



NATIONAL DIALOGUE REPORT

Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance, Food Security and Nutrition: Strategies for Improving Agri-food Systems in the Cambodian Mekong Delta



November 26, 2024

The office of the Council of Ministers, Phnom Penh

Co-Organized by:



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Executive Summary

The national dialogue workshop on Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance, Food Security, and Nutrition: Strategies for Improving Agri-food Systems in the Cambodian Mekong Delta, was held on November 26, 2024, at the office of the Council of Ministers, convened at least 103 key stakeholders, those participants were from government institutions, Development partners, community-based organization and university representatives to address critical challenges in agri-food systems. The workshop was organized by the Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) Secretariat and the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), in partnership with WorldFish Cambodia (WF) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). The workshop aimed to disseminate the experiences from the two innovative pilots on the integrated decentralized food system governance at the District Level and food security and nutrition, and health at the community level.

H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun, Chairman of CARD, emphasized the importance of strengthening food system governance and advancing the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (2024–2028) to build resilience against climate change impacts and ensure sustainable development by 2030. Ms. Lizzie Cameron, representing AMD donor, highlighted New Zealand’s \$18.6 million contribution to the CGIAR Asian Mega Deltas initiative, commended Cambodia’s potential to lead in climate-resilient, inclusive agricultural practices. The workshop featured two sessions: Multi-level Coordination of Agri-food Governance in Cambodia and Nutrition and Consumption. The first session highlighted innovations such as district-level technical working groups for integrated planning, while the second session focused on nutrition patterns, food consumption behaviors, and strategies like school gardens in feeding programs. In closing, H.E. Chea Samnang emphasized the need to evaluate and scale district-level governance models, ensure alignment with the Royal Government's policies, and integrate findings into the national agenda for sustainable food systems. The discussions reaffirmed Cambodia’s commitment to addressing food security challenges through collaborative governance, multi-sectoral strategies, and policy-driven innovation, aligning with its vision for inclusive growth and climate resilience.

Participants

There were 103 participants (23 are female) who attended the workshop. They are representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Ministry of Health, Councils for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI), WorldFish (WF), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), sub-national government agencies and communities from Prey Veng and Kampong Thom provinces, and other development partners and non-governmental organizations (see the Annex 1 for details).

1. Introduction

Welcoming Remark by H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary General of CARD

Welcoming remark was delivered by **H.E. Sok Silo**, Secretary General of CARD, at the workshop on **“Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance, Food Security, and Nutrition: Strategies for Improving Agri-Food Systems in the Cambodian Mekong Delta”**. He expressed gratitude to H.E Dr. Ouk Rabun, Senior Minister and Chairman of CARD and participants from various sectors, including government institutions, development partners, civil society, and the private sector, for their engagement. With the aim of the Asian Mega Delta (AMD) initiative addressing environmental and climate change impacts on the Mekong Delta, H.E. Sok Silo outlined five key mechanisms for implementation: (1) improving deltaic production systems, (2) developing nutrition-sensitive deltaic agrifood systems, (3) reducing risk in delta-oriented value chains, (4) facilitating joined-up, gender-equitable, inclusive deltaic systems governance, and (5) introducing evidence-based delta development planning. H.E. Sok Silo also noted the signing of the MoU between the Council for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) and the Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) to advance policy research on food systems, food security, and nutrition in alignment with the Royal Government's Rectangular Strategy Phase 1 priorities.



To conclude, H.E. Sok Silo extended his best wishes to H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun and all participants, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts for sustainable development in the Mekong Delta.

Welcoming Remark by Dr. Mak Sithirith, Country Manager, WorldFish

Dr. Mak Sithirith commenced his welcoming remark by emphasizing the significance of the Innovative Model for the Integration of District Food System Governance in Cambodia's Mekong Delta. He highlighted WorldFish's contributions to sustainable fisheries and natural resource management across 27 countries, with notable initiatives in Cambodia such as the Fisheries Conservation Project, the Asian Mega-Delta Project (AMD), and aquaculture development. Dr. Sithirith elaborated on the AMD's efforts to enhance the resilience of food systems in three target provinces, namely Prey Veng, Takeo, and Kampong Thom, by integrating agriculture, water, and fisheries governance at the district level. He shared insights on the 2024 pilot projects in Boeung Sneh and Boeung Ream, which focus on decentralizing food system governance with the support of district-level technical working groups.



The dialogue seeks to present pilot findings, gather stakeholder feedback, and explore scaling opportunities, aiming to ensure sustainable management and conservation of these critical resources. Dr. Sithirith expressed gratitude to all participants for their support and called for continued collaboration to advance this innovative governance model.

Opening remark by H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun, Senior Minister and Chairman of CARD

H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun, Senior Minister and Chairman of CARD presided over the opening ceremony of the workshop on “**Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance, Food Security, and Nutrition: Strategies for Improving Agri-Food Systems in the Cambodian Mekong Delta**”. He praised the collaboration between the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development, CDRI, WorldFish, IWMI, CGIAR, and other key stakeholders, noting the critical role of such partnerships in addressing food security challenges and advancing Cambodia’s development goals, including the vision of becoming an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income country by 2050. H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun emphasized the



Mekong Delta’s strategic importance as a highly fertile agricultural region that sustains millions of livelihoods but is increasingly vulnerable to climate change, hydrological disruptions, and ecological challenges. He highlighted the Asian Mega Delta (AMD) project as a cornerstone initiative supporting Cambodia’s roadmap for sustainable food systems by 2030, aligning with the Royal Government’s Rectangular Strategy Phase 1 and the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition 2024–2028. The workshop showcased the AMD project’s pilot models in Prey Veng and Kampong Thom provinces, where district-level technical working groups (D-TWGs) were established to promote decentralized and integrated governance of agriculture and aquaculture systems. These efforts aim to enhance food production, ensure nutritional security, and foster resilience to climate-related vulnerabilities while incorporating gender and youth inclusion.

In his concluding remarks, H.E. Dr. Ouk Rabun reiterated the importance of collaborative efforts among ministries, development partners, the private sector, and youth to strengthen governance and build sustainable food systems. He expressed confidence in the potential impact of the workshop and officially declared it open, extending gratitude to all participants for their contributions.

The Impression from AMD Donor

Ms. Lizzie Cameron, Senior Advisor, Agriculture – Climate Finance Pacific and Development Group (PDG) Development Economy and Prosperity (DEVECO) Division New Zealand, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trad. Ms. Lizzie Cameron, representing AMD's donor New Zealand, expressed her gratitude to CGIAR, IRRI, CARD, CDRI, and WorldFish for organizing the event and emphasized the strong diplomatic ties between New Zealand and Cambodia, which recently celebrated 65 years of relations. She highlighted New Zealand's \$18.6 million contribution to the Asian Mega Deltas (AMD) initiative, of which 27% is allocated to Cambodia, reflecting its significant need and potential for building climate resilience. She commended Cambodia's efforts to develop climate-resilient, inclusive, and productive systems in rice, water culture, and aquaculture farming, crucial for addressing the escalating impacts of climate change on food security and livelihoods in the Mekong Delta. Ms. Cameron acknowledged the importance of this event as a platform to explore innovative decentralized food system governance models and sustainable climate-smart practices. She reaffirmed New Zealand's commitment to collaboration with Cambodia and the ASEAN region, aiming to address climate challenges and improve livelihoods, food security, and nutrition through responsive and inclusive partnerships.



2. Presentations

By Mr. Sok Sao

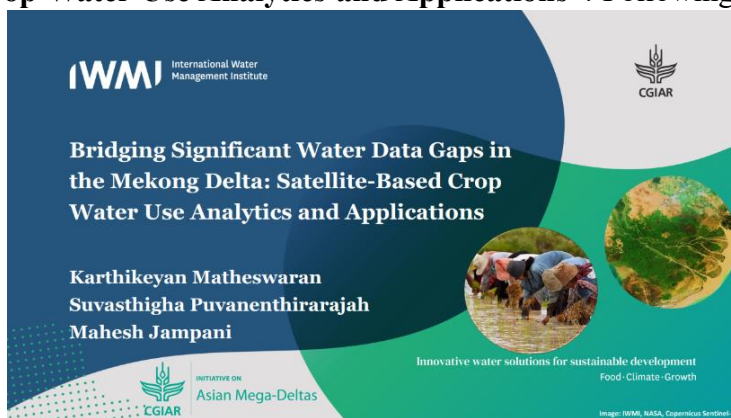
Mr. Sok Sao, Researcher of World Fish, delivered a presentation on “**Asian Mega Deltas Initiative (AMD) and Food System Governance in the Mekong Delta Cambodia**”. During his presentation, he mentioned that the project has five focus areas of work packages namely: (i) Adapting Deltaic Production Systems, (ii). Nutrition-Sensitive Deltaic Agri-Food Systems, (iii) Innovative Financing Mechanisms to De-Risk Delta Value Chains, (iv) Joined-Up Governance for Gender Equitable and Socially Inclusive National Resource Food System and (v) Evidence-Based Delta development Planning. The project is also being implemented in Vietnam, Myanmar, India, Bangladesh. He also added that the work package number 2 and number 4 were the main topics for this workshop. He pointed out that Boeung Sneh area in Prey Veng province and Boeung Ream community fish refuge in Kampong Thom province were the project target areas. He also added that the project aimed to deeply study the interaction between community fish refuge, community



fisheries, water user community, eco-tourism, irrigation, and rice production among the project areas. As a result, the project found that there was a change in water level and topography, increasing rice planting season (2-3 times/year), increasing pesticides usage and demand for agricultural water, decrease in fisheries resources and ecosystem, and limitation of interventions from other relevant institutions. Finally, he expressed gratitude and appreciated all project partners for their valuable contribution.

By Mr. Karthi/Mahesh

Mr. Karthikeyan, from IWMI presented a study on **“Bridging Significant Water Data Gaps in the Mekong Delta: Satellite-Based Crop Water Use Analytics and Applications”**. Following the objectives of AMD project, this study aimed to addressing key data to support decision-making, application of data-driven artificial intelligence models for mitigation risks in the Asian Mega Deltas (salinity forecasting) and reframing the hydrological issues within the socio-hydrological lens. During his presentation, he illustrated the biggest data gap in water management in Mekong Delta as well as providing technical framework to address the issue. It was also found that agriculture was the largest water user. However, there is a lack of data on water use by crops, which varies significantly over space and time. Last but not least, he also demonstrated Ongoing and future work such as capacity building events on the use of ET for irrigation system management, supporting data-driven decision-making and policy formulation for sustainable delta management in Mekong and Ganges, and application in Cambodia for Community Fish Refuges (CFR) and irrigation schemes.



By Dr. Heng Kong

Dr. Heng Kong, Director of IFReDI, FiA shared a valuable study on **“Improving fisheries management through water governance and integrated approach”**. First and foremost, he expressed the significant source of water in Cambodia, water value and key challenges. He mentioned that the annual rainfall pattern in Cambodia has been changed annually, especially in Tonle Sap Lake. Similarly, the water regime that Cambodia, Lao, and Vietnam received from the Mekong River have also changed from time to time. The Mekong River has provided valuable water and fisheries



resources for people in the region to support their livelihoods and regional economic growth. However, the changes in level of water resource from either raining regime or Mekong River water source have generated the negative impacts on Cambodians in terms of food security and nutrition, especially for those who mainly relied on fisheries and agricultural activities. He also added that rice and fish are important for Cambodians. Climate change and Hydropower dam also the key factors affected on water in Tonle Sap Lake and Cambodians people who have lived surrounding the lake. On the other hand, agricultural land use also increased which affected fisheries resource and sector. The water and fisheries resources management in the local areas of the country were limited, especially in the dry season. Indeed, the awareness of saving water among local people is also limited. He also mentioned that all these issues were the key challenges which need to be addressed. To solve these issues, he also provided some important solutions such as: strengthening district-technical working groups (D-TWG) that have been established, encouragement communities to take part in decision making in water and fisheries resources management, developing plans by providing technical assistance, budget, and other support from D-TWG, especially commune authorities. Finally, he also provided some recommendation to handle these issues including strengthening collaboration of water management with other relevant stakeholders, especially commune and district authorities to solve the challenges, strengthening the collaboration between community water user, community fish refuge, and community fisheries to ensure that the fisheries resource has been protected and provided as a significant food and nutrition source for local people in Cambodia.

By Mr. Sean Vichet

Mr. Sean Vichet, Research Fellow of World Fish, delivered a presentation on “**Promoting Climate Resilience and Productivity in the Mekong Delta**”. This study focused the trends of catching and using rice-field fisheries in rural Cambodia and promoting climate resilience and productivity in the Mekong River by improving the rice-field ponds. There are some key findings that he illustrated during his presentation. First, the rainy season emphasized the importance of catching and consumption fish which is driven by favorable environmental conditions



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of field fisheries. In contrast, the dry season indicated that the fish caught in the field was low due to the availability of water, which underscores the importance of flooded fields that affected areas of community fish refuge. Second, it was related to blackfish. Most of the fish caught in the field are spawning fish grown in the lowlands around seasonally flooded fishponds. Unlike white fish species, they depend on the flow of the Mekong River for growth or reproduction. Therefore, they are less affected by dams or changes in water flow, which mainly affect reproduction and circulation. In terms of economic trends and prices, the price of fish in the dry season is high due to lower yield whereas price of fish in the rainy season is low due to higher fish yields. The price

of rice fish remains competitive and safer in terms of consumption compared to other protein sources. Hence, it reflected the economic potential in these communities. Third, it was related to improving rice field fisheries management. It was found that the average fish yield in normal ponds was lower than improved fishponds. At the end of his presentation, he also pointed out some important actions that will be needed to implement in the future such as: strengthening the role of fish refuge communities in the Mekong Delta in managing the rice field fisheries system, which will increase the efficiency of sustainable fishing for the people in those areas; promoting the integration of field ponds into community-based water management. This initiative will enhance agricultural resilience, reduce dependence on external water sources and promote self-sufficiency for the benefit of farmers and communities; further study on fish catches and consumption rice field fisheries in the Mekong Delta of Cambodia by examining the fish catch fish consumption, aquatic animals, and aquatic plants.

By Mr. Phrum Sophat

Mr. Phrum Sophat, Ba Phnom district administration, delivered his speech on “**General Landscape of Boeung Sneh and District-Technical Working Group (D-TWG)**”. First and foremost, he provided a general overview of Boeung Sneh with regard to fisheries resource, water resource, agriculture, environment and eco-tourism. Relating to fisheries resource, Boeung Sneh has 4 community fisheries and 9 conservation places. Regarding water resources, Boeung Sneh has 5,100 ha of total lake area and 85,000, 000 m³ of water volume.

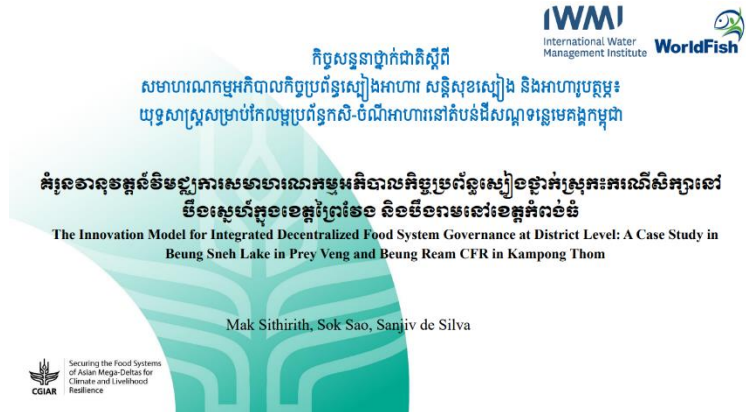


There are 9,434 households receiving beneficiaries from the Boeung Sneh. Boeung Sneh is covered by flooded forest approximately 10 ha and has more than 40 bird species. Additionally, the cover of land crops is about 18,100 hectares, of which 6,800 ha is the area of rice in dry season. Relating to agriculture activities at Boeung Sneh, there are 8,228 households who have depended on agriculture. People in that area can plant rice from 2 to 3 times per year. During his presentation, he also expressed that Boeung Sneh created a district-technical working group (D-TWG) which aimed to solve the problems that occurred in the Boeung Sneh area. He also showed the next 5 years visions of D-TWG at Boeung Sneh. The first, D-TWG, aims to identify the purposes and strategies that the team wants to achieve in the next 5 years. Second, D-TWG aims to open the opportunity for all relevant parties to participate in organizing the vision of the community and identify activities plan together to solve the problems. Furthermore, he also showed some key challenges that D-TWG team have faced and need to be improved such as capacity building among D-TWG, D-TWG need further support from government agencies at provincial and national levels and other relevant development partners.

By Dr. Mak Sithirith

Mr. Mak Sithirith, Country Manager of World Fish Cambodia, delivered a presentation on “**The Innovation Model for Integrated Decentralized Food System Governance at District Level: A Case Study in Boeung Sneh Lake in Prey Veng and Boeung Ream CFR in Kampong Thom**”.

During his presentation, he mentioned that the majority of Cambodians relied on agricultural activities. The main food source for Cambodian is rice and fish. Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake have positive impacts on rice production and fish. Hence, enhancing rice production and productivity are necessary for Cambodia to improving food security in the country.



However, climate change, natural disasters, the changes of rainfall pattern, hydropower dams, increase of population and development impacted food production at Mekong Deltaic and Tonle Sap Lake. AMD project that was initiative developed by CGIAR in 2022 to contribute to minimize these challenges. He continued to add that AMD project was a three-year project (from 2022-2024). This project is divided into two phases: Phase I focused on food production system at Mekong Deltaic while phase II focused on innovation model for integrated decentralized food system governance at district level, specifically at Boeung Sneh Lake in Prey Veng and Boeung Ream in Kampong Thom province. The studies in phase I were conducted in Prey Veng, Takeo, and Kampong Thom provinces. The results of the studies revealed that rice production has increased 13% between 2017 and 2023 (10.5 million ton in 2017 and 12 million ton in 2023). Yet, the management and development of water, land, fisheries and other natural resources remained limited. For phase II, the project conducted innovation model for integrated decentralized food system governance at district level, specifically at Boeung Sneh Lake in Prey Veng and Boeung Ream in Kampong Thom province which aimed to extend this practice in the future. In addition, he also pointed out the challenges and limitations which resulted from phase II activity. First, the innovation model for integrated decentralized food system governance at district level just established for 1 year which has not shown fruitful results. Hence, further support for this work is required and extended to other districts in the country. Second, transferring capacity in terms of roles and responsibilities to district level, technical budget resource and power are limited. Third, coordination and cooperation remain centralized and sectoral, sometimes decentralized but not integrated. It needs to build the cultures of integrated decentralized food system governance at the district level).

By Dr. Sok Sovannarith

Dr. Sok Sovannarith, Deputy Director, Department FSN & Health of CARD, gave a presentation on “**Governance of the Food and Nutrition System in Cambodia**”. His presentation mainly focused on: (i) overview of the food system, food security and the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition; (ii) Overview of the SDG2 goal and global initiatives; (iii) Cambodia’s initiatives to

contribute to achieve the SDG2; and (iv) Food System /Nutrition Governance Framework. He mentioned that there are 4 main elements of food security consisting of availability of food, accessibility of food, consumption and absorption of food, and food stability. He continued to add that food security, and the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition started from pregnant women affected to infant. If pregnant women faced malnutrition, it would affect their infant by reducing growth of infant both body and brain growth as well as their potential child development and future life. As a result of this the children will easily take risk of any diseases. Consequently, the children will not be able to earn much income for accessing



healthy diets when they grow up due to ineffectiveness of study's results. Hence, improving food security and nutrition system in Cambodia and the global is significant. He also expressed that this response aligned with SDG2 which aimed to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. Relevant to the global initiative, Cambodia government also developed strategies for Cambodia SDG which aimed to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. In addition, Cambodia government/CARD have been actively participating the global's initiatives such as Scaling Up Nutrition in 2014, United Nation Food System Submit (UNFSS) in 2021, and regularly attended the COP meetings. Furthermore, Cambodia is also a co-founder of ACF and committed to key achievement indicators of Nutrition for Growth (N4Gs) and collaborates with regional secretariat of Capacity for Nutrition (C4N). Finally, he also mentioned that Cambodia government also set up national and sub-national coordination platforms such as the Technical Working Group for Food Security and nutrition (TWG-FSN) and Provincial Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition (PWG-FSN) in order to enhance food system and nutrition in Cambodia.

By Mrs. Khiev Pirom

Ms. Khiev Pirom, a Research Associate of CDRI, delivered a presentation on "**Household food consumption: Strategies focused on Agro-Food systems for Improved Nutrition and Health**".

There were three main objectives of her study. First, the study aimed to analyses the change of food consumption and nutrients intake. Second, the study aimed to identify factors that influence food consumption behaviors and nutrients intake. Her study's findings revealed that: food take-away various among urban, rural, households pose



ID poor or non poses, and households in Phnom Penh city. Among these areas, Phnom Penh was found as the place that has the highest number of consumptions. The study found that food consumption and expense, especially on alcohol, increased from 2004-2021. Rice and meat are the most consumed by households in the rural areas. Plus, own products consumption number is 22% in the rural and 12% in urban area. According to the results of her study, she recommended that: strengthening healthy diet (including nutrition and affordability) is needed, enhancing awareness among consumers on health issues caused by unhealthy diets, establishing policy support for vulnerable groups by linking to the awareness of food consumptions and support local products (crops and livestock).

By Mr. Phal Raksmeay

Mr. Phal Raksmeay, a Research Associate of CDRI, delivered a presentation on "**Food consumption behaviors and Chronic illness in Rural Areas**". The specific objectives of the study included: (i) To assess the prevalence of chronic illnesses in the urban Phnom Penh and five deltaic provinces, (ii) To assess the food consumption, socio-demographic, and location factors affecting the prevalence of chronic illnesses. Based on his study's findings, he expressed that about 63% of 603 households have chronic illnesses which are caused by food consumption. Those chronic illnesses included diabetes, heart disease, obesity, kidney, cancer, stroke. His study also found that aging, gender, and soft drink are the main factors caused the chronic illness. For instance, households that frequently consume soft drinks are more likely to face diabetes multiple times compared to those households who did not frequently consume soft drinks. As soft drinks are commonly sale and easy for accessibility, it has driven to increase the number of consumers. Mobile street vendors and local markets are reported to be the most available and accessible places. Hence, consumer's perception priorities to the affordable prices, and accessibility over the food quality. Finally, he recommended increasing the awareness of chronic illnesses that are caused by unhealthy food consumption is important. Indeed, the increase in diet quality and support local people in producing agriculture products is also significant. Last but not least, providing school meal programs and promoting well-being would be contributing to this issue.



By Mr. Vanna Phuong Vichea

Mr. Vanna Phuong Vichea, Research Associate of CDRI, gave his presentation on "Cost assessment on Integrated School-grown Gardening in School Feeding program". The objectives of the study included: (1) To provide an estimate of the actual cost of the school meal program (current state) based on the actual expenditures of the academic year (AY 2022-2023) *Estimate both Total costs*

& Related costs (By estimate Cost Per Child (Per beneficiary)); (2) To compare the effectiveness and efficiency of the different modalities; (3) To provide an estimate of the level of nutrition intake of the students in the targeted schools , (4) To provide related benefits/trade-offs of the implementation of the school grown gardening in the school meal program in the targeted schools. His study's findings revealed the difference between State-Run, WFP-Run, and School-Grown Gardening. In addition, the study revealed that insufficient nutrient-intake (the 100-kcal) difference could make students feel hungry at mid-day and lose concentration among the study beneficiaries. He also pointed out the key challenges of implementing school-grown gardening such as technicality in growing veggies to withstand harsh weather and topology, weathering and irrigation system, and the linkage between the suppliers and the providers (supplying difficulties). At the end of his presentation, he provided some recommendations including: Financial consideration (increase budget to \$0.26), standardized guideline for meals that provide to the students at the maximum requirement at least 20-25% of the daily energy intake (roughly 400-500 kcal per breakfast consumption), school-grown technical supports, diversifying nutritional intervention support for students, and promoting local product consumption by introducing specific products to ensure the nutrient absorption of the students.



3. Questions and Answers for the Presentations

In this workshop, the participants actively participated providing feedback, comments, and raised questions to the presenters which were the significant inputs for the workshop. In particular, the first participant tried to better understand the management of Boeung Sneh before the AMD project intervention. In response to this point, the presenter who is a Ba Phnom district administration responded that Boeung Sneh also had a mechanism of management before the AMD project intervention. Yet, the management depended on each governance office from different institutions. It meant that they worked separately to solve the problems. It was different from what AMD project intervened. The project had set up the mechanism that allowed all relevant institutions and other development partners to work together to solve and improve the management of Boeung Sneh. It was a good mechanism that made positive impacts on the people in the areas as well as protecting natural resources.

The second participant also raised a question that aimed to better understand and seek the possible policies and strategies for water retention. To respond to this question, the presenter pointed out that the management of water is important. To enhance the effectiveness of water management, there is a need for a clear policy framework, contributions from all relevant government institutions and development partners, and resource support. Hence, we need to further facilitate and support by integrating all these elements together in order to improve water management. For instance, the management of water in Boeung Sneh started from the local level and the community worked together. Again, a good mechanism and budget support are needed for long-term actions.

Last but not least, the participants who are the expert officers from government institutions also provided some recommendations to the researchers regarding the data source usage in their studies. The data from any Cambodian ministries are recommended and encouraged to use in their studies rather than using data from other sources.

4. Panel Discussion

SDG2: "End hunger, achieve better food security and nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture" is the goal we all want to achieve by 2030. To achieve this goal requires relevant institutions and stakeholders to participate in the implementation of various actions together and have a coordination mechanism at all levels (both international and sub-national levels). Hence, this workshop raised a topic: "Promoting Multi-Level Coordination for Effective Food Governance" as a topic for panel discussion of the workshop. The panel discussion was facilitated by Dr. SOK Sovannarith and the panelist for this discussion included:

- H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary General of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
- H.E. Prem Ratha, Deputy Governor of Kampong Thom Province and Chairman of PWG-FSN of Kampong Thom province.
- Dr. Heng Kong, Director of Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute (IFReDI)
- Mr. Bin Sam Ol, Deputy Governor of Ba Phnom District
- Mr. Chum Virak, Deputy Governor of Santuk District
- Mr. Prum Sophat, Director of Ba Phnom District Agriculture Office

- Mr. Nav Ra, Director of Santuk District Agriculture Office.



There were 4 main questions raised in this panel discussion as mentioned below:

1. According to the presentations in today's workshop, we have established Food Security and Nutrition Coordination Mechanism at national level (TWG-FSN) and provincial level (PWG-FSN). Is the initiation of coordination mechanisms for governance of food and agri-food systems, especially territorial, fisheries and natural resources governance at the district level (D-TWGs) important? If so, why?
2. What are the difficulties in setting up the implementation of the District Technical Working Group (D-TWG) under the supported pilot project by World Fish?
3. How do we strengthen and support the District Technical Working Group (D-TWG)?
4. How do D-TWGs seek support from the Food Security and Nutrition Coordinating Steering Team (PWG-FSN) at provincial level?

In response to the first question, the panelists responded that the establishment of district-technical working group (D-TWG) is very important for natural resource management and improving food system and nutrition for the local people. In fact, Cambodia have established this mechanism at national and provincial levels which allow relevant stakeholders working together to improve food security and nutrition in the country as well as seeking the investment and support for this action.

In addition, the extension of this establishment at district level is also important which helps to enhance food security and nutrition at Boeung Sneh and Boeung Ream, for instance, and other areas in the future. All panelist agreed and supported the establishment of D-TWG, and hopefully this work would continue to extend to other districts in Cambodia. Furthermore, the panelists also requested to WorldFish and other development partners for further support D-TWG to enhancing food security and nutrition for Cambodians.

Regarding the second question, it is noticed that there are no remarkable difficulties in setting up the implementation of the District Technical Working Group (D-TWG) that were raised in the discussion. However, the panelist also requested the WorldFish organization to further support the established D-TWGs as these teams are just established in a short period of time (1 year). Therefore, they do need further support for long-term actions.

In response to the third question, the panelists pointed out that specific leadership mechanism, capacity building among leaders of technical working groups, seeking fund support, learning and sharing experience were key important actions to strengthen and support the District Technical Working Group (D-TWG). To achieve this, the panelists also requested other development partners continue their contribution to support these new D-TWGs.

Responding to the fourth question, the panelists suggested that collaboration between D-TWG and PWG-FSN was important for D-TWGs to seek support from Provincial Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition (PWG-FSN) at provincial level. Seeking support from other relevant stakeholders was also important for D-TWGs. In addition, D-TWG should further study and observe their work and identify what they need to do or improve for future work.

5. Closing Remark

H.E. Dr. Chea Samnang, Deputy Chairman of CARD, expressed gratitude to WorldFish, IWMI, CDRI, CGIAR, and all stakeholders involved in the Asian Mega Delta (AMD) project, emphasizing its importance in strengthening food security and nutrition in Cambodia. He acknowledged the significant contributions of provincial leaders and the General Secretariat of the Council for Agricultural Development and highlighted the need to consider the next steps as the district-level pilot phase of the project will end in the next month.



Key recommendations from H.E. Chea Samnang included:

- 1. District-Level Structures:** Assess the sufficiency of the current project structure at the district level, both technical and trial-based, and consider expanding it to other provinces or districts while addressing identified gaps.

2. **Integration with National Strategy:** Use the project as a case study to inform the implementation of the *3rd National Strategy on Food Security and Nutrition (2024–2028)*. Mechanisms for experience-sharing and progress reporting should be enhanced at both national and provincial levels.
3. **Steering Committee Formation:** Establish a steering committee to ensure alignment of the project with the Royal Government's policies, particularly if additional organizational support is provided.
4. **TWG Engagement:** Share project outcomes with the *Technical Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition (TWG-FSN)* to promote participation, ensure sustainability, and explore opportunities for scaling up initiatives.

He also stressed the importance of accurate data usage, urging caution when presenting figures and recommending reliance on official statistics from the National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, and other ministries. Lastly, he noted that while the project benefits local and commune levels, there is a need to evaluate how commune funds are utilized to support conservation efforts in project areas. H.E. Chea Samnang concluded by encouraging collaboration to build on the project's successes and ensure its long-term impact.

Annex 1. List of Participants

From Government Institutions

| No. | Name | Position | Institution |
|-----|----------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1 | អ៊ិត ម៉ាតារា | អនុប្រធាន | CARD |
| 2 | ស៊ុន សារ៉ាត | ទីប្រឹក្សា | CARD/NI |
| 3 | លី រតនា | ប្រធានការិយាល័យ | ល.ល.ជ |
| 4 | ស្នួន ងន់លី | ប្រធាននាយកដ្ឋាន | ក.ក.ជ |
| 5 | អ៊ុល តុលា | ទីប្រឹក្សា (M&E) | (MoH/NNP) |
| 6 | អាំង ហ៊ុយយូ | ជំនួយការ | ក.ក.ជ |
| 7 | មាស វណ្ណា | មន្ត្រី | ក.ក.ជ |
| 8 | អ៊ុក ឆៃយ៉ា | អនុការិយាល័យ | MRD |
| 9 | វង់ ឡូ | ប្រធានមន្ទីរ | N/A |
| 10 | យឹម សណ្តាប់ | N/A | MoE |
| 11 | ជា គង់ | អនុ. | N/A |
| 12 | ប៉ាក ចន្ទា | មន្ត្រីស្រុក | កំពង់ធំ |
| 13 | ឡៅ សំទ្វី | អគ្គរង | ក.ក.ជ |
| 14 | អ៊ុក ហ្សូលីនដា | មន្ត្រី | NCDSS |
| 15 | សូ ពៅចិន្តា | ប្រធានការិយាល័យ | MRD |

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| 16 | គង់ ស្រីហ៊ុច | មន្ត្រី | នាយកដ្ឋានកសិកម្មនិងឧស្សាហកម្ម |
| 17 | ទូច សុក្រិត | អគ្គ.រង | CARD |
| 18 | ភិន សុភាករណ | ជំនួយការ | CARD |
| 19 | នូវ សង្ហាពិសិដ្ឋ | ជំនួយការ | CARD |
| 20 | ឈឹម សុគន្ធី | អគ្គ.រង | ក្រ.ស.ជ.ស |
| 21 | អារាង ប៊ុនធឿន | អនុប្រធានមន្ទីរ | មន្ទីរឃីរស្ថានខេត្តកំពង់ធំ |
| 22 | ព្រំ សុផាត | ប្រធានការិយាល័យ | រដ្ឋបាលស្រុកបាភ្នំ |
| 23 | ប៊ិន សំអុល | អភិបាលរង | រដ្ឋបាលស្រុកបាភ្នំ |
| 24 | ឡេង លិក្ខណា | អភិបាលរង | រដ្ឋបាលស្រុកបាភ្នំ |
| 25 | ខៀវ សាម៉េត | N/A | ស្វាយអន្ទរ |
| 26 | ព្រំ វីរៈ | សាស្ត្រាចារ្យ | សាកលវិទ្យាល័យភូមិន្ទភ្នំពេញ |
| 27 | ជិន ស៊ីថា | នាយកដ្ឋាន | ផលផលកំពង់ធំ |
| 28 | ព្រឹម រដ្ឋា | អភិបាលខេត្ត | កំពង់ធំ |
| 29 | ជា សុមាលីណា | ប្រធាននាយកដ្ឋាន | CARD |
| 30 | តុង យី | អនុ.មន្ទីរ | កំពង់ធំ |
| 31 | ឈឹម សុខហេង | អនុ.មន្ទីរ | ព្រៃវែង |
| 32 | សៅ សុភទ | មន្ត្រីផែនការ | សាលាខេត្តព្រៃវែង |
| 33 | សែម សារុធ | អនុ.មន្ទីរ | អភិវឌ្ឍន៍ខេត្ត |
| 34 | គង់ វណ្ណា | ទីប្រឹក្សា | CARD |
| 35 | សួន ស្រង | អភិបាលរង | ស្រុកស្វាយអន្ទរ |
| 36 | ឌឹម ស៊ីថា | ប្រធានការិ. កសិកម្ម | ស្រុកស្វាយអន្ទរ |
| 37 | ចោង វណ្ណាវ៉ត | ប្រធានការិ. កសិកម្ម | ពាមរក៍ |
| 38 | តូច វ៉ាន់ថា | ប្រធានមន្ទីរ | ឃីរស្ថានព្រៃវែង |
| 39 | មៀច យ៉ាឌី | ប្រធានការិ. | A020/MAFF |
| 40 | ឈឹម សុខា | ទីប្រឹក្សា | CARD |
| 41 | ហែម សុភាព | ទីប្រឹក្សា | CARD |
| 42 | ប៊ឹង សេរីហ៊ុច | អនុ.ការិ | GDA/MAFF |
| 43 | ស៊ុន ទ្រី | អនុប្រធានការិ. | PDRD |
| 44 | ចាន់ ហុក | អនុ.ការិ.កសិកម្ម | សាលាស្រុកសន្ទុក |
| 45 | ខាត់ ញេស | នាយករដ្ឋបាល | សាលាស្រុកសន្ទុក |

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| 46 | ក្លុង សាវ៉ាត | អភិបាលរង | ពាមរ៉ក |
| 47 | ជុំ រ៉ី: | អភិបាលរង | សន្ទុក |
| 48 | ស្ទួន វ៉ាស៊ី | អគ្គលេខាធិការរង | ក/ជ |
| 49 | ជូ ប៊ិនហៀង | ទីប្រឹក្សា | ក.ក.ជ |
| 50 | ណី សុខយ៉ម | ទីប្រឹក្សា | ក.ក.ជ |
| 51 | មួន វិមាន | ជំនួយការ | ក.ក.ជ |
| 52 | ឆ្លោក កាំ | មេភូមិ | ជ័យជំនះ |
| 53 | អួន ស៊ីណាត | នាយខណ្ឌ | ជនផល ៧/ |
| 54 | នី ពិសិដ្ឋ | អនុ.ការិ | FiA/MAFF |
| 55 | យ៉ាន់ វ៉ាន់យ៉ង | អគ្គលេខាធិការរង | OVOP |
| 56 | ងន សារណៈ | អគ្គលេខាធិការរង | OVOP |
| 57 | គង់ បុណ្យ | ជំនួយការ | CARD/OVOP |

From Development Partner

| No. | Name | Position | Institution |
|-----|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1 | នៅ សារ៉ាត | ទីប្រឹក្សា | GIZ - MUSEFO |
| 2 | សុខ សៅ | Researcher | WorldFish |
| 3 | អង ឈាងហុង | ទីប្រឹក្សា | GIZ |
| 4 | អ៊ុក រស្មី | N/A | WorldFish |
| 5 | កែ សំរឿន | PMS | USAID |
| 6 | អ៊ុក រស្មី | N/A | WorldFish |
| 7 | ឡុយ ស៊ីណាក់ | N/A | WorldFish |
| 8 | ផៃ សុខចេង | Staff | WorldFish |
| 9 | ឈុន សុភក្ស | Staff | WorldFish |
| 10 | ហ៊ុន វណ្ណារី | N/A | Helen Keller |
| 11 | ស៊ាន វិចិត្រ | បុគ្គលិក | Worldfish |
| 12 | ឡាយ សេងហ៊ី | អ្នកបកប្រែ | Servies |
| 13 | Elizabet camen | Senior Advisor | MFAT NZ |
| 14 | Deepa Joshe | Senior leader | IWMI |
| 15 | Dr. Hong kong | Director | IFReDI |
| 16 | Sanoir Desizva | Researcher | IWMI |
| 17 | សួន ពិនរក្ស | អ្នកជំនាញកម្មវិធី | IFAD |

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| 18 | ស៊ឹម សុខចេង | នាយក | CDRI |
| 19 | វណ្ណា ភូងវិជ្ជា | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |
| 20 | អ៊ុយ សុខមាស | FNS | IIRR |
| 21 | កែវ សម្បត្តិ | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |
| 22 | វេស ច័ន្ទវល្លិ | អ្នកទំនាក់ទំនង | CDRI |
| 23 | ផល រស្មី | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |
| 24 | អូន សុខម៉ូលី | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |
| 25 | សិ ចរិយា | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |
| 26 | ខៀវ ភិរម្យ | អ្នកស្រាវជ្រាវ | CDRI |

From Community

| No. | Name | Position | Institution |
|-----|------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | ប៉ាន់ យន | ប្រធានសហគមន៍ | នេសាទបឹងស្នេហ៍ |
| 2 | ស៊ឹម សេង | ប្រធានសហគមន៍ | បឹងស្នេហ៍សំរោង |
| 3 | ញ៉ាន ប្រុង | ប្រធានសហគមន៍ | តាំងក្រសាំង |
| 4 | ណារ៉ា វ៉ា | ប្រជាភិកម្មស្រុក | ស្រុកសន្ទុក |

From University

| No. | Name | Position | Institution |
|-----|------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 | យឹម សុផល្លា | គ្រូបង្រៀន | RUA |
| 2 | ព្រី វីរៈ | សាស្ត្រាចារ្យ | RUPP |
| 3 | គុយ គឹមលន | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 4 | ហាក់ ចរិយា | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 5 | ជាន ស្រីណាន | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 6 | សៀម ស្រីឡា | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 7 | គង់ បញ្ញាពិសិដ្ឋ | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 8 | សុខ ធីតា | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 9 | វង់ ស្រីទុច | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 10 | យ៉ោក សុខុំ | និស្សិត | RUA |

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| 11 | យុទ្ធិ ជាតិ | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 12 | Vann Sophorn | N/A | N/A |
| 13 | វ៉ុន ភារ៉ាត់ | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 14 | ទេព ច័ន្ទសុថាត់ | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 15 | ញ៉ូ ប៊ុនស័ង | និស្សិត | RUA |
| 16 | ស៊ិន កែវ | HR | Sovann Phum |
| 17 | សៀន ចន្ទា | និស្សិត | RUA |