



FAMIY+ PROJECT-USAID/FRIENDS INTERNATIONAL

# Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) Survey On Foster Care

*Among CSOs Partners in Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siem Reap, and Sihanouk ville  
2015*

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## ABBREVIATION AND ACCRONYMS

<b>3PC</b>	Partnership Program for the Protection of Children
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>Family+</b>	Family Plus
<b>KAP</b>	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice
<b>KMR</b>	Komarik Reay
<b>KM</b>	Kaliyan Mith
<b>MS</b>	Mith Samlanh
<b>MT</b>	MlopTapang

## Executive Summary

### Overview

This KAP survey has gathered information about the understanding of, and work with Foster Care. This Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) Survey was carried out in four provinces and also the capital municipality in Cambodia across seven CSO partners including Komarik Reay (KMR), Kaliyan Mith (KM), Mith Samlanh (MS) and Mlop Tapang (MT). The purpose of the study was to measure the level of understanding of foster care among management members, social workers and case workers, and foster carers. The KAP survey seeks to highlight need and inform solutions for future reintegration for beneficiaries who placed into foster care families.

The objectives of this KAP Survey:

- a. What do respondents know about Foster Care Program?
- b. What do they think/view about Foster Care?
- c. What do they actually do with regard to seeking Foster Care?
- d. From where do respondents get messages about Foster Care?
- e. What are their knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs or behavioral patterns and practices toward Foster Care?

### Knowledge

The KAP results indicated that the meaning of Foster Care is generally understood by all individual respondents (CSO staffs and foster carers). This result indicated that all people involved in the foster care program had a good level of understanding about the program and its reason to place them in the program, however the survey also indicates that a small number of respondents said that they don't know why a child is placed in foster care and what was wrong with the kid's families prior to placement. They just know that when CSO staffs bring them the children, and they try their best to look after the children or/and be part of the foster care program when they are needed.

According to the foster care programs, most children placed in foster care were there as a result of abandonment, becoming orphaned, because of disability or abuse. The results indicated that staff of CSOs knew there is a high responsibility to reintegrate children back to their family and foster care was to be used as a short term care option.

Almost two thirds of respondents expressed knowledge that children can be placed in foster care between 0-6 years. Approximately 17% of the total respondents said that children can be

placed in foster care up to the age of 18 years or below while almost 19% of them said that children can be placed in foster care at any age. 19% was not a majority of the total number of respondents this indicated that knowledge of best practice of placing all children in the family environment rather than placing them in the center is evident in many organizations.

### *Attitudes*

Regarding the respondents views about foster care program in Cambodia, the results show that 50% of respondents said that Foster care is good program. It can help to save a lot of children's lives; and it can draw the full attention from NGOs and the government sector to focus on a family based care for children. Some said it also helps to reduce stigma for children living in the orphanage centers as well as children without family. 40% of the respondent said that even though there are organizations working with the government on the foster care program, it is not yet strong and running smoothly since people in the community still do not understand the concept of Foster Care wisely and it was reported that people get confused as to why the children were given away to a non-biological family. Another issue is that different NGOs use different guidelines while approximately 10% of respondent didn't really have any additional ideas to share.

Regarding working with the foster care families, the result of the survey indicated that 80% of the total CSO respondents expressed that they have a good relationship and communicate very well with the foster care families because the families have been critically selected to be part of the program. However, there were 20% of the CSO respondents that stated that there were some challenges that occurred while implementing foster care program with the foster carers. Gender issues was one of the main barriers which make the male social workers find it hard to get closer or providing counseling to female foster carers and some services were limited in case they want to discuss about sensitive topic especially the topic related to sexual reproductive health.

The expectation of the future lives of those children who have been placing in the foster care program in this survey clarified that 79% respondents stated that "Those children will have bright future if they live in the good family also if they could access good education. They will become a productive citizen and have good job in the future" while 21% of those interviewed respondents said that "I don't know if those children will have bright future especially for children with special needs – they don't know the future of children living with short-term foster care families if there is no more fund support".

### *Practice*

All the CSO that were selected to participate in the survey are have backgrounds working with foster care program. Some have shown that they have been running the program for years

while some CSOs are quite new to the program. However, when they were asked about the quality of the foster care program of each CSOs responded 100% that their programs were appropriate for children to stay, even for children with disability (in special needs).

Regarding capacity and supports in the formal knowledge and skills and materials to foster carers, almost 96% of foster care family respondents said that “I have received training on: Parenting skills, Nutrition, Child Rights, HIV/Aids Prevention, and gentle touch counseling” as well as other materials support including milk powder, hygiene materials, food support plus allowance, which is significant percentage while families with resources which are known as long term foster care families, don’t really need support from the CSO since they capable to provide enough support to the children themselves.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Family+ project is a Friends-International Project funded by USAID since April 2013. Family+ aim’s to enable children in Cambodia live in safe, healthy and sustainable family units rather than residential facilities/institutions. It is a continuation of the national system for alternative care, allowing for the development of vulnerable children through the creation of a good practice model, influencing the behavior of communities’, also providing training, and technical support to selected orphanage partners.

There are two mains purpose of conducting this KAP survey. Firstly, the KAP would be used to assess the behavior of all Friends-International partner NGOs who are experiencing, or running foster care programs. In the minimum standards for foster care set by MoSVY there is an emphasis on children under 6 years of age being placed in Foster Care. This does not mean that children older than 6 cannot be placed in foster care. It is believed that there would be many other children for who foster care placements could be found if more staffs were aware that ALL children are eligible for foster care.

The second part of the survey would be to assess the CSO staff’s attitudes towards placing children with disabilities in foster care. Generally, children with physical or intellectual disabilities would benefit far more from foster care than living in an institutional care environement, and additionally are more vulnerable to separation from family through abandonment or rejection.. Children with disabilities can have the chance to develop skills and have a better chance at entering employment or education if they are given more attention from a young age. However, there has been several times where both foster carers and case managers have refused to place a child in a family because it would be too difficult based on the fact that the child has a disability and would require greater care, attention, and financial compensation.

## II. METHODOLOGY

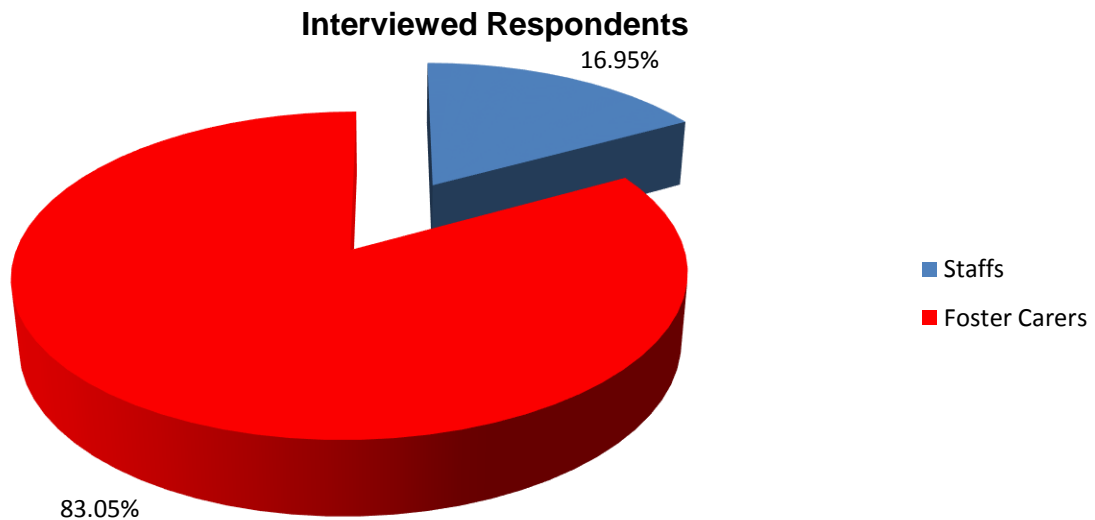
The KAP survey will be use mix qualitative and quantitative method. Data and information will be gathered from 2 different groups with 59 respondents (Staff and Foster Carers):

- (i) Staff Involved with Foster Care Programs (Project Managers, Project Officers and Social Workers) 16.95%
- (ii) Foster Carers: 83.05%

The survey is targeting partner NGOs from different provinces who run Foster Care Programs and Foster Carers themselves. Those partner NGOs are:

- Phnom Penh : Mith Samlanh
- Battambang : Komar Rikreay
- Siem Reap : Kaliyan Mith
- Sihanoukville : M'lop Tapang

## III. RESPONDENTS PROFILE



**Figure1:** This KAP interviewed 59 respondents included 83.05% foster carers (Mother and Father) and 16.95% of staffs who involved the foster care program (Project Manager, Project Officer and Social Workers). All information gathered from CSOs Partners staffs and fosters care families included MT, MS, KMR and KMSR.



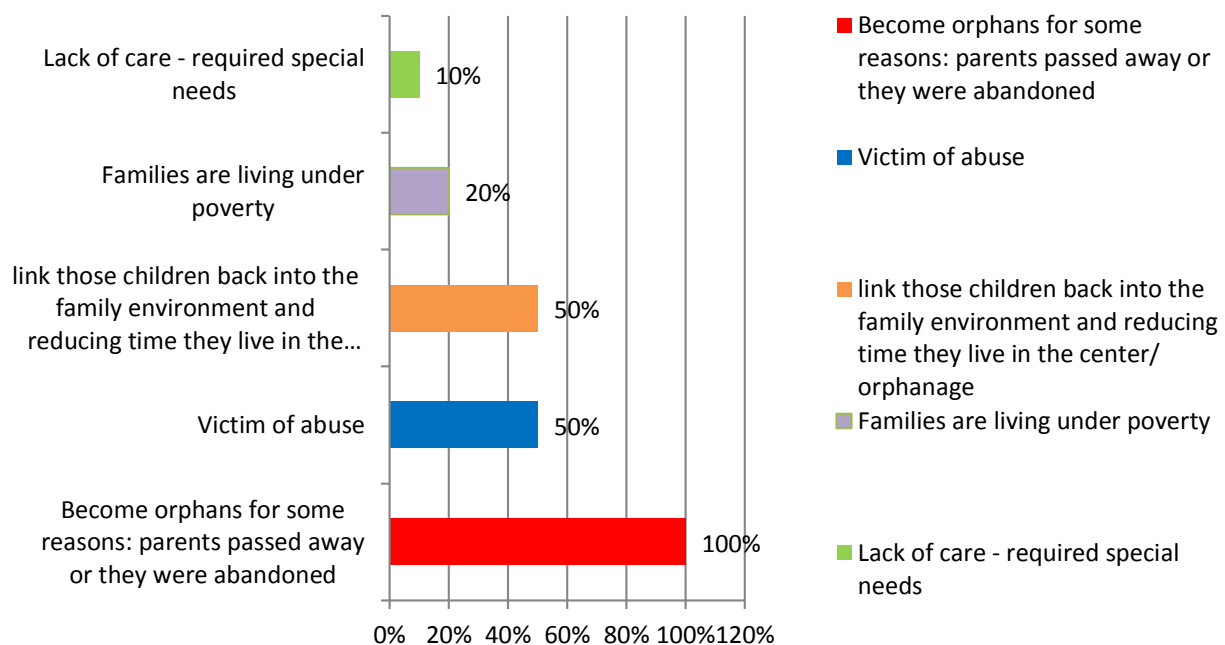
## IV. FINDINGS

### A. Knowledge

#### *Please describe what Foster Care means to you?*

**Staffs:** 90% of staff who are involved in foster care program defined “foster care is a kind of care to the unrelated children – the children who are not the biological member of the family” since 20% of them said that “It is a temporary care for children who has no families or relatives. However, this family provides those children rights to decide if they want to go back to their family if the family is found”

#### *Reasons of placing the children into Foster Care*



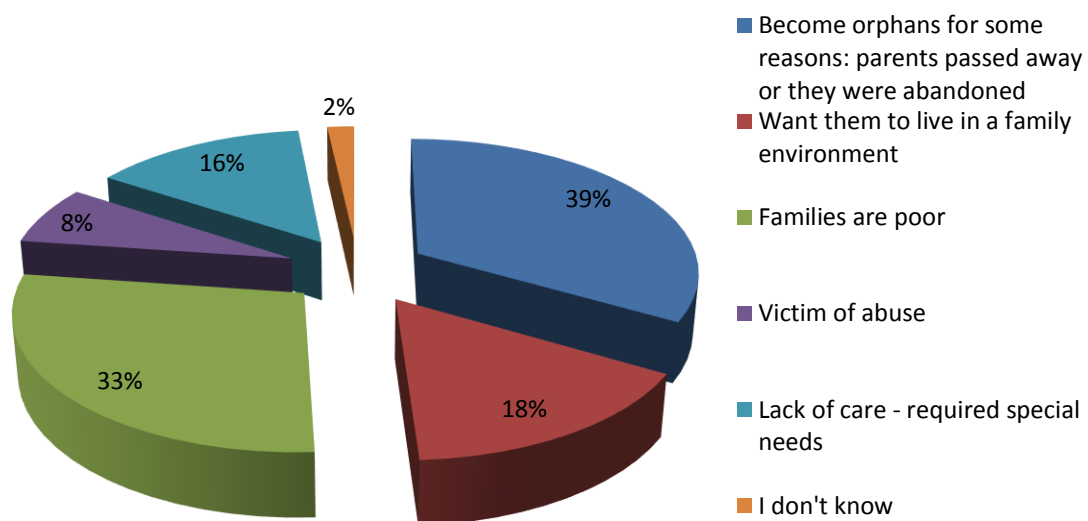
**Figure1:** On causes of placing children in foster care, it was found as following:

- 100% said that because they are orphan and it aims to provide care to children who has no families and relative
- 50% said that they place the children into foster care because those children were abused and cannot reintegrated back to their families.
- 50% said that they want to link those children back into the family environment and reducing time they live in the center/ orphanage
- 20% said that because families are poor and cannot effort to providing care to their children



- 10% said that because those children are in special need.

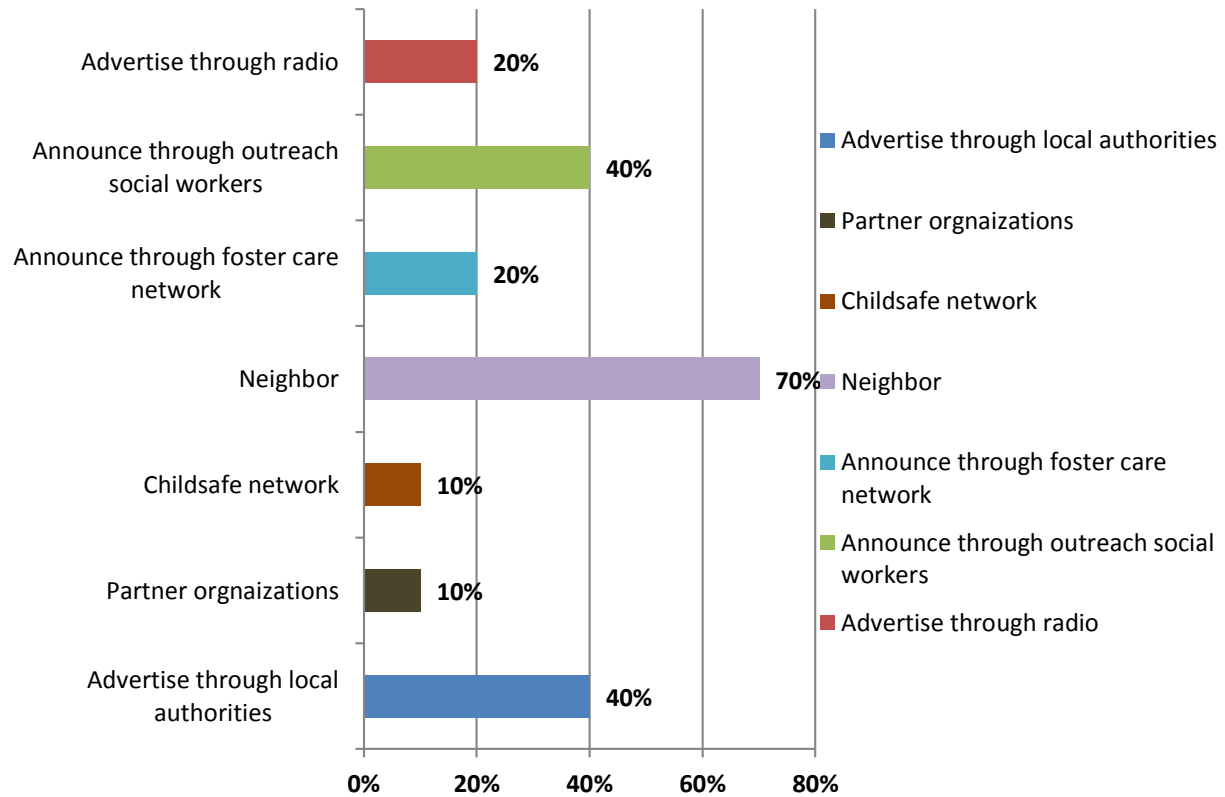
**Foster Carers:** 93.88% of foster carers indicated the meaning of foster care as “ The caring of unrelated children as their biological families which they need to provide those children good care, send those foster children to school, get vocational trainings, health care, loving, and compassionate toward caring”. 4.08% of them said that “It’s full of love and compassion for the children who has no family or relative” while other 2.04% of them said that “they don’t know”.



**Figure2:** On causes of placing children in foster care, it was found as following:

- 39% said that they become orphans for some reasons: parents passed away or they were abandoned. They need carers.
- 33% said that because families are poor and cannot effort to providing care to their children
- 18% said that they want those children to live in a family environment and they want to look after those children as their real family member.
- 8% said that they place the children into foster care because those children were abused and cannot reintegrated back to their families.
- 16% said that those children are in special needs and need to provide special care while their parent cannot capable to provide a good care.
- 2% said “I don’t know”

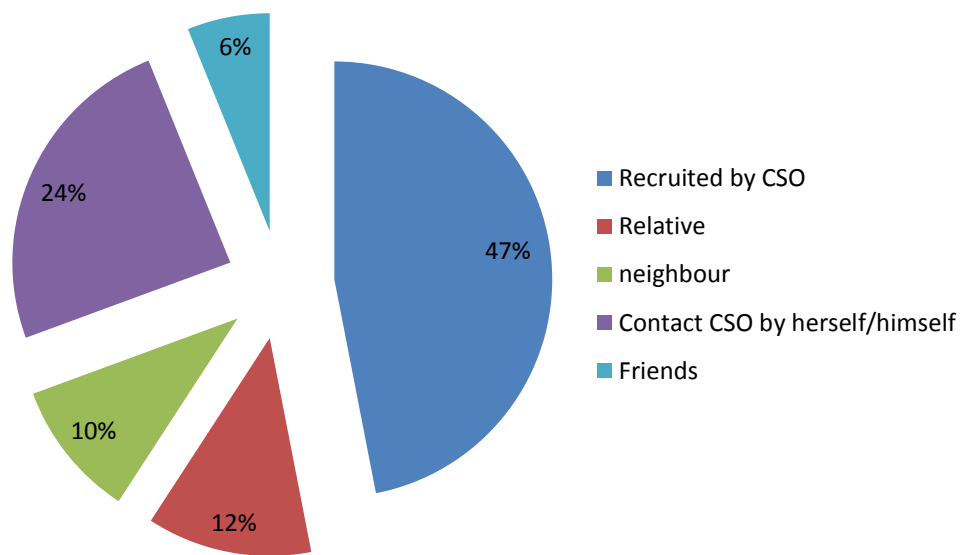
## How to select a foster carer VS How to become a foster carer



**Figure2:** There are different ways of selecting a foster carer for a child. However, the graph demonstrates that there were 3 effective ways CSO staff commonly use to recruit the foster carers: selecting the families in the neighbourhood area, announce through local authorities, and outreach social workers. As we can see:

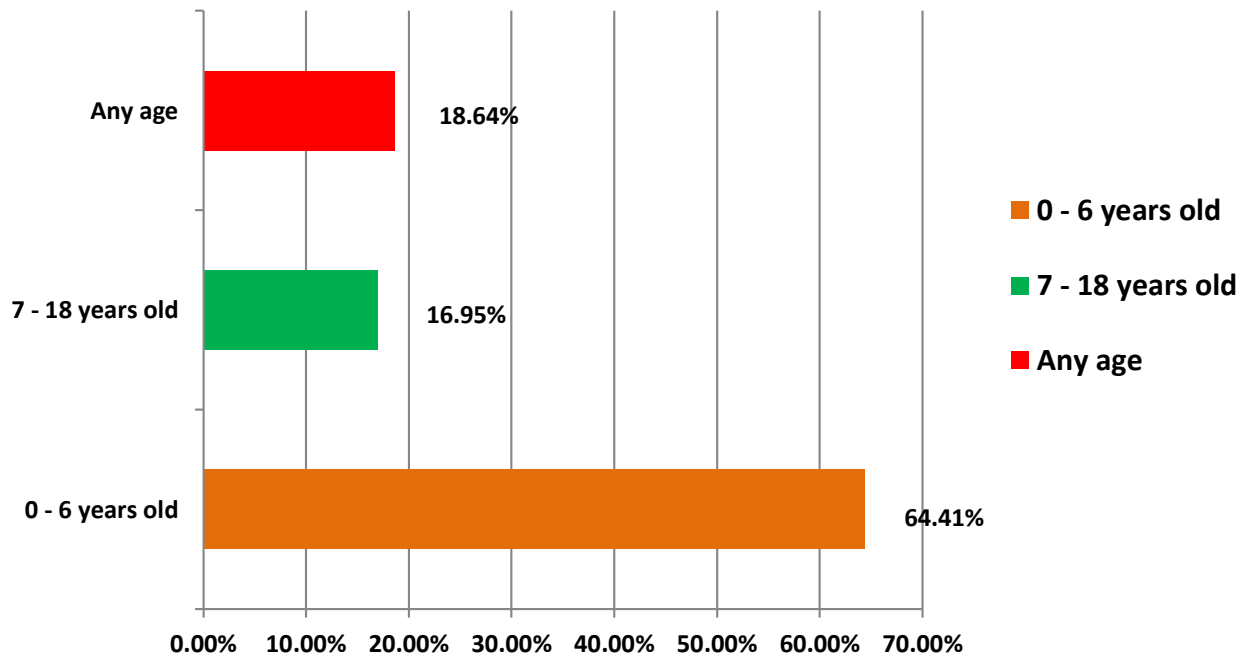
- 70% of the total respondents said that they select the foster care families through people in the neighbour
- 40% said that they announce through local authorities including police, commune chief, village chief...etc
- 40% said that they announce through outreach social worker
- 20% said they use foster care network
- 20% announcement through radio
- 10% said they announce through partner NGO and another 10% through childsafe network

### How do you become foster carer?



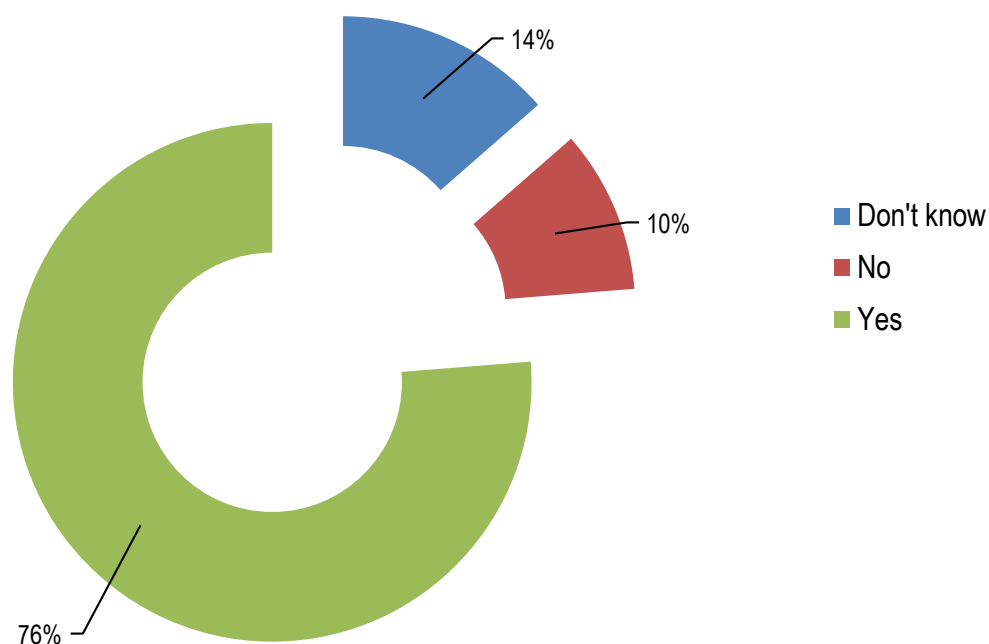
**Figure3:** Regarding how to become a foster carer, 47% of the foster care respondents said that “I have been contacted by CSO staffs”. 24% said that “I contact NGO by myself because I want to have a child”. 12% said that “I know the information that NGO want to select foster carer from my relatives”. 10% said that “I know the information from my neighbour while 6% of the respondents said that “I know the information from my friend”

### What age would you accept a child into Foster Care?



**Figure4:** Among 59 respondents who have been interviewed, 64.41% have said that “children from the age of 0 – 6 years can be placed in foster care program”. 16.95% responded that “even they are older than 6 years; children from the age of 7-18 years can be still placed in foster care” while 18.64% of them said that “Children at any age can be placed in Foster Care”

### ***Can a child with special needs be placed in foster care?***



**Figure5:** Among the total respondents, 76% of them said that children with special need are able to place in foster care program and 10% of the total respondent said that there is no possibility to place them in foster care while another 16% of the respondents said “I don’t know whether children with special need can be placed in foster care program or not”

- Within the total of respondents said that 80% reported that children who are placing in foster care program are not discriminated by their community while 20% said “I don’t know if they are discriminated, but I have tried my best to look after them as much as possible”

### **Finding Regarding Attitude**

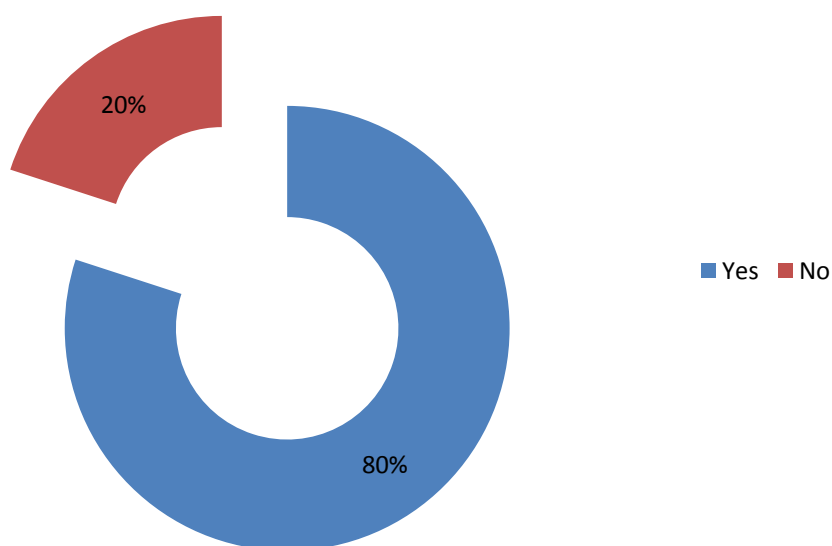
#### ***What do you think about foster care in Cambodia?***

Cambodia is still developing a national framework for foster care and as such foster care programs are still not yet widely implemented. This survey, a part of attitude acknowledgement, aims to know the view of staffs who are working direct with the foster care

program. Through the question *“Generally, what do you think of foster care program in Cambodia”*, It has found that:

- A huge percentage of 50% of respondents said that Foster care is good program. It can help to save a lot of children’s life; it can draw full attention from NGO and government sector to focus on a family based care for children. Some said it also help to reduce stigma for children living in the orphanage centers.
- 40% of the respondent said that even there are organizations working with the government on the foster care program, it has not yet strong and running smoothly yet since people in the community are not yet understand the concept of Foster Care wisely and It was reported that people got confused that the children were given away to the family. Another issue is that different NGOs use different guidelines.
- 10% of respondent don’t really have any idea about the foster care program in Cambodia (this was because they were new staff to the projects).

### **Do you like working with foster care family**



**Figure1:** It is surprise to know the relation between CSO staffs and the foster carers. This KAP survey was also seeking information regarding the individual feeling of staff on *“How they feel about working with foster care families”*

- A vast majority (80%) of staffs said that *“ I like to work with the foster care family because they are friendly, well-cooperated with high responsibility and they help to protect the children”*

- While 20% said that “I don’t really like to work with them because they need to spend time with the foster care family every working hour”. Another problem was that they find it hard to communicate with the females foster carers on providing counseling related to sexual reproductive health.

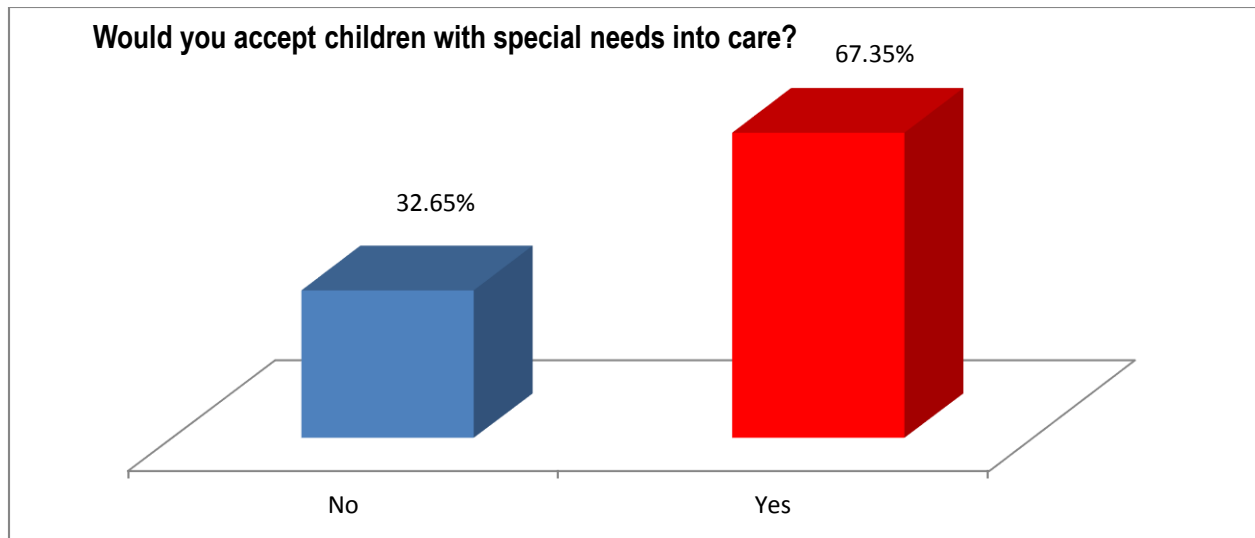
All the CSO that were selected to conduct the survey are all having background working with foster care program. Some have shown that they have been running the program for years while some CSOs are quite new to the program. However, when we ask about the quality of the foster care program of each CSOs, they all respond 100% that their programs are appropriate for children to stay, even for children with disability.

**Do you think if children in foster care will have bright future?**



**Figure2:** The expectation of the future lives of those children who have been placing in the foster care program in this survey have clarified that 79% responded stated that “Those children will have bright future if they live in the good family also if they could access good education. They will become a productive citizen and have good job in the future” while 21% of those interviewed respondents said that “I don’t know if those children will have bright future especially for children with special needs – they don’t know the future of children living with short-term foster care families if there is no more fund support”.





**Figure3:** there was a very positive from the respondents that 67.35% said that " I would accept children with special needs into care" while 32.65% said that "I would not accept children with special need into care because it would take more energy and effort to look after them while I am getting old now".

### Findings Regarding Practice

All the CSOs that were selected to conduct the survey all have a background working with foster care programs. Some have shown that they have been running the program for years while some CSOs are quite new to the program. However, when we ask about the quality of the foster care program of each CSOs, they all respond 100% that their program are appropriate for children to stay even for children with disability (in special needs).

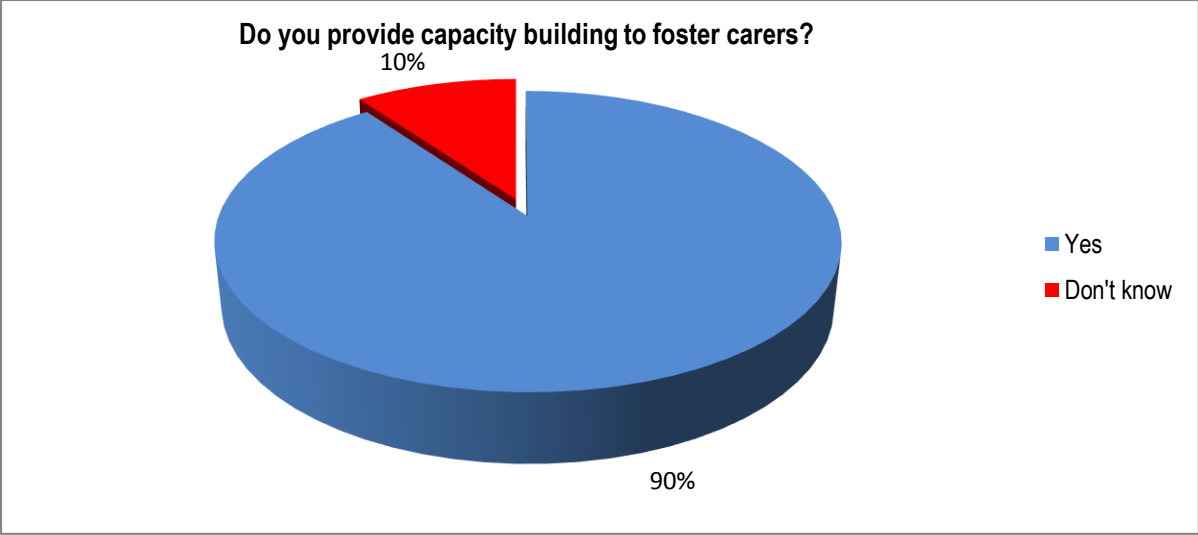


Figure: Regarding capacity building, 90% of respondents expressed their CSOs have been provided to all foster cares while 10% of them, new staffs, respond that “I don’t know”. The capacity building provided including care taker meeting, and a package of training.

Regarding capacity and supports in the formal knowledge and skills and materials to foster carers, almost 96% of respondents said that “I have received training on: Parenting skills, Nutrition, Child Rights, HIV/Aids Prevention, and gentle touch counseling” as well as other materials support including milk powder, hygiene materials, food support plus allowance which is very high percentage while families with resource which are known as long term foster care families, don’t really need support from the CSO since they capable to provide enough support to the children themselves.

**V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Knowledge*

Based on the findings, there was some discrepancy between the knowledge of foster carers and CSO staff.

Interesting- not all foster carers were clear on the role of foster care as part of a wider alternative care system. While this does not imply that the care given to the children is not of a high standard, it does raise some questions around how short term foster care is being used and how the process is being explained to children. It would be a recommendation of this report for clear explanations of the foster care process (short and long term) be given by CSO staff to foster care families prior to accepting them into the program. This will ensure that children are also best informed of the procedure, which is in line with the best interests of the children.

It was also found that the minimum standards around foster care have caused confusion for some CSO staff. While the minimum standards state that foster care should be prioritized for children 6 years and under, this does not mean these are the only children for whom it is suitable. Only a small number of respondents were able to recognize this. CSOs involved in foster care need to make sure that this message is shared- that foster care is suitable for children and youth of all ages.

### *Attitudes toward Foster Care*

Similarly relate to the knowledge section of this report, there was some discrepancy between what foster carers knew to be best practice in foster care, compared to what their attitude towards children being placed with them actually was.

These findings are not surprising. This year MoSVY announced that it would be prioritizing 25 children with disabilities for inter-country adoption based on the limited alternative care options for these children in Cambodia. Children with disabilities face stigma and discrimination around the world, and it could be argued that no children are more marginalized in Cambodia than those with disabilities. Child protection CSOs need to prioritize education, advocacy and stigma reduction campaigns are practices and a community based level to prevent separation. In terms of foster care, short term foster care currently remains the best option for children with disabilities however the sustainability of these programs must also be considered.

### *Practices on Foster Care*

The most important element of this study relates to the challenges the social workers at CSOs have in placing children in foster care families. As mentioned, working with foster care families can be time consuming. CSOs need to be aware of the additional time and stress that can be placed on workers. The development of standardized national practice on the evaluation and selection of foster care families (currently on the agenda to be developed by the sub-national working group in conjunction with MoSVY) should help with some of these issues.

Also concerning was the general practice of not placing children with special needs with long term foster carers, and only placing young children in foster care at all. A lot of this can be linked to a lack of knowledge and community attitudes. With more comprehensive guidelines (like those developed through the Family+ project) this practice should be partially rectified.

Best practice models for communication between staff and foster carers should be clearly defined- including support sessions around child development and reproductive health. Foster carers are largely paid a salary and as such it staff should feel comfortable having a forum to discuss all issues relating to child and adolescent development to ensure that children are receiving the best care and life skills education possible.

## **ANNEXES**

### **I. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**To**

#### **Conduct Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey**

#### **On Foster Care**

##### **Purpose of the KAP Survey**

The purpose of this KAP survey would be to assess the behavior of all Friends-International partner NGOs who are experiencing, or running foster care programs. In the minimum standards for foster care set by MoSVY there is an emphasis on children under 6 years of age being placed in Foster Care. This does not mean that children older than 6 cannot be placed in foster care. It is believed that there would be many other children for who foster care placements could be found if more staffs were aware that ALL children are eligible for foster care.

The second part of the survey would be to assess the staff attitudes towards placing children with disabilities in foster care. Generally, children with physical or intellectual disabilities would benefit far more from foster care than living in a TH. Children with disabilities can have the chance to develop skills and have a better chance at entering employment or education if they are given more attention from a young age. However, there has been several times where both foster carers and case managers have refused placing a child in a family because it would be too difficult based on the fact that the child has a disability and would require greater care and attention.

##### **Objective:**

Design and undertake a KAP survey on Foster Care. The survey is established with no limited to information on:

- a. What do respondents know about Foster Care Program
- b. What do they think/view about Foster Care
- c. What do they actually do with regard to seeking Foster Care
- d. From where do respondents get messages about Foster Care
- e. What of their knowledge gaps, cultural beliefs or behavioral patterns and practices toward Foster Care.

##### **Methodology**

The KAP survey will be use mix qualitative and quantitative method. Data and information will be gathered from 2 different groups within 100 respondents (Staffs and Foster Carers):

- (iii) Auxiliary staffs – staffs from management team (10%)
- (iv) Social workers and/ or staffs who work directly with the beneficiaries (30%)
- (v) Ordinary staffs – case workers such as cook, guard, driver ...etc. (10%)
- (vi) Foster Careers: (50%)

The survey is targeting partners NGO from different provinces who experiencing in running Foster Care Program and Foster Careers. Those partner NGOs are:

- Phnom Penh: Mith Samlanh
- Battambang: Komar Rikreay
- Siem Reap: Kaliyan Mith
- Sihanoukville: M'lop Tapang

### Timing and Duration

The total duration of the KAP Survey will be ..... **days** within the period ....., according to the following plan:

Activities	Number of days	Date	Responsible person
- Prepare a questionnaires			Rothanak Tep, Bryony Walsh, Chetra Khieu, and James Farley
- Testing questions and correction		4-5/ 06 / 2015	Rothanak
- Interview respondents in Battambang (KMR)		8-9/ 06 / 2015	Sopha & intern
- Interview respondents in Siem Reap (Kaliyan Mith)		11-12 / 06 / 2015	Rothanak, Sopha & intern
- Interview MS respondents in Phnom Penh		8-10 / 06 / 2015	Rothanak, Sopha & intern
- Interview respondents in Sihanoukville (M'lop Tapang)		12 / 06 / 2015	Rothanak & Intern
- Data entry and data analysis		17-19 / 06 / 2015	Rothanak & Sopha
- Draft reports		22-24 / 06 / 2015	Rothanak
- Correct and finalize report			Bryony Walsh
<b>Total days</b>			

### The Survey Team

This KAP Survey has been supported by 3PCand Family+ team and TAs from Friends-international.

**II. QUESTIONNAIRS**

***Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) Survey Questionnaire Related to Foster Care***

**FOR FOSTER CARERS**

Date.../...../.....

Staff interviewer.....

Location of interview .....

Interviewed staff job title/role.....

***SECTION1. KNOWLEDGE***

1.1 Please describe what does Foster Care mean to you?

.....  
.....

1.2 Do you know why a child is placed in foster care?

.....  
.....

1.3 Can a child with special needs be placed in foster care?

Yes  No  Don't know

1.4 At what age would you accept a child into care?

.....  
.....

***SECTION2. ATTITUDES***

2.1 How do you become a foster carer?

.....  
.....

2.2 What do you think about working as a foster carer?

.....  
.....

2.3 Do you think if children in foster care will have bright future?

Yes  No  Don't know

2.3.a why?

.....  
.....

2.4 Do you accept children with special needs into care? (Mark only one)

Yes           No

2.5 What reasons would you accept a child into care?

.....  
.....

**SECTION3. PRACTICE**

3.1 How long have you been working as foster carers?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.2 What are the challenges in working as foster carers?

.....  
.....

3.3 What support provided have you received from the CSO that place the child into your care?

.....  
.....  
.....

**FOR CSO STAFFS**

Date.../...../.....

Staff interviewer.....

Location of interview .....

Interviewed staff job title/role.....

**SECTION1. KNOWLEDGE**

1.1 Please describe what does Foster Care mean to you?

.....  
.....

1.2 Why are children placed into foster care?

.....  
.....



1.3 What is the maximum age that a child can be placed in foster care?

.....  
.....

1.4 Can a child with special needs be placed in foster care?

Yes  No  Don't know

2.3.a why?

.....  
.....

1.5 Can they reintegrate back to their families?

.....  
.....

**SECTION 2. ATTITUDES**

2.1 Generally, what do you think about foster care in Cambodia?

.....  
.....

2.2 Do you like working with foster care families?

Yes  No  Don't know

2.2.a If yes, why?

.....  
.....

2.2.b If not, why?

.....  
.....

2.3 How would you choose a foster carer for a child?

.....  
.....

2.4 Do you think your foster care program is an appropriate place for children to stay? (Mark only one)

Yes  No  Don't know

2.5 Are children in foster care discriminated by their communities?

Yes  No  Don't know

**SECTION 3. PRACTICE**

3.1 How long have you been running foster care program?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.2 Does your organization place children with special needs in foster care?

Yes       No       Don't know

3.3 What are the challenges of running foster care program at your organization?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.4 Do you seek support from outside institutions regarding foster care option?

Yes       No       Don't know

3.5 How do you prepare future plan for children in foster care program?

.....  
.....  
.....

3.6 Do you provide capacity building to foster carers?

Yes       No       Don't know

3.6.a what were those training about?

.....  
.....

3.7 What are the reasons you would not place a child in foster care?

.....  
.....  
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE