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# **Women's leadership in community fisheries: A case in Srei Ambel, Koh Kong, Cambodia**

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# Structure of presentation

- Introduce the issue
- Study area
- History of Sre Ambel
- Woman leader
- Conclusion



# Women and resources

- Women in fisheries
  - Invisibility
  - Value chain analysis (Williams et al. 2012, 2014; Hapke 2012)
- Women's role in forest/ land management
  - Community forest
  - Land grab (Daley and Pallas 2014; Tsikata and Yaro 2014)
- Women's role in fisheries management
  - Focus on fish as resources
  - Understanding women's role in community fisheries sheds light on non-fish resources in fisheries management



# History of Sre Ambel

- Upland farming (until 2005/06)
- Around 2000: lost land/ sold land and shift to fishing
  - Indebtedness to buy fishing equipment
  - Lack of access to market (low price)
  - Large ships come and destroyed gears
  - Further indebtedness





- Indebtedness induced migration of youth
  - Since 2003 to Phnom Penh
  - Since 2007 to Thailand
- Conflict with large ships in fishing in 2000
  - Violent clashes
- Community came together and decided to fight together
  - Establishment of community fisheries in 2003

- Patrol activities
  - Responsible to protect 24,300 ha area
  - Collaborate with DoF
  - Patrol and arrest of illegal fishers
  - In 2017, patrolled 25 times.





- Land disputes with private companies
  - In 2014, company came to claim land to plant sea weed
  - In 2015, company came to establish crane sanctuary for tourists
  - Took a year to settle issues
  - Since 2015, violent conflict decreased

- Mangrove planting
  - Since 2014, organize event to plant mangrove
- Eco tourism
  - Since 2017, built a center to promote eco-tourism



# Changes in livelihood

- Early 2000s
  - Indebtedness and low fish price → both women and men migrate to Phnom Penh and Thailand
- Mid-2000s onwards
  - Fish continue to decrease but higher price and higher demand → men continue to fish
  - Factories in Sihanouke ville and Koh Kong → women to factories
  - For fishing households, fish income is higher than factory wages.



# The woman leader

- Since 2013, vice chief of community fisheries (only one woman member among nine)
  - Very active in CF, but needed time to be recognized as leader
- Since 2015, head of community fisheries
  - Time when there was a lot of conflict.
- Since 2016, regional representative for four coastal provinces
- “Men only fish. But women are the ones who have to make ends meet by selling fish and managing household finance. If there is no money, women are the ones who have to go to borrow money.”



# Conclusion

- CF started as a response to oppression from large ships
  - Protect fish resources
- Women fish and have strong identity as fishers
- Women did not participate in public events, but repeated conflicts lead to women active in their struggle for land
- Land dispute and eco-tourism and a non-fisher woman leader
  - Protecting coastal resources (non-fish)
  - Transforming CF into not only protecting fish but claiming coastal resources development
- CF needs to be re-conceptualized so that they have the right to claim the use of the coast as a resource.

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  - Co-investigators: Ragnhild Lund, Nitya Rao, Nireka Weeratunge



- THANK YOU

