

A study of living condition and the way for healing victim 's family from the violence in southern Thailand : case study in Pattani province

Abstract

Aims: This study aimed to investigate the living conditions of victims' families from the unrest in Pattani, one of three southernmost provinces of Thailand, and to evaluate the success of the "healing victims project".

Method: Key informants of 284 victim families in Pattani province were interviewed during January to October 2007. Results are reported as percentages or mean \pm standard deviation.

Results:

1) **Victims:** The majority of victims were male (95.8%), were the head of the family (84.5%), of working age (45.9 ± 12.4) and Muslim (51.4%). Most were married (85.9%) and 88.5% of the victims had children. The most common educational level was primary (48.8%) and the most common occupation was agriculture (19%). Most were shot (88%), 65.1% died and 2.8% were left with a physical disability. Of all victims, 19.4% incurred asset damage and 28% were accompanied by a family member during the assault.

2) **Informants:** The informants were most commonly the victims' wife (73%), were on average 42.2 ± 12.8 years of age, 54% were Muslim, 49.8% had a primary educational level. The most common occupation was agriculture (21.4%). Among widowed wives whose husband passed away from the assault, 4.1% were re-married within and average of 23.6 ± 11.9 months.

3) **Living conditions:** After the assault family income was 3,000-5,000 Baht per month and 56% had debts whose median value was 60,000 Baht per family. There were a median of 3 dependents per family (min=0, max=9). 13.4% of the family's members moved to other places after the assault. Aspects of family life that deteriorated most severely after the assault were their sense of personal security and total value of their assets (70.4% taken together) followed by stress (66.6%) and financial problems (65.9%). Aid was received from government and private sectors together by 96.5% of families but 64.1% reported that it fell short of needs. The most urgent need for aid was financial (40.6%), scholarship for children (22.6%) and personal security and assets (16.6%). In practice however, the most frequent aid was financial (92.7%) followed by mental health (62.6%) and support from neighbors (55.7%)

4) **Children of victims:** There were 732 children from 284 victim families. The average age was 17.1 ± 10.4 years, 54.2% were female. Victims' children were most commonly studying (61.3%), working (21.7%) and only 2.3% were unemployed.

Conclusion: Although most of victims' families received some aid, there is a need to develop mechanisms to protect the rights of citizens, including a monitoring system and comprehensive and swift assistance for those affected. Compensation claims for victims and their families must be handled promptly in terms of both financial aid and mental health in both the short and long term.