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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....
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- 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



CAMBODIA

- ★ National capital
- ⊙ Provincial capital
- Town, village
- International boundary
- - - Provincial boundary

0 10 20 30 40 mi
0 20 40 60 km



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

Fishing

Inland

- Women fish with husbands
- Mostly seasonal fishers
- Convenience in living on water
- Fish catch decreased since abolishing fishing lot

Coastal

- Catch did not decrease.
- Difficulty in finding workers → in-migrants
- Women work as fish workers (but seen as exception)

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

Reference

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THANK YOU