



# Factors Driving the Effectiveness of Community Fisheries Management Resulted from Fisheries Policy Reforms

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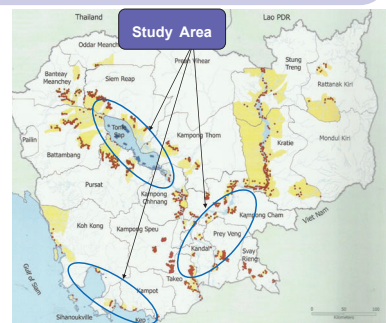
**Abstract** The study aims to identify the different driving factors that led to the functionality and effective operation of the CFIs co-management of the fisheries resources development and sustainability resulting from the fisheries policy reforms for almost two decades. The random 527 CFI members from purposive selected 16CFIs were interviewed and discussed. Two key main driving factors found, firstly legal framework is the most important to support the process of CFI establishment and fisheries co-management have given the local people's legal rights and opportunity to use and sustain their fisheries resources, expressed by 96% of responded CFI members. While second necessary factor is the benefit of being a member of the CFI, by 93% respondents highlighted. Being CFI members as small-scale fishers, they have been giving more access to the fishing grounds, harvesting more fish for consumption and income that improve their family socio-economic status, recognition of their value in participating in a co-management concept of governance, capacity building and working together as one and trusting each other as an unity.

**Introduction** Cambodia is endowed with rich natural fisheries resources in both freshwater and marine fisheries required to reform the fisheries management overtime, which was firstly in 2000 and followed by 2012, to address problems facing and demands, by cancelling all fishing lots (large/industry fishing scale) in the Tonle Sap great lake and providing legal rights to local fishers and publish users to form the community, called Community Fisheries (CFI), around the country. As the results of the reforms, there are 516 CFIs established for both freshwater and marine fisheries, which raising a question of what factors have been driving the functionality operation of the effective CFI management that can be learned to improve the sustainability of the fisheries resource management and development in Cambodia.

## Study Method

**Sample size:** 16 CFIs were purposely selected from three regions (Tonle Sap Lake, Mekong and Coastal region) based on the geographical fisheries ecosystems in Cambodia. A total of 527 CFI members (169 women, 32%) as respondents was randomly selected from the 16 CFI members' list.

**Data collection and analysis:** Primary data was collected through a face to face interview with the 527 respondents using a standardized questionnaire and using SPSS software for data analysis. The 16 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) of the 16 CFI selected was conducted with CFI committee and local authorizes to obtain the qualitative information by using problem loop, ranking and SWOT analysis in order to support and explain the quantitative data from individual interviews.



## Results

**Table 1: Factors driving CFI functionality and effectiveness CFI management**

Factors (Multiple response)	Frequency	Percent
- CFI legal framework	505	96
- CFI membership	488	93
- Financial and technical support	475	90
- Collaboration and support from local authorities	466	88
- Collaboration and support from technical agencies	443	84
- Collaboration and support from DPs	433	82
- CFiC ability and capacity	339	64
- Participation of CFI members	321	61
- Others (people willingness, support and work together...)	303	57

**Table 2: Reasons of CFI legal framework factor driving the CFI effective management**

Reasons (Multiple response)	Frequency	Percent
- Legal guidance for CFI establishment	521	99
- Official and legal recognition of CFI	518	97
- Legal guidance for CFI function and management	502	95
- Official support from the government and development partners	467	89
- Fisher's rights and responsibility in the natural fisheries resources management	436	83
- Increased support and collaboration more than before CFI establishment	328	62
- Others (CFI empowerment, commitment and resource ownership)	311	59

**Table 3: Reasons of CFI membership factor driving the CFI effective management**

Reasons (Multiple response)	Frequency	Percent
- Building trust to each other (villagers and villagers) as united	518	97
- Being recognized as group work (work together)	502	95
- Equal rights for fishing by family scale	480	91
- Can do fishing (more access to fishing ground) more than before	467	89
- Their membership and participation being recognized and valued (resources ownership)	436	83
- Gaining knowledge on fisheries resource protection and management	388	74
- Building empowerment and capacity (from meeting, workshop...)	353	67
- Voices and demands can be addressed	321	61
- Received more support for social welfare and poverty alleviation	313	59
- Others (more safety than before, no stolen, no violence...)	301	57

**Table 4: Key challenges facing the CFI effective management**

Key Challenges (Results of FGD)	Ranking
- Lacking of CFI self-financial support and generation	1
- Still limited benefits for being CFI members regarding with rights for fishing, everyone can do small-scale fishing in CFI area	2
- Limited financial support for CFI functioning from the state and development partners	3
- 5 years of CFI Area Agreement is short, not enough to produce tangible impacts for CFI	4
- Poor enforcement of CFI by-laws and internal rules by members and non-members	5
- Poor implementation of CFI Area Management Plan due to budget lacked	6
- CFI Committee (CFI leader team) capacity is still limited, leading to take poor rules and responsibilities, and affectively poor CFI function and management	7
- Still limitation support from local authorities	8
- Limitation of technical support and follow up by technical agencies	9
- Local people's awareness on CFI legislation/legal framework is still limited	10

## Conclusion

Community Fisheries is a voluntary fisher organization, which is officially established and legally recognized by the state with the provision of legal frameworks, which never been before in the history of fisheries management in Cambodia. It is a prime objective and achievement of the Governments' fisheries policy reforms, in 2000 and 2012, to ensure that the local fisher communities and small-scale fishers can obtain access to the fisheries resources for food, livelihood and poverty alleviation. The achievements and results produced after the fisheries policy reforms are due to the support of the legal frameworks for CFI that was provided at the right time and direction. Through these CFI legal frameworks, the small-scale and poor fishers are receiving benefits and rights to share their roles and responsibilities for the co-management of their natural fisheries resources for sustainable development. These are the most important factors that guide and drive the functionality and effective operation of the CFIs. However, there are still key areas that are facing challenges for the CFIs to be more functional and effective in co-management of the fisheries resources in the long run, which included the improvement of CFI legal frameworks. The CFI respondents recommended the improvement of the legal frameworks to consider the provision of guiding the CFI to generate income to self-finance their activities, suitable fisheries related livelihoods, and harvesting their resources. Finally the CFIs recommended to define clearly the rights of the CFI members and non-members/outside in fishing in the CFI fishing areas. They suggest that they should be given higher benefits for being a CFI member as well as a CFI committee member as prime incentives for their participation and efforts to actively protect and co-manage the natural fisheries resources development in an effective and sustainable manner.

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