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Gender and Development for Cambodia

PRESS RELEASE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS A MEN'S PROBLEM, SAYS NEW MEN'S GROUP

Phnom Penh, 23 November 2000

Caring Cambodian men will hand out white ribbons as promises of non-violence at three Phnom Penh markets and the river front on Saturday, November 25, in the first public action of the new Cambodian Men's Network.

"Violence against women is a men's problem", says network coordinator Chhay Kim-Sore, "We started the Men's Network to find ways that men can do something positive about this issue."

The Men's Network, launched by Cambodian NGO Gender and Development for Cambodia (GAD/C), encourages men to be responsible parents and loving partners, to reduce destructive and violent behaviour, and to reject all forms of violence against women. The founding members are NGO workers from five regions of Cambodia where the Men's Network is active.

The group aims to support existing women's groups, as well as running their own activities. Members of women's groups will also take part in the white ribbon distribution on Saturday.

The white ribbons represent a promise by the wearer never to commit or condone violence against women. November 25 is observed in many countries as the International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women.

Violence against women is a major problem in Cambodia. A recent study of Cambodian schoolchildren by the Royal University of Phnom Penh's Psychology Department and a visiting Palestinian academic, Raghda I. Saba, showed that:

- 41% of children aged 10 to 12 years had witnessed domestic violence in their own home
- 8.8% (22 children out of a sample of 250) had witnessed a rape
- 11.2% had witnessed a kidnapping

Workshops exploring male perspectives on gender roles have begun in five provinces of Cambodia, leading towards a national conference in 2001.

For enquiries and applications to join the Cambodian Men's Network, contact:
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For photographs of the white ribbon distribution on Saturday, November 25, visit

Psar Thmei	8.30-9.15 am	Psar Orassey	9.30-10.15 am
Psar Olympic	10.30-11.30 am	Riverside in front of Royal Palace	4-5.30 pm