

# Operationalizing Gender Aspects in the Creative Industries Support Programme



Cambodia 2010

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## **Acknowledgements**

This Report was realized after consulting a number of stakeholders, experts and representatives of different UN agencies and local NGOs. In particular the following institutions have been met: the whole CISP Team, M&E consultant, CISP Communication Consultant, FLD, CEDAC, VBNK Gender Expert, UNV Gender Focal Point ,UNDP Gender Expert, UNESCO Education Expert, ILO WEDGE, ILO ITP-LED, ILO Microfinance Expert, PyD, HAGAR, UNIFEM, AAC, MVI, MODE, COWS.

The Author would like to thank all these people for their valuable insights into the analysis reported in this document.



## List of Acronyms

AAC	Artisans Association of Cambodia
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BDS	Business Development Service
CBLM	Community-based learning and marketing centers
CDRI	Cambodia Development Research Institute
CEDAC	Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture
CEDAW	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CISP	Creative Industry Support Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FLD	Farmer Livelihood Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GMAC	Garment Manufacturers Association of Cambodia
ICC	International Cooperation for Cambodia
ILO	International Labor Organization
IP	Indigenous Peoples
LMAP	Land Management and Administrative Project
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MFI	Micro-Finance Institutions
MIME	Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MoC	Ministry of Commerce
MoCFA	Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts
MoLVT	Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
NTFP-EP	Non-Timber Forest Product-Exchange Programme
PDAF	Provincial Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
PDOWA	Provincial Department of Women Affairs
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SHG	Self-Help Groups
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VC	Value Chain
VCA	Value Chain Analysis
VDC	Village Development Council
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WEDGE	Women Enterprise Development and Gender Equality
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature



## Introduction

This Report analyses gender aspects in the value chains targeted by the Creative Industries Support Programme (CISP). The cultural and creative industries which the Programme focuses on are traditionally home-based, and characterized by a strong presence of female artists and producers. Even in those value chains that women do not work in normally, women still play a big role in different stages: traders and retailers are in fact mostly female (this is the case for resin especially). Despite the intrinsic target of the Programme, namely the majority of Indigenous women- is translated into most of the outputs indicators; women empowerment is not *per se* a direct objective of the Programme.

Nonetheless, the Creative Industries Support Programme will contribute to the Cambodian Millennium Development Goal Number Three (Women's Empowerment) - which, given the context of the programme should be interpreted as the economic empowerment of women. Therefore, it is important to identify the major issues affecting inequality between men and women as a means to reach the overall objective of women economic empowerment. An awareness of, and respect for, the roles that women and men play in their daily livelihood and care-giving activities is decisive to CISP's ability to address alternative livelihood development in a sustainable manner.

For example, while it is easy to assume that we know the motivators and challenges faced by men and women in the target Programme areas, until we take the time to ask target beneficiaries themselves the types of barriers they face in doing what they do every day it is not possible to make well-informed decisions that create positive change without causing harm, or threatening cultural values.

Gender analysis provides a starting point for more accurate poverty analysis and integration of key dimensions of extra-market factors like power relations, decision-making, needs, motivations and aspirations of men, as well as women.

This analysis aims at providing an insight into the gender dimensions of the Programme, enhancing the knowledge of gender differentiated aspects of value chains.<sup>1</sup>

This analysis followed a desk review and a participatory exercise in the target provinces. It includes a series of recommendations that will improve participation in, and quality of the outcomes for women in CISP development interventions.

This report can be used by CISP management and development partners in the process of designing interventions that empower, rather than disadvantage women; maximizing contributions to employment creation, economic growth and poverty reduction.

The report is organized as following: the first section provides an overview of the general situation of women in the economy, with a major focus on the informal sector; the second chapter includes the analysis of three of the value chains supported by CISP and a summary of few stakeholders engaged in gender and

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<sup>1</sup> This study is not a value chain analysis and for more information on the different aspects of the value chains, it is recommended to consult the VC Report.

women entrepreneurship development. The third section incorporates the findings of the Focus Group Discussions and the interviews conducted.

The final part contains a series of recommendations and actions that if implemented would improve CISP's impact on achieving gender equality.

#### **Creative Industries Support Programme - A summary**

The MDG-F Creative Industries Support Project is a UN inter-agency project with the Royal Government of Cambodia to preserve and promote culture through an entrepreneurial methodology. The Cambodia Creative Industries Support Programme is a concerted effort by UNESCO, UNDP, ILO, and FAO to develop Cambodia's creative industries and to preserve Cambodia's cultural heritage while fostering entrepreneurial skills and improving access to livelihood opportunities for clients.

Each agency's contribution is based on existing projects and expertise in the areas of cultural preservation, trade, entrepreneurship, and marketing. The target groups are mostly indigenous people (at least 60% women) in the provinces of Rattanakiri, Mondulakiri, Preah Vihear and Kampong Thom.

The programme contributes to the achievements of Millennium Development Goals One, Three and Eight and aims at achieving the following three outcomes:

1. Cambodia's heritage, cultural diversity and living arts are preserved and developed to promote their social and economic potential
2. Enhanced creative industries lead to improvements in livelihoods, particularly for indigenous groups and women
3. Improved commercialisation of local cultural products and services in domestic markets



# 1. Gender Outlook in the Economy

This section provides an overview of gender in the various sectors of the economy, especially in the informal economy, a critical source of livelihood for women.

Gender disparities in employment remain extensive, primarily because of traditional attitudes about ‘appropriate’ occupations for women and men. Low levels of literacy and education of women currently in the work force are manifested in very limited livelihood alternatives for women workers and their low representation in higher-level occupations and decision-making positions. Institutions responsible for the development and management of the economy are beginning to pay more attention to gender concerns, as reflected in the gender mainstreaming action plans developed by ministries. Changes in the structure of the economy and increased economic migration are also contributing to the vulnerability of women workers, further exacerbated by the economic crisis.

## 1.1 Legal Framework

Gender attitudes and behavioral change towards gender equality are embedded into the policy framework and to date Cambodia has developed and adopted several laws and policies that protect the rights, freedoms, and welfare of Cambodian women and men.

The ***Constitution of Cambodia***, adopted in 1993 clearly states that “*men and women have equal rights before the law and enjoy equal participation in political, economic, social and cultural life; equality in marriage and family; employment and equal pay for the same work*”. It also includes measures to prevent and eliminate of all forms of discrimination and exploitation of women<sup>2</sup>.

Cambodia has signed and ratified the ***International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*** on September 22, 1992. This Convention includes recommendations to reduce exploitation and discrimination against women and to increase measures to promote women’s status and rights. CEDAW provides a basis for equality between men and women by ensuring equal opportunity in public and political life including participation in election, standing for election, access to education, health and employment.

The ***Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency*** recognizes that “*women are the backbone of the economy and society*”. The Government, through the ***National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP)***, continues to implement policies and make provisions for increasing the enrollment of girls in formal education through increased scholarships, dormitories, ensuring safety for girls and increasing the number of women teachers. It also promotes women in decision-making and provides training and skills for women, both of which increase women’s participation in civil service and public administration. The plan also advocates for capacity development of women to stand as candidates for commune council elections;

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<sup>2</sup> Cambodia adopted woman suffrage right after Independence, in 1955.

continued support to entrepreneurship development and provide micro- and small credit for women. It also continues to implement the law on prevention of domestic violence and protection of victims.

The strategy implemented by the Government to promote gender equality is laid out in the **Ministry of Women's Affairs Five Year Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013 Neary Rattanak III** which has been developed in partnership with relevant ministries/institutions, and other partners to contribute to the government's continuous effort in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in Cambodia.

Especially relevant to our scope is the strategic area 1 which refers to the enhancement of socio-economic status of women through gender equitable poverty reduction and rural development programmes, expansion of employment and business opportunities and protection of women workers' rights. In particular for the vulnerable; the poor, the unemployed, and disabled girls and women.

The following targets have been identified to be the areas where the CISP is making impact through existing programmes and activities:

1. Employment opportunities expanded and improved for women, including the informal sector
2. Business development services for MSMEs established

Among the various activities:

1.4: Facilitate development of mechanisms to support employment opportunities for vulnerable women, including illiterate women, ethnic minority and indigenous women, and women with disabilities

2.3: Facilitate the formation of MSME producer groups and networks of women

### **1.2 Gender in the Economy: Some facts**

The facts reported in the sections below have been primarily drawn from the Cambodia Gender Assessment, *A fair share for Women*, MoWA 2008. (See References)

Cambodia is characterized by high labour force participation for women, relative to the standards in the region. It is estimated that 71% of female above 15 years old are employed (Source: ADB Key Indicators, 2007) mainly due to the baby boom of the 80s, which is the cause of a very young population. 55% of the population above 25 years old is female.

The average GDP growth rate between 1994 and 2006 was 8.4%, reaching 11.6% in 2008. The key sectors leading economic growth are the industrial sector (especially garment and construction) with agriculture lagging behind and the services sector maintaining a constant contribution to GDP growth. In recent years however, the composition of this sector has changed with a decline in the trade sub-sector, representing a particular concern for female employees who dominate this sector.

The tourism sector in Cambodia has been growing at a rate of 20-30% per annum, making it among the country's strongest growth sectors.

Looking at female participation in the workforce it is noted that women tend to be self-employed or unpaid family workers (in the informal sector, primarily in family-held enterprises and farming).

The biggest change in terms of employment patterns has been the increased number of female workers employed in garment factories, followed by trade and other manufacture<sup>3</sup>. If it is true that 90% of garment workers are women and the garment sector growth has been important in promoting gender equality, although income equality has not been achieved: in fact obtaining a job in the garment sector requires a certain level of education and studies show that occupation in this sector is higher in the richest quintiles.

The garment industry is so far the most affected sector by the global financial crisis — about 70,000 workers have lost their jobs since last year—the Garment Manufacturers’ Association of Cambodia (GMAC) told the ILO in April 2009. Since 90% of garment workers are female most of the laid-off workers are women who have to find another way of making a living, but often lack the skills to do so.

In urban as well as rural areas secondary occupations are a dominant feature of Cambodian employment, both for men and women, these complementary occupations tend to follow gender defined roles with women more engaged in small scale trade and crafts, and men in unskilled labour, construction and transportation.

In rural areas agriculture still employs 60% of the labour force (58% male and 62% female) being the primary source of livelihood, outside Phnom Penh. There are very few employment alternatives for female workers in rural areas, the most important of which being home-based production and retail trade. These occupations fall within the so called Informal economy<sup>4</sup>, “These unregistered businesses, which have limited access to markets seem to be the sectors where the vast majority of the workforce is concentrated, especially female. Non-farm work does represents an important sector for women, especially for the better-off households ( 44% of the richest families have females engaged in non-farming activities). Government jobs are instead more important for men.

### **1.2.1 Women and agriculture, access to land and natural resources**

The proportion of people employed in agriculture has declined in recent years ( for both men and women) and productivity in the sector is very low compared to other countries in the region. The reason is very insecure land tenure, which constraints investments in improving land, and prevents the planting of high-value crops. Additional obstacles to agricultural development are the lack of infrastructure, like roads, irrigation systems, low level of human capital, limited access to export markets and a lack of food processing technology. Low productivity is a major factor limiting the expansion of the sector: the average farming household cultivates about 1.4 ha of rice land in 2000-01 and the average yield was 2.1 tons/ha. At prevailing rice prices this production level does not appear to generate much, if any, disposable income. Food security remains the primary motivation for rice cultivation. (Natural Resources and Rural Livelihoods in Cambodia: A Baseline Assessment — Working Paper 23, July 2002, Bruce McKenney and Prom Tola, Cambodia Development Resource Institute).

Government’s investments in agriculture have been low and limited to large scale land concessions, with small or null benefits for small scale farmers.

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<sup>3</sup> The garment sector, although extremely important to the economy in general and to women workers, provides jobs only for 5.5% of the total female work force and 3.4% of the total employment ( CSES 2004).

<sup>4</sup> The ILO defined the “Informal Economy” as “*very small scale units producing and distributing goods and services, and consisting largely of independent, self-employed , some of whom also employs family labour and/or a few paid workers, operating with very little capital and with a low level of productivity, ...*” ILO ( 2002)

It is also reported that there is quite rigid sex segregation in agricultural tasks with men generally engaged in physically heavier tasks, such as irrigation, land preparedness, pesticide spraying, and for caring of large cattle. While women participate in seeds preparation, planting and raising small animals like chickens and pigs; tasks that are much more time-consuming.

The issue of access to land is particularly worrying and it represents one of the biggest concerns, especially for female-headed households. In fact, despite of the progress made in land entitling for married couples the situation of landholding for widows is very precarious: among the various segments of the population 38% of households without land are widows. (Deutsch R., 2006 Beneficiary assessment of land titles recipients under Land Management and Administrative Project- LMAP).

Women still face a lot of obstacles in the land titling process, with few female personnel in the administrative bodies and lack of relevant documentation reporting their status, with the consequence that land was registered jointly, despite women were divorced, separated or abandoned.

In rural areas, and especially for Indigenous Communities, land ownership and availability of natural resources are key factors for subsistence and among the most reliant coping mechanisms against poverty. In recent years it is becoming more and more difficult accessing natural resources and this is particularly evident for women who by traditions tend to have fewer rights to natural resource ( Brereton, 2006). This is because usually men go to deeper forest to get the material they need for their activities (collection of NTFPs and capturing wildlife), while women access the forest around the village in order to collect small quantity and less valuable NTFPs, generally those necessary for the family' s dietary requirements.

As reported above, women are dominating the crafts industries (especially bamboo and rattan handicrafts): thus for female producers it is becoming costly and time consuming to obtain raw materials ( such as rattan, bamboo, palm leaves, as well as natural clay) for their production.

### **1.2.2 Housework or the “care economy”**

Women in Cambodia, as well as in much of the world, are overwhelmingly responsible for household work and childcare. National statistics and account systems do not take in consideration these aspects, underestimating the informal sector and therefore provide inaccurate information of their overall output. It is estimated that women spend 91% of their total time in household work and childcare, compared with 9% for men. It is therefore obvious that in a society where a welfare state is absent women are tremendously constrained to entering the labour market. The most immediate way to ensure that women are not overburden by reproductive work and can perform productive work would be to improve home-based production. In fact it is demonstrated that women contribution to the so called “market oriented economy” can be increased if women can perform activities at home, or travelling time is minimized. This is particularly common at village level and among Indigenous societies: a system through which women can get at home the raw materials they need for their production could be set up in order to minimize the time spent outside their homes (for instance, through sharing responsibilities among members of producer groups)

### **1.2.4 Female-headed households**

Recent poverty research done by the Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI) demonstrates that in rural areas female-headed households tend to be poorer, and that the incidence of poverty increases with the size of the household. Data shows that poverty rates are at 100% for those households without any adult male and 8 family members. Furthermore, while some female-headed households were able to move out of poverty between 2001 and 2004 in general women-headed households had more difficulties to move out of poverty than male-headed households.

Girls in female-headed households with no male adult are more likely to be working than girls in other types of households; the situation changes when and if there is at least one adult male in the family. In the presence of an adult male generally both girls and boys are less likely to be working. This is true in child labour as well: rates are almost the same for boys and girls and child labour is higher in female headed households with no adult male only in the 12-14 age group.

While there are no big differences in work participation rates between female and male-headed households the scenario changes in terms of access to education. Boys and girls in female-headed households are less likely to attend school than children in other households. Girls in the 12-14 age group in female-headed households with no adult males are the least likely to attend school in all the other groups.

### **1.2.4 Access to and Control of economic resources**

Awareness of credit programmes and lending facilities amongst women is still small, although it increased from 2000 to 2005. In general the percentage of women who applied for or obtained a loan is still quite low (around 15%): in rural areas people borrow money from their relatives or neighbors. Very few borrow money from the village savings group and it is reported (A fair share for Women, 2008) that access to saving opportunities as a safety net to absorb economic shocks is still limited. During periods of food shortages or economic shocks sale of land is very common thus limiting further the possibility of obtaining credit from formal banks.

Participation in skills training remains lower for women reflecting the traditional gender roles (motorbike repair and electronics for males and sewing, weaving and hairdressing for women). Often vocational training curricula do not include any business management training and marketing and entrepreneurial skills are still low for women.

Accessing training organized by Provincial Training Centers (MoLVT) and by Women Development Centers (MoWA) can be often difficult as these tend to be located in the provincial towns, limiting accessibility for women living in remote village unable to leave their homes for extended periods of time. Nevertheless, the use of a training methodology that takes into consideration those constraints and aims at empowering women to easily have access to skills upgrading is recommended. The ILO-WEDGE training material (GET AHEAD) is a powerful tool in creating business knowledge for female entrepreneurs.

### **1.2.5 Other barriers**

Several obstacles, most of them embedded into the traditional beliefs and socio-cultural norms, still hinder women's full empowerment and employment.

- Gender norms still assign women a lower status than men and 45% of women at national level believe it is better to educate a son than a daughter (CDHS, 2005). This translates into lower levels of education for girls among the economically active population.
- Travelling still represents a barrier in most of the rural areas and security concerns often prevent women's access to education, information and markets.
- Men's work is considered more valuable and wage differentials are evident in all the sector, with considerable gaps in collection of NTFPs (men earn 119% more than women in this occupation).
- Employment options for women continue to be limited to a small range of occupations which reflect traditional gender roles: tailors, hairdressers, teachers, garment workers and preferably not far from their village/ community. There is generally lack of hope for the future and very few models to look at: low levels of education and literacy dramatically limit the prospective and livelihoods alternatives.

### **1.2.7 Participation in public decision making**

Cambodia still has low participation of women in politics, and a low Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) compared to other countries in the region.

However, over the years, the dynamics of women's participation in decision-making has changed. Today, women are still left out, but it is for different reasons. One reason is the lower status of women in a society that is based on male-dominated/modern criteria such as efficiency, the masculine perspective and aggressiveness.

In the past years an increased number of women have been elected as members of the National Assembly and Commune Councils, while percentages in executive branches at national and provincial level and in the judiciary system range between respectively 0-20 and 15%. (MoWA,2007: Data provided on Women in decision making positions).

Several steps and measures have been taken by the Royal Government in order to increase women participation in public bodies. For example at village level one third of village leaders must be women. The adoption of Gender Mainstreaming Action Plans in the executive branches and efforts at policy levels to nurture, recruit and reward women in elected and appointed offices has also be instrumental.

Nevertheless women participation in high level positions, such as judges, prosecutors, provincial governors and deputy provincial governors, is very difficult to achieve as it requires a high level of support from other leaders, strong contacts and networks.

Big efforts still need to be put in place to strengthen the enabling environment for effective women representation, to eliminate barriers and to promote incentives and ensure equal opportunities.

It is in fact assessed that having women participate in decision-making can also help change society's perception of gender relations. . As an example, *the socio-cultural bias of indigenous communities that still limits the freedom of women and equity in ownership of property may be much more easily changed if women are involved directly in decision-making* (Indigenous Women and Activism in Asia: women taking the challenge in their stride, Jannie Lasimbang).

### **1.2.8 Gender and Indigenous Societies**

The situation described above can largely be applied to Indigenous communities as well. Nevertheless some factors and characteristics of the Indigenous groups make this sub-section of the population particularly vulnerable to increasing poverty, reduced access to skills training, and resources. A study conducted in 2005, “Indigenous and Tribal People and Poverty Reduction Strategies in Cambodia”, by Chhin, highlighted that there has been a change in perceptions and rating of poverty among indigenous groups and an higher incidence of poverty has been recorded. People reported that life today is harder than before and this has been caused by decreased natural resources.

In Indigenous Society women have always covered an important role in the family being the ones primary responsible for transmitting cultural and spiritual knowledge and practices, and group identity in general, to succeeding generations. This is partially true in Cambodia where men have also have a important role in transmitting ancestors’ traditions, especially those related to the building houses, and activities in the forest. (Observations gathered during the FDGs). The role women have in cultural practices is important not only for the spiritual health of their communities, but also for the communities’ overall well-being. In Cambodia women are the primary providers of food, water, and healthcare for their families, but men are reported to be contributing to these activities. Women have the final say in financial matters, but, beyond their family, they participate very little in decision-making and in resolution of disputes. Female heads of family have a hard time to make a living: Chhin reported that the size of their chamkar<sup>5</sup> is usually about half of the other families.

Domestic violence and disputes among family members are still present, despite the increased awareness of gender issues through the intervention of several NGOs in the last few years.

Finally, in the interactions with non IP individuals, indigenous women face a “ double discrimination” because of their lower status as women, and because of their belonging to an ethnic group.

### ***Conclusions/ Recommendations***

*“It can be said that economic growth in Cambodia both in the past and in the future, will be ‘driven by women’,”* the International Labor Organization’s Sub-regional Office for East Asia in Bangkok (ILO SRO Bangkok) reported.

However, accelerated reforms and women inclusive policy-making are needed to further improve the conditions of women in the economic sphere.

Challenges met by women in the business and economic sphere are usually the same as men: lack of capital, limited access to technology, credit and markets, poor working conditions and the near total absence of social protection. Still, women are more hindered by those challenges due to less access to education and training, gender discrimination, and gender norms that assign women a lower status than men.

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<sup>5</sup> The term indicates the traditional vegetable garden.

The Government should have special considerations for women entrepreneurs and those employed in small scale businesses and in the informal sector: market-oriented skills training and business development services should be made available in rural areas and for indigenous groups. Promotion and incentives for women who demonstrated success, should be introduced. Moreover, these cases should be used as role models. Not only training or skills upgrading would be needed, it is indeed important that women participation is enhanced among providers of economic services ( skills trainers, land registration agents, tax agents).

Due to the small recognition and respect for women's contribution to the overall economy, social services ( such as daycare centers, community nursery etc) should be introduced in order to support women in labour force and to balance their work burden.

Access to financial services, especially credit and saving and mechanisms and conditions appropriate for the needs of women entrepreneurs, should be encouraged: promotion of Self Help Groups and Village Banks, should be in the NGO's agendas in order to guarantee the support and technical assistance needed.



## 2. Gender in the Creative Industries Value Chains

### 2.1 Value Chains Mapping

The value chains CISP is focusing on have been selected after applying a set of criteria defined by Emerging Markets Consulting (EMC), the organization which carried out the Value Chain Study in 2009.

The criteria included the “creative” aspect of the value chain, the volume (number of units of products), locally captured value added and the beneficiaries. Among the target beneficiaries, indigenous people and women were prioritized as the actors engaged in the selected value chains and whom the Value Chain upgrading strategies would benefit to.

Most of the products selected have indeed a large involvement of women at various stages of the chain and, for some of them, women represent the main or the most relevant players. Nevertheless the creative businesses, given their nature, supplementary and secondary to the farming occupation, are often overlooked and some specific activities, being home-based, are not regarded as “business” and are often forgotten while considering the overall household income and wellbeing. In fact indigenous people have a little understanding of what a business is, as demonstrated during the discussions held with villagers: they do not differentiate among the various sources of income and their business is relatively seasonal and marginal.

Moreover female producers and artists are often getting low margins, due to a sometimes unequal distribution of value added benefiting largely middlemen and traders (CISP Project Document).

From the data available (Value Chain Analysis and Baseline Reports) and the information gathered through field interviews, it emerges a quite strong gendered division of labour among men and women in almost all the productive activities.

In order to understand better the typology of business activities and the role covered by producers, an analysis of the data gathered through the individual interviews is reported.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of people interviewed and attending the group discussions are engaged in NTFP collection, handicraft (weaving and NTFP handicraft) and resin. Therefore all the information reported in the following section is limited to those value chains. No pottery and jars producers have been met (More details on the research methodology and the selection of VC are reported in Section Three).

It is also important to note that, despite people tend to dedicate the greater part of the time extra from the farming only on one creative industry, it was not rare to find that villagers are involved in more than

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<sup>6</sup> The entire findings of the Focus Group Discussions carried out in Mondukiri and Kampong Thom, are reported in the next section.

one business: so it is very ordinary having resin tappers doing also handicraft activity, and weavers selling vegetable and grocery. This is due to the nature of the creative industries, which are supplementary, mostly seasonal and for some extent marginal. A large number of producers also reported selling labour as another source of income during periods of food shortages.

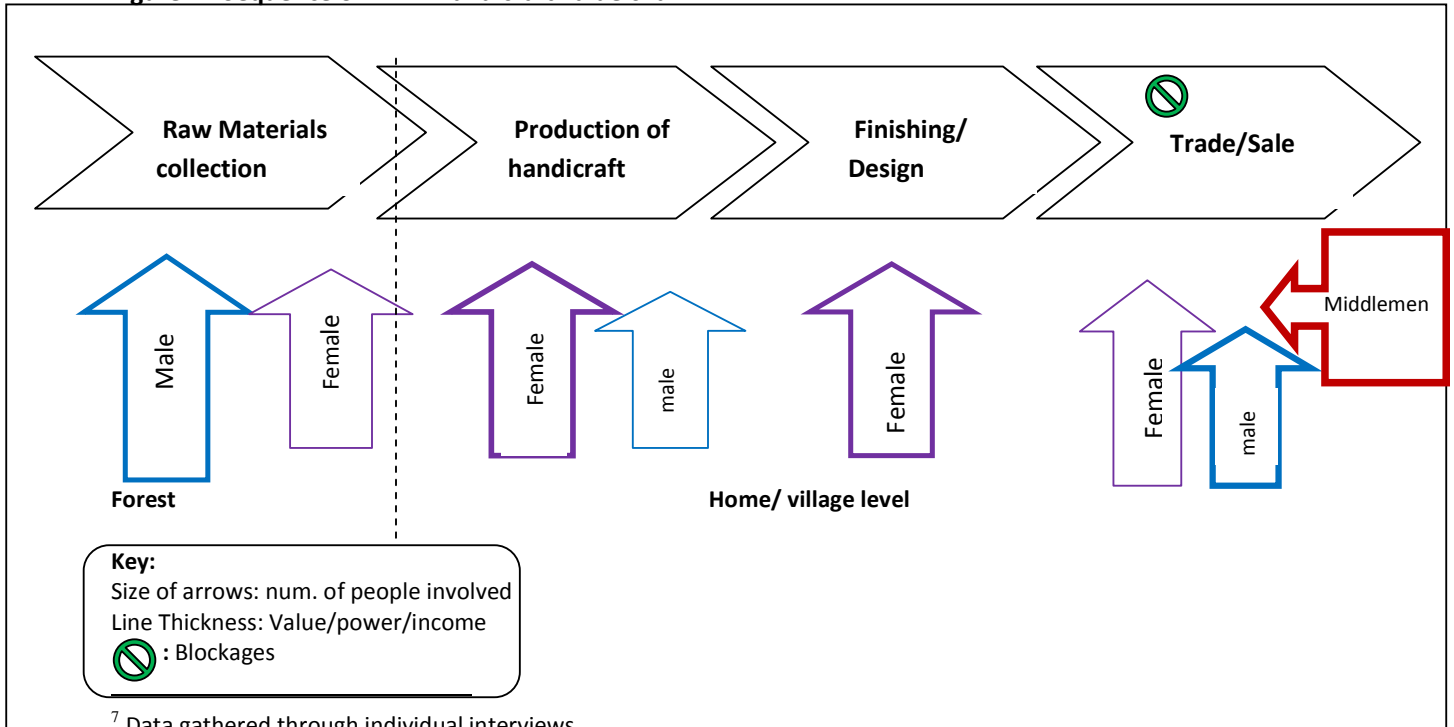
**NTFP Handicraft**

Although some tasks in each value chain are primarily dominated by one sex, producers tend to carry out many different activities within the same chain: for instance those engaged in handicraft production, reported being not only responsible for raw material collection ( bamboo, rattan, palm leaves) but also for product making and often refinishing activities. Trade (when it is performed directly by the producers) is usually a men’s activity, while sale, mostly from home and to middlemen, is a female task. 80% of the people interviewed, who reported being handicraft producers, reported to be carrying out at least two tasks: collection and production or production and selling, with a larger number of women selling small crafts<sup>7</sup>

The figure below is the simple flow chart of NTFP handicraft value chain: bigger arrows indicate a larger number of participants involved in the specific stage of the chain.

This is only a preliminary map<sup>8</sup>. It illustrates the main functions or activities involved in the chain, their broad geographical spread, the main operational categories or stakeholders involved and a rough idea of where the most powerful actors are.

**Figure 1: Sequence of NTFP Handicraft value chain**



<sup>7</sup> Data gathered through individual interviews.

<sup>8</sup> The map has been drawn on the basis of the flow charts reported in the manual “Making the strongest links: A practical guide to mainstreaming gender analysis in value chain development “ Linda Mayoux and Grania Mackie.

Collection of inputs from the forest is carried out by both men and women: men tend to go further and to gather more materials than women, who usually collect NTFPs close to the village. As reported in the next chapter, one of the main challenge affecting IPs and their sustainable livelihood, is the decreasing availability of natural resources, which has more severe implication for women-headed handicraft business.

NTFPs are also sold directly to other villagers: this seems to be an increasing phenomenon due to the fact that in certain areas the natural resources are not easily available or, in some cases, disappearing. ( During the meetings, producers reported both selling and buying raw materials to/from other villages).

The production of crafts ( small baskets, plates, little containers made of rattan, beads) is mostly done by women, who gather into groups of 10-15 people and work together after the rice farming activity. In Mondulkiri baskets carving is almost entirely done by men, who are also responsible for the sale. The backpack-basket (Kapha/Sas/Rev) is the one most produced by the households engaged in handicraft and it is sold for about 6\$ in the local market.

There is no uniformity among the producers regarding the duration of their business activity: many of the people interviewed started producing handicraft around 1993-1996, but a large number also reported to have started more recently ( 2007-2009). This might be due to the fact that in some villages ( especially in Kampong Thom) producers received skills training from different organizations and NGOs in the last 10 years.

Handicraft activities are performed by producers during their free time, before or after going to the forest or to the rice field: early in the morning or in the evening. In average households spend around 6 hours a daymaking handicraft, throughout the year, with peaks in the months from December to February.<sup>9</sup>

Sales are very limited, ranging from 2-3 products per week; they usually sell their goods to middlemen who are from the village or, more frequently in Mondulkiri, from other villages ( majority Khmer). This is the part of the chain where most of the difficulties and blockages happen: limited market channels and a very low demand for the items produced, make the sale very challenging.

Some handicrafts are brought to the markets in the nearby town, but the crafts made by women are sold by the women themselves to traders, with the consequence that, especially in remote areas, women do not have many possibility to check prices and to set their selling price accordingly with the demand. This leads to many episodes of cheats and frauds.

The income earned from the handicraft activity is rarely computed and kept separated from the other sources of income, so it is very hard to figure even the approximate monthly earnings generated by this complimentary activity; nevertheless, in line with the baseline data for Mondulkiri and Kampong Thom,

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<sup>9</sup> This information is taken from the baseline survey. It is an average estimation in the four provinces and it is referred to the total household production

people reported to produce and sell only a couple of products per month, so the average income generated by this business is around 2-3 dollars per week.

When asked whether they performed some tasks to improve their business and make more profit, and who was responsible for these business-related activities, almost all responded that they were not familiar with any of the actions reported below:

- Marketing activities to sell product
- Meeting with other business owners to exchange ideas and contacting possible new business partners and customers
- Book keeping (e.g. money in and out, balance, etc)
- Calculating costs before setting selling prices
- Making a detailed business plan
- Improving quality of products
- Introducing new products

**Gender Inequalities: *Are there gender segregation of tasks/ markets? Is there an equal distribution of value created?***

Women dominates the NTFP handicraft value chain in terms of number: they are present and play a major role in each step of the value creation. Therefore apparently there is no gender segregation of tasks which relegates women into marginal roles within the chain: women and men engage equally in the handicraft production process, and have equal access to markets.

Nevertheless handicraft produced by men ( especially the big baskets) are more valuable and therefore men' s benefits from the craft production seem to be higher than female's one. This was shared by producers in Mondulkiri, and it is in line with the data gathered during the baseline survey. Moreover, men tend to more easily move from the village to sell their products and this makes their business more profitable.

***Resin***

A large number of target beneficiaries, especially in Mondulkiri and Preah Vihear are engaged in resin collection. Resin extraction has been practiced for many years as one of the traditional indigenous occupation and trees are passed from a generation to another and it is increasingly seen as a way to preserve traditional indigenous culture.

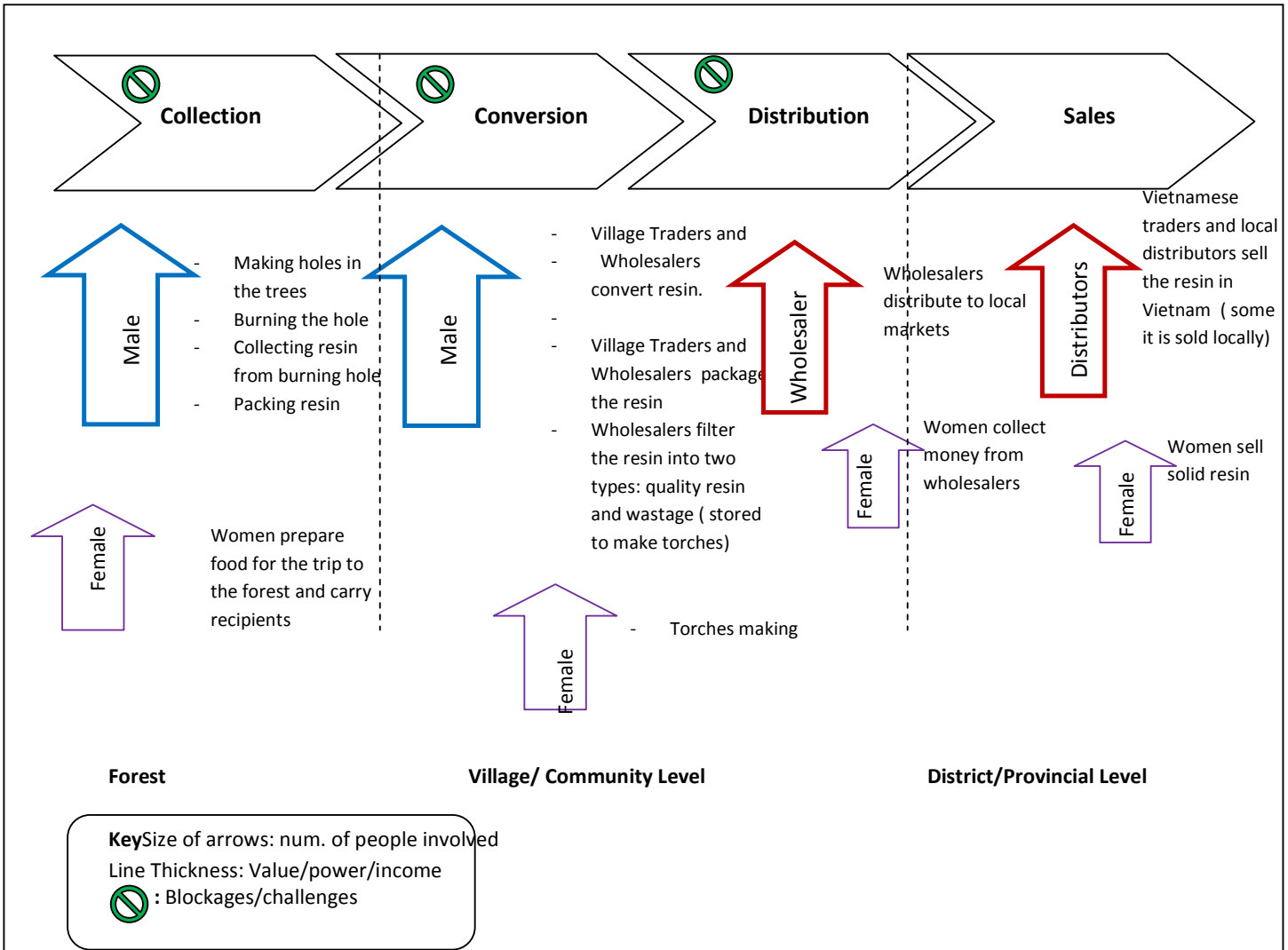
Resin tapping is done mostly by men, but women usually accompany their husband in the forest and carry the recipients.

There is a strong gendered division of tasks within the resin value chain, with men responsible for the collection, transportation, loading and unloading resin products from forest to villages, while women are involved in trading and business transactions and they are also responsible for preparing food before going to the forest.

Usually resin collection happens in small groups of people who go to the forest 3-4 times per month ( the frequency varies: it is higher in Preah Vihear as stated in the VCA report). Usuallytappers sell the pure

resin to village/commune traders who then sell it to wholesalers or secondary traders. Both village traders and wholesalers convert resin and differentiate among quality resin and wastage resin which is used to produce torches. The wholesalers then sell the resin to Vietnamese traders and some local distributors. The steps of the resin value chain are illustrated below.

**Figure 2: Sequence of Resin value chain**



Resin is tapped throughout the year. There are two types of resin collected by the households, 'solid' and 'liquid'. The latter being the more economically viable as to the former. Villagers reported that the solid resin is usually sold by women, while liquid one by men.

Resin production is at its peak in the rainy season, especially during October and November. Production is lower during the dry season but price is higher due to its less water contents. Their current production ranges from 10 to 20 litres a day, however the latter is rarely attained. Some households indicated that they only got an average of five litres a day. In the years before 2005, the participants cited that they can collect resin at least forty litres a day. Prices are determined by local traders. ( Baseline Survey Data, 2009)

The total working hours resin tappers engage in extracting resin is about 8 hours per day. Extracted resin is usually sold at the local community. Only few volumes are sold within the province. There are existing traders (locals called them as collectors) that buy the resin harvested.

Many are the challenges found in the resin value chain ( as reported by the VCA Report and corroborated by the resin tappers participating to the meetings). These blockages ( indicated in the figure above) are verified in the collection practices which are unsustainable and damaging, lack of processing techniques (including the fact that the only by-product is torch production) and high cost of transportation. Resin tappers also shared that during the rainy season water gets into the resin, diminishing its value and causing losses.

Most of the women involved in the resin value chain, revealed that they face problems in assessing the quality of resin and they are therefore considered having a lower status compared to men in what concerns the quality check and the sale. This is an important issue which can lead to smaller benefits obtained by women in this specific value chain.

**Gender Inequalities: *Are there gender segregation of tasks/ markets? Is there an equal distribution of value created?***

Resin production is characterized by a sequence of activities, most of which are performed by men. This was attributed by the participants to the the nature of the tasks which imply sometimes more strength ( i.e. making and burning the holes, carrying heavy quantity of resin).

The participants in fact reported that men collect resin because they are stronger, and when asked why women could not do the same, they reported that resin collection is a “men activity”. So this reflects the fact that traditions play an important role and they influence the attribution of tasks. The discussions also showed that women are not really interested in engaging in resin tapping. They often complained about going to the forest and about the fact that men can earn more by selling resin because of their higher knowledge on the quality aspects. So sharing information and knowledge about resin could be a way to increase women’s role in the sale of this product and therefore the income generated through this activity. The fact that the knowledge on resin quality is only detained by men, is again a reflection of the above mentioned attitude of men’s superiority on this activity because of ancestral traditions.

As mentioned in the Value Chain Report and highlighted in the Final Recommendations, resin tappers’ benefits from resin collection and direct sale are much smaller compared to the one of wholesalers and traders.. Formation of resin tappers groups should be promoted in order to increase the leverage and the bargaining power of the collectors and to increase domestic value addition.

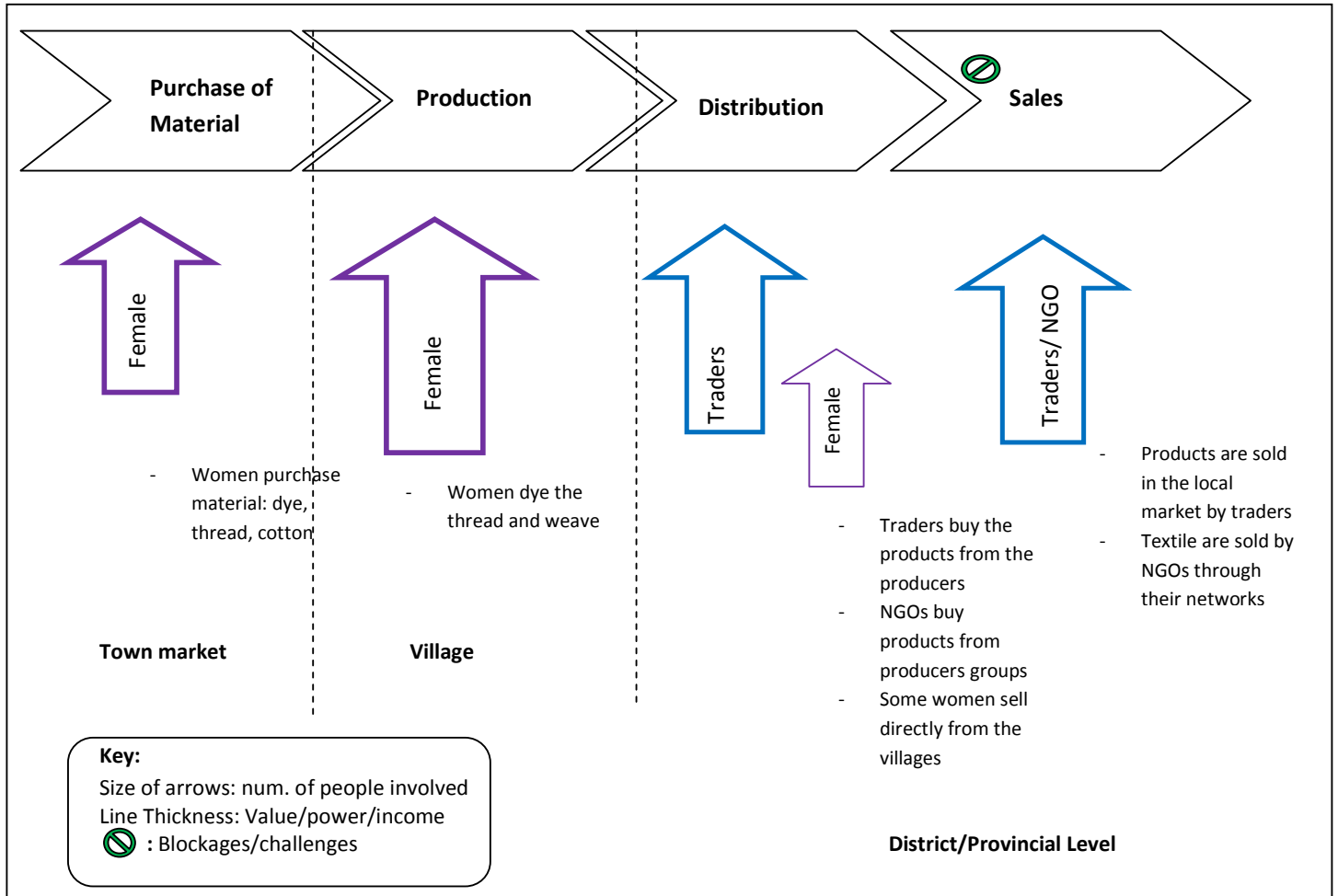
However, women still play important roles in the resin value chain: although they do not engage in the tapping, they carry the recipients, transport resin from the forest to the village sell solid resin, dealing often with buyers and wholesalers. It is less known the role that female household members play in assisting the husband in the resin extraction: women usually travel with men in the forest, often spending few days far from home, and are tasked with providing food. Finally women are engaged in torch production, the only by-product using resin filtering waste. Income differentials are reported among men and women: this is due to the major knowledge men have of resin quality and their bigger skills in bargaining conditions with buyers.

### ***Weaving***

Woven textiles are exclusively produced by women. This is a traditional occupation which has been practiced for many years; today due to a decreased demand for indigenous clothing, the production is almost disappearing, as the clothes are not longer used on a daily basis but only during ceremonies and religious occasions. Nevertheless in recent years many women have been trained in weaving skills and efforts are currently made in order to revitalize this know-how.

There is no division of tasks among men and women in the production and the majority of the chains' activities are performed by Indigenous women. They buy raw materials ( cotton and silk threads) from local markets, they sometimes dye the thread using local plants and tree bark ( commercial dyes are also used). They produce mostly kroma, scarves, bags and wrap-around skirts, using the traditional loom. Women produce at home, spending in average 6 hours per day ( Baseline Survey,2009).

**Figure 3: Sequence of Weaving Textiles Value Chain**



Production of woven material is mostly concentrated in October and November and reaches its peak in February and March.

Women weavers sell their products directly in local markets or to traders and middlemen who come to their village and then sell again the textiles. In some cases NGOs set up weaving groups and support producers promoting the products in cities and outside the province.

Nevertheless, skills are still very low and many women (especially in Mondulkiri) expressed the desire to learn the technique and, for those who do not know yet how to do it, to start the weaving activity.

Market remains the main concern and challenge faced by weavers: they sell very small volumes and often their woven products are used domestically. Nevertheless most of the women feel very enthusiastic about learning the skills and those already engaged in the business or members of weaving group, would be willing to produce more. In fact the supply is very limited due to the fact that women can only produce a limited number of items, while demand is potentially high, if the tourist sector is taken into account. In addition, these products are very expensive due to the unavailability of raw materials from the domestic market (cotton and thread are imported).



In this value chain, as showed in the chart, men are absent in most of the steps, except in the downstream phase, distribution and sale. In fact male traders buy the textile by the indigenous women and sell them in the local markets. Other sale channels include the ones established by local NGOs which buy the products and sell them through their existing networks, in the province and in Phnom Penh-Siem Reap.

From the findings of the Value Chain analysis, the profit margins of all the actors in the chain are rather equitable, showing no specific gender concern.

Therefore interventions aimed at the enhancement of this production and at chain upgrading should be encouraged as ways of contributing to increased incomes for women and gender equity.

## **2. 2 Stakeholders Mapping**

Several organizations, local and international NGOs, private sector and the Government, are supporting women economic development in the specific value chains analyzed.

The scenario changes depending on the provinces and on the target population, as not all the organizations involved on gender and livelihood development are focusing on indigenous minorities in the four provinces.

We report below few players in the sector, highlighting the programmes and fields more relevant for CISP's interventions. Specific suggestions and recommendations for possible links and/or synergies are considered in the last section of this Report ( page 35)<sup>10</sup>

### **Paz y Desarrollo ( PyD)**

PyD is a Spanish-based NGO, supported by AECID ( Spanish Agency for Cooperation and Development), working in Cambodia since 2007 under a cooperation agreement with the Royal Government of Cambodia. PyD Cambodia's programme in gender aims at *"Improving opportunities for women in the economic field and promotion of women's role in social and political spheres"*.

The major areas of interventions are: promoting the exercise of Women's rights ( including awareness on CEDAW) and technical assistance on Gender mainstreaming; the Economic Development of Rural Populations ; and Sexual and Reproductive Rights. The Component number 2 ( Promote Socio-Economic Development with Gender Approach ) is particularly interesting and relevant for the CISP<sup>11</sup>.

A specific focus is put to improve the living conditions of vulnerable people through income generating activities. In this field PyD is supporting local partners in the following: Local market Analysis and Vocational training on business activities; Access to credit through Saving Groups; ToT on Income

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10 This information has been gathered through meetings with the concerned organizations' staff and only the matters significant for the scope of this analysis have been cited. More details about the institutions can be found on their websites.

11 In particular, within this component are included the following range of activities: Facilitate access to local, National and International markets; promote Indigenous women participation on social organization; support the registration process of Indigenous villages at the Ministry of Interior; Construction of the Development Center for Women ( WDC) in Stung Treng; support Local social enterprise with deeply participation of women.

Generation, Business Plan and Business Management and Training on the same topics to beneficiaries ;  
Creation of new Saving groups.

The approach followed by PyD envisages a sequence of training delivered to the business groups formed after a market analysis and skills assessment. These include both vocational and technical training (in agriculture, handicraft, fishing), assistance in business plan development and business and credit management training. Groups are in fact provided with guidelines to establish saving groups, a small grant of max 4000\$ subject to the elaboration of a business plan. Financial education courses are then organized using ILO training material<sup>12</sup>. Some of the ILO tools have been adapted and simplified and the organization is currently working on the adaptation of the GET AHEAD ( Women in Enterprise Development Training Package) to the low level of literacy of target beneficiaries.

### **CEDAC**

Cambodian Center for Study and Development in Agriculture (CEDAC) was set up in 1997 as a national NGO, to develop sustainable agriculture and rural development. CEDAC's key activities and services target directly rural communities in about 20 provinces, through capacity building, leadership and management training and market assistance. CEDAC is one of CISP partners, working on handicraft support activities in Ratanakiri.

CEDAC also conducted specific gender-related training such as : reproductive health, participation and decision making and the business related training have a strong presence of women ( food processing, animal raising, handicraft).The business and management training follow the ILO's materials content, but the methodology adopted is simplified: in the past CEDAC staff received ToT from the ILO, but the trainers do not use manuals as the participants are mostly illiterate. It's a "on the job training" rather than a conventional course.

The organization is very active in establishing producers groups, village cooperatives and saving groups; the latter ones are all led by women. Among the various programmes, In Mondulkiri CEDAC is implementing a new programme called " Improving Food Security for Women and the Rural Poor in Mondulkiri Province (IFWP-MP)" which aims at increasing economic and social conditions of farmers and vulnerable social groups – especially Women- through increased food production and income as well as improved social cooperation. This project has been implemented in 30 villages across 9 communes in 2 districts (Koh Ngiek and Pechr Chenda districts).

Among the several activities, CEDAC is planning to set up two community-based learning and marketing centers (CBLM) which will facilitate the sales of local products.

Recently CEDAC has expanded its social business by creating an important unit called CEDAC *Enterprise for Social Development* (CESDE) in 2008. This unit support local businesses and enterprises through capacity building for community members, local institutional development, and also providing equity and loans for

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<sup>12</sup> A part from the Training on Business and Financial Education, PyD has developed a range of different tutorials and manuals focused on Gender Awareness ( three different books on CEDAW used in a cycle of workshops at provincial and district level) and a range of tools on Gender Mainstreaming ( Introduction to Gender, Mainstreaming Gender into the Project Management Cycle). These materials, approved by MoWA have been used in a series of trainings targeting five provincial Departments and two NGO per province, aiming at elaborating Action Plans and Project Proposals with a Gender-based approach.

investments. Moreover CEDAC has developed a whole distribution unit known as Natural Agri- Products and opened retail shops namely CEDAC Shops. These shops sell chemical-free food and other local products to consumers in the urban areas.

The ILO, FAO and UNESCO are supporting CEDAC with regards to the pottery value chain: FAO is carrying out technical skill training and natural resource management training, the ILO is assisting CEDAC on business management training and marketing; UNESCO is implementing a mentorship programme within the Living Human Treasure mechanism. Other intervention on handicraft and marketing (the latter, through the strengthening of the 4 CEDAC shops) are implemented by CEDAC with ILO technical and financial support. This integrated support is a key to guarantee sustainability of the producer groups formed and any follow up intervention should maintain this approach.

## **HAGAR**

Hagar is an international Christian organization committed to the recovery and empowerment of women and children who are victims human rights abuse; particularly domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Hagar's social business, Hagar Catering, provides jobs for many women from Hagar's programs. Each business gives its employees the chance to develop new skills, support themselves financially and reintegrate into their communities. Hagar structures its work around three main pillars: *Recovery* (critical crisis care including safe and secure shelter, food and clothing, and intensive counseling and therapy) *Building Resilience*: Education, literacy classes, life and vocational skill development, social enterprise and job placements; *Reintegration* into community.

As part of the rehabilitation process, women are given counseling and are provided with job readiness and soft skills training in order to identify their career pathway. Vocational training (hard skills development) and apprenticeship are part of this process. Hagar then supports the workers with a series of services: job placement, technical assistance in setting up their business or income generating initiative, rent support for the first three months, follow up by social workers and social networking.

As part of the business training provided, Hagar has its own modules on financial education, taken from the ILO ones. They have been modified and a section on Gender has been introduced. Hagar is a partner of the ILO-WEDGE Programme.

## **Farmer Livelihood Development (FLD)**

FLD is one of CISP partners, working with targeted communities on improving productivity, promoting, and creating jobs and improving Micro and Small Enterprise(MSE) practices for the betterment of food security and living conditions. FLD run a Gender Development project, *GET AHEAD*, which provides support for young women by teaching practical skills and providing small business training. It includes vocational skills, access to micro-loans to establish small businesses, access to local markets and provincial/ national markets through the shops that FLD has established in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.

FLD is currently supported by the ILO in establishing handicraft producers groups in six villages in Preah Vihear: the methodology includes a training on group formation and a sub-subsequent course on financial education.

FLD had been licensed as Micro Credit Operator on 18 March 2009 and it provides microfinance services to rural communities as effective means to secure and sustain their income. This programme, financed by the Asian Community Trust (ACT) has been implemented in two provinces, Kampong Speu and Preah Vihear and ended in March 2010.

FLD in partnership with the Cambodian Centre for Independent Media, recently started a radio programme called *Farmer Opportunity*. This is a series of 22 live programmes which gives farmers and others in the agricultural industry the opportunity to both listen and take part in discussions about Cambodian farming. It is broadcasted live by Radio Sarika and the series wants to encourage people to discuss farming as a business, think of ways they could boost their income and, therefore, improve their livelihoods.

### **Conclusions**

Women involved in the different value chains analyzed perform multiple activities: this is because of commonly recognised 'female' characteristics - able to manage multiple tasks and manage their workforce in more socially responsive ways. Women have an important role in NTFP gathering, production and sale, while they are less visible in the resin value chain, mostly in terms of income generation and distribution. Female members of the household are involved in torch production, but this has a very limited demand. Therefore women could benefit if the market for torches increases and if other commercial products are introduced. Women dominate the weaving production, but benefits from this activity are still quite low: there is a need to diversify patterns and designs ( while preserving the traditional techniques) and to identify new market channels.

Increased commercialization and marketability are key for the success of the sector. Market demand analysis have been undertaken by UNDP and this would help identifying new products and market channels.

Differentials in the revenues from NTFP handicraft production and sale of resin are evident, with female producers earning less than men in both the value chains, due to the lower knowledge and value of the items sold. Interventions aimed at improving the quality of products made by women ( new designs for the NTFP crafts, introduction of innovative and creative products) could lead to major value added for female producers.

Several problems and blockages are identified to affect women's business activities in the creative value chains supported by CISP. These are analyzed more broadly in the next session.

## 3. Gender Needs Assessment: Main findings

### Introduction

A field analysis was conducted between March and April in two provinces, Mondulkiri and Kampong Thom, where meetings were held in six villages. The total number of participants was 83 ( 52 women) and the villages where those meetings happened are: Andong Kralung Village, Lav ka Village, Pu Tang Village- Ou Reng District- Mondulkiri Province and Kampong Cheteal Village, Prasat Sambo district; Kokir Village, Srae Village, Prasat Balang District- Kampong Thom Province.

In both the provinces ( with a stronger presence in Mondulkiri), the participants belonged to an ethnic minority group ( respectively Bunong in Mondulkiri and Kouy in Kampong Thom) and, in all the six villages, female participation was higher.

Three different exercises have been conducted:

1. A focus group discussion, focused on gathering information about women's and men's roles in the business activities, as well as in the household and community life. Questions also were addressed to both men and women on market information availability, mobility, decision making and bargaining power, access to resources. Similar questions were then raised during two parallel sessions, each one having men only and women only in order to cross check relevant information.
2. Financial education skills and needs Assessment of the target groups. Specific questions aiming at understanding the level of education, numeracy skills and attitude toward money were addressed.
3. The team conducted individual interviews to some participants of each meeting ( in total 20 people have been interviewed).

Primary data collection methods have been accompanied by personal observation and diagnosis of participants, NGOs staff, examination of village situation and interactions among attendees.

A video and photo documentation have also being produced during the FGDs and Individual interview, ensuring that participants agreed and felt confident about.

The findings reported below have been aggregated from both the two series of meetings, for reasons of clearness in the reporting. However, sometimes in analyzing specific data or answers given, the reference to the village/ province has been highlighted in order to emphasize the differences among provinces. No mention has been made to names of villagers met.

### **3.1 Objectives of the Gender Assessment**

The assessment conducted represents a further analysis from the studies already carried out within the framework of the CISP ( Value Chain Analysis and Baseline Survey). This exercise allowed to gather views and perceptions from a sample of CISP target group in order to better understand specific gender issues which were currently overlooked in the current framework of the Programme. By knowing these extra-

market factors, the management team could more effectively implement programmes or suggest future interventions to foster gender equity.

It is important to point out that limited geographical scope might have affected the robustness of the findings. Efforts have been made to integrate as much as possible the qualitative data gathered through the Focus Group Discussions and the Interviews, with existing sources and other relevant documentation. Nevertheless caution should be used in interpreting the results.

In particular, the objectives of the Gender assessment can be summarized as followed:

1. Identify women and men roles in the value chains and highlight likely gender discriminations in the workplace ( i.e. business group) household and community; income distribution, access and control over resources, skills development, access to markets and market information;
2. Identify gaps in voice and representation of women in decision making (within the business group as well as within the household and at community level) and in bargaining power.
3. Identify priorities, needs, constraints and strategic interest of women producers alongside the value chain upgrading interventions

#### ***Some limitations of the methodology adopted***

Initially it was planned to have participants from different villages, coming together to one location to attend the discussions. This would have also been desirable in terms of success of the FDGs as this methodology usually requires that attendees are not from the same areas and don't have any connection.<sup>13</sup> However, this option couldn't be easily arranged: people are usually busy with their activities and attending meetings and discussions would have been difficult for them. It would have also required more logistical arrangements, which, for reason of budgetary and time constraints, were considered costly and avoidable. So the decision was taken to have meeting in each village ( selected on the basis of some criteria: accessibility, target areas of our partners and villages where business group have been formed or about to be formed). Within each village we invited people who were involved in the CISP value chains, but we couldn't find producers of jars/pottery among the villages selected. Therefore the data we could get from the discussions, only refer to NTFP collection and handicraft making, weaving and resin. Therefore the analysis reported is largely based on the information gathered through the field exercises. This explains the focus only on these three value chains. Consequently the report is a partial study, not aiming at generalizing conclusions adapt to the whole CISP target groups.

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<sup>13</sup> Especially women feel more confident to share sensitive information if they don't know the other people and if their husband/ close relatives are not present. ( Source: Participation Resource Centre of Institute of Development Studies, Sussex <http://www.pnet.ids.ac.uk/prc/index.htm> )

## **3.2 Respondents' characteristics**

### **Age and Education**

Participants were of different ages: more than 50% of people were below 50 years old and peaks were registered in the group of 18-24 ( all female) 35-39 and 40-44. All of them were married, except some young girls ( below 19 years old) a widow and a women who was divorced.

The majority of the participants were either illiterate or having attended primary school/ literacy classes. Only a couple of them reported having a higher educational attainment (including high school). In general, especially Bunong villagers could not read and write and female household members were the majority among those.<sup>14</sup>

### **Occupation**

Traditionally, men and women have had complementary roles in Indigenous communities, reflected in a quite distinct gendered division of labour ( Chhin, 2005).

Most of the participants engaged in various income-earning activities:most of them grow vegetable, collect honey, resin (liquid and solid) as secondary income-sources. There is also a significant number of NTFP handicrafts makers and weavers (all women). No pottery or jars producers were met, as they are mostly concentrated in other areas (primarily in Ratanakiri).

It is also reported that with increasable frequency many villagers–both men and women- sell labour during periods of food shortages. Rice shortage is experienced throughout the year for most of the households. November and December are least affected because rice is usually harvested in the last quarter, while the majority experienced shortages in July and August.

In general in Indigenous society, women accompany their husbands to the forest to collect vegetable, resin, fire wood; usually honey and resin are collected by men. For most of the products gathered in the forest, women are responsible for the sale, except for liquid resin and honey which are instead sold by males. This is due to the fact that men are considered more knowledgeable on honey and resin quality than women. Men therefore dominate honey and resin collection and sale activities .

Female participation in handicraft activities varies among the villages: it has been reported that in the villages surveyed in Mondulkiri mostly men make baskets (Kapha, the traditional backpack basket), while in Kampong Thom only women produce baskets and other handicrafts made of bamboo and rattan. Moreover only women sell them. When asked whether there was a reason for a female prevalence in craft activities, the attendees answered that men are busy outside the house, working in the field or raising animals.

In Mondulkiri basket carving is dominated by men ; in fact, according with the ancestors' traditions, men's role consist on building the house, doing farming, giving advice, telling stories about Bunong, teaching how to sing and baskets weaving. Men are also those who buy and sell cows, buffalo and exchange them with other goods.

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<sup>14</sup> Information on age and education levels have been collected at the beginning of the sessions in each village.

Conversely women perform activities like cooking, washing clothes, collect firewood, buying products from the market and weaving.

It was noted that handicraft was more advanced in Kampong Thom: this is due to the fact that in the target villages training have been held in the past ( by GTZ and Waseda University) and more recently from CISP.

In one village ( Lav Ka), the majority of the producers attending the meeting were members of a resin group recently set up by CISP: they all shared the information that men sell liquid resin ( more valuable) while women the solid one.

### ***Membership of Community Organizations/ Business Groups***

Many of the attendees reported their membership of community bodies ( Village Committee or Village Development Committee, Commune Council) : participation seems strong in meetings concerning issues that affected them (meetings relates to protecting the forest ,to obtain information relevant to their community). Village chiefs, deputy chiefs attended the meetings and among the participants, many reported to be members of the village committee, especially in the three villages in Kampong Thom.

Number of female members of Commune Council, although increasing, is still very low. Participation in business groups is very high among the attendees: in Lav Ka, all the participants were member of a Resin Group. In all the other villages, most of the producers reported to be member of weaving groups and/or saving groups. Weaving groups, due to the nature of the business , are women only.

### ***Training received***

There were several training conducted by service providers in the area which some of them attended.

CISP formed a resin group in Lav Ka and provided training on Small Business Development; in Andoung Kralong, CRDT, supported by ILO-ITP LED, trained women on weaving skills. In Kampong Thom, many handicraft producers benefited from the technical assistance on design provided by AAC.

There were also some who attended training on animal-raising, vegetable growing, gender and non-violence and human rights awareness-raising. In Kampong Thom, the Commune Council chief attended training on gender equality organized by World Vision and the Provincial Department of Women Affairs. He also attended other gender training and a course on reproductive health, together with around 20 people in the community. Courses on land management, environmental awareness and fishery were provided by WCS and ATSA.

Other organizations, such as GTZ in partnership with Waseda University provided training on handicraft skills to a group of villagers in Kampong Cheteal.

In general, especially in Kampong Thom, there seems to be lack of coordination in terms of training provided by different NGOs: most of the interventions are ad-hoc, there is no common methodology and some times overlapping among the training providers.



### 3.3 Key Findings

#### A. Household activities

In each of the discussions held, it emerged that women are the main responsible for household related activities: especially in the group discussions, both men and women acknowledged the fact that husbands help their wives in household work. Nevertheless **women spend longer hours doing a larger number of housework tasks ( washing clothes, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the children) and have heavier burden.** In fact, although male participants reported equal sharing of responsibilities in the house and talked about their engagement in house chores, women argued that this happens very rarely ( approximately once per week, as reported by a Bunong women).

In general, all participants said that housework is a women task and in a village, **the chief reported that women shouldn't go to the forest, but they should stay at home and look after the children.**

#### B. Community participation:

Despite the progress achieved in female representation in Commune Councils<sup>15</sup>, women elected are still very few compared with men. The Commune Council Chief and the Deputy are always man.

Conversely, it has been reported an increased number of women members of Village Development Committee : in Kokir Village, Kampong Thom, out of 15 members, 7 are women. Participation of women in Community Organizations is less in Mondulkiri.

There is still a strong perception of men having more skills and knowledge in community activity and in public decision making: one Kouy lady, member of the village committee said that she would like to be a village chief if she had the knowledge and the skills. **Men** seem not to be concerned about women participation in community decision making mechanism, but they **doubt the ability of women to carry out political tasks.** This is due to women's lower level of education and literacy.

#### C. Skills Development and Access and control over Resources

Generally, in both Khmer and Indigenous culture, **women have the final say on decisions related to financial matters in their families;** nevertheless, women's control over natural resources is reported to be more limited. This is in part linked with the alterations affecting the overall environment, such as land alienation, restrictions in accessing the forest and consequent decreased availability of natural resources, which is affecting both men and women, with more evident consequences for women.

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<sup>15</sup> In the second Commune Council Elections held in April 2007, the proportion of female candidates increased from 16 to 21% ( United Nations Development Programme, 2007. Report on the 2007 Commune Council Elections in Cambodia, Phnom Penh.)

As a result of these events, women seems to be losing influence as men have increasingly assumed control of many of the decisions related to high value resources.

However, the respondents all agreed that most of the decisions are taken jointly in the family and in the community. In some cases men make decisions and women follow, after consulting each other. Few men affirmed that they are stronger and have more energy, more knowledge and skills.

**Although most of the decisions regarding expenditures are made by women, they always consult their husband**, in addition, when he earns money, he usually keeps for himself a little amount, while women reported to share everything with her husband. Both make decisions about financial resources. When she gets the money, they decide together the use of it.

In line with the situation at national level, women seem to have less opportunities in terms of skills development. **There is no evident discrimination in terms of women accessing training, but domestic responsibilities in many cases are the major factors preventing women to fully benefit from advancement opportunities.**

#### ***D. Decision Making and Power Relationships***

Women are reported to be the main decision makers in terms of education and health because they are considered to have more knowledge on these issues, due to the fact that they spend more time at home, taking care of the children. Moreover, given women's control over financial resources, income allocation remains commonly a prerogative of females.

Obviously women do not decide on any issue: men ( and in some cases women) still consider males to have a greater level of knowledge and expertise in particular products ( like honey for example), or items like cattle.

Most of participants reported that husband and wife consult each other in case of disagreements concerning business and family related issues. One lady shared her experience: when she and her husband argue, they spend some time apart, without talking, then after some time one of the two apologize for his/her mistake. From the answers given, although an overall participatory and inclusive decision making process seems to be in place, nevertheless women always consult their husband and never decide by themselves, revealing a limited autonomy and leadership.

#### ***E. Market information Access***

As reported in the Baseline Report, most of the NTFP handicraft products are marketed locally and only few are sold within the province. The interviews and the Focus Group Discussions revealed that **sale is commonly performed by women who directly sell their products in the village to middlemen**. These are generally Khmer and they set the price. Some people said that they use to look at the products in other villages' markets and apply the same price, considering the quality, the size and the labour cost involved. Exchange of goods is still very common and practiced among Indigenous communities, especially in Mondulkiri where products are exchanged with animals ( especially chickens and pigs).

Women usually sell products at home with higher frequency, but earn less than men who sell more valuable items (honey/resin).

Movements outside the village are not very common, also due to the remoteness of some villages and the poor road infrastructures<sup>16</sup>: sales and purchases of most of the goods happen at village level. Women reported discussing always with their husband about going to other villages' markets and they are usually accompanied by their husband or other women ( sisters, relatives, neighbors). Although they said to feel safe to travel, they never go alone. They also showed to be afraid to be cheated by buyers, given their limited literacy in Khmer language.

#### **F. Income**

Data on income are very difficult to interpret due to the fact that producers were not able to differentiate the income generated by their business activity from other sources. So even if they were asked to give information on the income obtained from the sale of handicraft, NTFP or resin, most of the time they referred to their overall weekly earnings. Some handicraft producers reported earning around 25,000 per week ( 1,000,000 per month); others said that their earning were around 7,000 per week; some others around 50,000. In general the majority of the people engaged in handicraft production, reported to earn between 5000 to 15,000 per week. Resin collection is a more profitable activity which is reported to generate around 200,000 per month accordingly with the estimates made by some resin tappers. Men, who are also engaged in "big business", like cutting trees and sell wood, can earn from 700,000 to 1 million riel. ( A women in Lav Ka reported).

#### **A. Needs, Priorities, Interests**

Most of the attendees shared their concerns regarding the limited market opportunities for their products and the need for more clients. Moreover many villagers expressed the desire of having a space where to produce and sell ( production house and selling point) and in Andoung Kraloung few people would be willing to set up some tourism services, given the proximity to some waterfalls.

In terms of training, they showed big interest for technical skills training, especially weaving for women, basket carving for men. In Kampong Thom, those who didn't undertake any technical training, would like to learn handicraft styles, design, new models, while members of business groups required style improvement and marketing skills.

During the separated sessions focused on financial literacy, many participants expressed the willingness to receive numeracy and financial skills training. In fact the need for improving their skills on how to make calculations and better manage finances, arises from their little ability in dealing with money in daily transactions, mostly when larger amounts needs to be sold to middlemen.

Basket producers in Kampong Thom, expressed their interest in establishing contacts and networks with middlemen and other private sector actors, in order to have more stable and profitable market access.

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<sup>16</sup> In some villages, women walk long hours to reach the provincial town where they can sell their products. The distance, rather than the condition of the roads are major factors in limiting women's movements.

Lastly, some participants would like to receive a fund for starting up business which would allow them to make initial investments, like buying material and other production inputs. This idea was shared among several producers' group members in the three villages in Kampong Thom.

**B. Challenges**

A part from the lack of market availability and market accessibility , perceived as main factors of concerns among producers, another important threat is affecting indigenous communities, especially highlanders from Mondulkiri. This consists on the decreasing area of communal forests because of forest conversions, expansion of rubber and pine tree plantations and illegal logging. The lower availability of natural resources ( bamboo, rattan, palm leaves) and decreasing trend of resin harvest , are seriously modifying an already volatile life balance. Many participants to the meetings expressed their worries and considered this as one of the main issues to be addressed by development interventions.

As recent Poverty Research showed, **female-head household were reported to be among the poorest segment of the population**, with increasing levels of poverty incidence for higher family size. Few widow or divorced women participating to the meetings, said they were feeling more disadvantaged and having less opportunities, corroborating the above mentioned information.

**BOX 1 : Cross-check of information: Women and Men Separated Sessions**

In all the sessions conducted, the participants showed much more participation and engagement in the discussions held with people of the same sex. This was mostly happening among the women groups, as they felt much more comfortable and spoke more freely without the presence of men, as it was envisaged. Therefore some of the answers given during those sessions are very significant and, in a number of cases, they contradict the ones pronounced in the all together sessions.

For example, many women talked about more sensitive topics, like violence, rape, drunkenness . They mentioned cases of violence happened in the village between husband and wife and between men.

The following questions were raised in parallel sessions and only the most significant answers have been reported, denoting different views and perceptions compared to those emerged during the plenary sessions.

<i>Do women undertake difficult/ risky tasks in the business activity you are involved in?</i>	
<i>Women's answers</i>	<i>Men's answers</i>
Most of the women reported to be threatened by everything they are not sure about: animals, unknown people and they all shared the fear of being	Women suffer from lack of education & training in business

<p>defrauded.</p> <p>A women said that there are no men in her family and because of that, she has more disadvantages; she has to work a lot to maintain her family; she even has to go to the forest to collect resin herself when she is sick.</p> <p>Another female handicraft producer speaks about the difficulty of selling her products out of the village because she doesn't have any transport.</p> <p>Besides carrying their products, they have to take their children with them and keep an eye on them all the time. Men don't have to do that.</p>	<p>They don't manage well in Khmer</p>
<p>• <b><i>Do women and men get the same benefits from the business they are involved in?</i></b></p>	
<p>Men get more benefits than women. The 70% of the family income comes from husbands and the rest comes from wives.</p> <p>Men earn more than women (around 100.000-200.000 riel –especially from resin and honey) women 50,000-60,000. The reasons of these income differences id due to the fact that women have limited time to spend in business activities as they have to take care of the house and the children.</p> <p>They say men earn more money because of their activities which are more profitable (for example resin).</p> <p>They also say that the available income for the family depends on the man; sometimes some men spend all the money in drinking, not giving any money to the family.</p>	<p>Men earn more than women, as they are stronger and can collect more from the forest.</p> <p>The village chief said that women can't go to the forest because they have to stay at home, look after the children.</p>
<p><b><i>What does equality between women and men mean? ( Correct understanding- No correct understanding)</i></b></p>	
<p>When we asked if equality has been achieved in the village, they say they still need some help to improve their situation. They said men need to understand that when women are at home they are working (housework is work). They also believe that men have more benefits, more income, more power, more strength and better education than women.</p> <p>Some participants argued that equality among men and women was not yet achieved because women</p>	<p>They said that men and women have the same rights.</p> <p>In the past, the traditional thinking was prevailing and men were considered stronger. Now, because of the changes in the society, information, media, they acknowledged that women have value in the family and are responsible for many activities.</p>

work much more than men.  <i>“Men only sit down &amp; drink and then, when they’re drunk they go home and complain about everything”.</i>	
<b><i>When both wife and husband are working ( income generating activity), who should do the household work?</i></b>	
One lady strongly complained that, apart from one family, her husband and all the other men in the village, don’t help in the housework. She said that she has to do everything while her husband sleeps or does nothing. She is very upset and tired.  When asked if the housework should be divided, they strongly said yes.	Men reported to share the house work with wives before going to the forest.  Most said that elder children should be responsible for activities in the house.
<b><i>Do you think you ( as men/women) have more or less skills ( technical and business) in your specific activity than women/men?</i></b>	
Women believe that traditionally men have more skills than women. Women have to take care of the children and the house so men have more free time.  <i>“If women had less housework, they could do the same as men.”</i>	They think that men have more skills: this is because of the traditions and their culture. Men are responsible for women.
<b><i>• Do you think women are disadvantaged compared to men to access to markets? If Yes, why?</i></b>	
Women have more disadvantages because they have less knowledge (i.e: the buyers cheat women more than men, sometimes buyers even take their products and they don’t know how to deal with them).  Women reported to be afraid of the road and to have limitations compared to men because they are not able to ride motorbikes.	No, women are not disadvantaged.
<b><i>Which challenge is affecting most your activity and its success?</i></b>	
Women confirmed their concern regarding the limited amount of time they can dedicate to business activities, because of the house chores. This is felt to be a determinant factor which inhibits the success of their business.	The most common answer was the lack of market opportunities and a decreased availability and quality of natural resources.

### ***Other issues considered***

Accordingly with the data available at national level, domestic violence remains still high in Cambodia, affecting 20-25 percent of women. Although a lot of awareness programmes and prevention activities have

been implemented by several NGOs, the general impression was that villagers have to cope with increased violence not only against women, but also among men. The problem of violence is very much linked with alcohol consumption, which is part of their ancestral traditions (rice wine is usually drunk during ceremonies).

So several women, during the separated sessions, reported some cases of women being beaten by their husbands, while drunk. In most of the cases women reported the violence suffered to the village chief, who is responsible for handling family and village disputes. He recommended the men to undertake training run by the Commune police. When such events happen, families involved need to sacrifice animals, accordingly with their traditions and community believes.

Women didn't speak about prostitution and when asked they said that there were no cases of prostitution in their villages.

*"If a men is Prime minister, a women can also be the same"*

*" Women can do a lot of the works that men do"*A women in  
Kokir Village, Kampong Thom

*If men can be a teacher, also women can become a teacher*

A Women in Srae Village

#### **CASE STUDY 1**

*Sovann<sup>17</sup>'s husband used to beat her a lot and very seriously, he drinks a lot and she's very tired of it. He never helps her with the house work. She complaint to the elders (the traditional judiciary power of the village) and they informed the Village Chief. After doing that, her husband stop beating her. She said that, accordingly with the traditions, when they do something bad, they have to sacrifice animals for being forgiven by their wives . So her husband would have had to buy the animal, but, since he didn't have enough money, he stopped beating her.*

*A lady in Pou Taing*

#### **CASE STUDY 2**

*Ken, a handicraft producer, said that she has been often cheated in the market in KT town. Ken told that once some people from another village came and told her that they needed money for something that happened to them, so she gave them 170,000 and they never came back.*

*One lady said that once her nephew was mugged and someone stole her necklace.*

*A lady in Kokir*

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<sup>17</sup> The name is not real.

## **Conclusions**

In all the discussions held, it appeared that in Indigenous communities, most decisions are undertaken jointly by men and women. Participation and consultations happen in almost all the families where husbands consult their wives on expenses, use of money and sale of products.

Expenses on education and health issues are managed by women, due to their major knowledge and vicinity to questions affecting family and children.

Women cover an important role in the family, undertaking many tasks (more than men do) and this is perceived to be a burden which limits their business activity and prevent them to fully dedicate to income generating activities. The success ( measured by sales and volumes produced) of female businesses is therefore affected by the dual role ( productive and reproductive) women have always played in both Indigenous and non indigenous culture.

As indicated in Chapter 1, women are often engaged in productive and reproductive work simultaneously. Men in some cases still forbid their wives from working outside home even if women requested to do because they think women are better at home taking care of the children and household tasks. Having women working outside home, can reflect the fact that men are not capable of earning sufficient income.

Also, women have a key role in the selling the products and, in some cases, in transporting both raw materials to be processed ( resin, NTFPs) and finished items ( baskets and other crafts) to the markets or to middlemen. Despite the larger and more frequent number of transactions, women's income seem to be lower than men's. In fact men sell more valuable goods and have advantages in accessing the markets. Skills differences are also perceived, although there are no discriminations for women to attend training. The skills gap is in part due to a greater exposure to the outside world men benefit, compared with women ( meeting other producers, exchange of information etc).

Key challenges remain to be addressed in the promotion of women's participation in public decision-making; these include traditional beliefs and stereotyping, that women are not well suited for high positions. The burden women face in their role as care-givers and household work represents an additional burden for women to participate fully in decision-making. Moreover, many women lack experience in leadership and management in politics and community life. Capacity development specifically targeting women in this field is important.

Although men shared that they consider women having the same rights than men, in the separated meetings , men still value more their own skills and abilities compared to the female population: in particular women are less educated and this influences many business as well as household dynamics. In fact men think they are better at selling (especially big items or resin) and that women have difficulties calculating prices and are more often cheated by Khmer buyers.

Young girls are less literate than men due to a still resilient perception of priority given to male education and this is particularly noted with regards to ability to speak Khmer and in numeracy skills<sup>18</sup>. The low level of financial skills of the entire target group (especially women) is a crucial issue, noted in all the villages.

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<sup>18</sup> Source: Observations and Baseline Survey Reports.



## 5. Recommendations

The economic and social empowerment of women and men from disadvantaged and vulnerable groups requires a holistic perspective. Therefore it is important to note that successful strategies aiming at increasing women's participation and visibility in the business and in society in general, need to cover a wide range of interventions, from capacity building to promotion of gender equality in the family and the community and improved access to markets, information and financial resources.

From the existing information and the analysis conducted, it emerged that women who are engaged in small businesses recognized that as women they have advantages, and contributions, as well as facing several challenges. In particular they are aware of having good management and financial skills and to be able to manage multiple tasks, but they are also very constrained by their "unpaid" work in the household which limits their enterprise and marketing activities.

In addition to these challenges, women are also facing socio-cultural challenges as indigenous women: in fact it seems that they have encountered problems regarding their cultural heritage or being a member of an indigenous community in terms of keeping their traditions, communicating with outsiders and experiencing discriminations from Khmer people.

All these issues came out during the assessment conducted and they need to be considered while drawing conclusions and identifying a range of ways forward, including actions at business-household level and external interventions.

As series of interventions and potential strategies have been identified and are summarized below.

### **Income generation**

Women, despite having a more frequent number of transactions, get a lower income compared to men. The main reasons of this income gap seems to be men's major exposure to outside world, especially market, greater disadvantages for female producers to access natural resources and women's lower level of education which impedes equal and fair transactions with middlemen.

- Deepen the access to markets for indigenous women is therefore crucial if more equal benefits are to be achieved. A part from strengthening the links with existing NGOs operating as market facilitators in the CISP target areas ( especially FDL and CEDAC), new and alternative distribution channels need to be created, for instance establishing market linkages between producers and networks of souvenirs shops in the provincial town, hotels or handicraft association, establishing sale points ( kiosks or small production houses) in the villages and in the provincial town. Links with CEDAC shops and community-based learning and marketing centers (CBLM) should be established in order to facilitate the sales of local products. These interventions would be a prerogative of UNDP together with ILO and FAO for those interventions more at village level.

It would be recommended to UNDP and ILO to strengthen the connection of the isolated productions of handicrafts, mostly home-based and with no direct access to provincial and national markets, with the Artisan Association of Cambodia (AAC), in order to have a more stable and broader market channel.

- As highlighted in the analysis of the weaving value chain, this activity is dominated by women. From a gender perspective, promoting and strengthening this production, will lead to increased revenues for female producers. It is crucial to, increase quality of the weaving products diversifying patterns and designs through training and technical assistance.
- The introduction of new design and items, made possible by the AAC design consultancy in March 2010, has increased the range of handicraft products made by producers, especially women. The exchange tours of producers from Kampong Thom to Siem Reap also contributed to increased technical skills and knowledge on handicraft production. These interventions were welcomed by beneficiaries who felt more enthusiastic about the business and should be promoted and intensified to achieve more impact.

The resin value chain also offers some important points to be considered in order to broaden women's role and increase their revenues. Not many interventions can be suggested in terms of resin extraction or sale, which is dominated by men, either because of their physical strength or because of their traditional knowledge of resin composition and quality. A viable intervention would be to enhance information sharing and knowledge about resin among women organized into groups in order to increase females' role in the sale of this product and therefore the income generated through this activity .

Introduction of new processing facilities and strengthen processors and wholesalers' networks, involving paint manufacturers and wholesalers of final products, are among the foreseen actions to be explored especially by FAO and UNDP in partnership with the major NGOs involved on resin ( NTFP-EP, Ponlok Khmer, WCS, WWF) . Nevertheless, as noted previously and as reported in the Value Chain Analysis, alternative uses of the resin waste should be explored and, where feasible, new by-products should be introduced. Using resin for developing by-products other than torches would be a way to promote women participation in the resin value chain, given the fact that they already play a leading role in this specific production.

### **Business and Financial Literacy**

Households with low levels of financial literacy tend not to plan for expenses, to borrow at higher interest rates, to acquire fewer assets and to participate less in the formal financial system relative to their more financially-literate counterparts.

- Awareness and understanding of what a business is and how to run any entrepreneurial activity are very poor among the CISP target population<sup>19</sup>: Indigenous people don't have a "business mindset" and they rely largely on an agro-subsistence economy. Their management and leadership skills are very low and it seems that they are not familiar with basic concepts, such as budgeting, costing and pricing. Further support is needed for them to acquire a range of business skills such as: making a budget, tracking expenses, making saving plans. Moreover soft skills training ( including counseling) before starting a business and technical assistance once the business is operational should be part of the support provided to business group members ( HAGAR model). However, although these training are important to develop solid management and entrepreneurial skills, it is strongly encouraged to use a methodology which goes beyond the traditional training approach: illiteracy is a fundamental issue to be considered.
- It is recommended to introduce literacy modules and basic numeracy modules. The ability of target producers to make calculations, to manage money, perform sales/ purchases and to understand math and financial concepts is too low and any business related training which does not take into consideration this knowledge gap, would not produce the expected results.
- It is recommended to the ILO/FAO to incorporate sections on numeracy skills and basic mathematic and calculation in the financial literacy programmes already being delivered using the ILO methodology, using mechanisms suitable for illiterate targets . This could maximize the outreach of the financial training and increase the ability of producers, especially women, to deal with financial transactions and measurement.

Many NGOs have adapted and simplified the ILO manuals, making them suitable to the indigenous producers' education level. PyD had developed a manual on saving groups which is all based on images with designs and topics relevant for the IP context. CEDAC uses the ILO manuals as a starting point, integrating them with stories and content which is changed by the trainers accordingly with the level of the participants. These materials should be integrated by the ILO and FAO into one comprehensive package of Business and Financial Education for Indigenous Producers Groups.

- The financial education training should be combined with training on how to support women's entrepreneurship : the GET AHEAD methodology have a strong element of gender equality. It encourages women to approach the business activity more professionally but also helps empower women to have an equal say in their household and helps cultivate increased respect from their husband for their ideas and work. (Successful Strategies for Women's Entrepreneurship Development, ILO 2010).

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<sup>19</sup> This is a general observation from the discussions held at village levels and from representatives of partner organizations consulted on the matter.

### **Community participation**

- Because women are not always given many opportunities for taking on formal roles in the public arena, during the training organized by CISP ( especially group formation) trainers and NGOs staff should encourage women to become committee members. There should be a rule which set a minimum number of women as committee members. For instance in the ILO-WEDGE programme, at least two out of the five committee members of the Self Help Groups are women. Although this is difficult to achieve in practice, especially in more traditional communities, it is demonstrated to be a successful strategy not only to empower women part of the committee, but it also helps generate a deeper community spirit among the members and a sense of wanting to help fellow female members.

### **Access to Information: Radio programmes**

Acceptance of principle of gender equality is correlated with the exposure to mass media, which indicates the importance of communication initiatives addressing gender equality and discrimination: increasing access to communication and information could be considered as a tool to disseminate awareness on a range of topics.

An interesting initiative has been promoted by EQUAL ACCESS, a non-profit communication organization which since 2006 has broadcasted a radio programme called *The Future is in Your Hands*: this programme, in Khmer language addresses the issue of women empowerment , trafficking, women and girls' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS encouraging listeners to rethink perceptions about the role of women in Cambodian society and promoting the use of legal resources to confront trafficking, domestic violence and child exploitation.

Another successful social radio programme , called “ *We can do it*” broadcasted by Equal Access is focused on youth life skills, civic participation, community development, financial literacy, health, education, and other issues affecting young people. As part of this initiative, in 2009 additional funds were provided by WING<sup>20</sup> and a specific programme focused on basic money management has being broadcasted. It educates audience, mostly young people, on goals setting, savings, budgeting, financial institutions, WING services and programmes.

Thousands of youth group members meet regularly in hundreds of listening groups – *We Can Do It* clubs- to discuss program topics and generate feedback to Equal Access content producers. WING and Equal Access trainers were supported by Microfinance Opportunities in the development of the basic financial education content of the *We Can do it* programme. Many young people revealed to have taken this knowledge to their home community and put it into practical use developing saving schemes and saving plans.

- Given the large outreach that radio broadcasting can have, especially in remote areas and for low-educated audiences, community radio programmes should be promoted as one of the information tools to disseminate news, knowledge on youth education, health, culture, problems and concerns of the community people and issues related to women empowerment . The results of a UNDP baseline study on the information needs of vulnerable groups in Cambodia, would provide valuable insights into

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<sup>20</sup> Wing is a mobile money transfer service affiliated with Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited.

the usefulness and potential impact of different information tools as means to disseminate information to local community groups.<sup>21</sup>

- It is recommended for CISP ( UNESCO in particular) to explore possibilities of linking up with this existing initiative as it could be cost-ineffective to set up a completely new radio programme. Moreover the technical expertise of Equal Access could be used.
- The UNESCO Community Radio Programme could be expanded and additional contents in line with CISP objectives, could be included. These could be: IP Traditional Cultural and Heritage (including the Living Human Treasure System ); importance of preserving cultural practices; Financial Education ( the same content of a financial literacy training targeting illiterate producers); Product Quality and Marketing; Forest and natural resources management. ( More details on the Community Radio Programme and the potential implementation strategy can be found in the concept paper elaborated by the Communication Consultant). Partnership with Provincial Department of Information and with Nomad in Mondulkiri and ICSO in Ratanakiri ( which have already implemented a similar project) should be sought.
- Another interesting radio initiative to be investigated is a new programme implemented by FLD called Farmer Opportunity, a radio programme disseminating information for farmers. This programme could be easily adapted to cover other occupations, such as handicraft production, NTFP collection, market and marketing information.

### **Access to Credit and Saving**

Although microfinance and access to credit can benefit producers groups in expanding their business, it is often verified that beneficiaries of loans, use the money borrowed for non productive assets. Many women reported having borrowed certain amount of money with the intention of using them for their business ( i.e opening a shop) or to repair/ build the house. However, because of poor planning skills, they spent the money in consumption or to overcome other unexpected expenses, such as illness and funeral.

- Therefore, it is recommended that before introducing any microfinance scheme, an analysis of needs for credit/ saving is conducted. It is important to understand which would be the purpose of the money borrowed in order to identify the most suitable scheme. ( This study has being designed at the moment by the ILO)
- Several options could be explored as mechanism to enable vulnerable household to benefit from microfinance services: i.e. many institutions have provided income-generating assets instead of microcredit accompanied by enterprise development training, as a means to “ graduate” producers to regular microfinance programs.
- Saving groups and Self Help Groups are also considered to be the first step to properly prepare members to become clients of microfinance institutions and as a tool against indebtedness.

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<sup>21</sup> This is an initiative co-led by UNDP and UNOHCHR (Communication for Empowerment of Asia’s Indigenous People). The results of this study will be available in October 2010.

Nevertheless in periods of food shortages, savings were not used for business purposes but for consumption needs, with the result that these groups collapsed. If the results of the financial needs analysis would suggest to create saving and self help groups, ILO should link and learn from the WEDGE programme, adopting the new WEDGE methodology on establishing SHGs.

- SHGs could be promoted as a way to increase savings and to empower women, but follow up support and assistance from NGOs and trainers is needed.

It is important to stress that given the vulnerability of the target group, any microfinance intervention should take into account the precarious livelihood balance of the communities. Moreover microfinance mechanisms usually take a long period to be set up and become operational, making this component very risky in a limited timeframe.

### **General Recommendations**

- **Natural resources and Access to Land for Women:** The issue of access to natural resources and land falls outside the scope of CISP interventions, nevertheless the availability of these resources is a crucial factor determining the success of many industries supported by the programme and it affects particularly women. Where possible, efforts should be made to ensure that women are able to register their inherited land in their own name and increased awareness of land and property rights among women, commune councils and higher level authorities should be encouraged. This could be achieved through partnerships with existing programmes focused on land entitling ( i.e. the ILO Indigenous and Tribal People Project).
- It is recommended that CISP continues supporting IP groups in diversifying their economies based on their needs and own priorities. Where possible, in the areas where programmes have not initiated yet by local NGOs partners, community planning exercises would be encouraged, in order to come out with Village/ Community Action Plans: this would make easier understanding villagers' interests and priorities in terms of business activities. Women should be encouraged to participate actively and express their concerns and priorities.
- Gender considerations should be made in the organization of the training, making sure that these don't interfere with women's reproductive and productive activities and that female trainers and facilitators are present ( use of GET AHEAD methodology).
- Follow up support from trainers is crucial: if the trainees doesn't see the trainer or the NGO staff after some months, they lose confidence and interest and they might stop their business.
- In order to properly monitor the impact that the Programme is making in terms of gender, it is envisaged to constantly refer to the Gender Integrated Matrix throughout the implementation, and during the evaluation phase, to assess whether both men and women participated in the project and received benefits equally. This implies that in any data gathering process, disaggregated

information for men and women should be collected. This would allow depicting the different impact the projects/ interventions have caused to both female and men groups.

- As extensively discussed in the report, it is key to maximize the impact of CISP intervention through partnership and links with existing projects run by other organizations, PDoWA and stakeholders. In particular, given the similar range of activities implemented, geographical coverage and presence of same donor agency, links with PyD should be promoted as a way to boost the gender impact of CISP outputs. In particular if Women Development Centers will be built in Ratanakiri and/or Mondulakiri (at the moment one WDC is under construction in Stung Treng) these will represent an important source of services for women, as these centers will include vocational training, a business incubator for creating new entrepreneurial activities, showroom for products and will promote a range of networking opportunities for producers in other provinces as well
- Young Women lower educational attainment is an important issue to guarantee the success of any capacity building intervention. CISP (and UNESCO in particular) should link as much as possible with organizations having expertise on non-formal education programmes for IPs (CARE and ICC are the biggest players).
- Links with Youth Groups (Indigenous Youth Organizations) should be strengthened and young girls should be encouraged to participate.
- Follow up contracts with CISP partners could be designed taking into consideration the abovementioned points, integrating as much as possible methodology and tools among the CISP agencies; support to those organizations which provide gender-mainstreamed programmes should be continued (especially FLD, CEDAC, COWS).
- Follow up interventions for a potential phase II of the programme could be explored and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID) would be among the natural source of funds, especially if gender development and women economic empowerment are given a central focus.

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