

## **LESSONS LEARNT AND EXPERIENCES OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING POLICY AND STRATEGY IN THE FISHERIES (GMPSF) SECTOR IN CAMBODIA**

Kaing Khim, DDG of Fisheries Administration (FiA) and NPD of RFLP CMB, and Mrs. Heng Ponley\*, FiA Gender Working Group. [kaingkhim@online.com.kh](mailto:kaingkhim@online.com.kh) and [ponley\\_h@yahoo.com](mailto:ponley_h@yahoo.com)

Over the past decades, both Cambodian men and women have played important roles in contributing to the development of the fisheries sector by being involved in fishing, post-harvest fisheries activities, repairing fishing gears, fish trading, etc. However, little attention has been paid to women's roles in the fisheries sector and they have been poorly recognized in the fisheries sector. To respond to these issues and to achieve a better recognition of gender roles in the fisheries sector, in 2007 the Fisheries Administration endorsed a Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy in the Fisheries Sector (GMPSF). GMPSF was also a contribution to the implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Policy and Strategy in the Agriculture Sector (GMPSA) which was endorsed in 2006 by Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

The gender policy's goal for the fisheries sector is the "enhancement of gender equality in the fisheries sector through active cooperation of both women and men for the opportunity to contribute and benefit equality from the activities of all sub-sectors in the fisheries sector". In order to achieve this goal, five objectives of GMPSF have been indentified, namely: 1). to increase the number of women that have sufficient qualifications for management positions and advance their careers in Fisheries Administration (FiA); 2). to increase the gender awareness of FiA staff at every level of the fisheries sector; 3). Integration of gender analysis, sex disaggregated targets and data in reports and plans as well as in all projects and programs in fisheries sector; 4). to increase the ability of rural women to access and manage natural fisheries resources and services; and 5). to improve the communication linkage between relevant ministries, departments and other donor agencies (in relation to gender). The main approach of implementing this GMPSF is the integration of its plan into the FiA annual plan, mid-term and long term strategic plan through a strong coordination team in the FiA gender working group, comprising people in senior positions in the FiA management team and Departments/universities under FiA.

Since 2008, the GMPSF has had three years' of implementation and this period has provided many lessons learnt and experiences. Progress has been considered good and the GMPSF has gradually achieved significant change in term of upgrading gender knowledge of FiA staff at almost all levels, helping the management team decide on promotions for some women in senior positions, integrating gender indicators in FiA's annual plan/mid-term and long term strategic plans, and the incorporating the implementation of gender responsive acts in sub-sectors of fisheries through projects/programs at community levels. Therefore, gender mainstreaming policy and strategy in fisheries sector is very important, because it provides necessary and useful guidance for the organization to achieve gender equality.

However, more time still is needed as gender is a complex, controversial subject. Social relations change over time and gender focal points need time to disseminate information, coordinate and follow up regularly within the organization and in projects and programs in order to ensure that gender is taken into account.