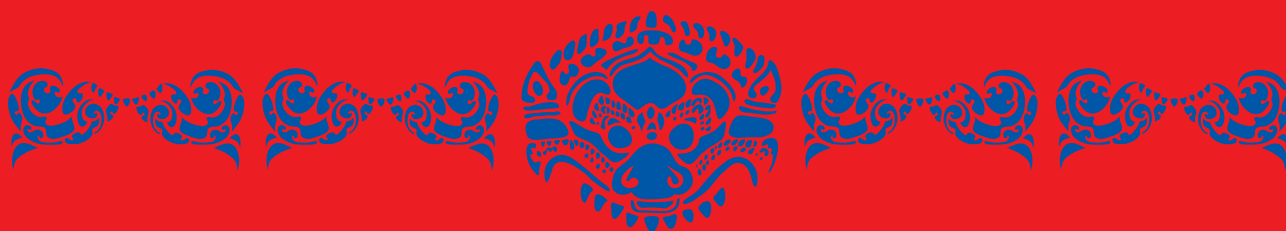


RESEARCH BRIEFING:

We Can Do It!

Empowering Communities to Report Violence

October 2014



International
Development

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

Introduction

This research briefing provides an overview of the Cambodia Communication Assistance Project (CCAP) Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW) program titled 'We Can Do It!'. The program is broadcast at four Provincial Departments of Information (PDIs) and Women's Community Radio in Kratie (WCRK), which work in partnership with CCAP.

The report is divided into two main sections: the first section briefly discusses the context of violence against women (VAW) in Cambodia and outlines the need for CCAP to launch a dedicated EVAW program. The second section provides an overview of We Can Do It! and looks at stories of impact from the four partner PDIs that highlight the impact of the program from an audience perspective.

This report was compiled triangulating data from multiple sources including the EVAW monitoring and evaluation database from on-air discussions and feedback from focus group discussions with talkback program listeners.

Context and Background

In Cambodia, women make up more than half the population¹ (51.2%) and constitute the 'majority of the poor'². Studies have found³ that violence against women is a continuing issue in Cambodian society. In Cambodia women are vulnerable to many forms of violence including trafficking, exploitation, prostitution, and domestic violence. According to a Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) survey conducted in 2009, '22.5% of married women experienced violence at home, and up to 89% did not report it'⁴. This illustrates the prevalence of violence against women in Cambodian society, as women still face barriers to accessing justice.

The MoWA and UN agencies have been working to strengthen the law, policy and community action to prevent VAW. UN Women, in partnership with MoWA, are supporting public awareness-raising campaigns by gender advocates to end violence against women. However, a lack of participation from women, as well as a lack of participation and engagement from local authorities on VAW is still prevalent at the local and provincial level.

1 The World Bank. (2014). *Population, female*. Retrieved October 1, 2014, from The World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL.FE.ZS/countries/KH?display=graph>

2 UN Women. (n.d.). *UN Women in Cambodia*. Retrieved October 1, 2014, from UN Women: http://www.unwomen-eseasia.org/Cambodia/about_cambodia.html

3 Ibid.

Ministry Of Women's Affairs. (2009). *Violence Against Women 2009 Follow-up Survey*. Cambodia: Ministry Of Women's Affairs.

4 UN Women, *op. cit.*

Rationale for ERAW Programming

In May 2013, qualitative focus group discussions (FGD) were held with PDI audiences who listen or participate in talkback programming. The focus groups revealed people's hesitation to intervene when they were a victim or witness of violence against women. Many discussed the barriers to reporting violence against women with a range of issues contributing to the underreporting of VAW. Some of the barriers to reporting on VAW included the perceptions that it is a personal and private issue; the potential for retribution if reported to authorities; lack of trust in authorities to respond effectively; loss of income to the family, embarrassment and karma.

The participants also highlighted that greater understanding of laws on violence against women, education and training, a safe environment and platform to share experiences and stories, ask questions and receive advice from gender specialists can help in increasing reporting of VAW.

Participants were supportive of a radio program that could raise awareness on relevant laws and policy relating to this issue. Participants also discussed the benefits of a forum that could increase the accountability and responsiveness of local authorities. By providing a greater voice to the community through vox-pops, interviews, and short feature stories, it was also thought that a program could help highlight the public's role in reducing, intervening, and preventing violence against women. Talkback listeners also wanted the opportunity to request topics to be discussed on the program.

'This kind of ending violence against women program would be good because the program [can help] raise issues related to violence against women and villagers... [We can] also suggest any topics related ... to the authorities' accountability on dealing with issues of violence.' Female, FGD participant, Kampot

'It would be good to have such a program because it enables villagers to express themselves... what is much better about this program is that the authorities have come down vto the village to deal with the case of violence.' Female, FGD participant, Kampot

Participants discussed the potential value of a dedicated program on ERAW and gender issues with one FGD participant in Kampot reporting:

'The program would not only allow authorities to deal with the case of violence but [it would] also educate people to behave in a good manner, especially husband's good manner towards their wives to escape from VAW.' Female, FGD participant, Kampong Cham

Two other female participants identified that:

'Villagers did not only listen to ERAW program to better improve [the] authorities responsible with the case of violence but also utilise knowledge learned from

We Can Do It!

Empowering Communities to Report Violence

listening to EAW program to reduce violence and one female said that this is a good program because it does provide knowledge related to VAW and people are more likely to better increased their knowledge and easy for villagers to practice to lessen violence. Female, FGD participant, Kampong Cham

Participant perspectives and feedback on VAW from the focus groups were used to design a program specifically dedicated to addressing VAW and to improve the accountability and effectiveness of local authorities in responding to and preventing VAW.

Ending Violence Against Women through Talkback Radio: We Can Do It!

Program Format

In February 2014, the CCAP and ABC International Development (ABC ID) EAW program, We Can Do It! was launched across four Provincial Departments of Information (PDI) (Siem Reap, Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampot), and Women's Community Radio in Kratie (WCRK) – run by the Women's Media Centre of Cambodia. The program focuses on ending violence against women. Specifically, it tries to influence local authorities to be responsible for taking action against VAW, hold them to account and change public perceptions on VAW. To further support the production of the program, CCAP also provided PDI and WCRK⁵ staff training on effective EAW reporting techniques and legal awareness information to help inform listeners.

We Can Do It! is produced in a radio magazine style format with four interchangeable segments:

- **My Story:** Discusses actions taken by local leaders (women and men) in the event of VAW and is a platform for local authorities, community activists and women to tell real stories of VAW from their community and how they dealt with the situation.
- **Pre-recorded Song or Poem:** Listeners participate in the program by providing a song or poem for up to three minutes. The theme of the poem or song is to highlight VAW and call on authorities to take action.
- **The Case:** Feature story segment showcasing recent VAW issues. The aim of this segment is to make VAW a community and social problem through improved public awareness. Radio producers review each case and discuss how authorities are dealing with the issue. On-going cases are followed up and reported on during the program.
- **Do You Know?:** Radio spots aim at educating women and men on the process of reporting VAW and related laws and procedures. Each spot uses sound clips of government, local officials, police, female activists and lawyers.

⁵ Partnership with WCRK: CCAPs collaboration with WCRK has provided staff with EAW training and regular support and mentoring to produce the weekly program We Can Do It!. The new partnership (Jan 2014) has provided the independent radio broadcaster training and content guidance to produce higher quality programs on EAW issues.

Outputs and Outcomes

The program airs weekly and has been successful in appealing to both female and male audiences. Between January and June 2014 a total of 104 programs were aired attracting almost 500 callers who shared their stories, experiences and asked questions on VAW issues. Female callers represented 46% of callers across the five stations, a significantly higher percentage of female callers compared to other PDI programs. This indicates that the primary target female audience is engaging with the program's key focus – gender issues and ending violence against women.

Some of the issues that have been discussed during the program include:

- Positive and negative effects of sending Cambodian women to work in Malaysia.
- Role of female authorities to help combat violence against women.
- Government's strategy in responding to human trafficking.
- Women's involvement in politics and improving women's capacity to take part in the political process.
- Role of the police in preventing and responding to violence against women.
- Effectiveness in implementing laws aimed at reducing violence against women.
- The Government's strategy for encouraging Islamic women to continue their academic study to a higher level.
- Increasing understanding of gender issues.
- Legal assistance for female victims of violence.
- Challenges of female beer promoters in beer gardens.

CCAP also established an Active Listener Club in each PDI to engage listeners, particularly women, to promote the program, encourage callers and to share VAW related news and topics with PDI staff.

Battambang PDI had success with club members actively calling talkback and We Can Do It!, providing stories from their community, and encouraging others to listen to the program.

To further promote the program, female members received radio sets, which they have used to create listening clubs in their community. The Battambang Active Listener Club has six regular participants, five female and one male. Across all four PDI listener clubs, women represent 67 per cent of members.

In each PDI province a listener club participant is selected to be a club facilitator. One participant talks about the impact of being a facilitator in her community:

'Things were different for me before listening to TBP (We Can Do It!). Before, if women have any problems, they don't know where to report or with whom to

consult, but now we have a listener club so women can discuss their issues among each other and bring them up with the PDI talkback team too.' Female, Active Listener Club Facilitator, Battambang

As a result of the facilitator's contribution and other active listeners, Battambang PDI had an increased number of female callers from listener club areas.

Stories of Impact - We Can Do It!

Since the program first aired in Kampong Cham, Siem Reap, Battambang, and Kampot in January 2014, many people have called the program to share their personal stories and experiences of violence against women.

The program has provided many people an open forum to share and discuss issues of violence, ask questions, seek advice, and request action by local authorities. Callers have raised issues in the different provinces, with many sharing similar experiences, concerns, and fears. The impact of We Can Do It! has been grouped into three main areas:

1. Encouraging citizens to share their stories and motivating people to report violence against women. The program aims to encourage callers to share their stories and seek help and support from family, friends and local authorities and NGOs.
2. Update listeners on cases of violence and the action authorities have taken in response to complaints. The program aims to increase citizens' awareness and knowledge of the laws relating to violence against women.
3. Aiming to keep government and public officials accountable and responsive when dealing with violence against women issues. The program has provided a platform for people to share their concerns on these issues and inspired both victims and former offenders to speak up and demand better systems to help end violence against women.

The following section highlights the impact of We Can Do It! using examples from callers within the four provincial locations.

In Kampong Cham a caller shared her family's experience with domestic violence, discussing the constant 'fighting, arguing and cruelty' her sister had suffered from being the victim of domestic violence. We Can Do It! has highlighted the many barriers women face in reporting and responding to violence.

The caller from Kampong Cham talked of the hesitation to report her husband to authorities because she feared he would be arrested and imprisoned, leaving no one to support the family financially. Financial dependence is a key barrier to reporting domestic violence and a major challenge to overcome in empowering women to report violence to authorities.

After listening to the program the caller from Kampong Cham discussed how her sister was

motivated to talk and report her husband to police:

'She asked for help from the authority to respond, and shared with me about her issues so that I can help.' Female, caller, Kampong Cham

A male caller from Battambang discussed domestic violence from a personal perspective. The story prompted others to call into the program, share grievances and call on local authorities to take action on violence against women. A 25-year-old female caller from Ratanak Mondul district discussed the impact of the story:

'If all men take a lesson from (male caller), there will be no violence against women in the community. Domestic violence doesn't do any good, it damages the entire family.' Female, caller, Battambang

Following the story, others were encouraged to share personal stories of violence against women from their community. A father called the program to share his story and express his concern at the lack of action from local authorities:

'My daughter was raped and killed in October last year, I filed the case to the police and since then I haven't heard anything. I've not even met the rapist. I want compensation and to see the local authorities take action against the perpetrator.' Male, caller, Battambang

After listening to We Can Do It! one caller from Siem Reap decided to ask for help and subsequently reported her husband and filed a domestic violence complaint to authorities. The Commune Post Officer responded to the case and provided an update on the process that was followed:

'[The] offender was arrested and imprisoned as this case is criminal so we need to submit the complaint to the district officer. ... then the offender was arrested on 18 August 2014.' Commune Post Officer, Siem Reap

In both Kampong Cham and Siem Reap, callers reported being hesitant in reporting domestic violence for fear of their own safety, believing that family, neighbours or local authorities would refuse, be unable to help or saw violence against women as a family issue to be dealt with inside the family.

In Kampot, callers contacted the program to discuss how local authorities have to be accountable for responding to violence against women. One caller mentioned that some authorities had taken money from an offender and then either rejected or delayed filing the complaint from the victim. The program provided the caller the opportunity to speak out against the perceived corruption of local authorities through on-air talkback.

One male listener from Kampot called the program and asked for further information to be provided on cases that have been responded to successfully by authorities and NGOs. Adding to this, the caller mentioned that immediate action needs to be taken by authorities

We Can Do It!

Empowering Communities to Report Violence

on cases of violence against women:

'Authorities need to take responsibility and arrest the offender immediately. Listeners should know more and think about rape cases as a criminal case.' Male, caller, Kampot

A female caller described what action she would take if faced with any kind of violence after listening to the program:

'I will ask for help and arrest offender to avoid attack, I asked for a neighbour and relative's help first and then for authority to take action legally.' Female, caller, Kampong Cham

Another caller reported what he would like to see eventuate from the program:

'Authorities should let us know how many domestic violence cases have been dealt [with]. And they also should explain to the offenders not to commit any violence again and if the offenders commit any more violence; the authorities should take action immediately.' Male, caller, Kampong Cham

'Authorities should also have further follow up activities with the victims in order to make victims more secure or in case the offenders commit violence again and again.' Male, caller, Kampong Cham

We Can Do It! audiences have been positive about the program because it provides different forms of intervention and provides people, even those who have previously committed violence against women, with awareness and information on its impact and methods for responding to violence against women. Moreover, listeners have shown their willingness to share their experiences of violence and report them to local authorities.

Conclusion

We Can Do It! stories of impact compiled from the four CCAP partner Provincial Department's of Information highlight the impact a dedicated radio program can have in addressing issues of violence against women in Cambodia. The three main areas of impact from callers to the program included:

1. Encouraging citizens to share their stories and motivating people to report violence against women. The program aims to encourage callers to share their stories and seek help and support.
2. Providing listeners updates on cases of violence and what action authorities have taken in response to complaints. The program has also aimed to increase citizens' awareness and knowledge of the law relating to violence against women.
3. Aiming to keep government and public officials accountable and responsive when dealing with violence against women issues. The program has provided a platform for people to share their concerns on these issues and inspired both victims and former offenders to speak up and demand better systems be established to help end violence against women.



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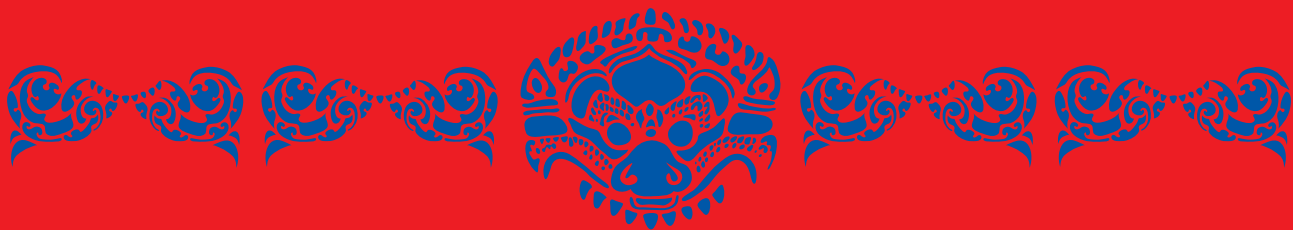
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Acknowledgements

This research briefing was compiled by Houn Kalyan, Sam Freeman, and Vipul Khosla, with support from Khuoy Mareudoeb and Anna Cerreto. The content of this report is the responsibility of the authors and research participants. Any views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent those of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Australian Government. This research briefing was prepared with funding from Australian Aid.



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