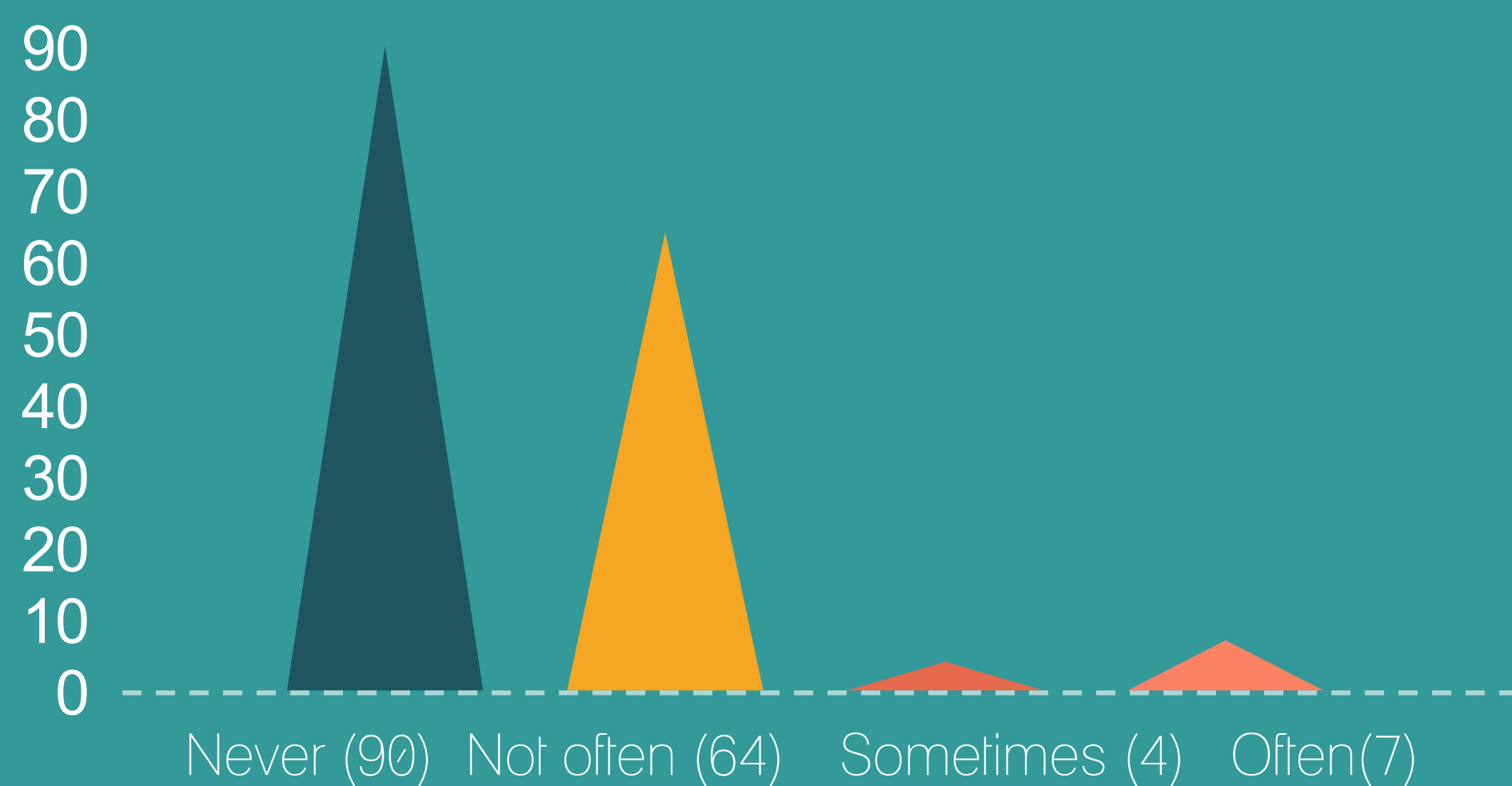


LEVELS OF VICTIM BLAMING IN RENTAL HOUSING COMMUNITIES OF PHNOM PENH

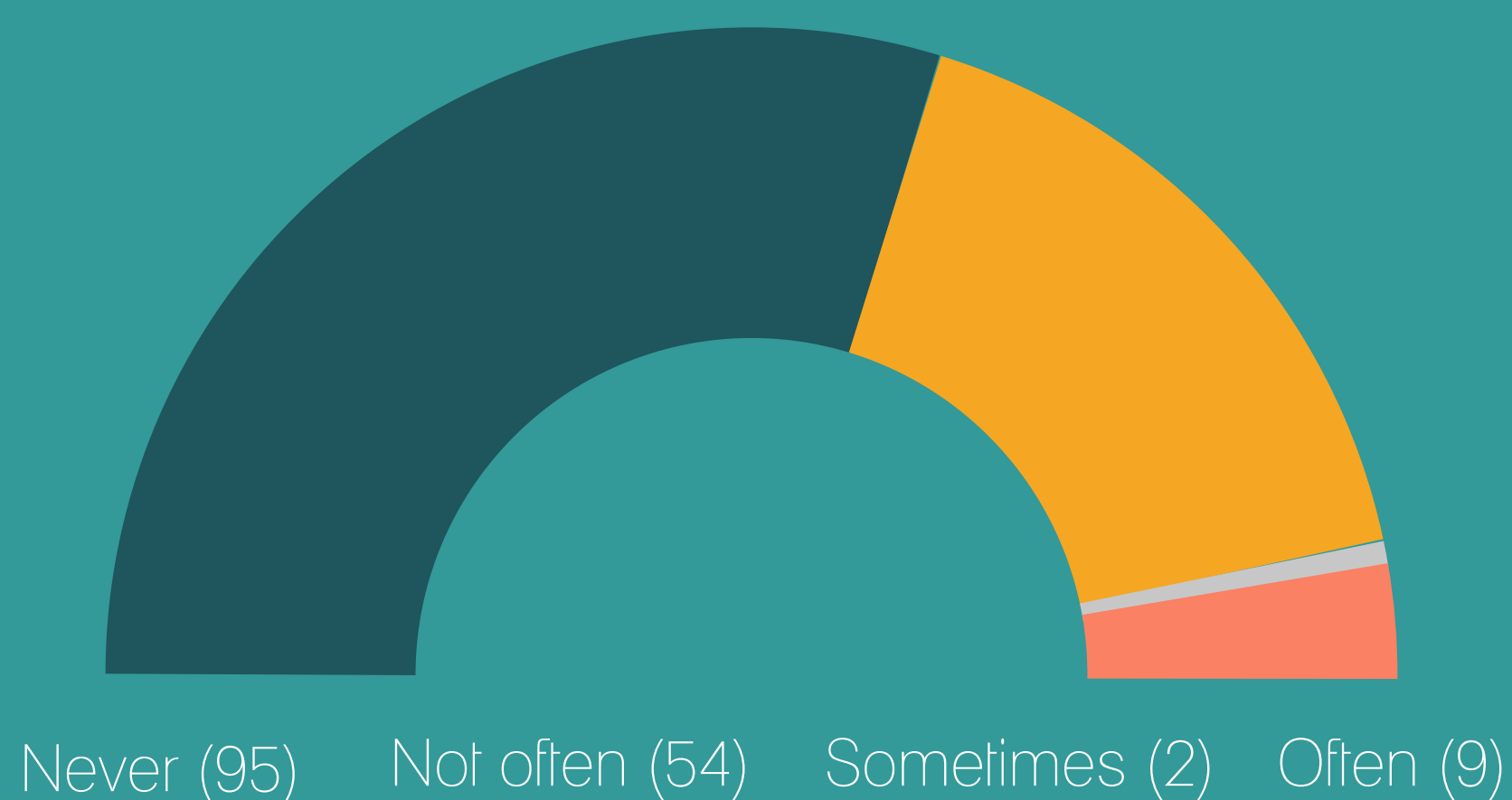
Findings from a research study by Klahaan, PIN and UPWD in February 2019*

Factsheet 4/4

Are women ever to blame for violence carried out against them by their husbands?



Are women ever to blame for violence carried out against them by strangers?



Are women being blamed for violence perpetrated against them?

The findings show that women who experience violence still face a significant degree of blame apportioned to them by some members of the community, including by some community leaders and duty bearers.

In the quantitative (household survey data), almost half of respondents felt that women were at least sometimes to blame for violence committed against them by their husbands.

Recommendations:

When seeking to combat GBV, an essential element is attitudinal and behaviour change. Research shows that despite how 'safe' the urban environment is rendered via improved infrastructure, if domestic violence is seen as 'normal' and men feel a continued sense of entitlement over women's bodies – eg in public spaces at night time – then gender-based violence will continue to occur.

All GBV programmes should include specific attitudinal change objectives, with education and strong messaging on women's sexual autonomy and bodily integrity.

Interview responses: Women are 'sometimes to blame' if:

- "The woman was *gambling*." (Police Officer)
- "The woman was *walking alone at midnight*." (Police Officer)
- "For example, when women *don't do housework*." (Woman resident)
- "Sometimes it is because of *the way women dress (too sexy, or revealing)*." (Woman community leader)
- "Some women did not *know their roles*, for example *cooking or taking care of children*." (Woman community leader)
- "Sometimes *mothers did not take care of their daughters well, and their daughters have become rape victims*." (Woman community leader)

Women are 'never to blame' because:

- "We cannot blame a girl who wears *revealing clothes. It is her own body*." (Commune Committee for Women and Children (CCWC) member)
- "Women are not to blame at all cost. *Physical abuse against women is always wrong*." (Woman resident)
- "We should not blame women. Because *she is the victim, we can't blame her. And the husband should come to the wife and say sorry to her*." (Male resident)

*Study consisted of 167 household surveys, six focus group discussions and 20 key informant interviews. For full methodology and findings, you can find the report online at www.klahaan.org/publications