

EDGING UP THE LADDER: THE WOMEN IN BAN THUNG MAHA, THAILAND



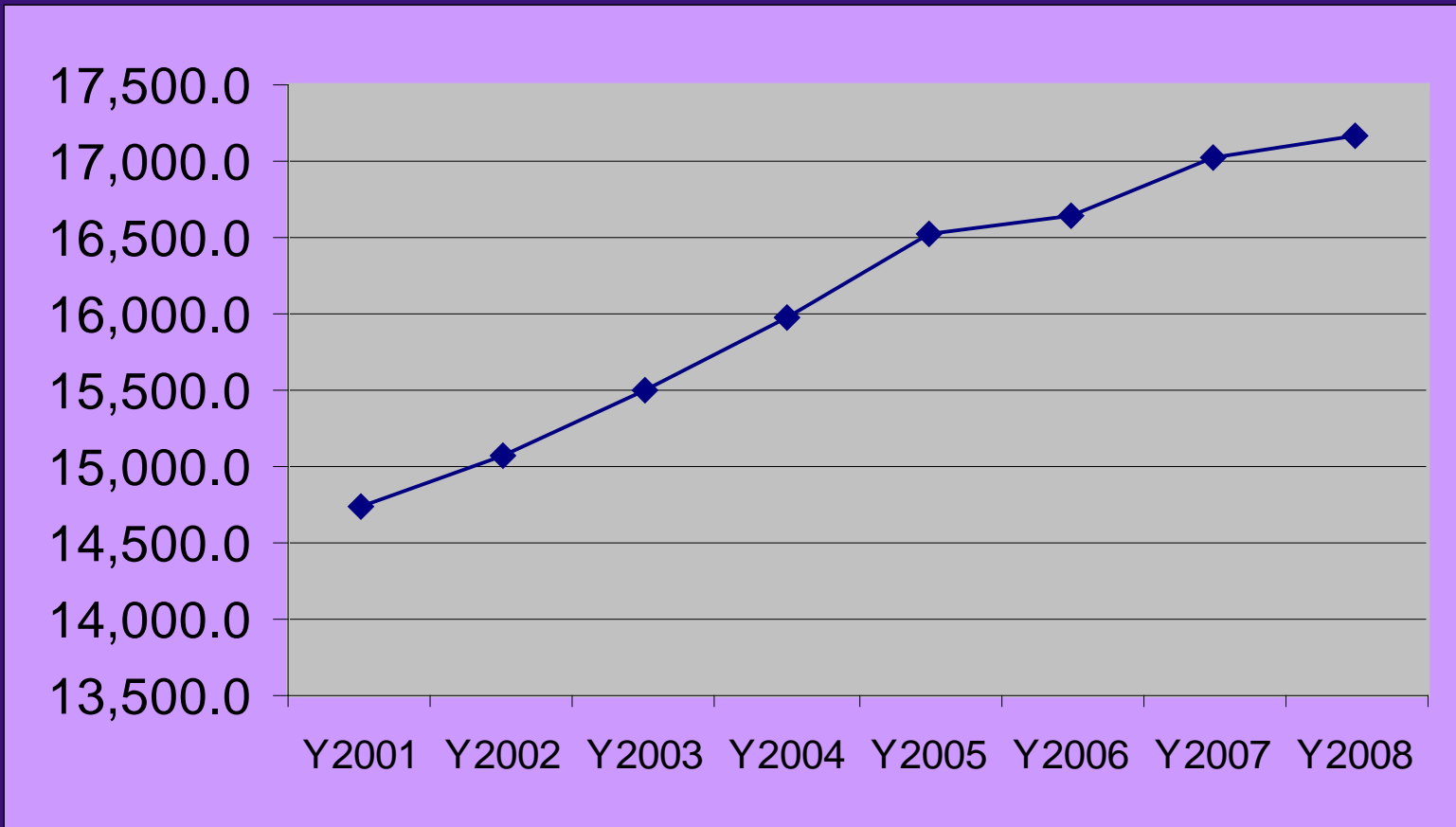
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Outline of Presentation

- Brief Background
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Setting
- Findings
- Conclusions and Implications

Brief Brief



Total Number of Thai Women Employed, 2001-2008.

Number of Thai Women by Occupation, 2008

Legislator, senior officials, managers	273.9
Professionals	887.1
Technicians and associate professionals	807.3
Clerks	878.5
Service workers, shop/market sales workers	3,832.8
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	6,131.5
Craftsmen and related trade workers	1,209.9
Elementary occupations	2,161.0
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	914.9
Workers not classifiable by occupation	15.5

Fish Farmers and Others Registered with the Department of Fisheries by Sex, 2007.

Activity	F (%)	M (%)	No record (%)
Hatchery and Nursing	26	73	1
Fish Farming	31	66	3
Supplementary Aquatic Food Factories	12	31	57
Fish Products Factor Traders	35	57	8
Middlemen	36	57	7
Primary Fish Processing (Owners)	40	40	23
Cold Storage Facilities (Owners)	16	32	52
Traditional Fish Processing (Owners)	56	39	5
Fish Processing Factories	10	26	64
Importers and Exporters	16	44	39
Ornamental Fish	35	54	11



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How are these data reflected at the local level?

What is the situation of women in the fisheries sector in relation to men?

What is the power relation?

How is access and control over resources distributed between men and women?

What are the activities engaged in by men and women and how much time do they allocate?

Do women have access to administrative/managerial decision making positions?

How do working women view their work?

Do they still dream for themselves? If so, what are these?

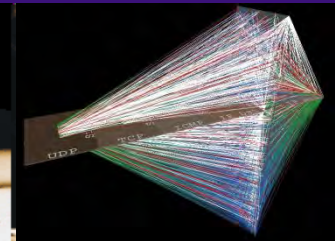
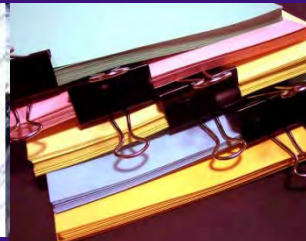


Objectives

Generally, to know and understand the situation of women in the fishing village of Thung Maha, Nakhorn Sri Thammarat, Thailand.

Specifically, it looks into the:

- men and women's access to and control over resources;
- activities and the time allocation;
- women's views about their work; and
- their aspirations in life.



Methodology



- Participatory Rapid Appraisal
- Participant Observation
- Key Informant Interview
- Photo Documentation

Study Site

Thung Maha of
Tambol Pakklong,
Chumphon Province

Auslogis



Ban Thung Maha, Tambol Pakklong, Chumphon Province

- Ban Thung Maha - one of the seven villages comprising Tambol Pakklong, Pathew District, Chumphon Province.
- A Thai-Buddhist community
- Coastal village - Fishing, farming (rice, palm and rubber), Entrepreneurial activities.
- In 2002, the number of total households = 196
- Good access roads
- Public transportation to village very limited hindering one's mobility very



Access to and control over resources



While access to fishery resources is open, the use and control of fishery resources, especially of high value off-shore resources, is traditionally assumed by men. Official registration also bear the names of male fishers.

In general, in farming, ownership and control are assumed by men. Women helped in managing it.

Activities

	F	M
Household		
Capture Fishing		
Fish culture		
Fish processing, marketing		
Coconut farming		
Coconut marketing		
Rubber plantation		
Palm plantation		
Watching stores/eateries		



WOMEN'S GROUP



- The Songkran or "Water Festival" - Thai traditional New Year (April 13 to 15)
- Loi Krathong or festival of floating lights (full moon of 12th month of the traditional Thai lunar calendar).
People make banana leaf cups (Krathong) and float them to the sea to drive away the ill fortunes and beg forgiveness of the Goddess of Water for one's carelessness in polluting the pristine water of the river that nourishes all life
- During In the birthday celebration of His majesty the king and Her majesty the Queen (August) - mangrove planting, release of juvenile sea bass and shrimps and gravid crabs along the shoreline for conservation, and community cleaning.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



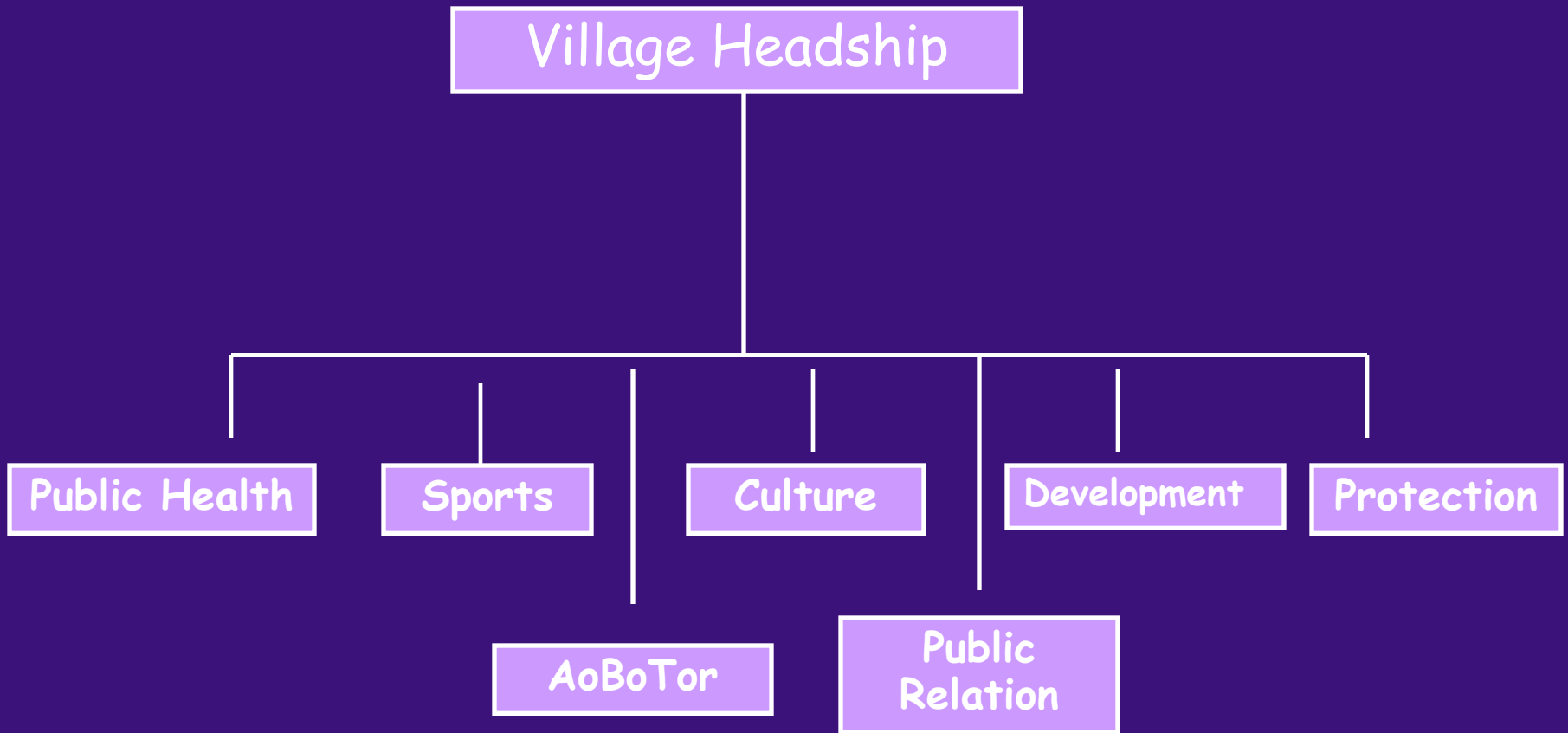
Food preparation

Help in mangrove planting,
stocking of fish, cleaning
and reforesting the sea



Cleaning of the venue

Take the lead in mangrove
planting, stocking of
fish in and cleaning and
reforesting the sea



Access to Administrative and Decision-Making Positions



- The above activities affirm the women's significant contributions to the fishing village of Thung Maha.
- Women do not only play the major role in the households but also in fishing and non-fishing activities such as farming, business, resource conservation and socio-cultural. Their work complement those of men.

Case stories

- **women in the productive and reproductive spheres**
- **how women viewed their works; and**
- **aspirations in life**

A Fish Processor

- PIN. A persistent 62 years old fish processor, first leader of women's group, wife to a private fish port operator
Problem: how to be economically independent while taking care of the housework and family
- Response: Accepted husband's decision for a while, later, accepted leadership position, empowered herself, led the women, engaged in fish processing. Earnings from fish processing allowed her to purchase tracts of land for rubber plantation without the knowledge of husband.
- Perception of work: Empowering and fulfilling
- Dream: To travel and see more women empowered and engaged in productive economic activities

A woman trader

- **DARINA.** 37, a hardworking woman trader, married to a 42 years old trader named Dato. She bore him two children, both in primary school. Darina used to be a fisher, setting out to the sea with her father at an early age and even with her husband after marrying him.
- **Problem:** Unstable income and the risks involved in fishing.
- **Response:** Engage in less hazardous business - selling banana and yam fritters and other local sweets.

A woman trader

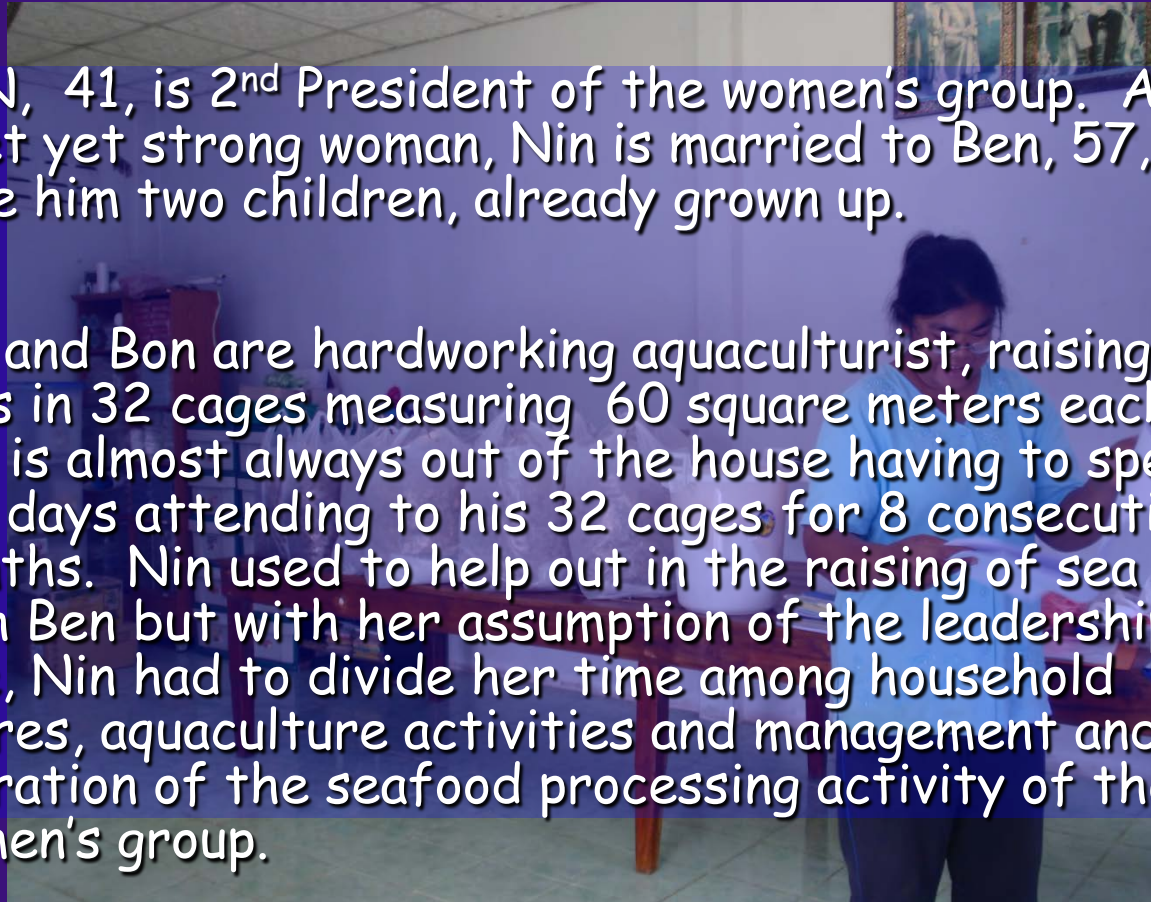
- Like most of the hardworking women in the fishing village of Thung Maha, Darina would start her day at 3:00 AM, doing household chores - cleaning the house, cooking breakfast - and making local sweets while her husband would prepare the fishballs and fry bananas and yam for sale in their local shop. At 6:00 AM, Darina would ride her motorcycle and set off to the rubber plantation to sell her homemade local sweets to the workers while Dato would stay home, watch their shop and take care of his mother and kids. Darina would come home at 1:00 PM, in time for lunch.
- Darina's afternoon break would be watching their small shop while Dato would go to the market to buy yam, bananas and other ingredients for the preparation of the local sweets. Darina would take charge of preparing the dinner while Dato would wash the dishes - an arrangement well accepted by both parties. After which, both would be watching TV shows. Bedtime is usually at 9:00 PM.

A woman trader

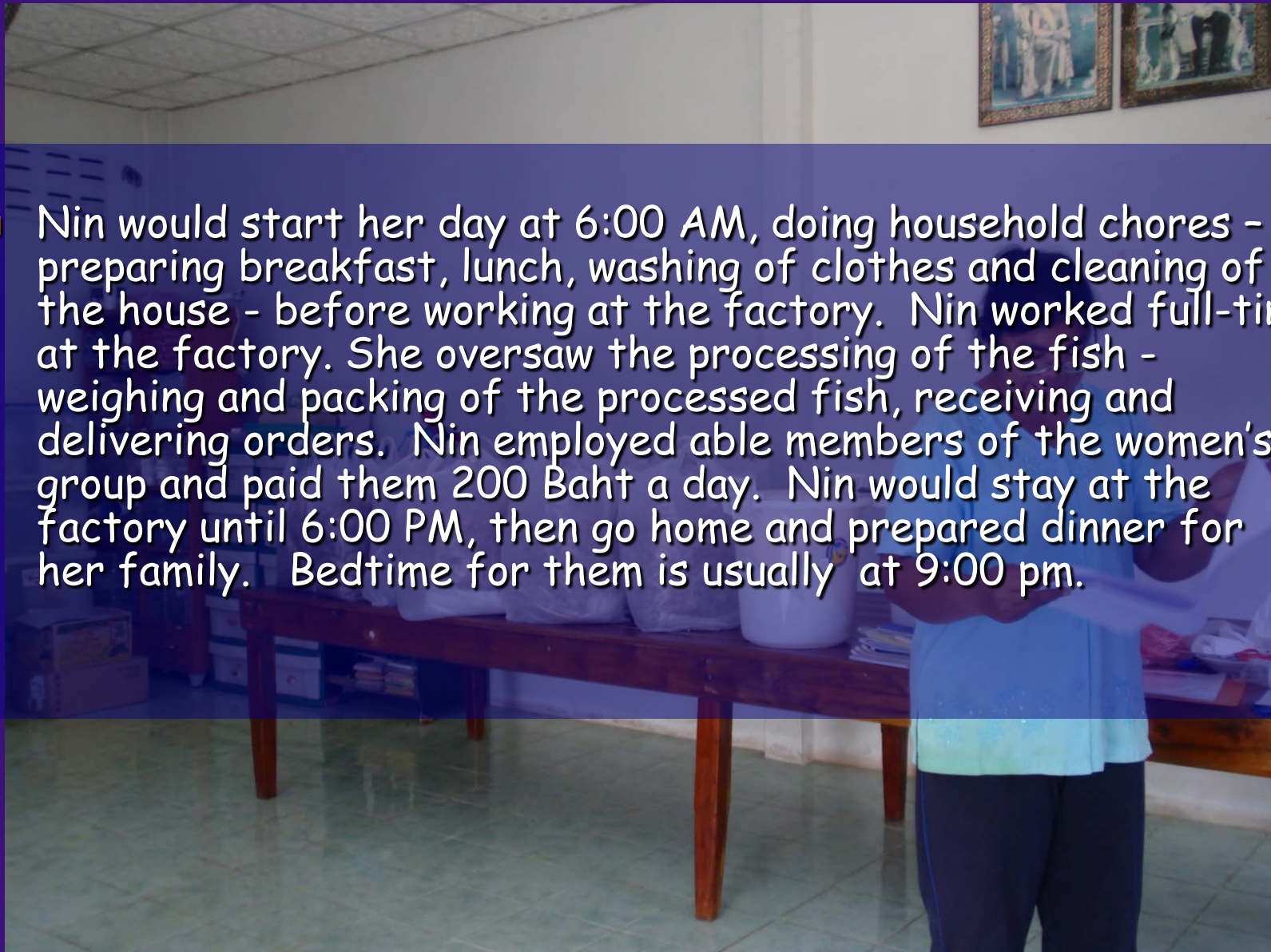
- Perception of Work: Liberating - Darina likes her work because it allows her to drive around the village, see her friends and be updated of the latest news in the village.
- Dream: Darina dreamed to own a rubber plantation someday. She believes that there is so much money in rubber plantation.

An Aquaculturist

- NIN, 41, is 2nd President of the women's group. A quiet yet strong woman, Nin is married to Ben, 57, and bore him two children, already grown up.
- Nin and Ben are hardworking aquaculturist, raising sea bass in 32 cages measuring 60 square meters each. Ben is almost always out of the house having to spend 2-3 days attending to his 32 cages for 8 consecutive months. Nin used to help out in the raising of sea bass with Ben but with her assumption of the leadership role, Nin had to divide her time among household chores, aquaculture activities and management and operation of the seafood processing activity of the women's group.



- Nin would start her day at 6:00 AM, doing household chores - preparing breakfast, lunch, washing of clothes and cleaning of the house - before working at the factory. Nin worked full-time at the factory. She oversaw the processing of the fish - weighing and packing of the processed fish, receiving and delivering orders. Nin employed able members of the women's group and paid them 200 Baht a day. Nin would stay at the factory until 6:00 PM, then go home and prepared dinner for her family. Bedtime for them is usually at 9:00 pm.



A Community Leader and Squid Drier

- Nit, 52 years old, is a committed community leader. She is married to Bon, a fisherman. They have 3 children all grown up.



- Nit used to go out fishing with her father when she was little. When she got married and had children, she stopped going out to sea and engaged herself in drying squid for additional income.



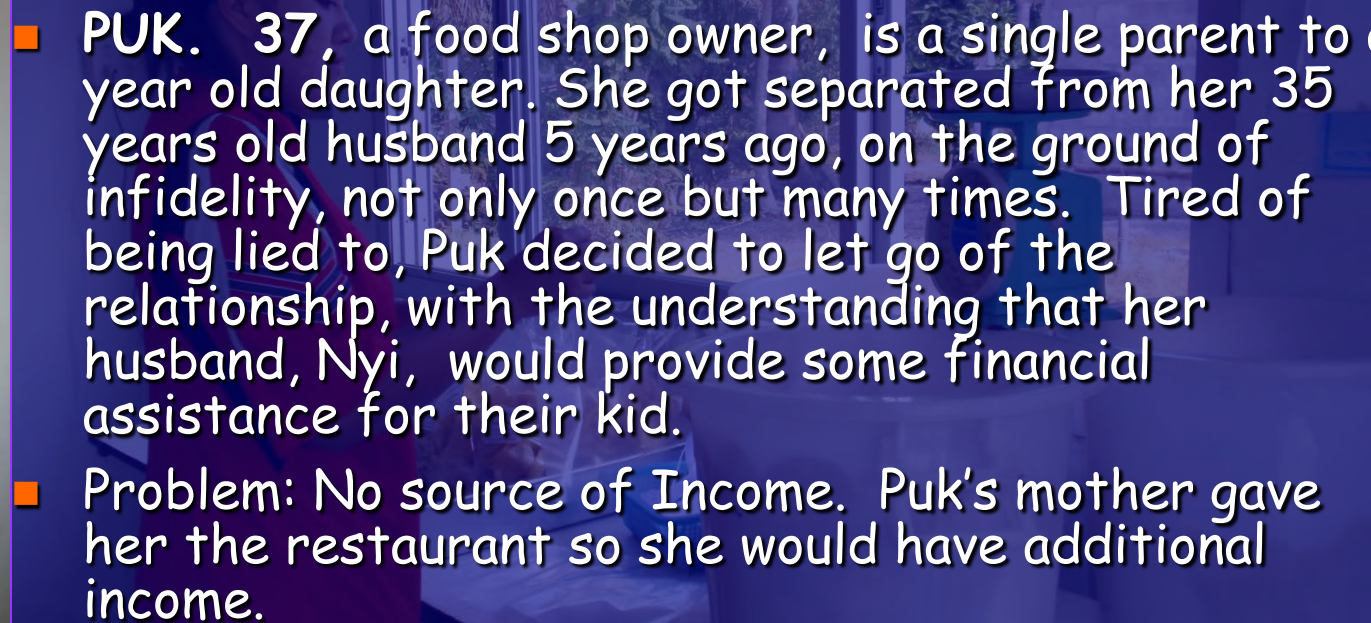
- Often times, she would start her day at 5:00 AM, preparing food and doing some household chores while waiting for Bon's return from fishing. If Bon's catch of squid is not enough, Nit would buy some more squid from other fishermen..

- Nit would spend at least 4 hours a day slicing the squid, laying them out on a flat sheet for drying while Bon would take his rest. Nit would take a short break during lunch and help Bon prepare his fishing paraphernalia. After sending Bon off to the sea, Nit would resume her work, packing some dried squid and selling them at the nearby market. Oftentimes, Nit would go home at 5:00 PM, in time for dinner preparation. She retires to bed early at 8:00 PM.

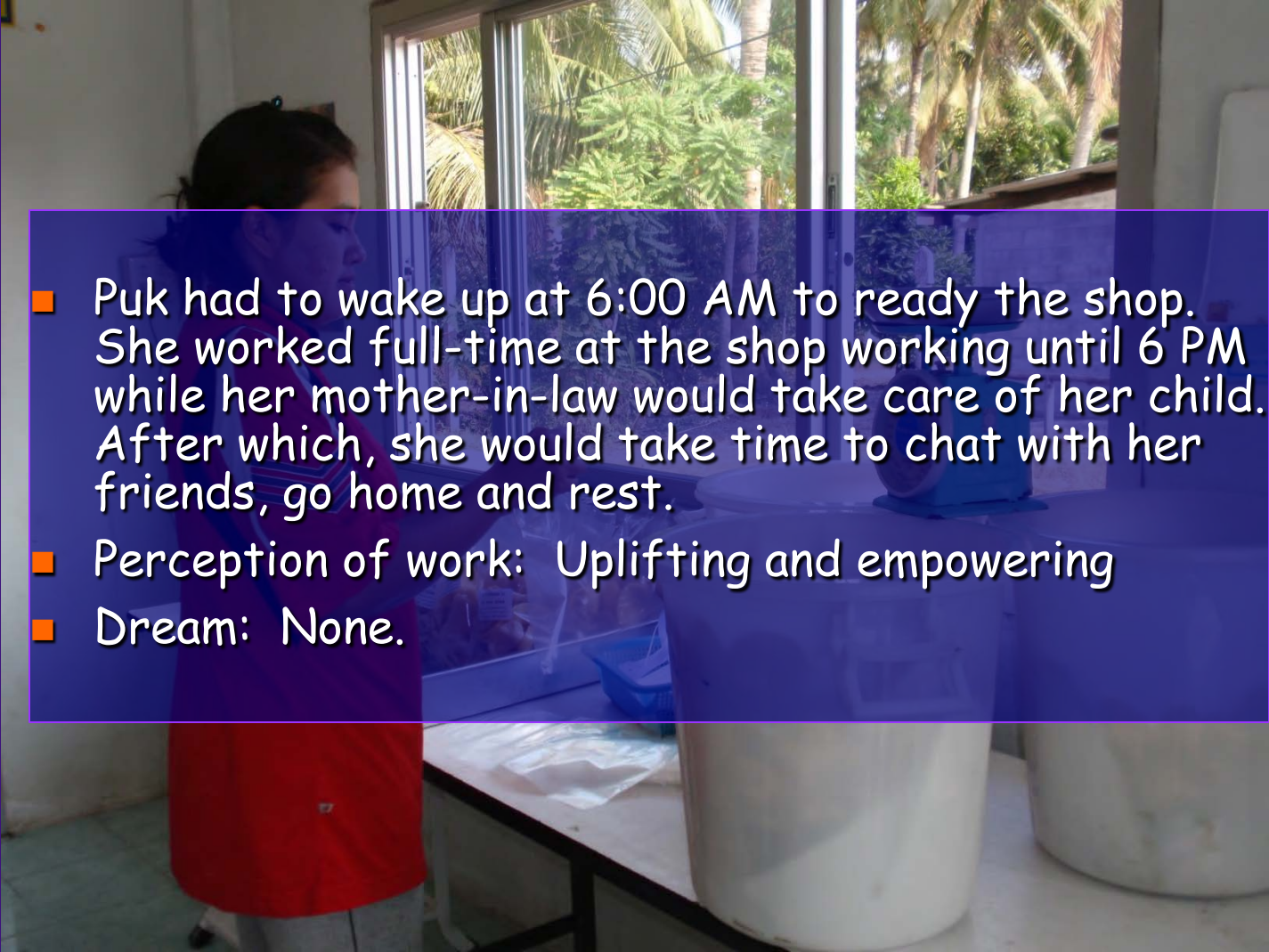


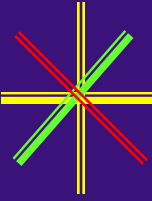
- Perception of Work: Nit was happy being able to work outside the house and relegated the work of a community leader in charge of entertaining the community's guests. She was also grateful that her work as squid drier and trader allows her to move around and socialize with people.
- Dream: None

A Food Shop Owner

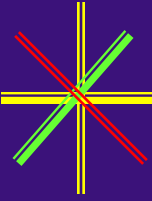
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- A woman with dark hair, wearing a red shirt, is seen from the side, working in a food shop. She is standing behind a counter with a white tablecloth. In the background, there are large windows showing a view of palm trees and greenery. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a daytime setting.
- **PUK.** 37, a food shop owner, is a single parent to a year old daughter. She got separated from her 35 years old husband 5 years ago, on the ground of infidelity, not only once but many times. Tired of being lied to, Puk decided to let go of the relationship, with the understanding that her husband, Nyi, would provide some financial assistance for their kid.
 - **Problem: No source of Income.** Puk's mother gave her the restaurant so she would have additional income.

A Food Shop Owner

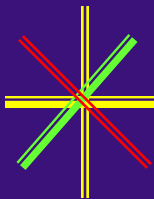
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- A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a red apron over a dark top, is standing in a food shop. She is looking down at a counter where there are several large white plastic buckets and some blue containers. In the background, there is a large window with a view of palm trees and greenery outside. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting daytime.
- Puk had to wake up at 6:00 AM to ready the shop. She worked full-time at the shop working until 6 PM while her mother-in-law would take care of her child. After which, she would take time to chat with her friends, go home and rest.
 - Perception of work: Uplifting and empowering
 - Dream: None.



The stories of these five women clearly illustrate the power relation between men and women found in the fishing village which is highly skewed in favor of men, the highly defined gender-based division of labor, the co-existence between men and women of fishing communities, the complementary roles of men and women, and the struggle of women (Puk and Pin) as they try to resist the control of men.



The under-representation of women in political and administrative decision-making positions show the traditional stereotypes which somehow deprives the community a large portion of available pool of expertise which could have been tap for its development efforts. This stereotyping is also evident in the gender-based division of labor and the conflicts that emerged between husband and wife.



The intervention of the Department of Fisheries through the women organization and provision of skills and livelihood trainings, although extension of their domestic work, provided good opportunities for men and women to realize the development potentials of engaging both in development efforts particularly in the provision of leadership opportunities.

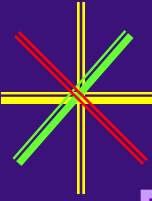


Their stories demonstrate how capability trainings have empowered women by enhancing their self-confidence and skills in product development and marketing which help augment their family income, and provided them the courage to lead others and to determine their life's direction, and how good the women are as breadwinners. e as breadwinners.



Provision of gender sensitivity trainings and education campaign on women's rights would help promote gender equality in the village.

Quantitative measurement of women's contribution (productive and reproductive) would be significant in making visible their contribution and thus, integration in development planning.



While some women learned to subsume their personal needs to those of the family to the point of voluntarily subordinating themselves to men for security, some learned to resist, pursue their interests and find themselves, in a matter of time.

THANK YOU!