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“What About Boys?” The sexual exploitation of boys and young men in Asia

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“What About Boys?”

The sexual exploitation of boys and young men in Asia



Glenn Miles PhD, Asia Director of Prevention
Heather Blanch, Hard Places Community,
Cambodia
Jasmir Thakur, Samabhavana, India

1 in 6



18.9% boys aged 12-15yrs said they had been sexually abused since they were 9 years. Miles (2005)

“I never thought it could happen to boys.”

Hilton, ‘First Step’> Chab Dai, Cambodia (2009)

- Lack of awareness and denial among communities, NGOs and authorities
- Isolation, marginalization and fear
- Diversity of abusers
- Poorly equipped practitioners



What do the boys say they need?

➤ Protection

- Psychologically
- Physically

➤ To be heard!

- Trusting relationships
- Confidentiality
- To be believed, respected and accepted
- People to be non-judgmental
- Love, belonging and affection

➤ Future

- Empowerment and choices

Research with former sex workers in Manila

(T. Gallagher/G.
Velazco 2007,
Love 46)

- Conducted with
seven boys in an
aftercare facility



What happens to the boys?

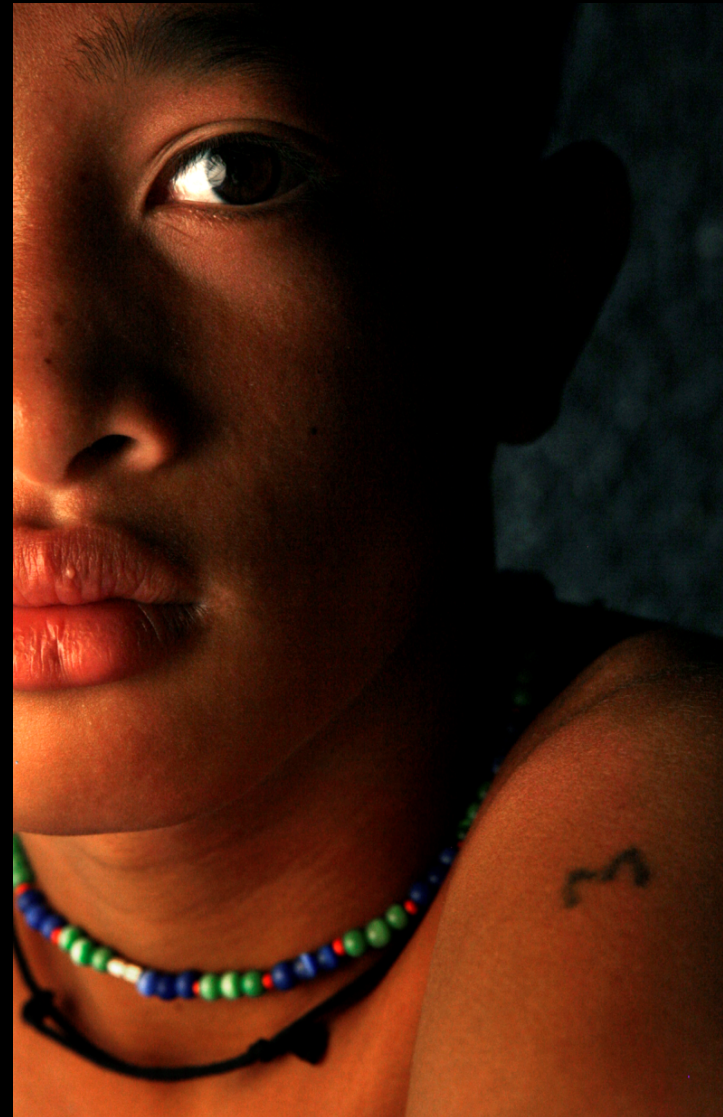
- Highly negative emotions towards male, female and gay gender roles
 - Men seen as abuser, pedophile, perpetrator
 - Women seen as sexual objects for men's pleasure and gratification and as seducer.
 - Gays seen as abusers, dirty, bad.
- Experiences
 - Bad experiences of abuse with men
 - Bad experiences with mothers/street women
 - Confusion about own sexuality and gender role

What can help the boys?

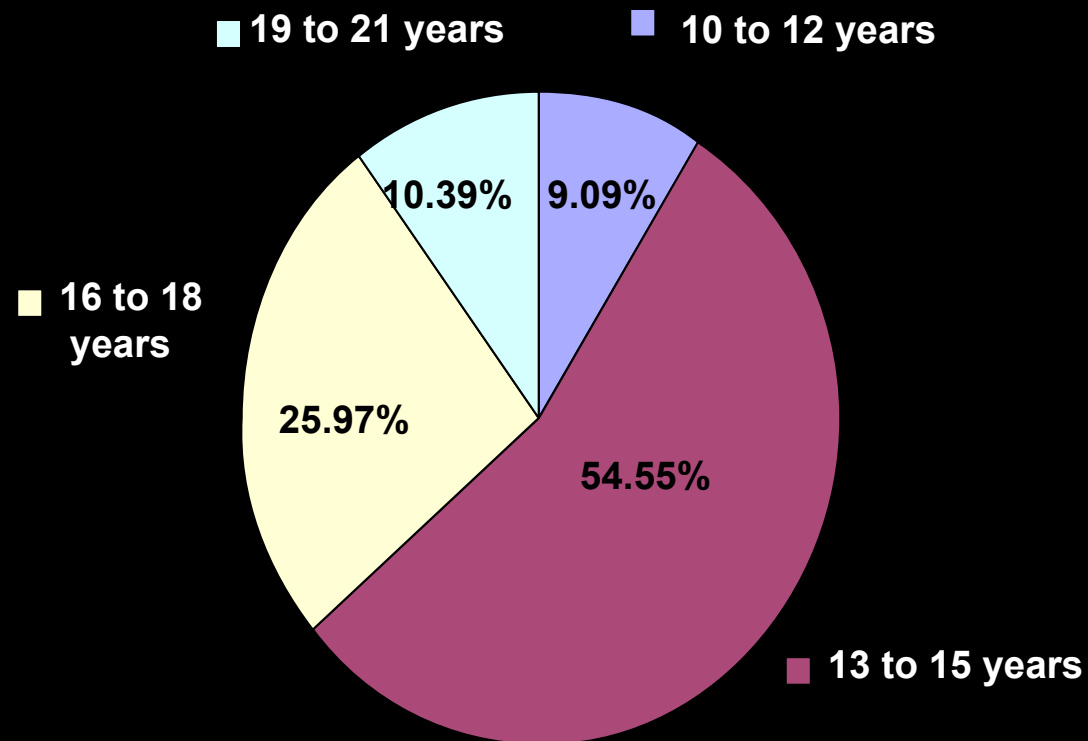
- Individual listening/counselling
 - Boys need space to reflect on their role and the role of others – how it is but how it could be better to begin healing and recovery.
 - Further research is needed to understand apparent gender confusion and the particular differences of boys compared to girls.
 - Staff need training in effective listening techniques specifically of boys.
 - Explore more the use of drama/role plays in drawing out beliefs

**Research with
77 masseur
boys in Mumbai
(Miles, Love 46/
Thakur,
Samabhavana) 2011**

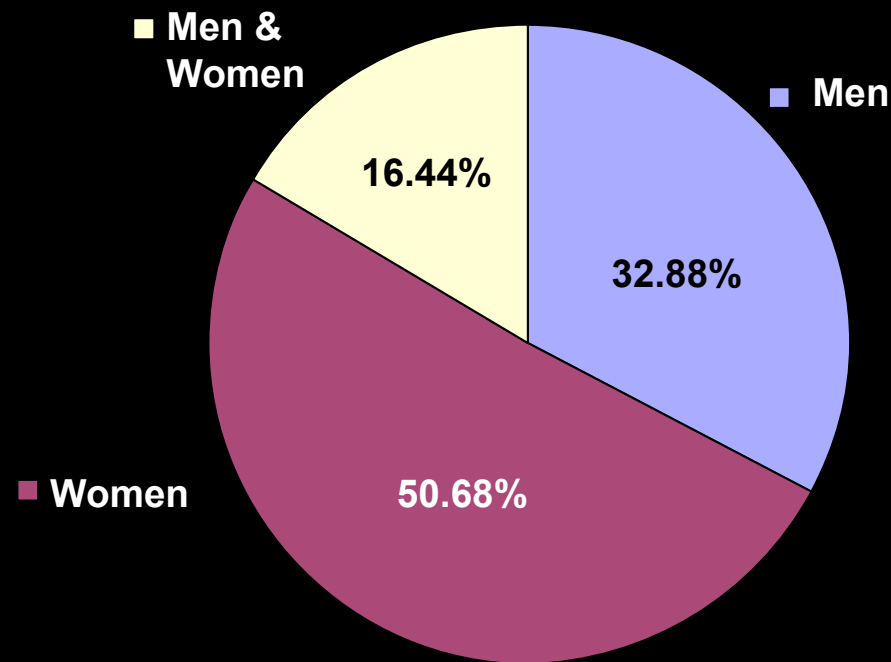
- Monitoring boys as they begin vocational training as an alternative



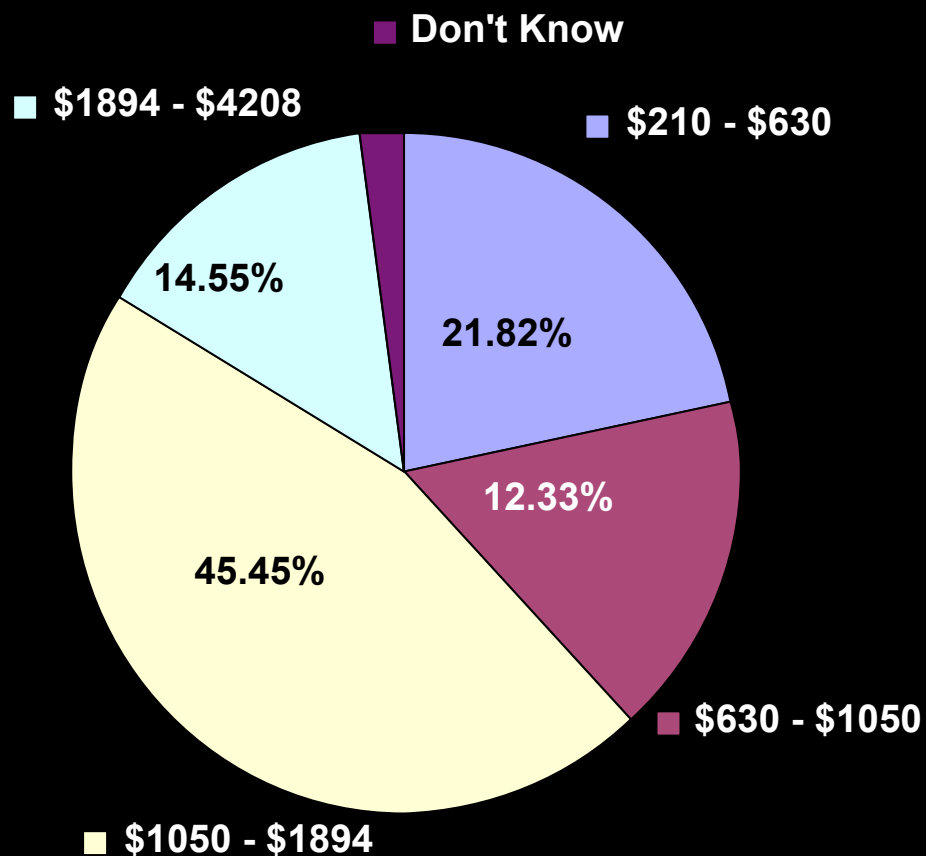
What age do boys start work?



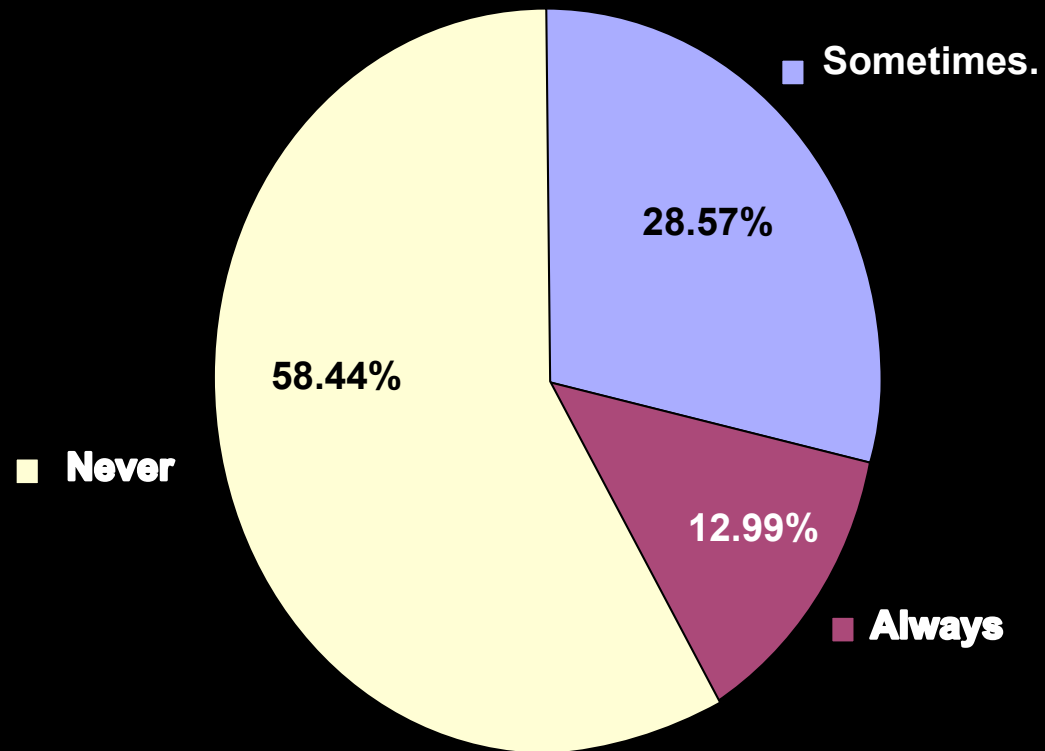
What is your sexual preference?



How much debt your family has ?



Were you ever forced to have sex?



What are the consequences to boys?

➤ Physical

- **Violence** from police (97%), community (32%) , goons/gangs (47%)
- **Multiple partners** –**none** said hadn't had in past 3 months–27% very often– at higher risk of HIV and trauma

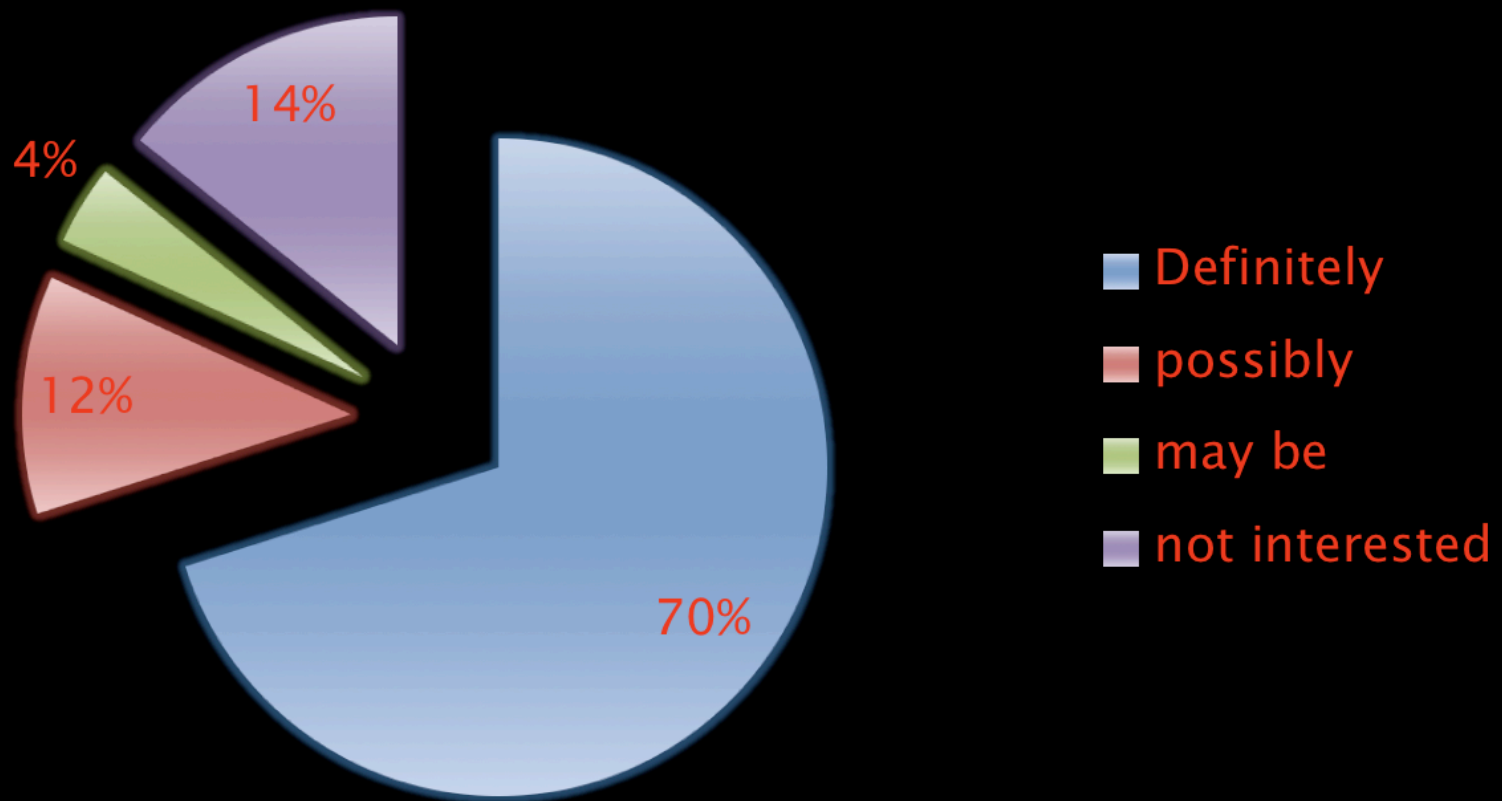
Psychological/Social

- 65% Being masseur very much affects **personal relationships**
- 74% **Low self respect** (score 1–3 out of 10) working as masseur

Why won't you tell your family?

- ➤ My family will **loose respect** & get a bad name & get ostracized (30)
- I will loose my respect/**society will reject me**/make fun of me/humiliate me (27)
- My **friends will get angry** & hate me (14)
- My **family will hate me**/throw me out (14)
- If the parents come to know of this they will call me back (17)
- My parents will feel hurt/die of **humiliation** (7)
- My **sister** will not be able to get married (6)

Interest in taking another job?



**Research with
masseur boys in
Phnom Penh
(Miles, Love 146/
Blanch, Hard
Places
Community)**

- Base line of 45
boys from 6
masseur places



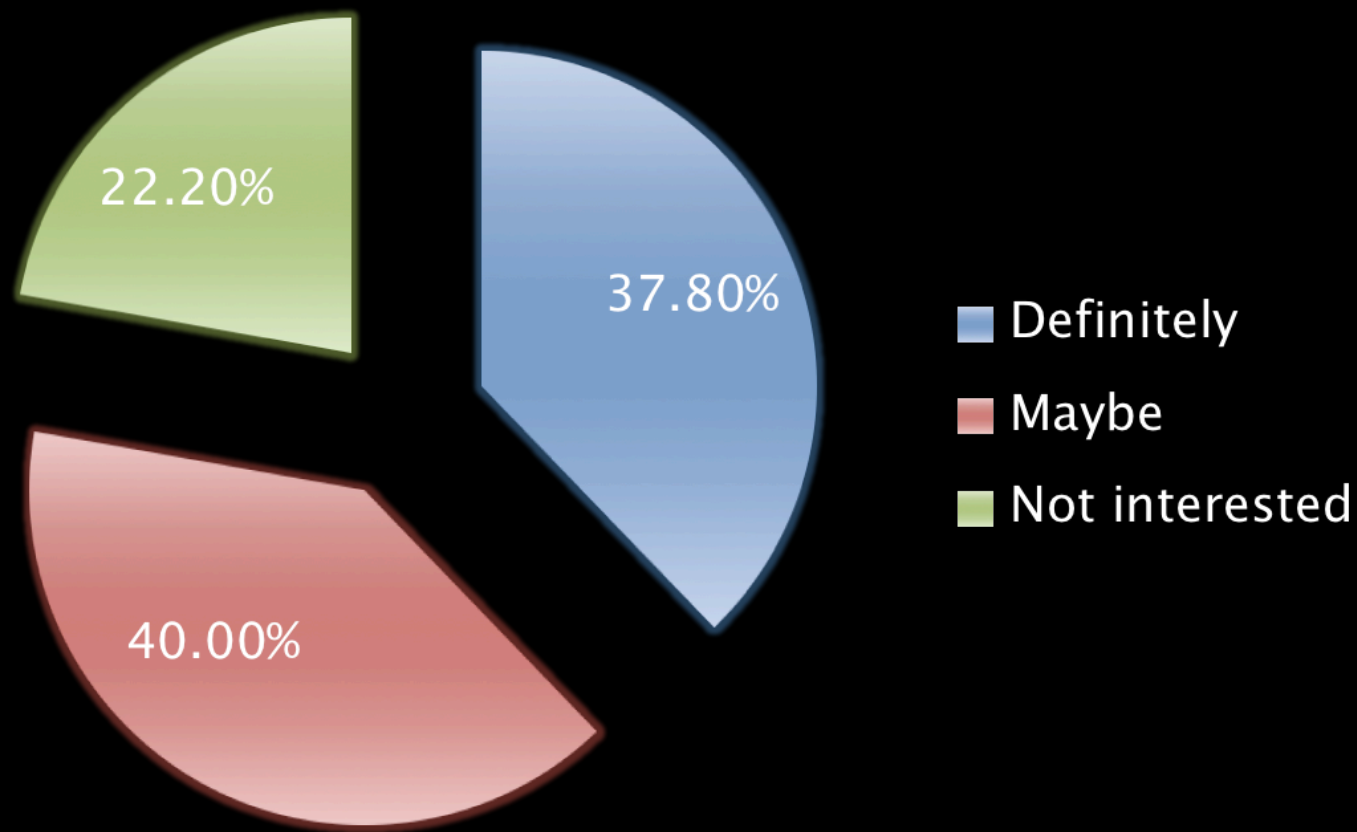
What are the consequences to boys?

Level of violence in masseur places less than those on the street



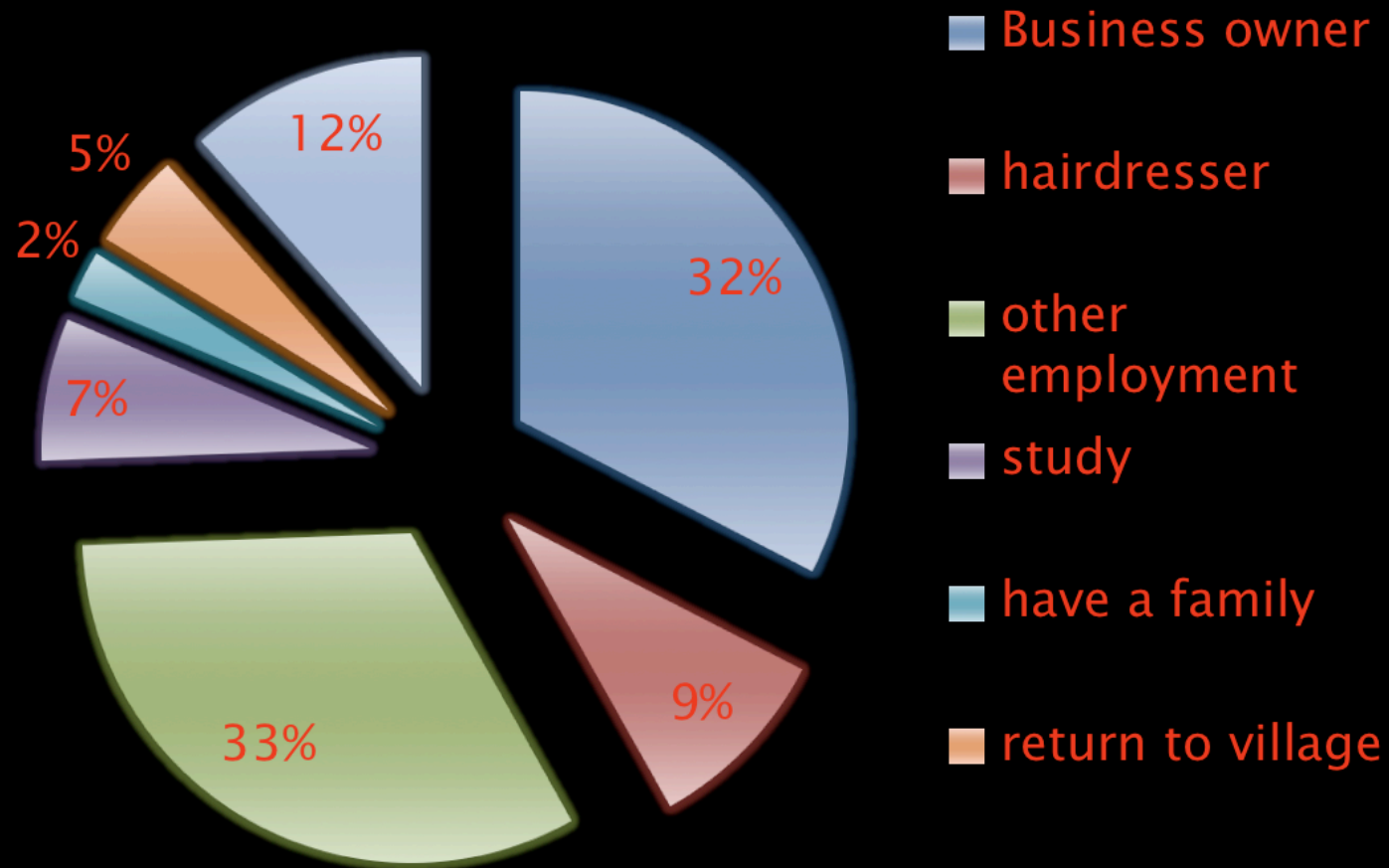
Interest in taking another job?

that would be 80USD/month

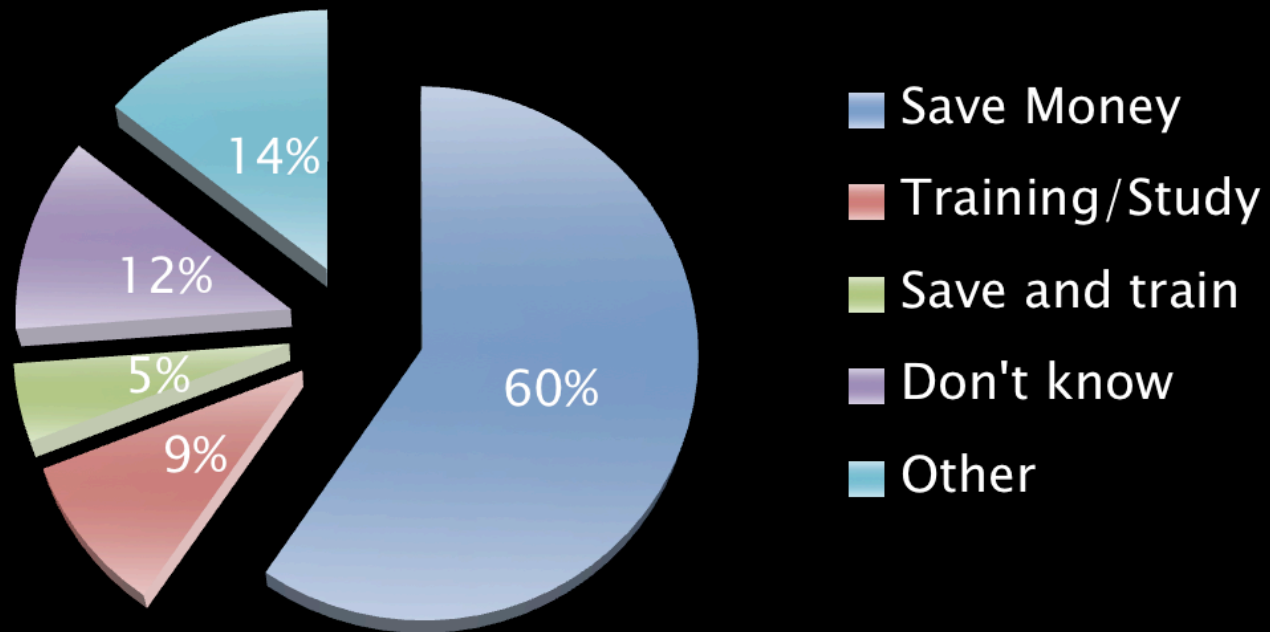


In 2 years time...?

I want to be a...



Plan to achieve goals



Recommendations

- Acknowledgement of community's existence!
- Legal position of boys ambiguous – Legal reform
- Boys are consistently exposed to high levels of violence – education of those responsible for them and self-protection
- Boys are major earners for family so family debt may be major factor in keeping them on the street – options
- Can't discuss sex or sexuality with family so may not understand risks – need to educate boys
- More and more younger boys are being brought into prostitution due to higher earning potential and little understanding the ramifications of prostitution on psycho-social and sexual health – more education at community level.
- To research clients perspective

Addressing Demand;
*Research with Indian
clients of boys*

Thakur, Samabhavana.

Miles, Love146

- Demand Factor How do men justify their use of boys?
- This will help to produce appropriate advocacy with the section of the gay community who are interested in young boys.



Where is everyone?

- ⌘ Is the secular community afraid to get in because they don't want to be seen as Anti-Gay?
- ⌘ Is the church community afraid to get involved because they don't want to be seen as Pro-Gay?
- ⌘ Does this mean that this invisible group falls through the gap?

What about boys?

- Not only about boys being the **victims**/survivors
-but also.....
- boys/men being the **perpetrators** of sexual abuse and exploitation so the need to address **demand**.

Addressing Demand: *Men and the Sex Trade Project: Thailand and Cambodia*

- Approaching tourists and expat men and getting them to consider what they are doing.
- Offering follow up for expatriates



TOURIST



PROSTITUTION OF
CHILDREN



**CHILD
SEX
TOURISM**

Views on Prostitution

- **Positive** views: 11.9%
 - Neutral views: 46.9%
 - **Negative** views 39.2%
- *one man viewed prostitution as either negative or neutral, depending on the situation
- *two men viewed prostitution as either positive or neutral, depending on the situation

Why do men **buy sex**?

- **Loneliness**: 23.7%
- Lack of **intimacy**: 11.9%
- Need for **love**: 13.4%
- Desire for **power**: 8.2%
- Other: 33.5%

*Men could choose more than one option

Addressing Demand;

Research with Cambodian men in Cambodia

Farley/ Freed of 'Prostitution Research' funded by Love146

- Demand Factor How do men justify their use of women and children?
- This will help to produce appropriate advocacy with stakeholders and awareness aimed at local men (rather than tourists)



Addressing Demand:

Working with military personnel on the Thai-Cambodian border areas to help them see their job is about protecting people as much as geographical areas.

Starting with their own problems of domestic violence in their own families



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