



ENTERPRISE IN
WASH

**Australian
Aid** 




east meets west
...

**Women's empowerment in
WASH economic activity**

Research findings
from Indonesia
and Cambodia





Background

- There are an **increasing number** of economic opportunities for small-scale enterprise in WASH
- Previous research showed **low participation** of women
- There are **strong imperatives to involve women** – as part of an inclusive approach, to ensure their needs are addressed, and so they may access these economic opportunities
- However, women are known to **face certain barriers** and we do not know how they are affected by involvement in WASH economic activity





Research Questions

Indonesia

1. What **motives** lead women to take part in economic activity in relation to WASH?
2. To what extent did women participating in WASH economic activity experience empowerment, including **economic empowerment**?

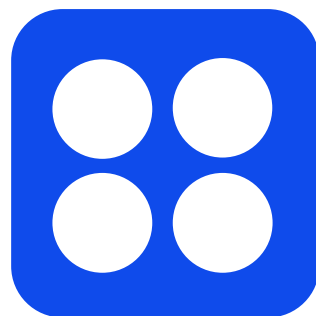
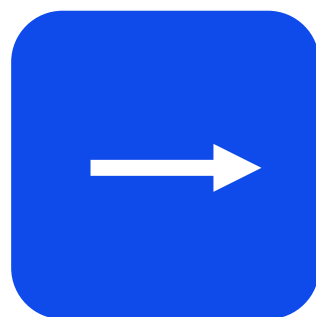
Cambodia

1. To what extent are women **empowered** through their management of water supply schemes in Cambodia?
2. What needs to be done, and by whom, to **support** female water entrepreneurs in Cambodia to achieve empowerment, including economic empowerment, outcomes?



Empowerment framework:

Four types of power



Rowlands (1997); VeneKlasen and Miller (2002); Eyben, Kabeer & Cornwall (2008); and Taylor and Perezniето (2014).

TYPES OF POWER	EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES OF EMPOWERMENT (Eyben, Kabeer and Cornwall, 2008)	EXAMPLES OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (Taylor and Perezniето, 2014)
'POWER WITHIN'	Self-understanding.	Perception that women	Learning business skills
Power within → Self-understanding Self-belief their lives			
'POWER TO'	Decision-making roles in the household,	Leadership of women in village-level	Managing decisions within own enterprises
Power to → Decision-making roles considered as men's occupations or domains			
'POWER OVER'	Access and control over	Ownership and control	Access to credit, paid
Power over → Access & control over resources			
'POWER WITH'	Process of group conscientisation	Women claiming space to challenge social	Forming cooperatives, unions and group-based
Power with → Group mobilisation change the labour and market conditions created by others			

Methods - Indonesia

Literature Review

On the **barriers** and **enablers** for female entrepreneurs in Indonesia across all sectors

Qualitative Research

Interviews with 18 women in Sumatra Island, Java Island, Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) and Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT)

- **Research participants** held various roles (often multiple roles) including business owners (7), community mobilisers (9) and sanitarians (6).
- **Purposively sampled** through NGOs and entrepreneur associations (Plan Indonesia, SNV, Water.org and APPSANI, a sanitation entrepreneur association).
- **Participant characteristics:** The majority of woman participating in this study were 36-55 years old (72%), married (89%), and had university-level education (61%).
- **Semi-structured interview guide:** participants' personal and family situation, motivations, key enablers and barriers

Methods - Cambodia

Literature Review

On the **barriers** and **enablers** for female entrepreneurs in Cambodia across all sectors

Qualitative Research

Interviews with female entrepreneurs, commune, provincial and national level stakeholders.

- **Purposively sampled** through one NGO and one water association (East Meets West, and the Cambodian Water Association)
- **Semi-structured interview guide:** barriers, enablers, perceptions of gender norms/ differences/similarities. Quantitative ranking of barriers.

National (n=3)

Provincial (n=5)

Commune (n=4)

Private Water Entrepreneurs (n=15)



Empowerment Findings



Cambodia

- The majority of entrepreneurs in this study displayed elements of 'power within', in terms of their perception of having the **same capabilities as men** to manage a water supply scheme (10 of 15)
- Yet, societal norms and perceptions which promote **men as more mobile and stronger** workers were also articulated (by women and men).
- **Training identified as critical** for preparedness to start then run a business

Indonesia

- A majority (14 of 18) had **positive self-esteem and belief** that they possessed the necessary skills to perform WASH activities, including some noting that women had equal or superior skills than men.



Power to



Cambodia

- **'Power to' manage financial decisions** and increased independence, including financial independence.
- All entrepreneurs were involved in **decision-making roles** on household expenditure and most managed the finances of their water supply scheme (10 of 15).
- Family businesses, with **joint financial decision-making**.

Indonesia

- **Mixed experiences** of women's 'power to' make decisions and take on leadership roles.
- Around half the women had positive experience including **sharing household duties**...while half reported being **limited by unequal division of roles** at home.
- Some faced resistance: one participant in a leadership role in a water collective had received verbal and physical threats from men.

“Generally, men have the view that it is unlikely that a woman can lead, especially in the water sector.”



Power over



Cambodia

- Entrepreneurs had **confidence** managing the finances, but **concerns** about access to finance, freedom of movement, and a need for additional technical training.
- **Barriers to empowerment:** high interest rates on loans, the double burden of work (housework and running a business), and worries about the financial status of their enterprises.

Indonesia

- Access to and control over **three kinds of resources** were identified: knowledge, networks and financial resources
- **Networks** were identified by most women participating in a variety of WASH activities as a **key factor** in their empowerment
- **Control over financial resources was mixed**, some faced barriers in borrowing from banks; and time and mobility were limitations.



Power with



Cambodia

- Entrepreneurs expressed a desire to **help other women** establish water enterprises if they were interested and had information and financial support.

Indonesia

- **Mixed experiences** – some positive some negative stories of involvement in group activities
- Positive **support was given by government** to a women's cooperative in Sumatra.
- Women also experienced **strong resistance from society** and strong doubts from men about their ability to succeed.

“I’m glad to meet other women [in WASH activities]. [We can] share stories, activities, as well as do monitoring of the program. Then we laugh together, and the stress is gone.”



Conclusions

Recommendations
& Implications

Indonesia

- WASH is in the traditional domain of women and **recognised as a sector which can offer an entry point for gender equality and women's empowerment.**
- **New and different strategies may be required** to achieve economic empowerment for women – informed by empowerment frameworks, tailored to the context.
- Opportunities to **promote collective action** - cross-sharing between women who are achieving economic empowerment
- Access to **social entrepreneurship training** could also be useful in Indonesia
- Since networks were key enabler, **pathways to enhance networks**, for example through business forums, community-based associations, or women's groups could be beneficial



Cambodia

- Some conclusions echo those from Indonesia –applying an **empowerment lens, building networks, offering training** (and ensuring it meets women’s needs around childcare, mobility).
- Practical strategies to **address operational challenges** e.g. support for professional feasibility studies, establishing communication channels between stakeholders about relevant works
- **Finance support is needed to help** entrepreneurs identify low interest loans, and assist with up-front finance overall.
- **Involve men** (particularly husbands) in the promotion and socialisation of female-led private water enterprises to minimise backlash.



For more information and resources: www.enterpriseinwash.info

Women's empowerment in the WASH sector

Research Report 9 and Summary Brief 1 provide findings of research examining the extent to which women participating in WASH economic activity experience empowerment in Cambodia and Indonesia.

Report 9: Enablers and barriers to female water entrepreneurs' empowerment in Cambodia

Full report



Summary



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Thank you



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Cut out slides

In Indonesia, social and environmental motivations featured more strongly than economic motivations

- **Economic motivations:** Less than half of the participants (7/18) had economic motivations to provide main or additional family income. These cases were due to illness or absence of male family members, or to diversify family income as a part-time activity.
- **Social and environmental motivations:** Strongly prevalent - based on need to interact with and help others, concept of service and religious beliefs. Environmental concerns to maintain clean water and a healthy living environment.
- **Conflicting motivations:** Not wanting to run a business since WASH was an important service to community

“

The [sludge-removal] business is more profitable than other businesses in this region. This business was actually initiated by my father and continued by my husband until he passed away. Since then, it has become a main source of income.

“

'[I am] glad to meet other women [in WASH activities]. [We can] share stories, activities, as well as do monitoring of the program. Then, we laugh together, and the stress is gone.'

In Cambodia, specific social, economic and program support enabled entrepreneurs

 <p>SOCIAL ENABLERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and encouragement from family and friends• Witnessing other women succeed in managing a water supply scheme
 <p>ECONOMIC ENABLERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital investment: loan from bank, micro-credit institutions, family or private savings
 <p>PROGRAM SUPPORT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical and financial training• Peer-to-peer networking• Provincial government support: promotion of women to be leaders in their communities, providing credit to projects supporting entrepreneurs, and encouragement of women to participate in the private sector and public works

Cambodia: How would female water entrepreneurs like to to be supported?

Technical support

Financial support

Promotion of the importance of clean water (to boost customer base)