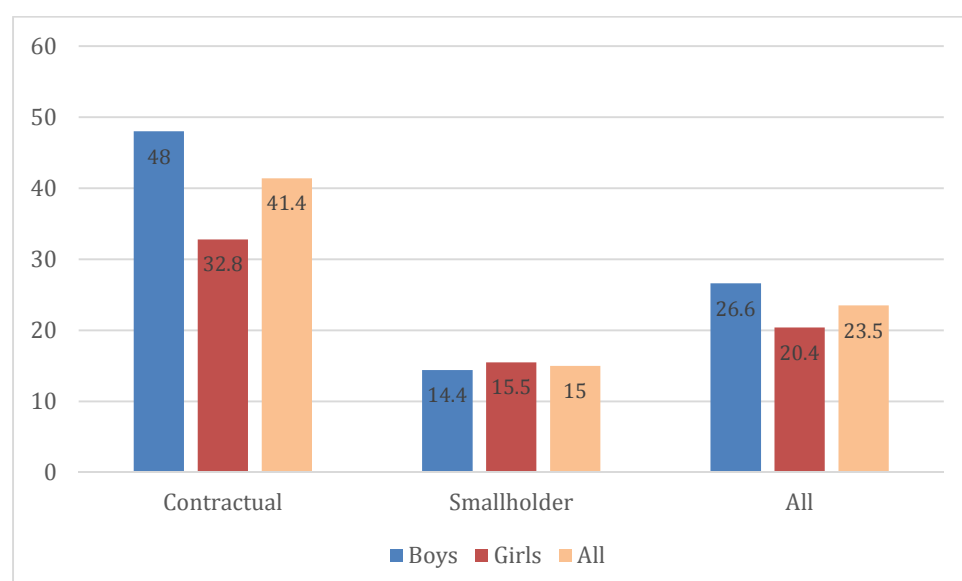


Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

**The working hours for children on smallholder farms are more flexible than those on the commercial plantations because it is a family enterprise.** They usually work from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. If they are in school, they help out in the evenings from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Children working on plantations that also attend school, typically work only on Sundays and on holidays for the full day.

Those working on plantations take lunch in the fields under a tree. They also get a 15 minute break at 3 p.m. The company does not pay for or provide lunch. Those who work on smallholder farms eat at home owing to proximity to the fields. Parents prepare the food.

**Figure 6: Average hours worked per week by gender and type of farm**



Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

Children who are not in school work 32.5 hours per week on average, compared to 19.2 hours for those combining work with school. The working hours increase by age regardless of school attendance. From 16.1 hours per week for young children aged 5–11. The average working time increases to 18.9 hours for 12–14 year olds, and 30.5 hours for older children (Figure. 6).

The distribution of working hours by age group further illuminates this point. A higher percentage of older children work longer hours than those in the younger age groups. Most 15–17 year olds work more than 15 hours per week and 26 per cent work more than 48 hours per week. Most under 12 years olds children work less than eight hours (Table. 6)

**Table 7: Number of hours worked per week by age group in both smallholder farms and plantations (yellow shading denotes those working excess hours)**

Age Group	1-7 hours	8-14 hours	15-29 hours	30-42 hours	43-48 hours	>=49 hours	Total
5-11 years (%)	36	28	12	24	0	0	100
12-14 years (%)	32	24	20	16	4	4	100
15-17 years (%)	12	12	30	21	0	26	100
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

### Wages and employment status

**Almost all children working on the plantations are paid casual workers, while those on smallholder farms are unpaid family workers.** For the plantations, wages are based on a daily rate of KHR14,000–15,000 per day (US\$3.50–3.75) independent of output for children and adults performing light work. Strong adults and foremen can

earn around KHR25,000–40,000 per day (US\$6.25–10.00). Payment is made in cash every week. In almost all cases, a child's income is given to the mother.

For smallholder farms, the household enters into an agreement with a buyer on a seasonal basis. The buyer provides the farmer with a lump sum price, based on the land size and estimated production before harvest. The average price is KHR3–4 million per field with size of 0.5–1 hectares (US\$750–1,000). In addition, the buyer pays for labour during the harvest based on a piece-rate of KHR300–500 per bundle of 10 canes (US\$0.075–0.125).

### **Children's exposure to hazards**

The vast majority of parents perceive the health risks to a child working in the fields as low. A large percentage of parents see the working conditions as acceptable because they believe their child is happy and it is good work experience. Nevertheless, they point out that children are exposed to extreme temperatures from working out in the sun, which can suffocate them and make it difficult for them to breathe. Children commonly get cuts from the sharp cane leaves and are stung by bees and wasps. Sixty-five per cent of the children working in the fields encountered skin infections, according to the household survey. Other indicators of hazardous work include: lifting and carrying heavy things, working around dangerous/sharp equipment, exposure to chemicals and pesticides, exposure to fumes from burning fields and exposure to dust.

In the focus group discussions, children working on the plantations mentioned that they or some of their friends have been injured working. Injuries included cuts from sharp sugarcane leaves, bug bites and knife wounds. Sometimes the children get a fever, headache, and/or dizziness. If the injury or sickness is serious, the foreman takes them to the hospital and the company pays for the treatment. The accessibility and affordability of quality healthcare was not explored in this study, but in general, healthcare in rural areas is limited and of poor quality. The injuries faced by children on smallholder farms are similar: cuts on fingers and toes from the sharp cane leaves and/or by the knives and hoes, skin infection from bug bites, swelling from bees and wasp stings. According to parents' assertions, most of these injuries are minor and are therefore treated by the family. There was no mention by households of the possibility of long-term damage to health from premature contact with pesticides or herbicides, from injuries caused by sharp machetes, knives or machinery, or simply from long hours labouring in the hot sun.

## Living conditions



Photograph 1: Living area of migrant workers in sugarcane plantation in Kampong Chhnang province

Most of the respondents in the survey live close to the sugarcane fields. They generally commute to the field daily and return home at night. Children travel with their parents and/or siblings. The living conditions of these households are poor but similar to that of the community in general. They have no electricity and few have latrines. Clean water is limited. The quality of their housing is poor, typically made of leaves and wood.



Photograph 2: Living area of migrant workers in sugarcane plantation in Kampong Chhnang province

The survey team was able to meet with some workers who were migrants from other provinces such as Kampong Speu and live on the plantations for the duration of the peak season. The living conditions of migrant workers is very poor with extremely sub-standard sanitation. They live in plastic cover tents with little coverage. There are no latrines or washing facilities. There is no electricity. In some cases, migrant parents will bring their young children with them because there is no caretaker at

### 3.3 Characteristics of working children

Overall, a total of 218 children per cent (94 children) worked in the sugarcane fields during the last season. This labour force participation rate is higher than the national rate of 19.1 per cent because the sample was purposively drawn from households with child labour only to

are included in the sample, of which 43.4

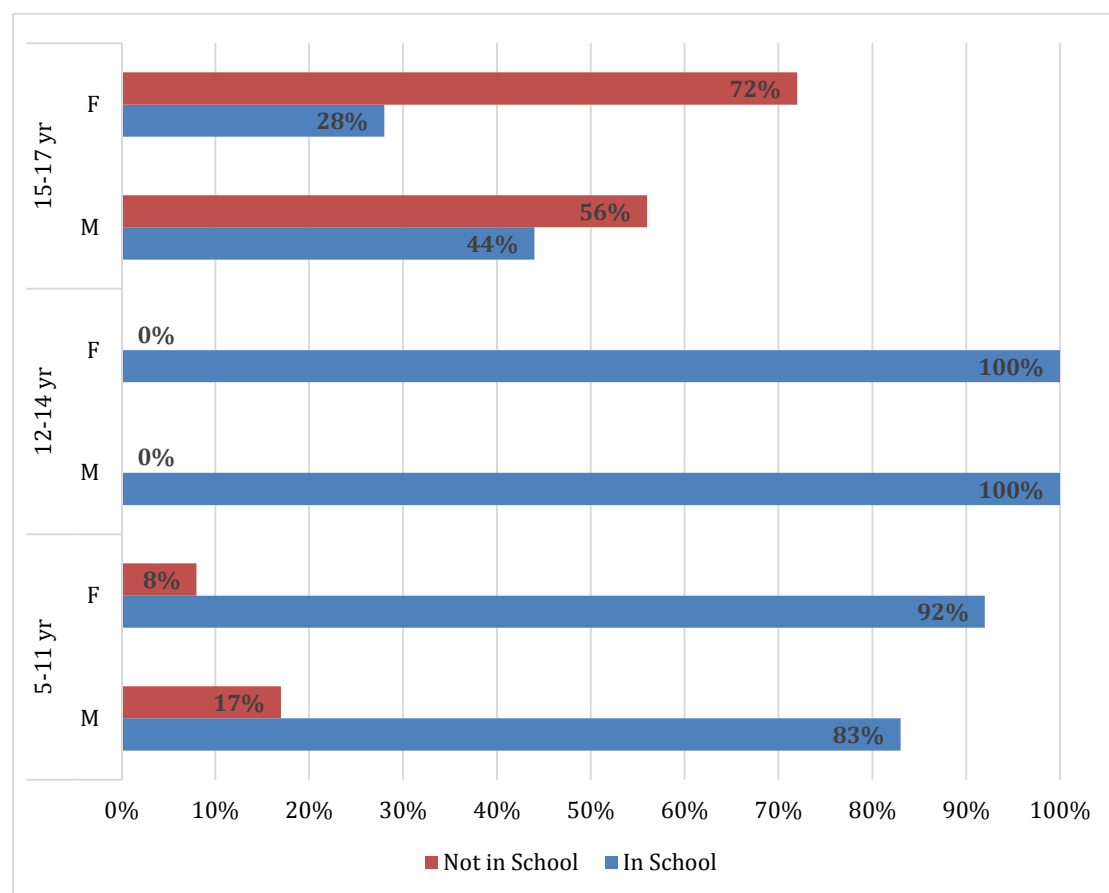


Photograph 3: Focus Group Discussion with children ages 13-17 years in Kampong Chhnang

ensure a significant sample size. A large proportion of children working in the sugarcane fields are in the age group 13–17 years (61 per cent), while roughly 37 per cent are between 5–12 years.

Among the 94 working children in the sample, 67 per cent combine work with school, while 33 per cent are not in school. In the youngest age group (below age 12), it is largely the children aged between 4–9 years that work and do not attend school. Therefore child labour seems to delay school enrolment, which international evidence suggests leads to lower school retention and completion rates.<sup>20</sup> This finding may signify a tendency for these children to work before they enroll in school, and a tendency for late enrolment (overage) in education. All of the working children in the group 12–14 years are attending school. Typically, these children work only after school or on weekends and holidays. When asked if work interferes with their schoolwork, they answered no and explained that the fieldwork is light.

**Figure 7: School attendance of working children by gender**



Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

It is in the age group of 15–17 years that one observes a dramatic drop in school enrolment rates, which is notably higher for girls (72 per cent) than boys (56 per cent), Figure 7. According to parents, 48 per cent (Table 8.) stated that their child does not want to go to school, particularly boys (57 per cent). Three out of ten parents said they

<sup>20</sup> Global March Against Child Labour, *Policy Paper: Out-of-school Children and Child Labour* 2014.



could not afford to send their child to school. Twenty-two per cent explained that the school is too far from home, especially for girls (38 per cent).

**Table 8: Reasons why working children ages 15–17 years are not in school**

Reasons	Boys	Girls	All
Child does not want to go to school (%)	57	38	48
Parents cannot afford child's education (%)	36	23	30
School too far (%)	7	38	22
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014.

Indeed, there are multifaceted problems to explain why children are not attending school, in addition to financial pressures at home, including the difficulty of getting to school and the cost of schooling. Even when tuition is free, there are additional costs for lunch, uniforms, and examination fees. Furthermore, parents may also be forced to pay for additional tutoring to enable their children to pass tests because of the poor quality of education, one that is difficult to relate to (due to an urban bias) or valued as relevant to finding attractive work. As the child gets older, these opportunity cost considerations increase greatly. As the child approaches working age, the opportunity cost is even higher as they forego opportunities to earn an income, working on the family farm or selling in the marketplace. Therefore, investment in education usually ends once parents and others perceive that the child has achieved basic literacy and numeracy. Job prospects for educated people are limited in Cambodia, and staying in school past grade 5, or even up to grade 10, are not believed to improve them significantly.

A recent study by USAID which includes Pursat Province, corroborates the above findings and clearly shows that the need to earn money is a major determinant of drop out, especially between Grades 7–9 (lower secondary).<sup>21</sup> The second main determinant is assistance with household chores while school access and quality factors are far less significant.

Given our sampling methodology, it is not possible to draw conclusions on the drivers of child labour, but it is possible to highlight some interesting differences between the contract labourers on large plantations versus smallholder farms, as following:

- **Smallholder farms have a higher prevalence of working children than commercial plantations:** 64 per cent of children in smallholder farms are currently working in sugarcane fields versus 26 per cent of those in commercial plantations. The prevalence is higher for smallholder farms for each age group.
- **Smallholder farms also rely on the labour of younger children than commercial plantations.** The average age of working children in the smallholder farms is 12 years, compared to 15 years for commercial plantations.

<sup>21</sup> USAID. 2012. "School drop out prevention pilot programme: Cambodia programme overview", 19 Sep. Available at: <http://schooldropoutprevention.com/country-data-activities/cambodia/> [Accessed Dec. 2014].

- **A higher percentage of the children working on commercial plantations are not attending school compared to those working on smallholder farms** – 47 per cent versus 28 per cent respectively. The rate for small holder farms is comparable to the national rate of 50 per cent of working children not in school. Typically, children in rural areas drop out of school at the age of 13–14 years. Most working children have a lower or upper primary school education (up to 8 grade), and say that they can read and write. However the extent to which they can do either effectively requires further investigation (appendix III).
- **Children working on the plantations tend to be paid casual workers (67 per cent), while those working on smallholder farms are unpaid family workers (97 per cent).** Nevertheless, roughly 10 per cent of children working on the plantations are unpaid family workers who accompany their parents to the fields.

### 3.4 Characteristics of households

Income from sugarcane activities represents a substantial portion (60–80 per cent) of income for the households in the sample. The income is seasonal and especially important during the slack period of rice production. “Income from sugarcane work is our best option,” said parents in Kampong Chhnang province during focus group discussions.

- The sample was purposively selected to include only households with children working in the sugarcane industry. Therefore, it is not possible to draw conclusions on the household drivers of child labour, but it is possible to look at the similarities and differences between contract labourers and smallholder labourers, and compare this to the national situation. The household size in the sample for the two groups is roughly the same, five persons, which is consistent with the national average.



© ILO/CIDS 2014  
Photograph 4: A household that works on sugarcane farming in Kampong Chhnang province

### Key findings

- **Households with contract labourers are poorer than those working as smallholder farmers.** Households with children working on commercial plantations have a lower monthly expenditure than smallholder based households - US\$130 compared to US\$192 (US\$ 23 per capita versus US\$38). Forty per cent of households with contract labourers hold an IDPoor card compared to 15 per cent of those in smallholder farms. Furthermore, 44 per cent of households with

contract labourers feel that their income is insufficient to meet household needs, while only 17 per cent of those on smallholder farms felt this way.

- **Households with contract labourers tend to have smaller plots of agricultural land than smallholder farm workers, 1.42 hectares versus 2.6 hectares (national average is 1.6 hectares).** Of the contract labourers 18 per cent are landless, compared to 2 per cent of smallholder farmers.
- **The quality of housing of households with contract labourers is significantly worse than for smallholder farmers.** Only 2 per cent have access to latrines and 0 per cent have access to electricity.
- **In terms of debt, a higher percentage of households with smallholder farm workers have outstanding loans,** which are likely to be for agricultural business. 65 per cent have debts with an average value of US\$1,403. Only 47 per cent of contract labourers' households have debts, and the amount is much smaller, US\$302. More than half of the smallholder households feel that they are over-indebted, compared to 38 per cent of contract labourers. This suggests that smallholder households have greater prospects of escaping poverty in the longer term, but also expose themselves to greater risk.

**Table 9: Household Characteristics**

Household characteristics	In Sample			Cambodia
	Contract Labourers	Smallholder	Total	
Total Children	117	101	218	3 956 751
Of which working children	30	64	94	755 245
Number of HH	45	48	93	2 189 000
Household size	5.2	5.1	5.1	4.7
Average Monthly Household Expenditure (US\$)	130	192	162	343
Average Monthly Household Expenditure per capita (US\$)	23	38	32	73
IDPoor card –poverty indicator (%)*	40	15	27	27
Feel income is insufficient (%)*	44	17	30	n/a
Total land ownership (ha)	1.91	2.94	2.44	n/a
Total agricultural land ownership (ha)	1.42	2.60	2.03	1.64
Own no agricultural land (%)*	18	2	10	12
Feels that quality of house is poor (%)*	71	52	61	n/a
Access to toilet (%)*	2	46	25	33
Have electricity (%)*	0	0	0	34
Household Debt - yes (%)*	47	65	56	n/a
Household Debt amount (US\$)	302	1 403	959	n/a
Feel In-debted (%)*	38	52	46	n/a

\*As percentage (5) of total households surveyed

Source: Household Survey by CIDS, June 2014; Ministry of Planning, National Institute of Statistics, *Cambodia Labour Force and Child Labour Survey*, 2012.

### 3.5 Socio-cultural context

There are ingrained attitudes about the role of children in rural areas. According to parents and community leaders, children generally start helping with agriculture work at the age of 7–8, mostly as unpaid family labour. “Every family has a child working in the fields” according to several respondents. They assert that this is how it has always been. Parents themselves started working on the farm at the same age. As the child gets older, at around 13–15 years, they may enter into paid contract labour. At this age, the opportunity cost of keeping the child as unpaid family labour and in school is too high, and paid options outside the family farm are considered far more attractive.

Parents explain that there are two main reasons for their children to work in the sugarcane fields: the family needs the income, and the lack of labour supply for their own farms. Twenty-two per cent of parents stated that if the child stopped working, it would result in a decline in their living standards as the family is dependent on the child’s contribution to income. Overall, 74 per cent of parents are not happy having to send their child to work but stated: “there are no other options”. The main conditions cited by parents that would allow the child to stop working are:

- 1) parents earn enough income;
- 2) parents have enough land for farming;
- 3) parents have enough money for a child’s continuing education.

The report sheds light on the informal community institutions and social norms that play a key role in influencing traditional ideas of a child’s familial obligation and of children as active agents of the family/household economy. For instance, foremen and labour recruiters often experience significant social pressure and compulsion to hire children. While poverty is certainly a driver, social norms and pressures coalesce to create a supply and demand for child labour.

Ideally, parents want their children to complete their education to at least grade 9 or preferably grade 12. Parents believe that having a higher education can enable their children to get better paid jobs in future. However, pressures felt from present financial constraints at the household level, the hidden costs of schooling, and poor quality education, especially as the child gets older tilt household decisions that do not favour the pursuit of a child’s education past grade 5.

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

The objective of the study is to generate knowledge on the use of child labour in sugarcane production in Cambodia to inspire policy, law, and practice to address it.

Sugarcane production and processing is an increasingly important agricultural growth industry and employment provider for the country.

The study, in conformity with international statistical standards defining child labour, applied two criteria to determine if an economically active child is considered to be engaged in 'child labour'. First, he or she works hours that are in excess of legally permissible standards. Second, he or she is subjected to poor working conditions and exposed to hazards, compromising their physical and mental development.

**Survey findings show that 54 per cent of the working children surveyed currently work in excess of permissible hours. This is especially prevalent for boys working on commercial plantations – where 82 per cent work more than permissible hours per Cambodian regulations.** In addition, the work environment and tasks carried out by children, such as working around sharp cane leaves in excessively hot and humid conditions, cutting sugarcane, and operating hand tractors, is extremely hazardous and dangerous. The immediate hazards, combined with significant potential long-term effects of labouring under the hot sun, inhalation of fumes, exposure to chemicals and fertilizers, are also factors that can hinder the growth and development of the child. This means that children working in the sugarcane sector qualify as child labour.

In summary, the comparative analysis highlights the following:

- **Children in both types of work arrangements engage in hazardous work and work in dangerous conditions.** Children work in extremely hot and humid conditions for hours on end, surrounded by sharp cane leaves, handle sharp knives, and operate heavy machinery (hand tractors). However, parents generally believe there is low health and safety risk in the work environment, and observe that their children are only moderately tired or not tired. Most children also indicate that the workload is physically manageable.
- **Households working on both types of farms are clearly dependent on the labour of their child; therefore, an outright ban on child labour without suitable alternatives may result in immediate negative repercussions on a households' living standard.** Alternatives could include: making the work environment less hazardous for children including those above legal minimum age, providing sufficient and clean drinking water to keep children hydrated, and setting up accessible cooling stations to provide relief during heat bouts in the day. Training should be provided to children, youth and adults on safety and health at work. Risk assessments of health and safety at the workplace can be used to guide in the elimination or substitution of workplace hazards, and help transform hazardous work for children above the minimum age into safe and decent youth employment.
- **Enhanced awareness** on child labour and what constitutes safe work and hazardous work for children and youth below 18 years. There needs to be a change in the attitudes, perceptions, and practices of what is safe and hazardous. As mentioned, parents believe that existing working conditions and practices are not detrimental to the child's health.

## Recommendations

This comparative analysis, which looks at child labour in commercial plantations and in smallholder farms, recommends some initial actions in terms of policy, research, and sensitisation. These actions would lay the groundwork for better informed, responsive, and sustainable action by a variety of national and international actors in the immediate future. The initial recommendations in terms of policy, research and sensitization, as follows:

## Research

There are key knowledge gaps that need to be urgently filled. Key stakeholders (Government, Industry, unions, farmers associations, contractors, human rights organizations and non-governmental organizations) will be better placed to work effectively towards the elimination of child labour if served by more accurate, timely and in-depth data on the nature and extent of child labour within the sugar cane supply chain. In particular the following:

- **A macro level industry supply chain analysis** of the sugarcane sector should be undertaken to better design audience specific interventions. The research should detail a holistic macro picture of this sector-wide industry and analyze the factors that allow and nurture the use of child labour in the industry, as well as the gaps to be addressed in mitigating these problems. The supply chain analysis should include qualitative focus groups or interviews with a range of key actors – from farmers, child labourers, plantation managers, recruiters, industry representatives, and government officials – and also include extensive desk based research. It should provide information on the industry structure, labour force characteristics, profile key actors along the supply chain, domestic and export marketing and distribution structures, and any existing production standards and monitoring systems being employed. Further, it should analyze wages and prices as the sugar cane changes ownership, to determine how much value is added as it moves up the value chain, i.e., profit margins. The research should detail a holistic macro picture of this sector-wide industry and analyze the factors that allow and nurture the use of child labour in the industry, as well as the gaps to be addressed in mitigating these problems.
- **An analysis into the peculiar linkages between familial enterprises in smallholder farms and sub-contracting arrangements** should be undertaken to enrich our understanding of the benefits and disbenefits of this system and how issues raised by it can be better addressed.
- **A comprehensive gender perspective needs to be undertaken** to build on current findings in terms of deepening our understanding of the social pressures for boys and girls to engage in work and the impact that it has on their future prospects in life.
- **An occupational safety and health (OSH) “risk assessment” should be undertaken for children working in the industrial crop sector.** This should explore specific workplace hazards according to the tasks performed by children. The research should generate recommendations for reducing and/or removing these risks across all stages of sugar cane production. It will help the Government, especially under the leadership of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), in their efforts to continually update their list of hazardous occupations

for children under eighteen. At present, Ministerial regulations (*Prakas*) do exist on child labour in agriculture more broadly (***Prakas# 242 of November 2011***), but they don't take into account the specificities of the sugarcane sector.

- **The impact of working on plantations and smallholder farms requires closer investigation in terms of impact on children's nutritional status and longer term development and well being.** This survey shows that children on smallholder farms are fed by their families while they are not provided with lunch on plantations. Existing demographic household survey data on nutritional status in rural Cambodia reveals high levels of stunting – stunting at 25.4 per cent and wasting at 8.1 percent in rural Cambodia.<sup>22</sup>

### Policy

Children in both small holder farms and plantations engage in hazardous work despite dangerous conditions. While poor rural households may be dependent on the labour of their children; an immediate, outright ban on child labour without access to suitable alternatives may have negative repercussions on children.

- **There is a clear need to formulate a Ministerial Regulation governing hazardous work for children in the sector.** While pursuing this, alternatives in the interim could include: making the work environment less hazardous for children, providing sufficient clean drinking water to keep children hydrated, providing meals, and setting up accessible cooling stations to provide relief during hot periods.
- **Moving work from smallholder farms to work on commercial farms that are regulated and meet minimum environmental and labour standards, or organising small holder farmers to form cooperatives may be strategies to consider.**<sup>23</sup> A lack of reliance on informal kinship networks within smallholder farms would lessen the increasing reliance on disguised forms of child labour, left unchallenged due to notions of customary support. However, caution must be exercised that environmental, labour and human rights standards are not compromised in doing so. Organising smallholder farms into cooperatives may be another promising alternative that could offer greater income security, protection, promote gender equality, and economic opportunity to these vulnerable rural households.
- **Policies to promote quality education and end inter-generational poverty are critical to lessening the reliance on child labour.** Parents, community leaders and children all believe that higher education standards/opportunities can help lift them and their family out of poverty and open up decent work opportunities.

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<sup>22</sup> C.M. McDonald et al.: "Household food insecurity and dietary diversity as correlates of maternal and child undernutrition in rural Cambodia" in *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* (2014), Vol. 69, Aug) pp. 242-246

<sup>23</sup> A cooperative is defined by the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) as "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise." <http://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles> [accessed December 2014]. See also ILO, *Cooperating out of child labour: Harnessing the untapped potential of cooperatives and the cooperative movement to eliminate child labour*, 2009.



Enhanced access to quality education and training opportunities suited to rural realities would incentivize school enrolment and retention. Measures could include: adjusting school holidays to seasonal agricultural calendars, providing school meals and starter kits for trained and entrepreneurial graduates, and creating linkages with potential employers to deliver vocational training to older children. Some agencies are already engaged in trying to address such issues (USAID, 2012).

- **A child labour monitoring and referral system needs developing.** Child labour monitoring is an active process often involving workers, employers, recruiters, labour inspectors, schools, and other relevant local governance authorities whereby these actors systematically monitor children and young legally employed workers to ensure that they are safe from exploitation and hazards at work. The monitoring would be supported by a referral system which establishes a link between appropriate services and ex-child labourers. The system would include regularly repeated direct observations to identify child labourers and to determine risks to which they are exposed, referral of these children to services, verification that they have been removed and tracking them afterwards to ensure that they have satisfactory alternatives.<sup>24</sup>
- **The potential of innovative crowdsourcing approaches to exchange information and monitor child labour should be explored,** including through ICTs such as social media and SMS technologies given their extensive use and continuing expansion in Cambodia.
- **Prioritize the outreach of social protection services through the IDPoor scheme** to communities working in the sugarcane sector and surroundings. These include ensuring a minimum income security for the working age population; child benefits; extending access to social protection services evenly to rural communities; extending income security for the elderly; health care for all and maternity protection.

#### Sensitization:

Sensitization on the negative aspects of child labour needs to be enhanced ideally through a communication strategy that would target key stakeholders. These include:

- **Families and parents need to better understand alternatives to excessive child labour and damage to the child's long term interests;** harnessing the positive dimensions of rich cultural traditions while bringing to light the negative dimensions of premature, dangerous and excessive labour. Awareness regarding health and safety risks could serve as an entry point to address the more complex social and behavioral changes that are desirable for sustainable change, including awareness of the laws governing child labour.
- **Key community and government duty bearers should be further sensitized on the need to control and monitor child labour abuses** and ensure that their access to education and other services is not jeopardized.

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<sup>24</sup> For further information on child labour monitoring systems, please see *Overview of Child Labour Monitoring*, ILO, Geneva, 2005 and *Paper on A Child Labour Monitoring System for Cambodia*, ILO-IPEC and Winrock International, 2012.



- **Employers should be sensitized on the need to mitigate the impact of child labour** by ensuring it is safe and does not impinge negatively on access to education and other services, including the health and wellbeing of children.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Economic land concessions for sugarcane - Company profiles

Concessionaire name	Concession size (hectare)	Province(s)	District(s)	Investment intention	Investor country	Director nationality	Duration	Contract date
1. Koh Kong Plantation Company Limited	9,550	Koh Kong	Botum Sakor	Sugar cane plantation	Cambodia (Ly Yong Phat)	Cambodian	70 years	2-Aug-06
2. Koh Kong Sugar Industry Company Limited	9,550	Koh Kong	Srae Ambel	Sugar cane plantation and processing	Thailand (Khon Kaen Sugar)	Thai	70 years	2-Aug-06
3. (Cambodia) Cane and Sugar Valley	6,595	Oddar Meanchey	Samraong	Sugar cane plantation and processing factory	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)	Thai	70 years	24-Jan-08
4. Angkor Sugar	6,523	Oddar Meanchey	Samraong	Sugar cane plantation and processing factory	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)	Thai	70 years	24-Jan-08
5. Carmadeno Venture (Cambodia) Limited	7,635	Kratie	Sambour	Sugar cane plantation and processing factory	Vietnam	Indian	70 years	13-Nov-09
6. Kampong Speu Sugar Co.	13,752	Kampong Speu	Oral	Sugar cane plantation and processing factory	Cambodia (Ly Yong Phat)	Not found	Not found	2010?
7. N K Venture (Cambodia) Limited	1,200	Svay Rieng	Romeas Haek	Sugar cane plantation	Not found	Indian	70 years	27-Jan-10
8. Phnom Penh Sugar Co. LTD	9,312	Kampong Speu	Thpong	Sugar cane plantation and processing factory	Cambodia (Ly Yong Phat)	Not found	Not found	2012?
9. HengNong (Cambodia) International Company Limited	6,488	Preah Vihear	Chey Saen	Rubber, acacia and sugar cane plantation	China	Not found	Not found	Not found
10. HengRuy (Cambodia) International Company Limited	7,607	Preah Vihear	Chey Chhaeb Saen,	Rubber, acacia and sugar cane plantation	China	Not found	Not found	Not found
11. Heng You (Cambodia) International Company Limited	8,860	Preah Vihear	Chhaeb	Rubber, acacia and sugar cane plantation	China	Not found	Not found	Not found
12. LanFeng (Cambodia) International Company Limited	9,015	Preah Vihear	Tbaeng Mean Chey, Chey Saen	Rubber, acacia and Sugar cane plantation	China	Not found	Not found	Not found
13. River Sugar cane	6,618	Oddar Meanchey	Chongkal	Sugar cane plantation and constructing factory	Thailand (Mitr Pohl)	Thai	70 years	Not found
14. Ruy Feng (Cambodia) International Company Limited	8,841	Preah Vihear	Chhaeb	Rubber, acacia and Sugar cane plantation	China	Not found	Not found	Not found
15. Tai Ninh Kratie Sugar	8,725	Kratie	Sambour	Sugar cane plantation	Vietnam	Not found	Not found	Not found
<b>Total</b>	<b>120,271</b>							

Source: Open Development, 2014.

**Appendix II: Annual Sugarcane Production by Province, 2012-13**

Province-Town	Total production (ton)
Kampong Speu	635 424
Svay Rieng	305 685
Koh Kong	297 770
Kratie	106 659
Kampong Chhnang	69 961
Kandal	29 550
Takeo	26 040
Kampong Cham	24 382
Kampot	14 891
Siem Reap	13 368
Stueng Treng	10 353
Pursat	7 286
Battambang	6 785
Pheah Vihear	6 011
Prey Veng	5 560
Otdar Mean Chey	5 060
Bantheay Mean Chey	4 923
Rotanakiri	1 980
Kep	1 836
Preah Sihanouk	1 200
Phnom Penh	911
Kampong Thom	702
Pailin	135
Mondulkiri	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 576 472</b>

Source: Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Annual Agricultural Statistics, 2012-2013.

### Appendix III: Characteristics of working children

Characteristics	In Sample			In Cambodia
	Contract labourers	Smallholder	Total	All child labour
Total Children	117	101	218	3 956 751
Of which working	30	64	94	755 245
<b>Average Age (in years)</b>				
Not working	5	7	6	n/a
Working	15	12	13	n/a
Go with parents to fields but don't work	7	3	4	n/a
All	12	11	12	n/a
<b>Employment by Age Group (% of employed)</b>				
<b>Boys</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>
1) Under 5 yr	0	0	0	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	10	18	16	n/a
3) 13-17 yr	47	28	34	n/a
<b>Girls</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>
1) Under 5 yr	0	3	2	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	7	28	21	n/a
3) 13-17 yr	37	23	27	n/a
<b>All</b>				
1) Under 5 yr	0	3	2	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	17	46	37	10*
3) 13-17 yr	83	51	61	90**
<b>LFP Rate (% of age group and sex employed)</b>				
<b>Boys</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>
1) Under 5 yr	0	0	0	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	9	71	29	n/a
3) 13-17 yr	54	75	64	n/a
<b>Girls</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>20</b>
1) Under 5 yr	0	33	15	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	8	75	42	n/a
3) 13-17 yr	61	83	72	n/a
<b>All</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>19%</b>
1) Under 5 yr	0	11	6	n/a
2) 5-12 yr	8	73	35	4*
3) 13-17 yr	57	79	67	34**

Characteristics	In Sample			In Cambodia	
	Contract labourers	Smallholder	Total	All	child labour
<b>Not in school (% of employed)</b>	47	28	34	50	
<b>Education Level (% of employed)</b>					
No formal education but can read and write	0	3	2	n/a	
Primary school (class 1 to 5)	32	46	42	52	
Upper primary school (class 6 to 8)	48	28	34	52	
Lower-secondary school (class 9-10)	16	15	16	19	
Upper secondary school (class 11-12)	0	0	0	5	
Technical education and vocational training	0	2	1	1	
Too young to be in school	0	6	4	n/a	
Never attended	3	0	1	23	
<b>Status of employment (% of employed)</b>					
Regular	23	2	9	n/a	
Casual	67	2	22	n/a	
Unpaid	10	97	69	57	

#### Appendix IV: Questionnaire for household survey by CIDS

**Screening questions: Interview only if satisfy both these criteria:**

- 1) Worked in sugarcane plantations in the previous / current season
- 2) Have children under 18 years old working in sugarcane plantations

**Introduction**

Hello. We are conducting a study to understand the current practices and conditions of employment in the sugarcane sector. The interview will take about 45 minutes, and all information will remain confidential.

Village	Commune	District	Province	Village code
Enumerator ID	Date of interview	Starting time of interview		



**Section 1: Household members and demographics** *(About household members\*)*

Member ID	Name of household member (Start with the household head)	Relationship with household head	Sex 1= male 2= female	Age in completed years as on last birthday	Marital status	Main activity	<b>(Only for children of 5-17 years)</b>		Current education level
							Is s/he presently attending school? Yes=1, No=2 If Yes, go to Col 10	If not, in school, what is the reason	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
#	Name	Code	Code	Years	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**\* Household members are those resident in the dwelling and sharing the same cooking arrangements for past 6 months (household members may or may not be related by blood)**

**List of Codes**

**(3) Relation with the household Head:**

1= Head of the Household, 2= Wife/Husband 3= son/daughter, 4= Parents 5=Other relatives, 6= others, specify (.....)

**4.1.1 (6) Marital status:**

1= Never married, 2= Currently married, 3= Separated, 4= Divorced 5 = Widowed

**(7) Main Activity:**

1= Employed, 2= Unemployed, 3= Student, 4= Unpaid household service, 5= Retired/Unable to Work, 6= Other

**4.1.2 (9) Reasons for not going school:**

1= School is too far 2=Quality of school is bad 3= Child does not want to go to school 4 = Cannot pay for child's education 5 = Didn't pass exam, 6=Other

**(10) Educational Level:**

1= illiterate, 2= no formal education, but can read and write, 3= pre-school, 4= primary school (class 1 to 5), 5= upper primary school (class 6 to 8), 6= lower-secondary school (class 9-10), 7= upper-secondary school (class 11 to 12), 8= technical education and vocational training, 9=University graduate and over, 10= too young to be in school, 11= Other specify.....

**Section 2A: Main Economic Activities** (About Household Members responding to '1' = Employed to Col. 7)

Member ID	Industrial sector	Occupation	Specify	Is it a traditional work for the household? 1=yes 2= no → <b>if no go to next section</b>	If it's traditional, why did you decide to take the job? ( <b>choose up to 3 main reasons</b> ) 1=I had no say over my occupation, 2=no other employment opportunities, 3= Want to help my family, 4=I like the work, 5= Others			Do you receive other benefits? ( <b>choose up to 3 benefits</b> ) 1= Meals 2= Grocery items 3= accommodation, 4= transportation, 5= No other benefits received, 6= others		
(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)
#	Code	Code	Text	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**(12) Codes for Industrial Sector:**

1=Agriculture; 2=Construction; 3=Manufacturing/Processing; 4=Wholesale & retail trade; 5=Hotels and restaurants; 6=Financial intermediation; 7=IT/; 8=Health; 9=Education; 10=Domestic help; 11=Gems & jewelry; 12=Government/Public Services; 13=Transport, storage & Communication; 14=Real Estate; 15= others (specify)

**(13) Codes for Occupations:**

1= Farmer at own field; 2= Agricultural laborer; 3=Construction labor; 4=Textile /garment factory laborer; 5= Street vendor; 6=Trader; 7=Driver =7;  
 8=Domestic worker; 9=Clerical work; 10=Government Officer/Public Servant; 11=Unpaid family worker; 12=Sales; 13=Home based worker; 14=Teacher;  
 15=Other (specify)

**Section 2A: Main Economic Activities** (About Household Members Residing with Family) - Continued

Member ID	How many months worked?	How many days per month?	How many hours per day?	Do you receive any pay-ment in cash Yes=1 No=2 If 'No' go to Col. 33	Frequency of cash payment 1= daily, 2= weekly 3= monthly, 4=seasonally, 5= yearly	Average monthly cash income from the <b>main occupation</b>	Were you able to save money in the last one-year from the income of this trade? 1=yes, 2=no	Where did you save money? 1=deposited in bank, 2=cash at home, 3=kept with friends/relatives, 4. group savings 5. tongtin 6. other (specify	If yes, amount saved monthly (riels)
(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)
#	#	#	#	Code	Code	Riels	Code	Code	Riels

**Section 2B: Secondary Economic Activities** (About Household Members Residing with Family)

Member ID	Age at which you started working for the first time (age in year)	Do you have a secondary occupation  Yes = 1 No = 2 If No, go to col.43	Is it family enterprise? 1= yes 2= no	If no, what kind of contract do you have with your employer? 1=verbal, 2=written, 3=no contract	Do you receive any pay-ment in cash Yes=1 No=2 If 'No' go to Col.43	Do you receive payment on time? 1=yes, 2=no	If no, what is the outstanding balance as on date?	Secondary occupation (only one)	Average monthly cash income from the <b>secondary occupation</b>
(32)	(33)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(37)	(38)	(39)	(40)	(41)
#	Years	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Riel	Code	Riels

**(40 ) Codes for Secondary Occupations:**

1= Farmer at own field; 2= Agricultural laborer; 3=Construction labor; 4=Textile /garment factory laborer; 5= Street vendor; 6=Trader; 7=Driver =7;  
8=Domestic worker; 9=Clerical work; 10=Government Officer/Public Servant; 11=Unpaid family worker; 12=Sales; 13=Home based worker; 14=Teacher;  
15=Other (specify)

**Section 2C: Economic Activities in Sugarcane Sector – If engaged in the last season only** [including children 17 years and under who goes to sugarcane plantation fields with parents even if they do not work in fields)

Member ID	What tasks did you perform? (choose up to three)			Which months did you work?	How many days per month do you work?	How many hours per day do you work?	Is it traditional work? 1=yes 2= no	If it is traditional, why did you choose the occupation? (choose up to three) 1=I had no say over my occupation, 2=no other employment opportunities 3= Wanted to help my family, 4=I like the work, 5= Others (specify)			Is it also the family occupation? 1= yes, 2= no If yes, skip to #52	If no, what kind of contract do you have with your employer? 1=verbal, 2=written, 3=no contract, 4=Other (specify)
(42)	(43)	(44)	(45)	(46)	(47)	(48)	(49)	(50)	(51)	(52)	(53)	(54)
#	Code	Code	Code	Code	#	#	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**(39-41) Codes for Tasks**

- 1=Clearing fields
- 2=Planting Sugarcane
- 3=Tending the Sugarcane
- 4=Cutting sugarcane by hand
- 5=Cutting sugarcane by machine
- 6=Collecting cut sugarcane
- 7=Cleaning sugarcane (stripped, topped and bound)
- 8=Load sugarcane into truck
- 9=Other (specify)

**Section 2C: Economic Activities in Sugarcane Sector – If engaged in the last season only** [including children 17 years and under who goes to sugarcane plantation fields with parents even if they do not work in fields) - *Continued*

Member ID	Type of employment? 1= regular, 2 =casual, 3= unpaid	Do you receive payment on time? 1=yes, 2=no	<u>If no</u> , what is the outstanding balance as on date?	Frequency of cash payment 1= daily, 2= weekly 3= monthly, 4= seasonally, 5= yearly	Average amount of cash income per time	Is payment based on wages or output (piece-rate)? 1=wages 2=piece-rate	Do you receive other benefits? ( <b>choose ,up to 3 benefits</b> ) 1= Meals, 2= Grocery items 3= accommodation, 4= transportation, 5= No other benefits received, 6= others (specify)			Age at which you started working in this sector?
(55)	(56)	(57)	(58)	(59)	(60)	(61)	(62)	(63)	(64)	(65)
#	Code	Code	Riels	Code	Riels	Code	Code	Code	Code	Years

5 **Section 3: Reasons for children working in SUGARCANE FIELDS** *(Only about working children aged 5 – 17 years)*

Member ID	Employment status?	Working hours per week on average	Who received the cash payment?	Who spent the cash received?	Main reason for child working	If the children stop working, what will be main impact? <b>(pick up to two)</b> 1= household living standard decline 2= household can not afford to live 3= household enterprise cannot operate 4= Does not affect any way 5= Other specify		Whose decision was it for the child to work	Are you happy with your child/children working? 1=yes 2=no 3=no option but to work
(66)	(67)	(68)	(69)	(70)	(71)	(72)	(73)	(74)	(75)
#	Code	#	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**(63) Codes for Employment Status**

- 1= self-employed,
- 2= unpaid family worker,
- 3= paid employee – regular,
- 4= paid employee–casual,
- 5= others

**(65) + (66) + (69) Codes**

- 1= Self
- 2= Mother
- 3= Father
- 4= Brother/Sister
- 5= Grand Parents
- 6= Other

**(65) Codes for Main Reason**

- 1= Cannot afford schooling
- 2= Family need the income
- 3= Child has reached working age
- 4= No opportunity to do a other job
- 5= Do not have enough land for farming
- 6= No one to watch child at home
- 7 = Other (Specify)

**Section 4: Parents' opinion about the working conditions of their children in SUGARCANE FIELDS** (Only about working children aged 5-17 years)

Member ID	Main Type of hazards faced at work (multiple answer)			Has the child ever been hurt at work/workplace or suffered from illness/injuries due to work? 1= yes 2= no	If yes, how serious was it? 1= Did not need any medical treatment 2= Medically treated and released immediately 3= Stopped work temporarily but not hospitalized 4= Hospitalized 5= Could not work permanently 6= Other specify	If yes what was the nature of the injury/ illness? 1= Eye infected 2= Ear infected 3= Skin infection 4= Breathing problem 5= Stiff neck 6= Back problem 7= Body ache/fatigue 8= Loss of limbs 9= Burn 10=Other (Specify)
(76)	(77)	(78)	(79)	(80)	(81)	(82)
#	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**(76) Codes for Tasks**

- 1= Exposure to chemicals or pesticide
- 2= Exposure to dust
- 3= Exposure to foul smell
- 4= Long hours of work/ inadequate sleep
- 5= Lack of protection (being felt alone etc)
- 6= Lifting and carrying heavy things
- 7= Night work
- 8= Fire and explosion risk
- 9= Dangerous, sharp equipment / machines
- 10= Injury/electronic shock from use of machine
- 11= Exposure to extreme temperatures
- 12= Other (Specify)



6 Section 4: Parents perception about their working children in SUGARCANE FIELDS (*Only about working children aged 5 – 17 years*) - continued

Member ID	Employer treatment of child. 1=harsh; 2=moderate; 3=good	If answer is 1=harsh, how does the employer abuse the child? (Choose up to 3 main forms of abuse) 1=verbally, 2= physically (violence), 3= sexually, 4= no rest, 5=no food provided, 6= no payment, 7= neglect, 8= others specify			Wages received by child. 1=low; 2=moderate; 3=high	Health risks faced by child. 1=low; 2=moderate; 3=high	How tired is the child due to work? 1=very tired; 2=moderate tired; 3=not very tired
(83)	(84)	(85)	(86)	(87)	(88)	(89)	(90)
#	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**7 Section 4: Parents perception about their working children in SUGARCANE FIELDS (Only about working children aged 5 – 17 years) - Continued**

Member ID	Do you think that the current working situation is acceptable for the child/ children? 1=yes, 2=no	<b><u>If Yes, then why?</u></b> (multiple choice) 1= need additional income; 2= work conditions not abusive; 3= children are happy working 4= school has no value 5= work experience is good for child 6= others (Specify).....	<b><u>If No, then why?</u></b> (multiple choice) 1= working condition is too harsh; 2= can't go to school; 3= employer's abuse 4= exposure to hazards at work 5= psychological stress on the child 6= others, specify	What are the 2 main conditions that would allow the child to stop working? 1=enough income for family; 2=enough money for child's education; 3=enough land for farming; 4=schools closer to home/workplace'; 5=better quality schools; 6=if someone takes care of child; 7=others, specify	
(91)	(92)	(93)	(94)	(95)	(96)
#	Code	Code	Code	Code	Code

**Section 5: Household Tasks performed by Children (ONLY about children aged 5 -17 years performing household tasks)**

Member ID	Are you engaged in <b>own</b> household tasks 1= yes 2=no <b>If no, skip this section</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Main Task		2 <sup>nd</sup> Main Task		3 <sup>rd</sup> Main Task		Other
		If yes, what is the task you spend <b>most</b> time?	Average time spent on the task (hours/week)	What task?	Average time spent on the task (hours/week)	What task?	Average time spent on the task (hours/week)	Average time spent on the task (hours/week)
(97)	(98)	(99)	(100)	(101)	(102)	(103)	(104)	(105)
#	Code	Code	Hours	Code	Hours	Code	Hours	Hours

**Household tasks**

1= cooking, 2= washing clothes, 3= cleaning house, 4= child care, 5= taking children to school, 6= Looking for sick/old members,  
7= other (specify)

**Section 6: Migrants' Information** *(About Family Members Not Residing in the Household)*

Member ID	Are there any members who have out migrated? 1= yes 2= no	If yes, where did he/she go? 1= with in the country 2= outside the country	Write the Country or Province	What was the main reason for out migration?	If "to find a job", what is his/her occupation?	At what age did they migrate out?	Are you in contact with them ? Yes = 1 No = 2	Are you happy about his/her migration 1= yes, 2= no
(106)	(107)	(108)	(109)	(110)	(111)	(112)	(113)	(114)
#	Code	Code	Text	Code	Code	Years	Code	Codes

**Codes**

**(75) Reasons for out migration**

1=To find a job, 2=For higher education, 3=To help family members, 4= Not known, 5= Other specify.....

**(76) If the answer is 1= "to find a job" for Q.4.4, what is his/her occupation?**

1= Domestic worker, 2= Construction worker, 3=Garment factory worker, 4=Not known, 5=Other: specify.....

## Section 7: Household characteristics

### Migrant status

- (115) Is the household a migrant family? 1= yes 2=no  
 a. If yes, why did your family migrate? (code).....  
     1=political reasons  
     2=was indebted to landlord, businessman, moneylender, etc.,  
     3= Government provided land  
     4.=Insufficient income  
     5= Marriage  
     6=Job  
     7=Educational Purposes  
     8= others, specify ( .....)  
     .  
 b. If yes when did you migrate (year).....  
 c. d. If yes, from where did you migrate in? (Write name of province).....

### Household income

- (116) Is your total income is sufficient to support the household 1= yes 2= no  
 (117) If no, how do you manage?.....

### Household debt

- (118) Does your family have any debt? 1= yes 2= no  
 (119) If yes, how much? ('000 riels).....  
 (120) Do you feel that the debt is too much for your household to repay (difficulties repaying the debt)?  
     1= yes 2= no  
 (121) Does your household have an IDPoor Equity card? 1= yes 2= no  
 (122) How would you rate the quality of your house? (keep in mind space, privacy, roofs, walls, latrines)  
     1= poor  
     2= fair  
     3= good  
 (123) Monthly household consumption expenditure

No.	Item	Average monthly expenditure, Riels
1	Food and beverages	
2	Education	
3	Clothing	
4	Utilities: Electricity/ Water	
5	Telephone	
6	Transport	
7	Medicine / medical treatment	
8	Fuel	
9	House rent/ lease	
10	Loan repayments	
11	Recreation, social events such as weddings, etc.	
12	Other	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	

- (124) How much land do you own? .....hectares

- (125) How much of this land is agricultural land? .....hectares
- (126) Which is the main fuel that you use for cooking at home?
- 1= gas
  - 2=electric
  - 3=firewood
  - 4=kerosene
  - 5= cow dung
  - 6=others specify.....)
- (127) Do you have electricity supply in your home?
- 1= yes
  - 2= no
- (128) Do you have drinking water supply in your home, or access to a communal tap within 100 meters??
- 1= yes
  - 2= no
- (129) Does your home have a latrine, or access to a communal latrine within 100 meters?
- 1= yes
  - 2= no

## **Rapid assessment on child labour in the sugarcane sector in selected areas in Cambodia: A comparative analysis**

Worldwide, agriculture is the sector where by far the largest share of working children is found — nearly 60 percent. Over 98 million girls and boys aged 5 to 17 years old work in crop and livestock production, helping supply some of the food and drink we consume and the fibres and raw materials we use to make other products. In Cambodia, 90 per cent of all child labourers live in rural areas and the agricultural sector accounts for just over 50 per cent of all economically active children. Over 80 per cent of all child labourers are 12–17 years of age.

This study was undertaken in 2014 by the Cambodia Institute of Development Study (CIDS) in order to fill an apparent existing knowledge gap on the nature of child labour in the sugarcane sector in Cambodia. The research covers selected sugarcane growing areas within two Provinces of Kampong Chhnang and Pursat. The research offers a close look at a number of household level factors that push and pull children into child labour, the hazardous conditions they endure in the work they perform, and the distinctions in the nature of child labour between small holder farms and plantations. It also seeks to clarify what can be defined as child labour given that the concept of child labour can often be misunderstood.

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