



Gender and Fisheries Groups: Case study in Rayong Province, Thailand

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Gender issues in fishers' organization and collective action

- Crucial to safeguard fishers' livelihoods (Kalikoski and Franz, 2013)
- For fisheries resource management, for economic gains (livelihood security), for advocacy.
- SSF guidelines emphasizes the responsibility of state and civil society to facilitate collective action.
- Accounting for gender has been identified as important strategy for strong organization functioning – both integrated and as independent women's group (Kurien, 2014).
- Women's participation crucial for success of collective action (Alonso-población and Siar, 2018; Jentoft et al. 2018; Kusakabe and Thongprasert, 2022).
- → our study contributes to this discussion by analyzing how women's participation improves the sustainability of the fishers' organizations.

Objectives of Study

- The study explores the factors that contribute to sustained groups by comparing three communities in Rayong Province, Thailand from a gender perspective.
- Specifically, the study:
 1. Assessed the formulation of the fisheries groups, their activities and characteristics;
 2. Compared the differences in the development of the groups;
 3. Identified the factors that contributed to the sustainability of the group

Fisheries Production of Thailand in 2020

Total

Product : 2,617,248 Ton

Value : 167,021.2 MB

Capture

Product : 1,589,200 Ton

Value : 63,405.8 MB



Culture

Product : 1,028,048 Ton

Value : 96,151.7 MB



Marine

Product : 1,472,400 Ton

Value : 63,405.8 MB



Inland

Product : 116,800 Ton

Value : 7,463.7 MB



Coastal

Product : 556,810 Ton

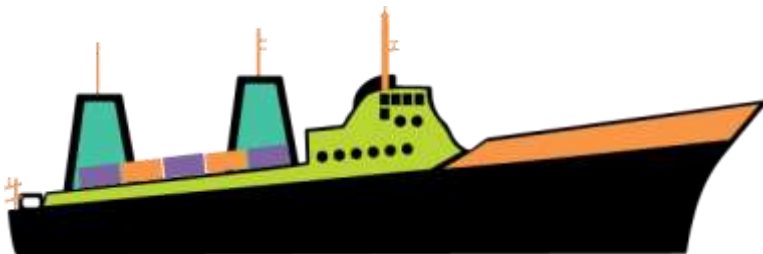
Value : 68,590.8 MB



Freshwater

Product : 471,238 Ton

Value : 27,560.9 MB



Marine fisheries governance regime in Thailand



The new Royal Ordinance on Fisheries B.E. 2558 (2015) and its revision in B.E. 2560 (2017) recognize the significance of sustainable management of the fisheries resources of Thailand



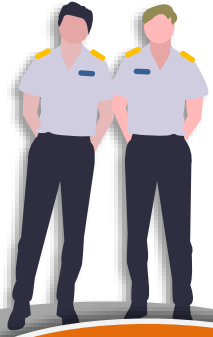
➤ DOF developed and implemented the National Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) 2019-2022

➤ The important management measures specified in the FMP (2019-2022)

In order to manage fisheries resources sustainably, Thai government is encouraging fishers to form groups and register

- Control of illegal fishing,
- Introduction of area-based management for selected fisheries, including clams and shrimp and introducing Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) for selected fisheries.
- Restrictions on the number and characteristics of fishing gear will be maintained.
- Expansion of sustainable fishing into deeper waters in Thailand and into overseas fishing grounds will be promoted.
- Reduce the catch of juvenile market fish, mesh size limits will be maintained or increased, and
- Seasonal closures improved. Artificial reefs and restocking programs will be maintained.

Establishment of Local Fisheries Groups in Thailand



Ready

- Establishment of local fisher groups is defined in the fisheries law (2015) and its revision in 2017 in Section 25.
- To promote participation and provide support to local fishing communities in the management, maintenance, conservation, restoration, and sustainable utilization of aquatic animal resources.
- DoF shall take actions to provide assistance/support in the following matters

- 1) Promote participation of local fishing communities in the development of the policy;
- 2) Arranging for the registration of local fishing community organizations according to the rules prescribed by the Director-General;
- 3) Mentor local fishing communities on management, maintenance, conservation, restoration and utilization of aquatic animal resources, as well as provide support to the implementation of communities' work, projects or activities; and
- 4) Disseminate knowledge and information on the management, maintenance, conservation, restoration and utilization of aquatic animal resources.



Registration
done by the
Provincial
Fisheries Office.

Why government requires groups to be registered

- It is easier to communicate with fishers, and also to spot whose boat it is at sea.
- In order to encourage fishers to form groups, DoF provides subsidies to fisheries groups (e.g. 100,000 baht per group) to implement fisheries management plan of their group such as crab bank, conservation, buy fishing gears for their group member.
- In the whole country, around 200 local groups availed of such support/year. Each group needs to submit a report once a year to keep their registration active.

DoF has introduced registration of groups as one of the major strategies to govern fisheries



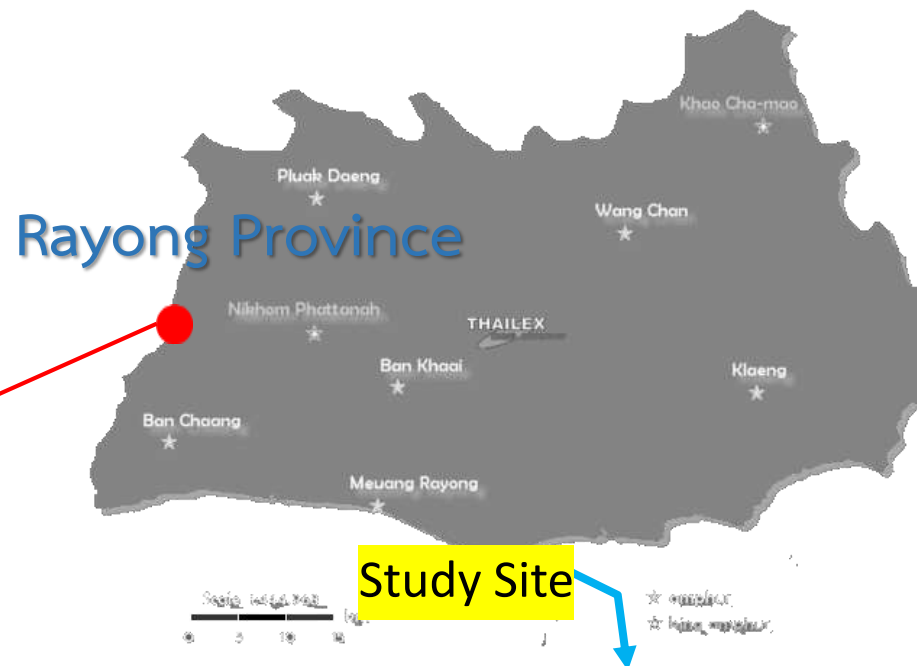
Situation of Local Fisheries Group registration in Rayong Province

- **More than 40 local fisheries groups.**
- **Incentives for DoF registered groups,**
 - They will receive legal support from DoF. There are some groups that are also registered as community enterprises with Department of Agriculture Extension, since this will entitle them to received support from other agencies including the local government bodies.
- **To register with DoF, the groups need to shows**
 - Their commitment to work together.
 - Initially the requirement was to have more than 30 members to register, but this was later lowered to 15 members since it was difficult to gather 30 members.
 - Membership of the registration is per boat (one person per household).
 - Aside from the support from the government for these registered groups, there are support from the industry.

Methodology

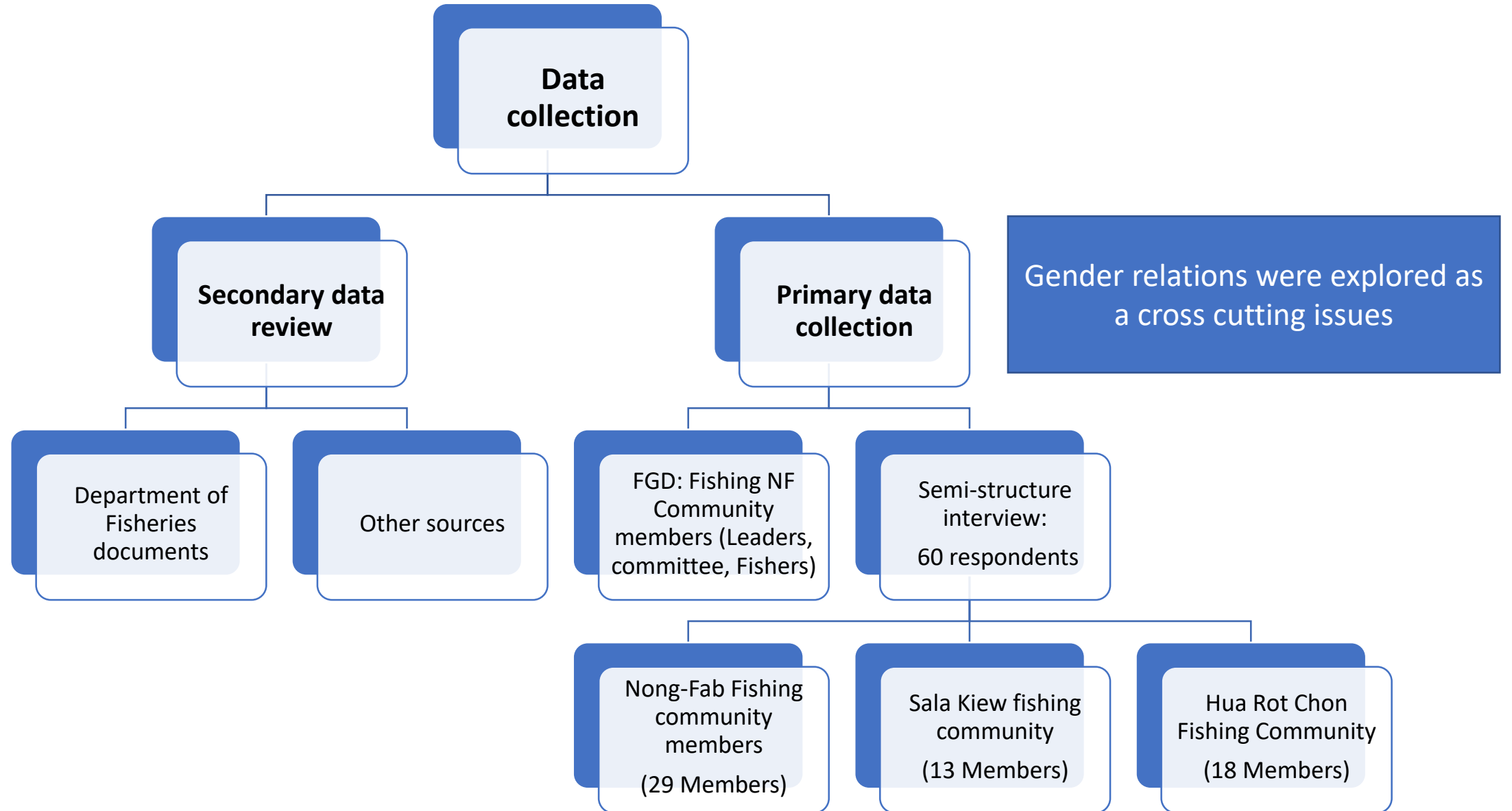


Study site



1. Nong Fab Fishing Community, Map Ta Phut Sub-district, Mueang district
1. Sala Kiew fishing community, Ban Phe, Sub-district, Mueang district
1. Hua Rot Chon Fishing Community, Taphong subdistrict, Muang District

Data collection Design



Study findings



General information of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	47	78
Female	13	22
Total	60	100

Age	Frequency	%
≤20 years old	2	3.30
21-40 years old	18	30.30
41-60 years old	27	45.00
>60	13	21.70
Total	60	100

Marital status	Frequency	%
Married	48	80.00
Single	10	16.70
Divorced	1	1.70
Widow / Widower	1	1.70
Total	60	100

Education	Frequency	%
Graduated primary	3	5.00
Graduated lower secondary	28	46.70
Graduated higher primary	19	31.70
Vocational / High Vocational	6	10.00
Graduated university or higher	4	6.70
Total	60	100

Main occupations of family members	Frequency	%
1) Government officer	11	7.64
2) Company employee	29	20.14
3) Personal business	1	0.69
4) General local employee	23	15.97
5) Fishery	21	14.58
6) Housewife	14	9.72
7) Farming (Orchard)	9	6.25
8) Boat driver / Taxi driver	2	1.39
9) Local merchant	22	15.28
10) Unemployed	9	6.25
11) Babysitter	1	0.69
12) Technician	2	1.39
Total	144	100

Household income and land ownership

Household income per year

	Nong Fab	Sala Kiew	Hua Rot Chon	Total
Average	419,027 THB (12,698 USD)	2,327,446 THB (70,529 USD)	1,049,000 THB (31,788 USD)	1,021,510 THB (30,955 USD)
Median	408,000 THB (12,364 USD)	540,000 THB (16,364 USD)	684,000 THB (20,727 USD)	511,800 THB (15,509 USD)
Minimum	48,000 THB	126,000 THB	120,000 THB	48,000 THB
Maximum	648,000 THB	24,360,000 THB	6,000,000 THB	6,000,000 THB

Land of ownership

Land of ownership	Frequency	%
Yes	34	56.70
No	26	43.30
Total	60	100

Area (Rai)	Nong Fab	Sala Kiew	Hua Rot Chon
≤1	66.7	85.7	66.7
1-5	33.3	14.3	16.7
6-10	0	0	0
>10	0	0	16.7
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average	1.12	7.33	3.95
Min	0.0725 Rai		
Max	50.0 Rai		

Average HH income contributed by different activities

Occupation activities	Income/Month
1. Fishing	17,862.07
2. Farming	7,722.22
3. Trading	120,190.48
4. Government Officers	20,555.56
5. General employee	14,750.00
6. Received from Child/relatives	6,560.00
7. Old age allowance	600.00
8. House rent	14,500.00
9. Company employee	23,928.57

% Contribution of fishing income to HH income

Village	% of contribution
Nong Fab	47.95
Sala Kiew	41.21
Hua Rot Chon	39.32

Characteristic of Fisheries in the study area

Fishing boats used

Village	Nong Fab	Sala keaw	Hua Rod Chon	%
Wooden boat	45	9	9	78.75
Fiberglass boat	9	4	4	21.25
Total	54	13	13	100

Utilization of Catch (%)

Species	Wholesaler	Retail	Household	Total (%)
Fish	35.77	54.47	9.76	100
Crab	58.64	25.67	15.69	100
Squid	43.93	33.79	22.28	100
Shrimp	64.30	18.63	17.07	100

Fishing gear used

Fishing gear type	Frequency	%
Shrimp gill nets	2	1.70
Crab gill nets	30	25.21
Fish gill nets	23	19.32
Hooks	31	26.05
Squid jig	9	7.56
Fish trap	8	6.72
Squid trap	1	0.84
Octopus Pot Fishing	14	11.76
Krill push nets	1	0.84
	119	100

Trend in catch from fishing in the past 10 years

Trend	Frequency	%
Change	55	91.67
Not change/stable	3	5.00
Not stable	2	3.33
	60	100

Trend of change	Frequency	%
Increased	1	1.67
Decreased	59	98.33
	60	100

Reasons of decreased in catch	% of perception		Total
	yes	no	
1. Climate change	22.03	77.97	100
2. Decreased in fishing ground	27.12	72.88	100
3. Catch in small size of fish	3.39	96.61	100
4. Illegal fishing	5.08	94.92	100
5. Increased in fishing effort	50.85	49.15	100
6. Industrials made fishing ground damaged	44.07	55.93	100
7. Used harmful fishing gears	1.69	98.31	100

Characteristic of Fisheries Group: **Nong Fab**



- There are 45 boats, and there are 65 members.
- Map Ta Phut industrial zone development has affected their fisheries. They have a long history of negotiating with the company and now have developed a working relations with the companies.
- Being a group contributed to their visibility in the negotiation with government and industries, as well as receiving support from external organizations.
- Operating a savings group for a long time since 1997. The members saved 100-200 baht per month. Since 2015, they have registered themselves as a community enterprise, and made this savings group into a more formal group.
- They have also started hoi wan (sweet oyster) releasing project, training and release seeds. They continued to release seeds to replenish the natural resources. They wanted to be true to their principle of protecting the natural resources and also this was part of the strict discipline that the group expected from their members.

Characteristic of Fisheries Group: **Sala Kiew**



- This community is near the main market of the Rayong province.
- It is a center of tourist area. It used to be a strong fisheries group (around 30 years ago in 1992) but has become inactive in the recent years.
- The former president of the group was very active, but he has passed away. The current vice president has taken up the presidency after the former president passed away. She is a restaurant owner at the pier. But the group has not been active.
- Recently they have again come together to form a group and register. Since they have just formed a group, they do not have any rules for the group yet. This is because they need to register the fisheries group in order to access support from the government.
- The recent oil spill was followed by compensations distributed to the fishers.
- Those who had their boats registered were able to receive compensation. The compensation from the oil spill was 45,000 baht for registered boats and 15,000 baht for those who have not yet registered boats.

Characteristic of Fisheries Group: **Hua Rot Chon**



- This area did not have any group before, but they just registered in April 2022.
- This is because by registering they will be able to get support from the government.
- This area has been heavily affected by the oil spill. But the village was not included in the compensation list of the company
- They have 23 members, all men, and all are boat owners. Their boat are artisanal size. This group is younger in age compared to the other groups.
- This is because the chairman is a young man, and it is his peers who became members. Most of the members have other jobs, and many are doing fishing either as a pastime or as a secondary income during the weekend

Comparison of the three groups

Nong Fab

- a successful and strong fisheries group that attracts much external support;
- Able to take a leading role in protecting the natural resources in their area.
- community thinks that the fish resources have increased from before
- Women take active role in the group activities.

Sala Kiew

- Used to be a successful group but now lost its cohesion
- They have experienced in fisheries resources decreased.
- Only one woman in the group (who is a fish trader/ restaurant owner)

Hua Rot Chon

- A new group which has never worked as a group before
- They have experienced in fisheries resources decreased.
- Lead by young man and his friends.

Factors that contributed to organizing: Risks and shocks

1. Risk and shocks as an impetus for strong group

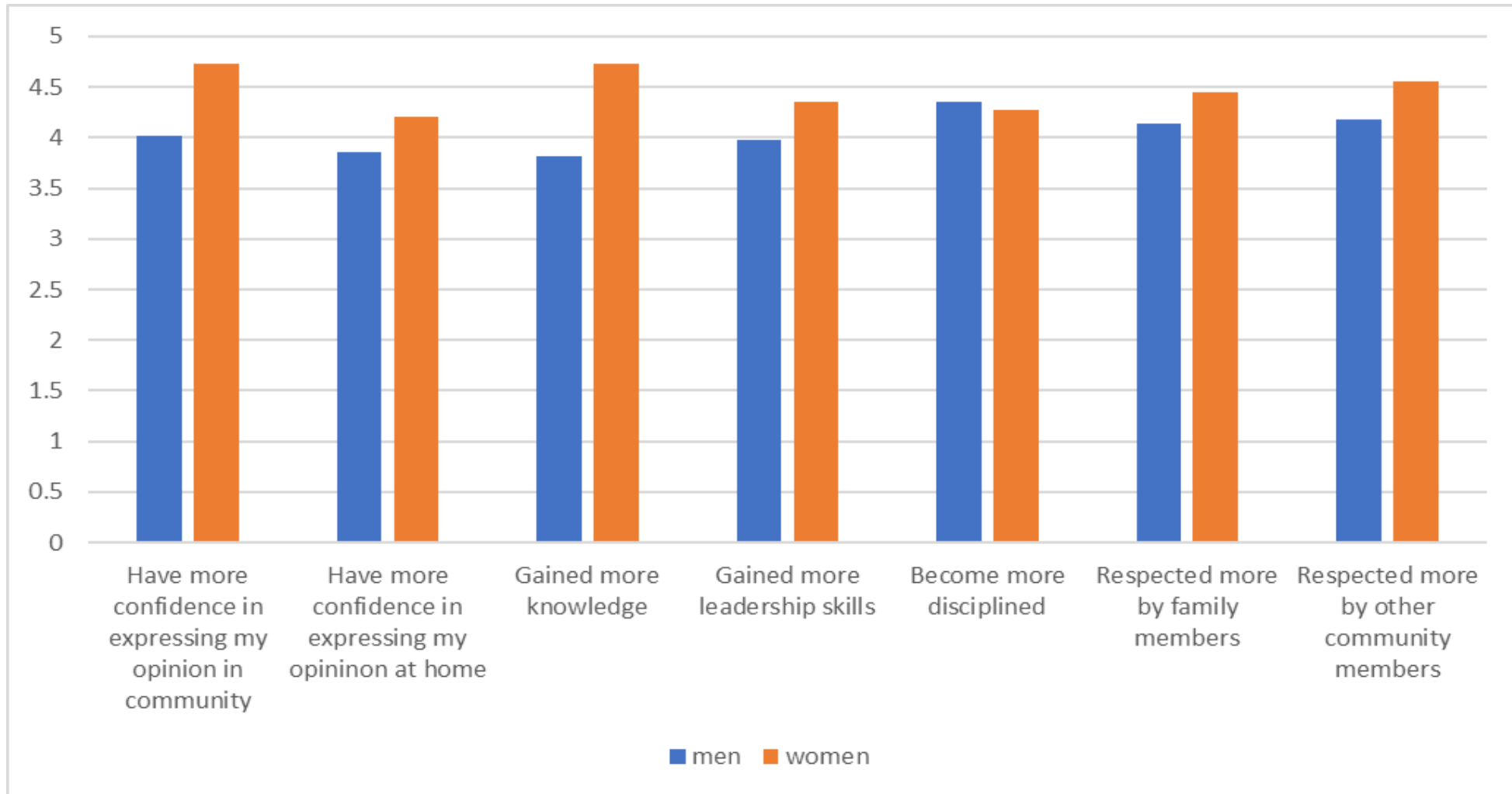
- Study found that external support is a result of a strong group and not the other way round. It is a risks and shocks that create the impetus for group formation, and which will bring people together.
- Nong Fab community came together strongly because of the Map Ta Put Industrial Zone development that threatened their fisheries livelihood.
- Sala Kiew community came with external support but could not sustain. It was only when they have seen that they were being left behind from the fisheries development that they came together.
- Hua Rot Chon community came together because they were excluded from the compensation from the company. It is also important to note that the sustained risk that Nong Fab community faced because of the industrial zone has continued their need to get united.

Factors that contributed to organizing: Diversity

2. Diversity in membership

- The registration to the group is by boat owning households (boats are registered under men's name) → Initially, the group can be homogenous. But some groups start to involve different people and get rooted into the community.
- Nong Fab, Nong Fab community has shown is the active involvement of women, which is different from the other two groups, community's women are very active and strong and play an important role in fishing, strict rules also create a much orderly space for women to join
- Sala Kiew community has women leader, but she is not a fisher but a restaurant owner.
- Hua Rot Chon community Hua Rot Chon community is all men members,
- That is, participation and involvement of women is very important for the continuation of the group. Or wider involvement – not only dependent on one leader (which happened in Sala Kiew community).
- For effective community groups, it need to have diversity in group membership.

What are the positive changes that you observed after you became a member?

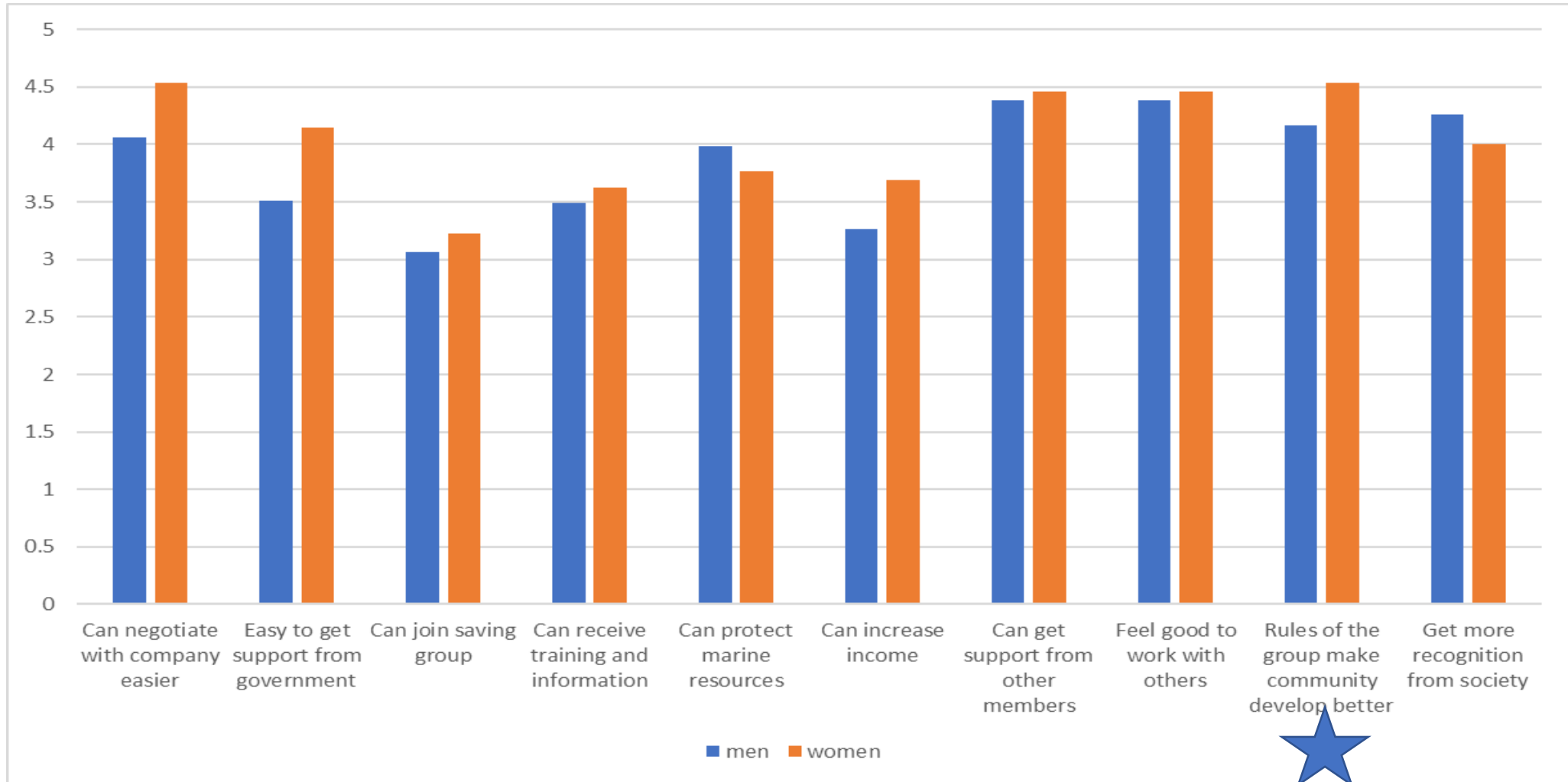


Factors that contributed to organizing: Rules

3. Introduction of rules

- Introduction of rules and being able to get all members to follow the rules is a reflection of a strong group.
- Nong Fab, the rules are strict, such as no drinking in the office premise or no collecting of sweet oysters are considered strict by some and those who cannot follow the rules have left the group. Those who are in the group finds that these rules are important to keep the group in order. They enforce the rules strictly and members who break the rules is asked to quit , so these people can move to join other groups with more relaxed rules, but then, those groups do not become as cohesive and strong as Nong Fab community, thus do not get as much support from external agencies, this can lead to a vicious circle of decline of the group.
- The enforcement depends on the leadership as well as the agreement of the members.
- Nong Fab has a policy to get everyone have experience in becoming a committee member. Such practice can create shared learnings of the importance of rules, facilitating better understanding why members need to follow rules.

What benefit do you get through joining the group



Factors that contributed to organizing: Alternatives

4. Having alternatives

- Fisheries group is stronger when their main income come from fisheries
- Sala Kiew community has declined and got dispersed is because they now have many other alternatives for livelihood. The community is located just next to the main provincial market. Tourism and manufacturing work are easily available. Their better income from fishing earlier has enabled their children to get educated and they have more options
- Hua Rot Chon community Most of the members have good income from non-fisheries work, and fisheries is more a hobby, fisheries group not as a basis of livelihood like Nong Fab, but more as a social activity. They are into conservation, to show activities in facebook, That is, he is bringing in social remittances – knowledge and ideas from outside. It might be important to see fisheries group not only as a livelihood group but also a social group.

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**Thank you
very much**