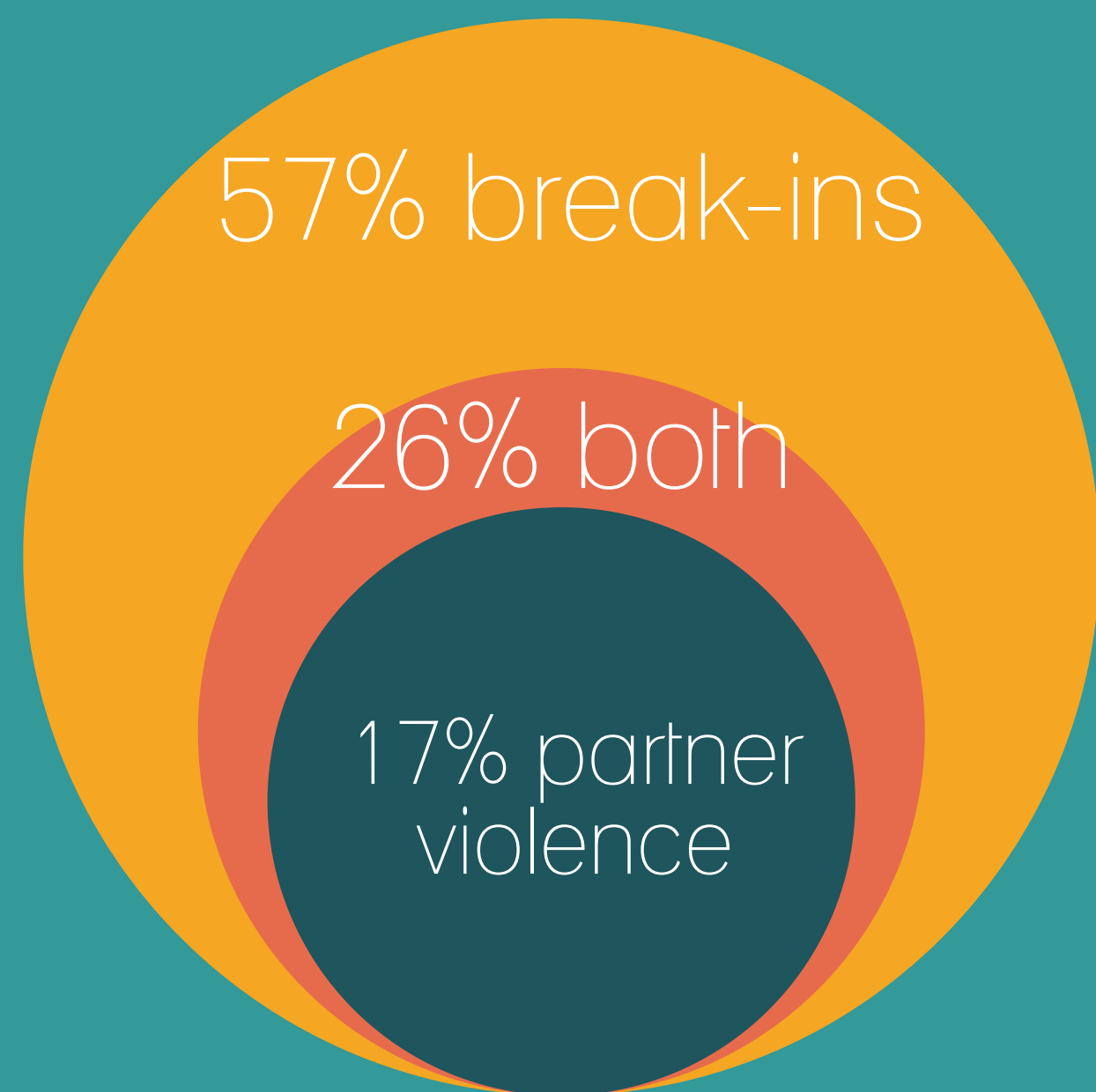


# PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY IN RENTAL HOUSING COMMUNITIES OF PHNOM PENH

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

Factsheet 1/4

## Fear inside rooms: Due to partner violence, or break-ins?



More respondents indicated that women felt afraid inside their rooms because of break-ins, than because of domestic violence. This is despite over a third reported witnessing or being aware of domestic violence being perpetrated inside rental rooms in their area.

This may be related to language: when we are asked questions about the word 'safety' we may tend to think more of 'stranger danger' than of danger of intimate partners, despite the reality being that domestic violence is the most common form of GBV.

## How safe is the area for women at night?

A majority of respondents interviewed indicated that women feel unsafe in the areas around rental rooms.

- Where tenants **shared bathrooms**, perceptions of safety were greatly reduced
- One respondent observed that women felt more afraid when they were **alone** without their husbands
- Several respondents listed a **lack of street lighting and small roads** as making women feel unsafe, particularly those working night shifts as they may be approached on their way home
- Fear of 'drug users' and **thieves** were expressed by several respondents

"THERE IS POOR SECURITY. WOMEN WHO HAVE NIGHT SHIFTS FEEL UNSAFE BECAUSE THE ROAD IS SO DARK AND THERE ARE NO STREETLIGHTS. RENTAL ROOMS ARE NOT COMFORTABLE LIKE OWNING OUR OWN HOUSES. SO WE CAN'T TRUST PEOPLE AND CAN'T DECIDE WHO IS BAD OR GOOD."

Male FGD respondent, Choeung Ek

WE ALSO HAVE SOME FEAR AROUND OUR RENTAL ROOMS. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT A DRUG USER COULD WALK INSIDE THE COMMUNITY, AND WE ARE AFRAID OF ROBBERY.

THE AREA IS FAR FROM A POLICE POST.

Woman FGD respondent, Chak Angre Leu

## How safe do women feel inside rental rooms?

Just under half of respondents interviewed reported that women feel unsafe inside their rental rooms. The reasons given for this focused primarily on break-ins:

- Several respondents explained that the **poor physical condition** of the rooms ("decaying" as one put it), made them easy targets for burglaries. "It is unsafe inside the rooms. Rapists, thieves could break into our house since it's not well-built."
- One respondent detailed a **lack of security** in their area, with the main gate left open all night.
- One respondent listed **drunken neighbours** as a reason for experiencing fear inside her rental room
- Contrastingly, some respondents advised they felt safe inside their rooms and hadn't had any problems

\*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](http://www.klahaan.org/publications)