GENDER AND MIGRATION IN FISHING COMMUNITIES IN CAMBODIA

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Gender, migration and livelihoods

- Wider changes in social provisioning leading to migration (Hewage et al. 2011; Locke et al. 2013)

- Migration and subsequent changes in livelihoods
  - Shaped by identity?
  - Shaped by attitudes about gender roles and work? (Hapke 2001)
  - Further vulnerability? (Locke et al. 2013)

- Not just about migrants but migrants in social context.
Research question

- When catch decrease, rules and policies change, economic situation changes, generation changes....

- How do household strategies change in different fishing communities, especially migration patterns?
  - How is it different for women and men? And why?

- Capture the dynamic changes that is happening in fisheries in Cambodia and how gender shapes and is shaped by these changes
Changes in fisheries

- 2012: abolish fishing lots (around 270,000 ha)
- Community fisheries in study area:
  - 2002-2009
  - Coastal: protection from larger boats
  - Illegal gears, outsiders fish
  - CF committee members
  - No women’s group in study area
- Fish catch highest at around 2012
- Factories, salt fields, migration
Source of income

**Inland villages**
- Main income from paddy. (perceived)
- Almost all are part time fishers. (but income from rice can be equal to fish – perception)
- Paddy farmers considered to be better off.

**Coastal villages**
- More full time fishers than in coastal area
- More factories near villages – esp for women
- Fish income as main income
- But those with paddy is considered to be better-off
- Salt field
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inland</th>
<th>Coastal</th>
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<td>- Women fish with husbands</td>
<td>- Catch did not decrease.</td>
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<td>- Mostly seasonal fishers</td>
<td>- Difficulty in finding workers → in-migrants</td>
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<td>- Convenience in living on water</td>
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<td>- Fish catch decreased since abolishing fishing lot</td>
<td>- Women work as fish workers (but seen as exception)</td>
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Migration

**Inland**
- Young migrate
  - Thailand
- Almost all households have migrants (both women and men)
  - Not necessarily more for fishers than farmers
- Often do not come back (women tend to come back more)

**Coastal**
- Young migrate
  - Kp. Som, Phnom Penh
- Less migration
- Return (→ better income from fishing/ factories/ construction)
- Support for children’s education in the village.
- Debt to buy new gear → migration
Conclusion

- Environment/economy/policy changes shape migration.
- Inland
  - Resource depletion leading to migration (both women and men) → Thailand (proximity)
- Coastal
  - Diversification (women in factory work, men migrate, lack of fishers)
- Migration used to maintain life in fishing villages.
  - Maintenance of identity as “fishers”, “paddy farmers”; no identity as “workers”
  - Identity not linked to amount of income?
  - Women stay near village and work in factories (even for less wages) to look after house and parents/maintain household identity. → non-recognition


THANK YOU