Ministry of Education Youth and Sports

Action Research on the Gender Dimension of Skills Development in Cambodia

Focus on the informal sector, populations living in poverty and social exclusion

Kyoko Kusakabe,
Yim Pich Malika and Research team of
The Department of Technical
Vocational Education and Training

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Cambodia

and

International Labour Office (ILO) Bangkok and Geneva

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Kyoko Kusakabe, Yim Pich Malika and
Research team of the Department of Technical Vocational Education and Training,
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Cambodia and
International Labour Office (ILO), Bangkok and Geneva

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Foreword

The positive role of girls and women in the development of a country and the immense impact of the educated female population in societal growth is being increasingly recognized the world over. Affirmative action to provide equal access to girls at all levels of education and to provide equal employment opportunities to women is evidence of the realization of multiple benefits from an educated and trained female population. While there has been a tremendous transformation of the role of women in the developed countries, much has still to be done in the developing countries. In many of the developing countries, women are still considered the weaker sex and are confined to jobs, which can be categorized as feminine jobs. There have been some notable exceptions, but more efforts should be made to address gender inequalities in policies and programmers and provide equal opportunities to girls and women so that they are truly equal with the males of society.

The stark reality in many countries is that women have limited access to the labour market. Furthermore, they face a lot of discrimination in the workplace. Girls and women from disadvantaged groups are often exploited, especially if they are uneducated. As a result, many of them end up in low-pay and low-status jobs. Quality vocational training can provide the opportunity to these girls and women to be more employable and more productive. Empirical studies have proven that educating and training women have multiple benefits not only in better family health but also in better productivity and a better society. These are powerful reasons to provide education and quality vocational training to females. While every effort should be made to provide schooling for the marginalized females, many of them cannot go back to school because of their compulsion to earn to survive. Society must help these people to earn more. This can be done through vocational training so that the people can become better employed and become better earners.

Women have to confront discrimination in both access to employment and in the workplace. Discrimination will not disappear automatically. There has to be a conscious effort on the part of all sections of society to combat this discrimination and promote equality in the workplace. Political will is also mandatory to enforce employers to promote equality in the workplace, which will impact on poverty reduction and help promote sustainable development.

Bearing the above in mind, the Government of Cambodia and ILO in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) undertook action research on two major vocational training programs under the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DTVET) with the specific aim of identifying good practices which promote not only women's access to vocational training but also to promote equality in the workplace. As Cambodia readies itself to enter WTO, the development of relevant skills and competencies will be crucial for the country to play an effective role not only within the region but also within the world at large.

On behalf of DTVET, I would like to express my happiness on the production of this report, which has been prepared in both Khmer and English, with the English version used in the ILO's Global Report, *'Time for Equality at Work'*. The Government of Cambodia hopes that this report will be enlightening to those working in the vocational field in Cambodia and be of interest to all those Cambodians interested in promoting gender equality.

H.E. Pich Sophoan
Director General
Directorate General of Higher Education and
Technical-Vocational Education and Training
Royal Government of Cambodia

Preface

Increased access for girls and women to education and training plays an important role worldwide in providing them with more and better jobs. This also rings true in Asia, where the feminization of the labour market has become a reality. However, girls and women from low-income or other marginalized population groups continue to have limited and less attractive labour market choices. They often find themselves in 'women's jobs', not only because they are considered to be the weaker sex, through ingrained cultural traditions and beliefs, but also because they generally only gain access to skills training opportunities within a limited range of occupations that are considered to be suitable for them.

These two factors combined continue to limit equal access and participation of women in the labour market and give rise to discrimination at work. Quality vocational training can act as a powerful device to overcome unproductive, volatile, low-paid and low-status work in which women from disadvantaged population groups are often clustered.

The 2003 International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Report, 'Time for Equality at Work', states that the elimination of such discrimination benefits not only individuals, but extends to the economy and society, resulting in higher economic growth rates, political stability and social justice for all.

While the elimination of discrimination is possible, effective and desirable in free and competitive societies, discrimination in employment and training will not vanish by itself, nor will the market, on its own, take care of its elimination. Poverty reduction and sustainable development will only take place if institutions and practices move towards the explicit promotion of equality.

Recognizing the need for such a shift, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Government of Cambodia and the ILO carried out action research on two major vocational training programmes under the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in cooperation with the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), with the aim of drawing on existing experiences and identifying good practices that can increase women's access to vocational training. Competitive skills development is vital for Cambodia in light of global economic realities, and investment in all human resources will be crucial.

This report has been published in both Khmer and English. The English version has been utilized as input for 'Time for Equality at Work', which has been discussed at the 2003 International Labour Conference. It is the sincere hope of the ILO Office in Bangkok that the report will serve to inform policy makers in the vocational training field in Cambodia, and be an inspiration for Cambodian researchers interested in the promotion of gender equality.

Christine Evans-Klock
Director
Subregional Office for East Asia
International Labour Office, Bangkok

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The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to ILO's specialists Amelita King-Dejardin for providing initial guidelines for the study, and Nelien Haspels for continuous support, guidance, and constructive comments. Without her inputs and encouragement, this study would not have been completed. Our thanks also go to Sam Ian Cummings, Elizabeth Morris and Irene Kyoung-Hee Yu of the ILO Multidisciplinary Advisory Team for East Asia for their technical inputs, and to Sugunya Voradilokkul for secretarial assistance.

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List of abbreviations

ACLEDA	Association of Cambodian Local Economic Development Agencies
ADB	Asia Development Bank
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
CDC	Council for the Development of Cambodia
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey
CDRI	Cambodian Development Research Institute
CHDR	Cambodia Human Development Report
CSES	Cambodia Socio-Economic Survey
DoF	Department of Fisheries
DTVET	Department of technical and vocation education and training
EIU	Economic Intelligence Unit
GDN	Gender and Development Network
GEO	Gender and Equal Opportunity
GRET	Group de Recherches et d'Echanges Technologiques
HDI	Human Development Index
HPI	Human Poverty Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries
MFI	Micro-finance institutions
MFN	Most-favoured nation
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MoSALVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocation Training and Youth Rehabilitation
MoWVA	Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs
NEEEW	Integrated Economic Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Employment for Women in Cambodia
NTB	National Training Board
NTF	National Training Fund
PTC	Provincial training center
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SME	Small and Medium-size Enterprise
TENA	Training and Employment Needs Assessment
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
VTC	Vocational training center
WID	Women in Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Rationale and Methodology

In 2001, the International Labour Organization's (ILO) InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability (IFP/SKILLS) and concerned field offices initiated a global review of the effectiveness of vocational training to promote equal access to employment for men and women. Cambodia is one of the three countries in Asia participating in the global review besides Thailand and Nepal. This research addressed the question: Are skills development systems providing appropriate skills and equal access to training and jobs to young and adult women and men? The objectives of the research were to:

- analyze macro-economic and labour market trends, and employment patterns of women and men in Cambodia
- assess whether the training programmes have increased equal access of poor women and men to quality skills development for decent jobs and income
- identify good practices and lessons learned, and make recommendations on equality of opportunity and treatment in skills training services, and equality in training outcomes, for adoption and expansion of vocational training policies, programmes and practices which address the needs of women and men in poverty
- strengthen national efforts in improving vocational training programmes for women and men, and provide inputs for ILO policy advisory services and technical assistance programmes in the field of gender and skills development.

The research consisted of two components: macro analysis and action research. The macro analysis, based on secondary data, reviewed labour market trends, and women and men's access to vocational education and training. The action research analysed major training strategies and measures, reviewed the impact and outcomes of training, and drew lessons and good practices for the promotion of gender equality. Under the National Training Board, there are 20 government institutions which provide short term vocational training, 14 vocational training institutions of NGOs' and 54 private vocational training institutions. Out of these, six training centers under the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (DTVET) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) were selected for the research – four provincial training centers (PTCs) – in Kampot, Siem Reap, Battambang, and Kampong Cham – and two vocational training centers (VTCs) – in Battambang, and Preah Kosomak in Phnom Penh. Structured interviews were carried out with the directors; trainers (31 men and 8 women); current trainees (162 men and 65 women); and graduates (52 men and 49 women). In addition, focus group discussions were carried out with the current trainees. The action research was conducted during September – December 2001.

This research report is divided into five chapters. The first chapter describes the rationale, methodology and overview of the research. Chapter 2 provides a macro-analysis of the changes and trends in the labour market, economic changes and skill development in

Cambodia. Chapter 3 gives an overview of the vocational training institutions and systems in Cambodia, in particular the surveyed training centers under MoEYS. Women's access to these training centers and the barriers for women to participate and make full use of the vocational training systems is discussed. Chapter 4 analyses the quantitative and qualitative assessments of the training and its employment outcomes based on the survey in the six training centers selected for this study. The last chapter gives conclusions and recommendations based on the study.

Summary of Findings

In Cambodia, gender inequalities exist in various spheres of society. The Cambodian Human Development Report (CHDR) found that gender disparity in human development not only persists in all economic groups, but is actually greater among the richest 20 per cent of the population than among the poorer groups. The Human Poverty Index for women is 29 per cent larger than for men. Among the second richest 20 per cent of the population, the difference is even larger, amounting to 37 per cent. The CHDR concluded that the gender disparity in human poverty in Cambodia would not necessarily narrow with economic growth and rising consumption standards.

The macro-analysis showed that the labour force participation of women and men in Cambodia is equally high (65.9 per cent for women, 66.3 per cent for men in 1999). This reflects the necessity of Cambodian women to earn a living for the household. Especially notable was that the labour force participation rate of young women is higher in the 14-19 age group compared to boys of the same age, and the rate reverses after that, showing that young women quit school and join the labour force earlier than men.

Women are generally disadvantaged in the labour market because of job segregation and 'women's' work is generally less remunerated than 'men's' work. Traditional attitudes and gender ideologies give less priority to women and justify women's low wages. On average, men earn 23 per cent more than women. The wage level in Phnom Penh is much higher than in other areas, and the highest wage earning jobs such as machine operators and technicians are dominated by men. There are twice as much women who are employed as unpaid family worker compared to men. Even though women's labour force participation rate is high, and unemployment rate low, most are absorbed as unpaid family labour or in an occupation that gives lower remuneration compared to men.

Women's disadvantaged position in the labour market is further aggravated by women's low education and their heavy workload at home. There is no significant gender disparity in school enrolment rates until the fourth grade. However, a larger percentage of girls drops out of school. Girls' enrolment rate become lower, the higher the education level is. At the lower secondary level, the enrolment rate of boys is 68 per cent greater than that of girls. At the tertiary level, 85 per cent of students are men. The main factors contributing to the low enrolment of girls in higher education are: privatization of education; schools being far from the village; less importance attached to girls' education; reluctance to send

girls away from home; and the expectation by parents and society that girls should help in the household and assist the family financially.

Even though Cambodian women seem to possess strong decision making power in the day to day operation of the household, they have less decision making power over larger properties. They are also less represented in decision making positions in the public sphere, and, thus, have less influencing power on policy and legislation. It is imperative that women's capability and status in the labour market be improved to eradicate poverty in Cambodia.

The pronounced sex segregation in the labour market in Cambodia is reflected in the enrolment rates of women and men in vocational training. The overall majority of women trainees participates in courses which teach 'female skills' such as sewing, food processing and they form around half of the trainees in home gardening. Barber, wood and marble carving attract less than 15 per cent women. Courses in repair of household appliances, cars and motor cycles have participation rates of less than 5 per cent of women. No women were enrolled in carpentry, agricultural machinery, leather, welding, plough making, masonry and rice production, although female masons and especially rice farmers are commonly found. The PTCs provide a mix of male and female-dominated skills training, while VTCs provide training in male-dominated skills almost exclusively. In the PTCs, 71 per cent of trainees during 1996, 1999 and 2001, the reference years for this study, were women: two PTCs had around one-third of women trainees; one PTC had around half of male and female trainees; and in one PTC the number of women amounted to 86 per cent. In the VTCs less than 7 per cent of trainees were women during the reference years.

The training courses had an important impact on employment outcomes of the trainees. Almost two-thirds of the male graduates and 7 out of 10 female graduates were self-employed and had started a business after the training. Thirty per cent of respondent graduates became wage workers. No major gender difference was found in the employment status after graduation, but while the employability of women and men was almost the same, more women respondents were observed to have double or triple jobs. This is partly because many women work at home, where it is easier to combine jobs, but also because one job is not enough to make a living.

In the training centers studied, fewer mobile courses are currently provided as compared to the mid nineties, and most of the mobile training is now limited to agriculture-related courses. It was also noted that the average age of trainees is decreasing. This might indicate that it is becoming more difficult for working adults to attend training since more and more training courses are center-based. It was found that women have more difficulty in accessing transportation to come to the center. Almost all of the recent women trainees were from the provincial towns where the centers are located. The study showed that the average education level of trainees is higher than the national average, and also higher for current trainees compared to graduates. This might suggest that working poor women with low education are not able to access the training.

The overall majority of male graduates utilized the vocational skills learned during the training. However, almost one-third of the female graduates did not directly use the skills gained during the training for the following reasons. Income from the occupation in which women use the skills learned is often not enough to support the family. Sometimes family members oppose women's employment. For those women who took up non-traditionally female skills training, it was difficult to find employment in the field they were trained in because of the existing pronounced sex segregation in the labour market. This gender discrimination makes it difficult for women to take up employment in male-dominated fields even when they have shown high performance in the training courses.

'Male' occupations are generally better paid and have a higher status. Women are concentrated in lower paid work, and thus it is important that women are given more opportunity and space to improve their income and career in 'men's' jobs. There is a common understanding among the managers and trainers of the training centers that it is important to promote women in non-traditional occupations. However, there are three problems:

- promoting women in non-traditional occupations is not clearly stated in the policy and guidelines of the training centers especially in VTCs
- there is no clear strategy on how to promote women in non-traditional occupations
- there is still an ambivalence in the attitude of trainers. Seventy per cent of the trainers believe that women are suited for certain jobs only.

There has been some attempt by the training centers to challenge the sex segregation in vocational skills training. For example, in VTC Battambang, a graphic design course was provided exclusively to women. Graphic design, at the moment, is a relatively better-paid profession and is considered to be more of a man's occupation. But since it is still a new profession, it is possible to change this general perception.

Women have more problems in obtaining employment and market information, because they have less mobility compared to men, and, thus, their source of information for job vacancies is limited to PTCs and parents/relatives. Women graduates found that the certificate was useful, while men, more than women, found the network and support from the training centers beneficial.

PTCs provide credit to new graduates since 2000. However, it is only for new graduates, and it is given only once. For those in the remote villages, it is difficult to access the credit of PTCs, both for borrowing and for repaying. Fifty-three per cent of graduates in self-employment (48 per cent of men, 59 per cent of women) replied that they needed assistance in access to micro credit. Seventy per cent of current trainees (60 per cent of men, 83 per cent of women) said that they anticipate financial problems in achieving their plan for employment after graduation. There are not many credit sources suited for agricultural purposes. Access to credit is important for women. Women have less access to and decision making on assets, and, thus, have less power to mobilize their own financial resources.

Recommendations

1. Literacy training

The PTCs have eased the recruitment criteria so that illiterate and semi-literate women can access their training courses. It would be very useful if PTCs could add a literacy training component for illiterate and semi-literate women in their training courses.

2. Review the target groups for vocational training

Currently, the PTCs' special target groups are: female headed households, disabled people, demobilized soldiers, internally displaced people, returnees, eldest daughters, orphans, school drop-outs, and families with more than four children. The current trend shows that among the special target groups, the proportion of school drop-outs is increasing while participation rates of the other groups are decreasing. The skills and teaching methodologies for school drop-outs and other target groups with more occupational and life experience might differ. The PTCs need to prioritize among the target groups, decide which group they would like to focus on, and review the course schedule and the location, duration and timing of the training accordingly.

3. Improving access to training for vulnerable groups

In order to improve the access to training for those living in remote villages and those with heavy responsibility in sustaining the family through caring work and income generation, short term, regular, mobile training has to be offered in villages at times which suit the time schedule of trainees.

In order to improve the access to training for women school drop-outs from remote villages in center-based courses, it is important that adequate accommodation or transportation arrangements are made which are considered safe by women trainees and their parents.

Single women with children and elderly women living alone in Phnom Penh are very vulnerable and belong to the poorest population groups. MoEYS should consider whether skills training can be extended to this group.

4. Systematic approach to promote women in non-traditional occupations

PTC and VTC policies need to be explicit about the promotion of women in non-traditional skills and occupations. Several strategies can be adopted to realize this goal.

(i) *Recruitment.* When the trainers visit villages to recruit trainees, more encouragement can be given to recruit women in non-traditional skills. Even though women's labour force participation rate is high and women contribute significantly to the household economy, families do not prepare young women for the labour market as much as they invest in young men. Campaigns can be carried

out through the mass media, brochures, videos, and personal communications with trainers and other staff from the training centers.

(ii) *Increase in women trainers in non-traditional skills.* Among the respondents, there was only one woman trainer who was teaching non-traditionally female skills for women. There is no woman among new and younger trainers who are teaching non-traditional skills for women. It is important that there are more women trainers in non-traditional skills and the government-supported vocational training system can take the lead in employing women role models not only for the women trainees but in the whole society.

(iii) *Create a women-friendly learning environment in non-traditional skills training.* The study found that women trainees feel less comfortable in a male-dominated learning environment, and incidences of sexual harassment were more common in such an environment. Increasing the number of women trainees in non-traditional skills courses is important. Both male and female trainers should be trained in encouraging women to pursue a career in a non-traditional skills area and in providing a learning environment that is conducive for women.

(iv) *More employment opportunities for women in non-traditional skills.* Four strategies to challenge the stereotyped image of occupations are suggested

(a) *Giving skills training opportunities to women in newly emerging occupations.* A good practice was identified in VTC Battambang where a women-only course was organized in graphic design. This occupation tends to be seen as a male profession, but because it is a new field, this image may be changed.

(b) *Forming women-only technician groups.* Women graduates in non-traditional skills can form a group, and the PTCs and VTCs can support them by giving work contracts. Such arrangements already exist for male technicians and female weavers. This will not only serve role model purposes but will also provide on-the-job experience to women graduates so that they can gain confidence in pursuing their occupation.

(c) H*ighlighting successful women role models in jobs not considered suitable for them through media campaigns.* The mass media can support attitudinal changes in society by highlighting women's performance in non-traditional occupations.

(d) *Identifying employers willing to hire women in non-traditional skills.* There is a need to identify socially responsible male and female employers who are willing to recruit qualified women graduates with a non-traditional skill and public sector employers could set a good example in this respect.

5. Improvement of income, working conditions and status of female-dominated occupations

Compared to encouraging women in non-traditional jobs, improving training in female-dominated skills was given less attention in the training centers. While vocational training institutions cannot be the only institutions engaged in promoting better

employment for women, they can adopt practical measures to upgrade the status of female-dominated occupations, as follows:

(i) *Policy statements and expanded curriculum*. The centers should have an explicit mandate to improve the disadvantaged situation of women in female-dominated occupations. In addition, it is suggested to expand the course content. Besides literacy training for illiterate women, women trainees in female-dominated skills training need training in confidence building, negotiating and safe work practices to enable them to look after their basic workers' and health rights as women workers.

(ii) *Follow-up training.* Follow-up training will ensure that trainees will be able to upgrade the skills related to their occupation. This not only raises the skill standard of women in the occupation, but also raises the self-esteem of the trainees.

(iii) *Group formation and association building.* The PTCs and VTCs can encourage trainees to form professional associations or industry-specific groups. Associations can help in maintaining and upgrading the skill standards of members; nurturing mutual help among them; increasing visibility and bargaining power; reducing production and/or marketing costs of self-employed women; and raising the self-esteem of their members.

6. Increasing wage employment opportunities

Seventy per cent of the trainees, especially young single men and women prefer wage employment. Formal wage employment is very limited in Cambodia at present, and concerted efforts of various ministries as well as the private sector are needed.

(i) *Networking.* Even though the PTCs and VTCs have some connections with business establishments, the information flow is not as good as expected. It is important to establish better communications with businesses so that the industries will be able to see the PTCs and VTCs as places that can provide them with skilled personnel.

(ii) *Access to information on vacancies.* Information on wage employment opportunities is almost inaccessible to women in the villages. A communication network of graduates, especially for women graduates in the villages, can be established in order to provide them with market information.

(iii) *Career counseling.* Career counseling for jobs is currently done at an informal level. A more systematic approach to career counseling is important.

(iv) *Policy to support Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs).* Wage employment for graduates can be created in SMEs. At present, foreign investment is given top priority, and nurturing domestic SMEs is not given much importance. A national policy to support and promote SMEs has to be elaborated.

7. Increasing self-employment opportunities

In order to increase the graduates' chances of starting a business, the following recommendations are given:

(i) *Follow-up and refresher training.* Many graduates feel that the training course itself is not enough, and they are not confident enough to start their own business. Follow-up training is necessary to make the graduates confident to start their own business, as well as refresher training to upgrade their current business.

(ii) *Training on enterprise development.* At present, at the end of each training, the trainers teach basic business management. Further training on management, marketing and communication skills will help graduates in starting and maintaining viable businesses.

(iii) *Credit.* There is a need to create access to flexible credit sources that allow different types of investments.

(iv) *Legal advice.* Micro-enterprises are vulnerable to harassment by the police and other influential figures, especially in urban areas. It would be useful if training centers can offer basic legal rights training and advice to their trainees to cope with such problems.

8. Coordination with other ministries

Vocational training is provided by many organizations in Cambodia. It is important that the training centers and MoEYS coordinate with other ministries and stakeholders at national and provincial levels as appropriate. For example, skills training to process agricultural, fisheries and forestry products which are promoted by the MAFF would be effective. Currently, the PTCs are conducting agricultural training that is also provided by the MAFF. Coordination will minimize duplication of efforts in developing syllabus and course materials, as well as in the geographical coverage of training.

9. Collection of labour market information on paid and unpaid work

There is a large fluctuation in data on unpaid family labor in Cambodia between surveyed years. Making women's work better visible in statistics will contribute to changing perceptions in society to view women not as secondary income earners but as earners of substantial income in their own right.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Twenty years of civil war and strife have left Cambodia with more than its fair share of vulnerable groups. Eighty five per cent of Cambodians are based in the rural areas and 3,400,000 rural people (35.9 per cent of the population) live under the poverty line. Of the 15 per cent of the population living in urban areas, 24 per cent or an additional 360,000 live below the poverty line. If one takes poverty as criterion for vulnerability, 38 per cent of the population could be classified as vulnerable.

Cambodia has embarked on a market liberalization policy since 1989. Since then, the economy has been expanding with occasional staggering because of political instability. More employment opportunities are created, but at the same time, unemployment and underemployment are increasing. The resolutions of the February 3, 1999 National Convention on the dissemination of the policies of the Royal Government of Cambodia emphasize the importance of the development of a market economy and democratization for creating a better society for Cambodia. The private sector is seen as the driving force for the country's development. Promoting private sector development is one of the major government policy responses to rural poverty (RGC, 2000).

Women in Cambodia played a major role in sustaining the household economy, and building up the Cambodian economy from scratch after the Democratic Kampuchea regime. In spite of the heavy responsibility and important role of women in Cambodia, women are generally found in occupations with less pay and lower status compared to men, and women are often regarded as second class citizens. Lower skills and knowledge of women as well as their household responsibilities make it difficult for them to improve their status in the labour market. Increased opportunities to obtain and upgrade their skills through vocational training is thus important for the advancement of women.

Cambodia's first modern Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system was established under the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) with the assistance of the ILO between 1992 and 1997. The system was expanded through the ADB-supported Basic Skills project including the set up of the National Training Fund (NTF). The MoEYS provincial training centers (PTCs) form the mainstay of the national training programme. The NTF supports a micro credit scheme that offers start-up money to establish small businesses for groups of graduates and their relatives in rural areas. From the outset, the provision of access of vocational training to poor and rural women has been emphasized in the programme.

Due to the large increase in birth rates in the current and next decades, an increasing number of students will graduate from secondary school and become eligible to enter the formal TVET system. In addition, reform of the basic education system will result in increasing number of graduates. However, the demand in the labour market for

graduates of the formal TVET system is still limited. There is a need to upgrade the capability of the graduates to meet the market demand. Women not only have less access to the higher paid job markets but also have less access to formal TVET systems that will allow them to improve their skills and increase their employability. Current technical, vocational education and training for Cambodian women is mainly provided through non-formal education. The range of courses women are trained in is limited and the gender segregation in skills training impedes women's access to a variety of jobs.

This research addressed the question: Are skills development systems providing appropriate skills and equal access to training and jobs to young and adult women and men? To address this question, the research covered the following elements:

- Inequalities in access to, and outcomes with regards to vocational skills development among workers in the informal sector and populations living in poverty and social exclusion
- Diagnosis of problems, issues and barriers which affect access and reproduce inequalities in the recent decade
- Identification of policies and major initiatives aimed at reducing or removing inequalities
- Synthesis of lessons.

1.2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the research were to:

- analyze macro-economic and labour market trends, and employment patterns of women and men in Cambodia
- assess whether the training programmes have increased equal access of poor women and men to quality skills development for decent jobs and income
- identify good practices and lessons learned, and to make recommendations on equality of opportunity and treatment in skills training services, and equality in training outcomes for adoption and expansion of vocational training policies, programmes and practices which address the needs of women and men in poverty
- strengthen national efforts in improving vocational training programmes for women and men, and provide inputs for ILO policy advisory services and technical assistance programmes in the field of gender and skills development.

1.3. Methodology

This study has been conducted during September – December 2001. The research consisted of two components: macro analysis and action research. Detailed terms of reference and draft questionnaires for the action research were provided by the ILO Geneva and Bangkok offices and these were adapted to the situation in Cambodia by the researchers in consultation with ILO.

1.3.1. Macro analysis

The macro analysis included a review of secondary data and existing studies and covered the following topics:

- Implications of labour market trends and patterns on women and men with respect to their skill and income patterns, future opportunities for skills development, their professional mobility and employability
- Access to vocational education and training
- Problems, issues and barriers which affect and create inequalities
- New training policies, institutional changes and initiatives

The macro analysis was carried out by Kyoko Kusakabe of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok.

1.3.2. Action research

The action research was conducted by the Department of Technical Vocational Education and Training (DTVET) of MoEYS in Cambodia. The task was to:

- Give an analysis and synthesis of major strategies and measures that have been adopted and developed in recent years to combat inequalities and promote equality in skills development.
- Analysis the impact and outcomes of training.
- Draw lessons and good practices for the promotion of equality between men and women and for disadvantaged groups.

The research design and planning was agreed between the DTVET and ILO Bangkok. Field research was carried out by the Training and Employment Needs Assessment (TENA) Unit and Gender and Equal Opportunity (GEO) Unit of DTVET in consultation with Kyoko Kusakabe at AIT. Four provincial training centers (PTCs) located in Battambang, Kampong Cham, Kampot, and Siem Reap provinces and two vocational training centers (VTCs) located in Battambang and in Phnom Penh municipality (Preah Kosomak[1]) were selected as sample for the field research. These centers were selected since they are some of the oldest training centers and represent different geographical regions in the country.

1.3.3. Selection of respondents for the action research

In each center, the following respondents were selected for interviews:

(a) Managers of the training center (one per center, six in total).

(b) Trainers of the training center. A total of 39 trainers (31 men and 8 women) were interviewed from the six training centers. The respondents were trainers who were available at the center during the period of the field research. See Table 1.1 for the number of trainers interviewed in each center.

[1] This center is now called the Preah Kosomak Poli-technique Institute. Since it was called Preah Kosomak Vocational Training Center at the time of the survey, this name will be used in this study.

(c) Current trainees of the training center (both women and men). Respondents were selected from those who were enrolled at the time of the study. Table 1.2 shows the number of current trainee respondents in each center.

(d) Graduates of the training center (both women and men). Five training centers excluding Preah Kosomak VTC, maintained a name list and the graduates' home addresses. Graduates were selected from the list of persons, who graduated in the years 1996, 1999, and 2001. These three years were selected for the study, because 1996 was the year that ILO started its support for the PTCs, 1999 was the year that it ended its support, and 2001 was selected to obtain a picture of the most recent situation. It was planned to select ten women and ten men graduates in each of the five centers. The actual number of respondents is shown in Table 1.3. Preah Kosomak VTC did not keep track of graduates and the few available records showed that their graduates are scattered in various provinces. Therefore, it was not possible to conduct a tracer study for Preah Kosomak VTC.

Table 1.1
Number of trainers interviewed in each training center

Training center	Men	Women	Total
Battambang VTC	11	2	13
Battambang PTC	4	1	5
Siem Reap PTC	6	2	8
Kampong Cham PTC	4	1	5
Kampot PTC	3	2	5
Preah Kosomak VTC	3	0	3
Total	**31**	**8**	**39**

Table 1.2
Number of current trainee respondents in each training center

Training center	Men	Women	Total
Battambang VTC	51	10	61
Battambang PTC	19	12	31
Siem Reap PTC	9	10	19
Kampong Cham PTC	30	20	50
Kampot PTC	22	10	32
Preah Kosomak VTC	31	3	34
Total	**162**	**65**	**227**

Table 1.3
Number of graduate respondents in each training center

Training center	Men	Women	Total
Battambang VTC	11	9	20
Battambang PTC	10	10	20
Siem Reap PTC	10	10	20
Kampong Cham PTC	11	10	21
Kampot PTC	10	10	20
Total	**52**	**49**	**101**

1.3.4. Data collection methods for the action research

Structured questionnaires or guidelines were developed for each group of respondents by the ILO and these were adapted to the situation in Cambodia by ILO Bangkok officers, Kyoko Kusakabe of AIT and the TENA and GEO Unit of DTVET. The data collection instruments consisted of the following six tools:
Tool 1: Administrative data on the training centers for the years 1996, 1999, and 2001
Tool 2: Interview with training center manager
Tool 3: Trainer interview
Tool 4: Current trainees' basic data and guide for focus group discussions
Tool 5: Tracer study (graduates interview)
Tool 6: Observation of the training center facilities

Information on Tool 1 was provided by staff of the training centers. Tool 2 was used in individual face-to-face interviews with the managers. Tool 3 guided individual face-to-face interviews with the trainers who were teaching at the time of the data collection. Tool 4 allowed for systematic data collection among trainees who were studying at the time of the research. Focus group discussions were organized by type of course and by sex. That is, in one focus group discussion, there were students from only one course, and women's and men's focus group meetings were conducted separately. When there were not enough women in one course, women from several courses were combined. Basic data on the current trainees was gathered from the same trainee respondents who participated in the focus group discussions. Before the focus group discussion, the researcher distributed the questionnaire, explained the questions to the group, and asked the respondents to complete it. Tool 5 was conducted through individual face-to-face interviews with ex-trainees. Tool 6 was conducted through the researcher's observation of the training center facilities.

1.3.5. Data analysis

The information from Tools 3, 4, and 5 were coded in SPSSx for descriptive statistical analysis by the DTVET with assistance by Kyoko Kusakabe. Other information was synthesized in a descriptive way for qualitative analysis. After the analysis, discussions were held by the author of the macro analysis and the action research team to develop joint recommendations for future action.

1.4. Organization of the report

Chapter 2 provides an analytical overview of the macro-economic and labour market situation of Cambodia from a gender perspective. It reviews the situation of women and men in poverty, and their access to employment, training and other resources. Chapter 3 discusses the vocational training available in Cambodia and the achievements so far. Chapter 4 is based on the primary data collected under this study with graduates, current trainees and trainers. Firstly, it describes the opportunities and obstacles that the graduates faced after training. Then, it discusses the current trainees' perception and assessment of the training. It also shows the trainers' assessment of the trainees' performance and their analysis on the labour market

situation. Chapter 5 concludes with the findings and gives recommendations for improving vocational training programmes for women and men in Cambodia.

CHAPTER 2

THE LABOUR MARKET, ECONOMIC CHANGE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN CAMBODIA: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

2.1. Poverty profile of women and men in Cambodia

2.1.1. Demographic characteristics

In mid-2000, the total population in Cambodia was estimated to be 13.1 million with women representing over 51 per cent. The sex imbalance seen in the 1980s has been corrected over the years. The population is increasing at the rate of around 2.5 per cent annually, and is projected to grow at the rate of 2.4 per cent until the year 2010, when the projected population would be 15.5 million (Ministry of Planning, 2000b). In 1998, 16 per cent of the population lived in the urban areas. The population of Phnom Penh increased from 812 thousands to 1 million from 1994 to 1998, showing an annual growth rate of 5.8 per cent. This is much higher than the total population increase. In-country migration is increasing (Table 2.1) with more people looking for better labour conditions (Godfrey et al., 2001).

Table 2.1
Percentage of people among migrants whose duration of residence in the area is less than one year

Stratum	1993-94	1996	1998
Cambodia	1.1%	6.7%	10.7%
Other urban areas	1.3%	7.6%	12.6%
Rural areas	1.2%	5.9%	9.9%

* There is no data for Phnom Penh for the years 1996 and 1998, so Phnom Penh is not included in the table.
Source: MoP, 2000b:17

There is considerable seasonal migration from the provinces to Phnom Penh. Sophal et al. (1998) found that 89 per cent of cyclo drivers, 80 per cent of porters and 27 per cent of women vegetable traders in this city resided in rural areas. Many women come to Phnom Penh alone, leaving their families in the rural areas. They become garment factory workers and micro-vendors. Case studies in the Phnom Penh markets confirm that many women micro-vendors are new arrivals in Phnom Penh, who leave their families in the rural areas (Kusakabe 1999). Godfrey et al. (2001:22) pointed out that the proportion of inter-provincial migration rose from 37 per cent in 1996 to 44 per cent in 1998. Among this, women constitute 50.3 per cent (MoP, 2000c). In the census of 1998 (MoP, 1999c), 37 per cent of migrants stated that they changed their residence because they followed their family. More women gave this reason (47.5 per cent) than men (26.3 per cent); 14.5 per cent of the migrants said they moved in search for work. More men (17.8 per cent) than women (11.5 per cent) gave this answer.

Before the Asian economic crisis in 1997, it was estimated that 82,000 Cambodians worked in Thailand, most of them as illegal workers and most from the bordering provinces. After 1997, the number dropped because of the economic situation in the recipient country. There are no official records on these migrants not to mention gender disaggregated data, but interviews in Siem Reap province showed that both poor women and men migrate to Thailand for seasonal work. Sometimes women go alone to Thailand for construction and other work[1].

The youth dependency ratio[2] in Cambodia is quite high with 70.1 per cent for the whole country in 1999. Almost 40 per cent (39.7) of the population was under 15 years of age. Most of these children and youths will be entering the labour market within 10 years, and thus there is an urgent need to create more employment (MoP, 1999b).

According to the 1999 Cambodia socio-economic survey (CSES), 169,000 people or 1.51 per cent of the total estimated population is disabled. Thirty three thousand of them are living in the urban areas and 136,000 in the rural areas. There are more men who are disabled than women. The prevalence rate (number of disabled for every 100,000) is 1,840 for men and 1,204 for women. By type of disability, amputation of one limb or not being able to use one limb is the most prevalent (214 and 274 respectively), followed by blindness and permanent disfigurement (174 and 165). For women, prevalence of blindness is higher than for men (prevalence rate 185 for women, 162 for men). No statistics are available to show how these disabled people are making a living.

2.1.2. Economic growth and poverty in Cambodia

The Cambodian economy has experienced high economic growth since the early 1990s after the policy change to a market economy, marking over 7 per cent annual growth rates during 1994-95 (Table 2.2). The Asian economic crisis in 1997 compounded by an internal crisis due to conflicts between two political parties in Phnom Penh in July 1997, had plummeted exports, foreign investment and the tourism industry. Foreign aid and custom revenue fell, and the Cambodian riel depreciated. This caused the growth rate of GDP per capita in US dollars to drop to -11.8 per cent in 1997, and -22.2 per cent in 1998 (at constant 1993 prices). In 1999, GDP per capita was US$256.3 at current prices (Godfrey et al., 2000).

Table 2.2
Real GDP growth (in percentage)

Year	Average 1991-95	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Growth rate (%)	6.1	7.6	7.0	3.7	1.8	5.0	5.0

Source: EIU (2001) and EIU (1996)

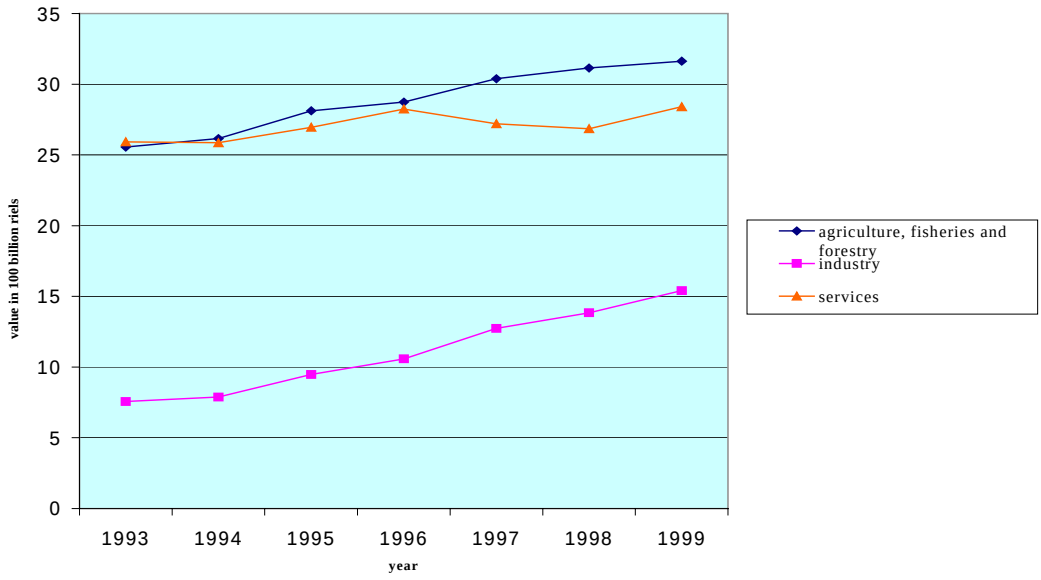
[1] Villagers mentioned that only the desperately poor go to Thailand. They mentioned that if women go to Thailand for work alone, often there will be problems in the family, since the husband will start doubting the fidelity of his wife. If the men go alone, there would be less problems. This reflects the common perception that women should not be going far away from the house (Kusakabe, 2001b).

[2] Youth dependency ratio is the ratio of the population aged below 15 to the population aged 15-64 years.

Even though total employment was not much affected by the crisis, real wages and earnings were a sensitive indicator of increased hardship among the poorer parts of the population (Godfrey et al., 2001). Average real wages fell immediately after the 1997 crisis. Women felt the immediate impact more than men, but by the end of 1998, women's earnings had almost fully recovered, while men's earnings, especially among the self-employed dropped throughout the post-crisis period (Godfrey et al., 2001:39). The Cambodian Development Research Institute (CDRI) survey showed that women petty traders suffered the steepest fall in earnings, but their recovery was faster than, for example, cyclo drivers and porters. Cyclo drivers and porters, who are all men, normally earn more than traders, who are predominantly women. But their recovery during the post-crisis period was slower, so in late 1998 and in late 1999, traders were earning more than porters and cyclo drivers. By the middle of 2000, the income gap between women traders and men cyclo drivers and porters had decreased again compared to the pre-crisis level (Godfrey et al., 2001)[3].

In terms of value, agriculture, fisheries and forestry produced the most with 4,539,423 riels in 1999. Services follow with 4,278,948 riels and industry with 2,156,015 riels (at current prices). Even though industry is currently producing the least among the three sectors, it shows the highest growth rate since 1993 (Chart 2.1). Most of the growth in the industry sector came from manufacturing, especially from the growth in the textile, wearing apparel and footwear industries. This labour intensive industry has employed many women, thereby improving their labour market situation to some extent (See Section 2.2.2(b)).

Chart 2.1: GDP by sector (at constant 1993 prices)



Source: MoP (2000b)

[3] There has been no explanation given by Godfrey et al. (2001) on the reason for the differences in recovery between traders, porters and cyclo drivers. It might be because the demand for porters is more dependent on import, and the demand for cyclo drivers on numbers of tourists.

In 1999, agriculture, fisheries and forestry comprised of 39.6 per cent of GDP at current prices, services amounted to 37.3 per cent, and industry to 18.8 per cent in 1999 (MoP, 2000b)[4]. The contribution of agriculture to GDP has been declining slightly. In 1993, agriculture, fisheries and forestry accounted for 42 per cent of the GDP. The same can be seen for the service sector. In 1993, it accounted for 42.6 per cent of the economy, while in 1999, it had dropped to 37.3 per cent. The only exception in the service sector is hotel and restaurants, which showed an increase from 3.2 per cent in 1993 to 4.6 per cent in 1999. On the other hand, industry has been on the increase, with 12.4 per cent in 1993 to 18.8 per cent in 1999.

While agriculture, forestry and fisheries contribute 39.6 per cent of GDP, it employs 76.5 per cent of employed persons, while industry employs only 6.4 per cent (MoP, 2000b). This shows the low per capita income among agriculturalists. Prescott and Pradhan (1997:26) found that more than three-fourths of the poor are found among households in which the head has an agricultural occupation.

In spite of the economic growth, the poor still remain to be poor. The socio-economic survey of 1996 identified that 36 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line (MoP, 1998). Even though the poverty situation has improved slightly from 1993 (39 per cent), the rapid economic growth during these three years has apparently had little impact on the elimination of poverty.

According to the CSES 1999, the average monthly per capita income is 79,355 riels (around US$ 20.8). Income disparity is high, with the lower 20 per cent of the households having a per capita income of 29,805 riels (US$7.8), while the highest 20 per cent has an average monthly per capita income of 181,347 riels (US$ 47.5). The Cambodia Human Development Report (CHDR) 1998 (MoP, 1998a) calculated the Human Development Index (HDI) scores[5] and identified that the richest 20 per cent, i.e. the richest quintile of Cambodians have an HDI score that is nearly 2.5 times as high as that of the poorest 20 per cent of Cambodians. The HDI score for urban Cambodia is nearly 50 per cent greater than that for rural Cambodia.

The CHDR also found that gender disparity in human development not only persists in all economic groups, but is actually larger among the richest 20 per cent of the population than for the poorer groups. Among the richest 20 per cent of the population, the disparity between women and men is wider than among the poorest group. The Human Poverty Index (HPI)[6] for women is 29 per cent greater than for

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[4] The rest of the GDP is from taxes on products. The same goes for the figures for 1993.

[5] In the Human Development Index (HDI), human development is defined as a process of enlarging people's choices. The most critical ones are: to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated and to enjoy a decent standard of living (UNDP, 1991). Longevity is represented by average life expectancy at birth. Knowledge is represented by adult literacy rate and combined first, second and third level gross enrollment rates. Decent living standards are represented by real per capita consumption expenditure.

[6] From a human development perspective, poverty means the denial of choices and opportunities for a tolerable life (UNDP, 1997). It is in the deprivation of the lives people lead that poverty manifests itself. Based on this perspective, the Human Poverty Index (HPI) uses indicators of the most basic dimensions of deprivation: a short life, lack of basic education and lack of access to public and private resources. The HPI is constructed based on the following figures: percentage of children under 5 severely stunted, percentage of population not surviving to age 40 years, percentage of adult population

men. Among the second richest 20 per cent of the population, the difference is even larger with 37 per cent. The CHDR concluded that the gender disparity in human poverty in Cambodia would not necessarily narrow with economic growth and rising consumption standards.

As for household expenditure, 61.6 per cent of the average monthly household consumption is spent on food, beverage and tobacco (MoP, 2000a). In the CSES 1999, expenditure for medical care accounted for only 5.9 per cent, and education for 2.1 per cent of the average monthly household consumption. However, Gordon's (2000) survey showed that among the urban poor, medical costs amount to 14 per cent of the monthly expenditure. The actual education cost will be higher for families with children, since the CSES data averages for all households regardless of the number of children. Education expenses can be heavy especially for urban women-headed households with young children. Many urban women vendors expressed that their main goal in life is to have their children educated. Many women do pay for their children's expenses from their own income. This shows the importance in creating employment and increasing income for women so that they will be able to support the education of the next generation.

2.1.3. Female-headed households

There is no data that compares the income levels of women and men, since income and expenditure data are collected from households. One indicator used to identify possible gender gaps in poverty is to compare female-headed and male-headed households. According to the CSES 1999, 19.6 per cent of total households are female-headed.

Prescott and Pradhan (1997) used data from the CSES 1993/94 to compare the poverty level of female-headed and male-headed households. According to their calculation, about 40 per cent of individuals in male-headed households are poor, while only 35 per cent of those in female-headed households are. CHDR (MoP, 1998a) explained this difference by pointing out the differences in average age between women-headed households and male-headed households. The incidence of poverty in Cambodia declines with the age of the head of household beyond 35-39 years of age and the average age of female heads of households is 50.1 years and for their male equivalents is 42.3 years.

CHDR (MoP, 1998a) also reported that individuals living in women-headed households are at a disadvantage over those living in male-headed households in the urban areas of the country. The report pointed out that women-headed households in urban areas are more vulnerable to poverty because extended households are more common in rural areas, with multiple male earners present. Women-headed households in urban areas whose female head is aged 56 years and over are the most disadvantaged, especially if she is a single earner in the household. Thus, a simple comparison between female- and male-headed households can be misleading because another critical variable is the number of earners in the household.

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illiterate, percentage of population with no access to safe water, percentage of population with no access to health services, percentage of children under 5 moderately or severely under-weight.

In addition, women-headed households especially those who were divorced or were second wives had less access to social support because of the stigma that they suffered by being deviant from the commonly held image of women (see Section 2.4.1).

Recognizing the classification of female-headedness to be misleading[7], Prescott and Pradhan (1997) have also analyzed the extent of 'femaleness' of households, that is, the percentage of working age (15-60 years old) household members who are women. By examining the femaleness by household expenditure, one will be able to compare per capita expenditure standards. According to their study, greater femaleness was found to have a positive and statistically significant influence on per capita consumption, suggesting higher per capita income for women. This result controlled for the years of education and dependency ratio. However, again this result should be interpreted with caution. It might be that it is easier for women to get employment in the informal sector, thus greater 'femaleness' increases income. At the same time, if there are no men in the household, women may have to buy the services that the man in the household could have provided, thus increasing their household expenditure. Therefore, increases in household expenditure for households with greater 'femaleness' might not indicate that their living conditions are better.

In sum, more research is needed to identify the specific vulnerabilities of female-headed households in their own right as almost one in five households is headed by women. There is a much higher incidence of female-headed households in Phnom Penh (25.8 percent compared to 19.6 per cent for the country as a whole) (MoP, 2000a). Considering that older women in female-headed households, who are the sole income earner in urban areas are more disadvantaged, special attention is needed for this group (Kusakabe, 2002).

2.2. Characteristics of women's employment

2.2.1. Labour force participation and employment

The labour force participation rate in Cambodia is high, and for those above 10 years, the rate seems to be on the increase for both women and men (Table 2.3). The labour force participation rate of women is higher than men in the age bracket of 15-19 years, but the rate reverses after the age of 20 (Chart 2.2). The above data reflects the gender differences in school enrolment. As shown in Table 2.4, men tend to continue education longer than women, while women have to start working to support the family. Women are withdrawn from education earlier either because they join the labour force or because they carry out unpaid household work so that other family members can go out for work.

[7] Different types of female-headed households exist: a multi-generation household where the oldest person is a woman and thus the head of household, a household consisting of women and children only, or a household where a woman was the reference person during data collection. The most vulnerable households will be those with women with small children only. The reason that they become female-headed can also vary – women can either be widows, divorcees, abandoned, or second wives (see Section 2.4.1).

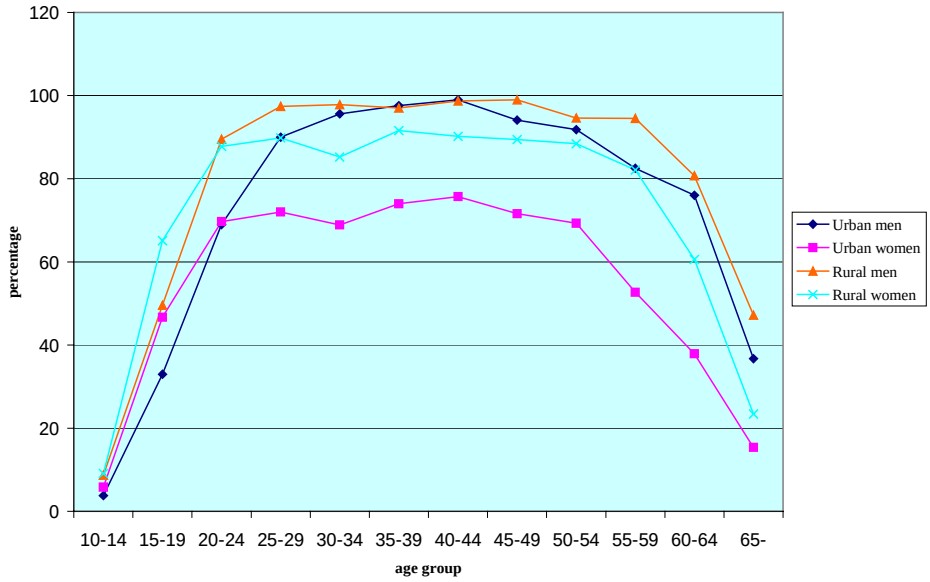
Among the not economically active population, there are more men who are students, that is, preparing themselves to enter the labour market with skills, while most of the women are not economically active because of family care and household work. In Phnom Penh, there are 1.2 times more men than women who are not seeking work because they are studying, while 18 times more women than men are not seeking work because they are caring for children or elderly/disabled persons, and 8 times more women do house keeping. Although this might show that women in these households are better off because they can afford not to do paid work, it also shows the tendency in family decisions to prepare men for labour market entry, while women should do the unpaid work at home. Considering the generally high labour force participation rate among women, there is a high possibility that these women who are engaged in childcare and house keeping would in the future enter the labour force once they are through with childcare and the household economy demands it. Families invest less in their women members to prepare them to become marketable in the labour market. Thus, a great need for skills upgrading and job placement for women exists.

Table 2.3
Labour force participation rate and unemployment rates by sex by year for the whole country (for population 10 years and above)

Year	Labour force participation rate			Unemployment rate		
	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
1993-4	56.6	58.1	55.4	2.5	2.3	2.7
1996	65.4	65.8	65.1	0.9	0.7	1.2
1997	65.8	66.2	65.4	0.73	0.8	0.66
1999	66.1	66.3	65.9	0.6	0.5	0.6

Source: Ministry of Planning (2000b)
Unemployment = whether worked for at least one hour during reference week.

Chart 2.2: Labor force participation rates by age, sex and area
(November 2000)



Source: MoP (2000d)

Table 2.4
Not economically active household population 10 years old and over by sex and reason for not being available and/or seeking for work, 1998 in Phnom Penh

	Total	Male	Female
Not in labour force (population)	344,338	143,513	200,825
Reason for not being available and/or seeking work			
Infirmity	5,427	1,248	4,179
Disability	2,838	2,073	765
Too old/retired	24,994	9,994	15,000
Student	214,038	116,709	97,329
Caring for children/ elderly /disabled	51,842	2,727	49,115
House keeping	32,096	3,507	28,589
Believe no work is available	6,234	4,287	1,947
Awaiting results of applications	2,232	1,210	1,022
Waiting to start a new job	4,413	1,758	2,655
Others	224		224

Source: Ministry of Planning (2000b:43) (based on Labour Force Survey 1997-98)

Table 2.3 shows that the unemployment rate is on the decrease, for both women and men. However, this decrease in the unemployment rate has to be treated with care. The above employment rates have been calculated with a lax definition of being employed: whether they had worked at least for one hour during the reference week. Table 2.5 provides data on the labour force participation and unemployment rates calculated from both the demographic survey of Cambodia in 1995/6 and the general census of the population in 1998. Both of these surveys took a stricter definition of

employment – whether persons had worked for six months during the past year - compared to the CSES. This shows that overall underemployment and unemployment might actually be on the increase.

Table 2.5
Labour force participation rate and unemployment rates by sex by year
(for population 7 years and above)

Year	Labour force participation rate			Unemployment rate		
	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
Whole country						
1995-6	59.2	59.0	59.4	2.5	2.2	2.8
1998	55.5	56.5	54.6	5.3	4.7	5.9
Urban areas						
1995-6	50.8	55.0	47.0	7.9	5.7	10.1
1998	49.3	55.6	43.4	9.2	6.7	12.2
Rural areas						
1995-6	60.5	59.6	61.3	1.8	1.6	1.9
1998	56.7	56.6	56.7	4.7	4.3	5.0

Source: Ministry of Planning (2000b)
(based on the demographic survey of Cambodia and the general census of the population)
Unemployment = whether one had worked for six months during the last year.

The large increase in the unemployment rate due to the change in definition shows that there are many people who are engaged in irregular casual jobs. Considering that most people cannot afford not to work, they would be taking up any kind of work available. There are few people who are unemployed by choice. Thus the unemployment shown in Table 2.3, although the number is low, is a tip of the iceberg of a serious problem of lack of people's employable skills.

Similar findings resulted from the Cambodia socio-economic survey (CSES) 1999. The employment rate was over 99 per cent for both women and men. However, among the employed persons, 4.4 per cent of men and 5.7 per cent of women were employed for less than 25 weeks during the reference year, and only 87.1 per cent of employed men and 82 per cent of employed women were employed for 45 weeks or more during the reference year. This shows that under-employment is higher among women than men.

The decreasing labour force participation partly shows that children are going to school, and more youngsters are in education and not in the labour force. For example, in 1996 approximately 40.9 per cent of children aged 0-14 were going to school, while in 1998, 47.2 per cent[8] of children in this age group went to school. However, the increasing unemployment rate among adults is quite alarming. It is

[8] According to the Socio-economic survey of Cambodia (SESC) in 1996, there were 4,411,663 children in the age bracket of 0-14, while in SESC 1999, there were 4,433,945. At the same time, the number of primary school students amounted to 1,805,631 in 1995-96, while it amounted to 2,094,000 in 1998-99 (Ministry of Planning, 2000b).

increasing more in the rural areas than the urban areas, and the increase is higher for women than for men in the urban areas.

2.2.2. Employment by type of industry

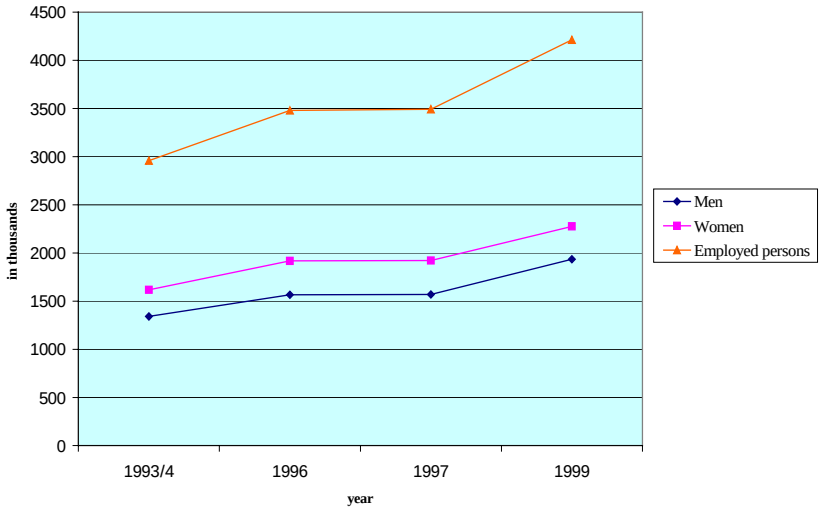
There is a slight decrease in people engaged in agriculture, hunting and forestry and a slight increase in employment in manufacturing. The increased employment opportunities for women in manufacturing were noted in Section 2.1.2. The increase owes especially to garment factories in Phnom Penh. In 1993/94, 54.1 per cent of women's employment in Phnom Penh was in the wholesale and retail trade, and only 8 per cent was in manufacturing. However, in 1999, women's employment accounted for only 38.9 per cent in the wholesale and retail trade while manufacturing accounted for 24.5 per cent of women's employment in Phnom Penh. Although tourism was supposed to become a booming industry, tourism itself does not seem to contribute much to employment creation. Even though percentage wise, the increase in people that are employed in hotels and restaurants is large, the actual employment increase since 1993/94 to 1999 was only 19,660, while for manufacturing, the increase in the same period was 124,921.

(a) Agriculture, fisheries and forestry

In 1999, there were 2,276,780 women and 1,935,362 men working in agriculture, fisheries and forestry which shows that women are over-represented in this sector (Chart 2.3). Considering that this sector earns the least per capita income, women are seen to be concentrated in the least remunerated sector in the economy.

Even though employment in this sector is the least remunerated, Cambodia will continue to depend on agriculture, fishery and forestry production in the following years and this sector will continue to be the largest employer in Cambodia. Although the sector's contribution to the national economy might be decreasing, a closer look within the sector shows that there was a production increase in some areas such as rice and other crops and fisheries, and a decrease in forestry and logging (Table 2.6). Women are actively involved in rice, crop and small livestock production and also have considerable control over the production process. Fisheries are greatly controlled by men, but the fish trade and fish processing are women's realms. Therefore, this sector still offers large employment opportunities for women as well as for men.

Chart 2.3: Employed persons 10 years and over in agriculture, foresty and fisheries



Source: MoP (2000b)

The growth rate in crops was due mostly to the increase in rice production. The harvested area has increased from 1,855,000 ha in 1990 to 2,079,000 ha in 2000 (MoP, 2000b). The production in the same period increased from 2,500,000 tons to 4,049,900 tons. The Government indicates that Cambodia has now reached self-sufficiency in terms of rice production, and the Government is expecting to export rice in the future (EIU, 2001). JICA is to support on improving post-harvest quality of rice for this purpose. Provinces such as Siem Reap are trying to cultivate high quality rice to cater to the needs of tourists. Although rice production fell in 2001 because of an unfavourable climate, further production increases and added values can be expected in rice production and thus, it is still a potential area for technical training. It should be noted that training in rice production is attended more by men (Kusakabe, 2001b).

Table 2.6
GDP per cent distribution at constant 1993 prices
for agriculture, fisheries and forestry sub-sectors

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Agriculture, fisheries and forestry	41.4%	41.7%	40.4%	41.2%	41.5%	40.1%
Crops	16.0%	19.3%	19.1%	17.9%	17.7%	18.4%
Livestock and poultry	8.3%	8.0%	7.8%	7.6%	7.9%	7.1%
Fisheries	9.1%	8.6%	8.9%	9.2%	9.5%	10.5%
Forestry and logging	7.9%	5.8%	4.7%	6.5%	6.4%	4.0%

Source: Ministry of Planning, 2000b:188

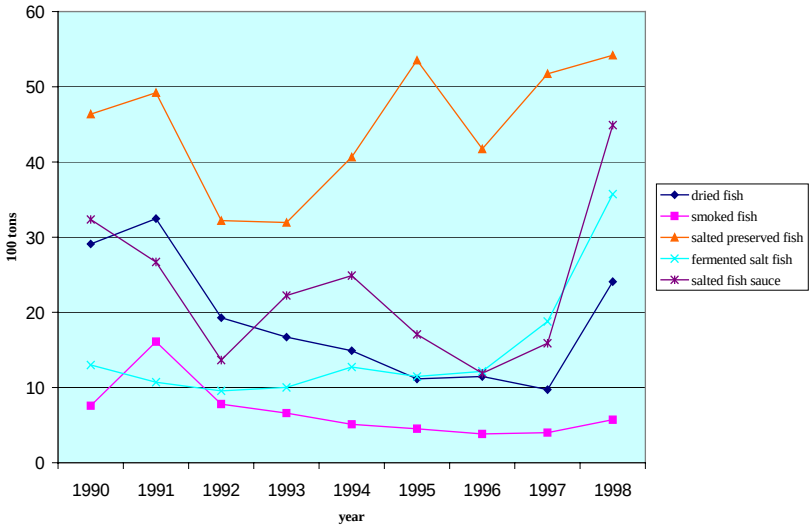
Other crops that are increasingly being cultivated are soybean and black and white sesame. The area harvested for soybean has more than doubled from 15,000 ha in 1990 to 34,950 ha in 1999. For sesame, it increased from 10,000 ha to 16,410 ha. Training linking these increases in agricultural production to the processing and marketing of agricultural produce is an important area to look into.

While the percentage contribution to GDP is not growing, there is an increase in absolute production of livestock. Most of the increase owes to the increase in poultry production. In 1990, there were 8,193,000 heads which increased to 13,417,500 heads in 1999, an increase of around 60 per cent. Currently, poultry vaccination is not much practiced because of the low coverage of the veterinary service network as well as the low awareness among farmers on the necessity of poultry vaccination. With the increase in veterinary services and extension, this sub-sector has a potential to grow. Pig production also increased around 40 per cent during the same period. Small livestock production such as poultry and pig production is mostly carried out by women, and the income from livestock is also often controlled by women.

In the fisheries sector, the production of fresh water and sea products has been constant, while aquaculture production has been steadily increasing. In 1990, there was only 6,400 tons of fish production in aquaculture, which increased 2.3 times to 15,000 tons in 1999. The Department of Fisheries is promoting aquaculture, and this sector is expected to grow in the future.

With the increase in fish production, the processing of fish products can also increase. Fish is a major export item along with logs, sawn timber and rubber. The export value of logs and sawn timber is decreasing, while the export value of fish products has been increasing since 1993. This shows promising growth in sectors related to fish marketing and fish processing. As can be seen in Chart 2.4, since 1990, the production of dried fish and smoked fish has not grown much. On the other hand, the production of salted preserved fish, fermented salt fish, and salted fish sauce production is on the increase. Further skills development potential also lies in this area.

Chart 2.4: Production of processed fish products



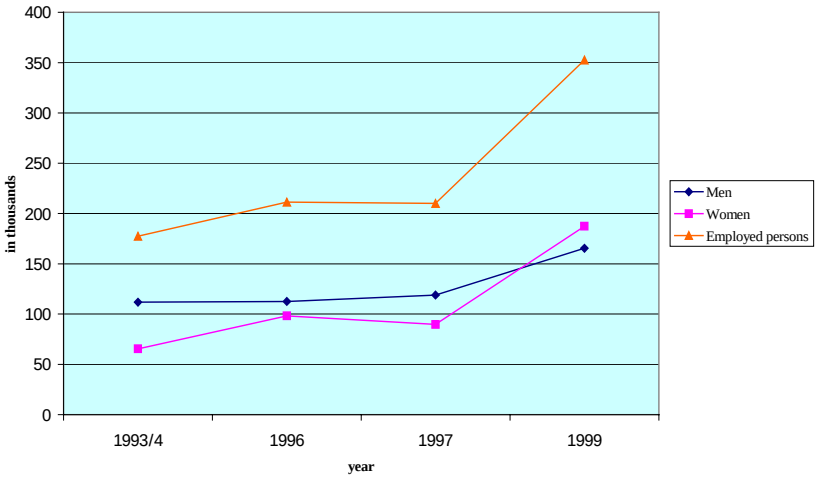
Source: MoP (2000b)

(b) Industry

In 1999, there were 187,330 women and 165,440 men employed in this sector. As seen in Chart 2.5, there has been a reverse in the number of women and men engaged in manufacturing. Up until 1997, there were more men, but since then, there have been many employment opportunities for women in the textile and garment industries. There has been a slight drop in the number of women employed in this sector in 1997, due to the regional economic crisis and political turmoil.

As of 1995, there are more women than men employed in the manufacturing of textiles, wearing apparel and dressing. The same is valid for the manufacturing of tobacco products (Gorman, 1999:10). All other industrial sector groups employ more men than women. The growth in the industry sector took place mainly in manufacturing, especially in the textile, wearing apparel and footwear industries (Table 2.7). This sector employed the highest number of people next to the manufacture of other nonmetalic minerals in 1995. More than 5,000 people (5,199) were engaged in manufacturing wearing apparel and dressing in 14 establishments in 1995. The number of garment factories increased from 11 in 1994 to over 102 in 1997, employing 82,724 workers, although the actual number of employees was around 54,000 in 89 factories in 1998 (ILO, 2000:7). Most of the workers employed are women. The Ministry of Women's and Veteran's Affairs (MoWVA) estimated that in 2000, there were 174 factories employing about 90,000 people (MoWVA, 2000).

Chart 2.5: Employed persons (10 years and over) in industrial sectors



Source: MoP (2000b)

The 1994 Investment Law offers 'the best business incentive package in Southeast Asia' according to the Government of Cambodia (CDC, 1994). Cambodia has a comparative advantage over the more developed countries of the region because it has been granted most-favoured nation (MFN) and generalized system of preferences (GSP) status with the United States, which allows for reduced import tariffs. This gives incentives for companies in other more developed countries to relocate to Cambodia (Gorman, 1999).

Table 2.7
GDP per cent distribution at constant 1993 prices for the industry subsector

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Industry	12.5	14.0	14.9	17.3	18.4	19.5
Mining	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Manufacturing	8.1	8.4	9.5	12.4	14.1	14.7
food, beverages and tobacco	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3
Textile, wearing apparel and footwear	0.9	1.0	1.9	4.2	6.0	8.1
Wood, paper and publishing	1.4	1.6	1.7	2.6	2.4	0.9
Rubber manufacturing	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5
Other manufacturing	2.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.9
Electricity, gas and water	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Construction	3.7	4.9	4.7	4.3	3.6	4.2

Source: MoP (2000b)

In 1995, the total wages and salaries paid in the manufacture of wearing apparel and dressing was the highest among the industry groups. However, when comparing wages per worker, the wearing apparel and dressing industries paid less than other

industry groups. The industry providing the highest average wage per worker was the manufacture of wood and wood products except furniture.

In the women-dominated garment and textile industries, men dominate the higher ranking positions. Workers are vulnerable to dismissal without reason or notice. Even though the Labour Law requires factories to provide health and child-care facilities, sick leave and health and safety regulations, reports show that these are not enforced. Workers' dissatisfaction with the working conditions has led to the formation of trade unions. They have organized strikes and demonstrations, in spite of several cases where these were dispersed with violence. Trade unions have large numbers of women workers as members, although the leaderships are largely male.

The garment industry contributes 96 per cent of all exports. In 1994, the garment sector exported only 3.8 million US dollar. In 1999, it grew to 640 million US dollars (Ministry of Commerce, 2000:8). Workers in this sector received a monthly wage of US$40. After strong demands from the garment workers' unions, the minimum wage has since then been increased to US$45. However, even the 40 dollars minimum wage has not always been observed. Since their regular income from the factory is not enough, many women work 12-15 hours a day (Godfrey et al., 2001), and some of them have started to work as part-time commercial sex workers. Not only are they paid low wages, but their working and living conditions are insufficient. The workers live in a cramped environment, work under bad working conditions that affect their health, are exposed to sexual harassment, and have little scope of promotion (Nishigaya, 1999). Although the labour force participation of women is high, the majority of workers in this sector have low quality jobs.

Even though the wages in garment factories are low, they are much higher than income from other job options for unskilled women, such as working as waitresses. Thus, many young girls in the rural areas are attracted to work in the garment factories in Phnom Penh (Gorman, 1999). Several NGOs that provide sewing training to women have agreements with factories to give preference to their trainees. Since there are so many women who want to work in garment factories, they usually pay money to procure a position.

Table 2.8 shows that most of the industrial establishments are small. It also illustrates the importance of the food, beverages and tobacco industry in terms of number of establishments, accounting for more than three-quarter of the total number of industrial establishments. These industries are women-dominated, which indicates women's concentration in small establishments.

ILO (2000) also pointed out that while micro-enterprises employing 1-9 persons are widely distributed across the country, the small industry category with 10-49 workers is concentrated in Phnom Penh and surrounding Kandal Province. This area accounts for 55 per cent of all small manufacturing industry establishments.

Table 2.8
The number of micro and small industrial establishments by industry, 1998

Industry	Number of establishments			
	Less than 10 persons	10 and less than 50 persons	Total less than 50 persons	50 and above
Mining and quarrying	35	74	109	28
Manufacturing	23597	510	24097	218
Food, beverages & tobacco	18419	171	18590	33
Textiles, wearing apparel	291	19	310	130
Wood and wood products	847	48	895	22
Paper and paper products	15	11	26	2
Chemicals, rubber and plastic Products	25	30	55	10
Non-metallic mineral products	624	187	811	15
Basic metals manufacture	-	4	4	1
Fabricated metal products	1334	37	1371	5
Other manufactured products	2033	2	2035	0
Electricity, gas and water	438	19	457	6
Total	24061	602	24663	232

Source: Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (1998) quoted in ILO (2000:12)

(c) Services

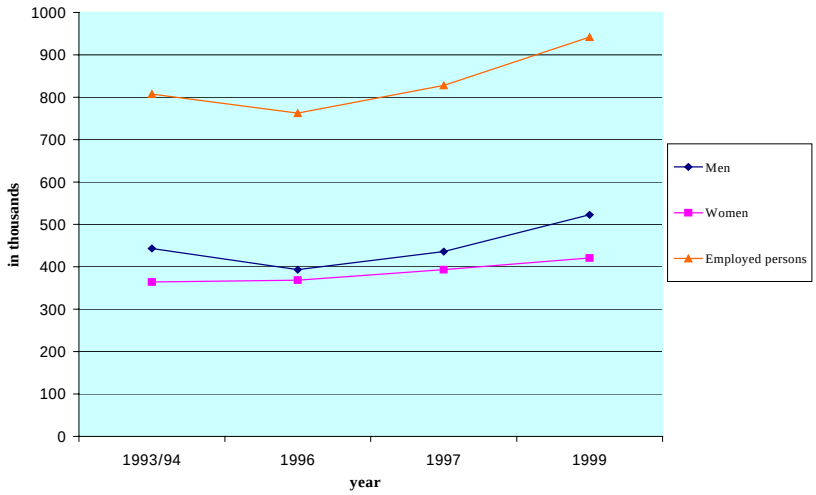
Services, especially the tourism related subsectors have been vulnerable to political instability. It has turned negative since 1996-97 (-3.7 per cent growth at constant 1993 prices), but again became positive in 1998-99 (5.8 per cent) (Table 2.9). Hotel and restaurants grew by 18.3 per cent, and transport and communication by 13.2 per cent in 1998-99. The transport sector's growth rate went down to –14.4 per cent in 1996-97, owing to the political turmoil and the regional economic crisis. There has been a steady increase in the number of people employed in this sector (Chart 2.6), with slightly more jobs for men than for women.

Table 2.9
GDP per cent distribution of service sector at constant 1993 prices

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Services	40.9	40.0	39.7	36.9	35.7	36.0
Trade	14.6	13.6	12.9	12.1	11.3	10.9
Hotel and restaurants	3.8	4.3	4.3	4.0	3.8	4.2
Transport and communication	6.4	6.0	6.2	5.1	4.9	5.3
Finance	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9
Public administration	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4
Real estate and business	7.6	7.3	7.0	6.9	7.1	7.0
Other services	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.2	4.4	4.3

Source: Ministry of Planning (2000b)

Chart 2.6: Employed persons (10 years and over) in the service sector



Source: MoP (2000b)

The share of wholesale and retail trade activities in total employment is around 7.3 per cent. In Phnom Penh, this sector is large and accounts for nearly 25 per cent of total employment. Retail trade, especially, small-scale retail trade is heavily dominated by women - a ratio of three employed women to one employed man (MoP, 2000a). As businesses become larger and more 'formal' in this sector (such as wholesale and shops), the proportion of women drops, as well as the control that women have over the business (Kusakabe, 1999). Micro and informal traders are frequently subject to harassment from the police and other authorities (Banwell, 2001; Kusakabe et al., 2001).

Gorman (1999:41) notes that

> "Many of these activities are an extension of women's domestic role, and require few or no new skills. Business itself is an extension of women's responsibility to manage the household finances. Many women are forced into these occupations out of necessity, because they are the sole income earners, while others are supplementing a husband's low formal sector income".

As stated, the number of tourists is vulnerable to the political situation in Cambodia. In 1993, there were 118,183 foreign arrivals. Around 73-74 per cent of them were tourists. It increased by 35-40 per cent in the following years until it dropped in 1997. Since 1999, the number of tourists is growing, and in 2001, the number of foreign visitors rose by 39.8 per cent to 628,638. Fourteen per cent of them came from the US, 20 per cent from Europe, and 50 per cent from Asia. Twenty-five per cent of visitors came by land or sea, indicating the significance of regional tourism (EIU, 2002). The Government is expected to sign an agreement with China that will allow Chinese tour groups to visit Cambodia. The tourism sector is expected to continue to fare well.

Hotel and restaurants employ more women than men especially in Phnom Penh and other urban areas. According to CSES 1999, women employed in hotels and restaurants amounted to 14,410 while the number of men was 10,500. In Phnom Penh, there were 7,420 women and 5,800 men working in this sector. Gorman (1999) indicated that women dominate in lower paying positions such as hotel clerks, waitresses and beer girls. Women dominate in restaurant and bar work (79 per cent), but in the hotel industry itself, there are more men than women working. Young women are employed precisely to attract male customers, and are forced to tolerate harassing behavior (Aafjes and Athreya, 1996 quoted in Gorman, 1999). Generally, they have few opportunities for promotion and skill development.

There were 1,500 commercial sex workers (CSWs) working in Phnom Penh in 1990 (UNICEF, 1996 in MoP, 1998). In 1997, their number was reported to have increased to more than 14,000 (National Assembly, 1997 in MoP, 1998). In 1998, their number was estimated at 17,000 with about 10,000 in Phnom Penh (Diakonia, 1998 in Gorman, 1999). The Gender and Development Network (GDN) and the NGO Forum's Women Working Group cited a figure of 50,000-55,000 as estimated number of women working as sex workers (2000:21). UNICEF (1996 in MoP, 1998) indicated that 35 per cent of female CSWs in Phnom Penh brothels were under 18 years of age, and some were as young as 10 to 12 years old. Many have been tricked or sold into the profession. Klaasen (1995 in Gorman, 1999) showed that only half of CSWs interviewed intended to become sex workers, while the other half originally migrated in search of other income generating activities. Commercial sex workers are at great risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. Studies suggest that 64 per cent of CSWs may be infected by the virus (GDN, 2000:5).

2.2.3. Employment by occupation

The primary occupation of the Cambodian labour force is skilled agricultural and fishery work (Table 2.10). In 1999, 74 per cent (76.2 per cent of women and 71.6 per cent of men) were employed in this category (MoP, 2000a). For women, the second highest occupation is service and shop and market sales workers (9.9 per cent). For men, it is elementary occupations (6.5 per cent).

In Phnom Penh, 39.9 per cent of women were engaged in service and shop and market sales workers as a primary occupation, and craft and related trades workers came second (23.6 per cent). This confirms that most of the employed women in Phnom Penh are engaged in retail selling, tailoring, and other handicraft making and selling. The actual number of women engaged in these occupations might be higher, since some might be doing it as a secondary occupation beside agriculture or household work. According to Gorman (1999), 67 per cent of small shop holders and 77 per cent of stall and market vendors are female. These occupations are insecure positions requiring few formal qualifications.

Men in Phnom Penh are employed as technicians and associate professionals (24.8 per cent) and plant and machine operators (13.1 per cent). There are only 9.8 per cent and 0.5 per cent of women respectively employed in these fields. A similar situation is seen in other urban areas and rural areas, except that in rural areas, occupations other

`than skilled agricultural and fishery work are not widely available. Even in other urban areas, agriculture and fishery are the primary occupations of the people.

There are generally more men than women who hold multiple jobs. This is mostly because of women's time constraint owing to their unpaid household responsibilities. In 1999, 32 per cent of women and 38 per cent of men held more than one job (Godfrey et al., 2001:9). It is interesting to note that among the plant/machine operators, more women are taking multiple jobs. This might indicate women's lower position among this category of workers.

Table 2.10
Employed population (aged 10 and above)
by occupation group (based on primary occupation) by sex and area, 1999

Major occupation group	Whole country			Phnom Penh			Other urban areas			Rural areas		
	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F	B	M	F
Legislators, senior officials and managers	0.6	1.2	0.1	2.0	3.0	0.8	1.0	1.9	0.2	0.5	1.0	0.0
Professionals	2.4	3.6	1.3	7.2	9.5	4.5	4.9	6.7	3.2	1.7	2.7	0.9
Technicians and associate professionals	2.7	4.5	1.1	17.8	24.8	9.8	4.8	7.6	2.1	1.2	2.2	0.4
Clerks	0.2	0.2	0.1	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0
Shop and market sales workers	7.0	3.7	9.9	25.1	12.2	39.9	15.3	6.9	23.4	4.5	2.5	6.2
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	74.0	71.6	76.2	8.1	6.5	9.9	52.8	48.7	56.8	82.0	80.6	83.3
Craft and related trades workers	4.9	4.1	5.6	17.8	12.6	23.6	7.1	7.0	7.2	3.5	2.9	4.1
Plant and machine operators etc.	1.4	2.7	0.2	7.2	13.1	0.5	3.2	6.1	0.4	0.7	1.3	0.1
Elementary occupations	5.9	6.5	5.3	9.5	9.5	9.4	8.0	10.2	5.9	5.3	5.7	4.9
Armed forces	1.0	2.0	0.1	4.4	7.7	0.6	2.6	4.9	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.0
All occupation groups	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Employed population (in '000)	5508	2626	2882	388	207	181	528	259	269	4592	2159	2432

B = both; M = male; F = female
Source: Ministry of Planning, 2000a:33

Compared to data from 1993/94 there has been a mild decrease in the ratio of both women and men engaged as agriculture and fishery workers although this sector continues to absorb the increase in labour supply. For women, there is a steady increase among those engaged as craft and related trades workers and in micro-scale market vending work and men increasingly work as technicians and associate professionals. This means there is some diversification of skills among women and men, and some increases in upward labour mobility. However, women continue to be under represented at the higher occupational levels; 2.5 per cent of all employed

women as compared to 9.3 of all employed men were legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, associate professionals or technicians.

2.2.4. Equality in wages

On average, men earn 23 per cent more than women (Godfrey et al., 2001:11). Data from the CSES 1996 showed that the average monthly earnings was 62,000 riels (around US$23) for women and 83,000 riels (around US$30.7) for men. The gender wage gap was more than 300 per cent in the case of trade, in other words: on average men earned three times as much as women in trade. Trade is the highest pay sector for men, while manufacturing is the highest pay sector for women. Higher pay for women in manufacturing owes to the earnings of garment factory workers. According to Godfrey et al. (2001), garment workers earn around four times as much as waitresses. This shows why garment factory work is prized in spite of the working conditions in these factories (see Section 2.2.2 (b)).

Table 2.11
Monthly wages of paid employees (based on their primary occupation) by major occupation group and stratum, 1999

(in riels)

Major occupation group	Cambodia	Phnom Penh	Other urban	Rural
Employed population	165,236	298,648	154,964	112,069
Legislators, senior officials and managers	137,765	399,243	72,249	63,219
Professionals	130,181	215,199	131,588	101,986
Technicians and associate professionals	265,028	397,298	163,629	135,447
Clerks	186,502	306,646	214,089	60,319
Service and shop and market sales workers	174,010	263,454	185,716	72,214
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	97,691	94,547	156,256	81,192
Craft and related trade workers	194,373	281,645	189,533	147,782
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	301,683	395,515	272,699	198,642
Elementary occupation	120,228	200,316	155,248	106,530
Armed forces	110,047	161,011	109,220	73,576

Source: Ministry of Planning, 2000a:34.

Generally, the wage level in Phnom Penh is much higher than in other areas. However, there are differences between occupations. There are higher wage gaps between Phnom Penh and rural areas among legislators, senior officials and managers, technicians and associated professionals, clerks, service and shop and market sales workers. Godfrey et al. (2001) noted that agricultural wages are higher than the lowest remuneration in urban areas for waiters/waitresses and scavengers, and suggested that rural areas do not necessarily have more surplus labour than urban areas. However, it should be taken into consideration that agricultural labour is seasonal, and in the off-

season, it will be almost zero. This gives reason for out-migration to less paid and vulnerable occupations in urban areas.

Table 2.11 shows that wages of machine operators and technicians are as high as those of senior officials and managers. Both occupational groups employ mostly men. Therefore, women may require career counselling and placement support even when they have the necessary skills to gain and maintain entry into these male-dominated jobs.

2.2.5. Employment status

In Phnom Penh, the main source of household income was wage employment which contributed 34.9 per cent of total income, while income from self-employment amounted to 30.3 per cent (CSES, 1999:59)[9]. In other urban areas, self-employment contributed 58 per cent of income while wage employment contributed 21.3 per cent. In the rural areas, the ratio is 71.4 per cent income from self-employment and 15.4 per cent from wage employment.

Men are working more as paid employees compared to women – 19.9 per cent of men and 10.9 per cent of women respectively are paid employees. Although a gender gap still exists in access to paid employment, the gap seems to be narrowing. Two years earlier, the CSES 1997 showed that 15 per cent of the male labour force were paid employees as compared to 5.4 per cent of women. This reduction owes much to the emergence of paid employment opportunities for women in garment factories.

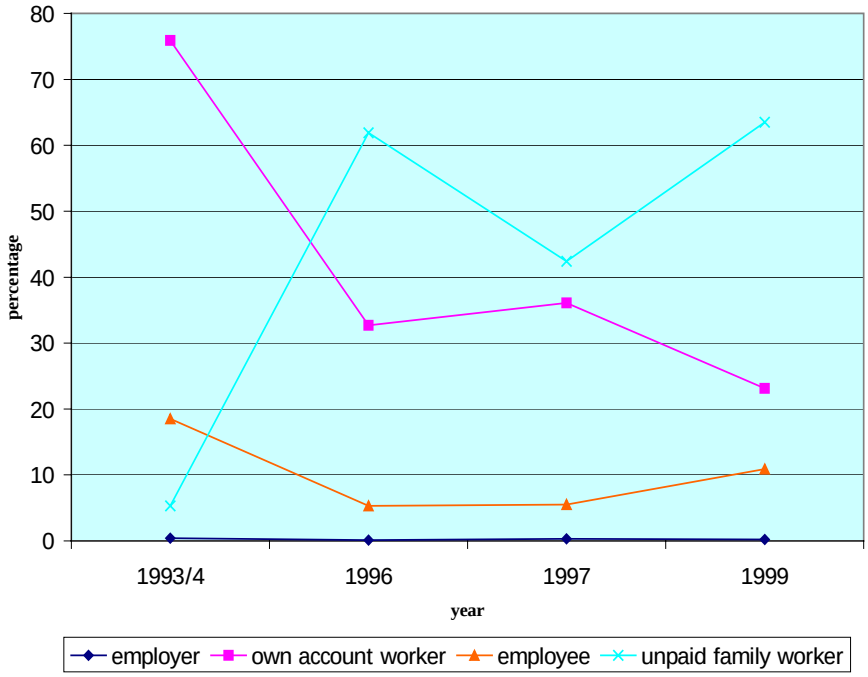
Table 2.12
Employed population (aged 10 years and above) by employment status (based on primary occupation) sex and stratum, 1999

Employment status	Whole country			Phnom Penh			Other urban areas			Rural areas		
	B	**M**	**F**	**B**	**M**	**F**	**B**	**M**	**F**	**B**	**M**	**F**
Paid employee	15.2	19.9	10.9	53.4	65.1	39.9	24.1	34.0	14.5	11.0	13.8	8.4
Employer	0.2	0.2	0.2	-	-	-	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3
Own account worker*1	36.6	51.3	23.1	33.3	28.2	39.2	38.2	42.8	33.7	36.6	54.5	20.8
Unpaid family worker	46.2	27.3	63.5	12.6	6.0	20.3	35.3	20.9	49.3	50.3	30.2	68.2
Other	0	0	0	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	0	-
Not stated	1.8	1.3	2.2	0.5	0.5	0.5	2.1	2.0	2.3	1.8	1.3	2.3
All types	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
All employees (in '000)	5508	2626	2882	388	207	181	528	259	269	4592	2160	2532

Source: Ministry of Planning, 2000a:31
B = both, M = men, F = female
*1 Own account worker and self-employed.

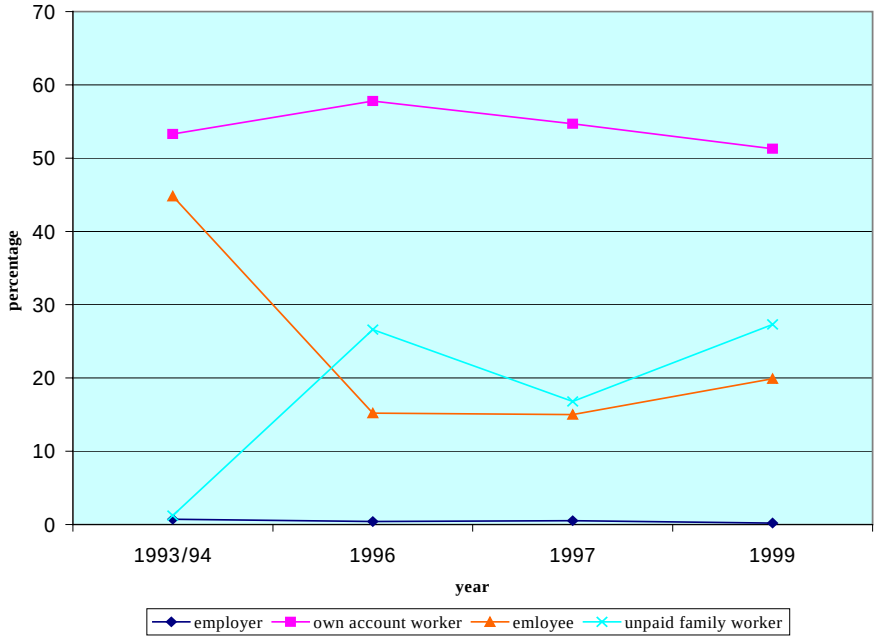
[9] The remaining 34.8 per cent of sources of household income came from other sources such as rental income, interest received, transfers and inputed value of houses rent, etc.

Chart 2.7: Employed women (aged 10 years and above) by employment status (based on primary occupation)



Source: MoP (2000b)

Chart 2.8: Employed men (aged 10 years and above) by employment status (based on primary occupation)



Source: MoP (2000b)

In 1999, 46.2 per cent of the work force consisted of unpaid family labour, working without pay on their own family farms and businesses (Table 2.12). Especially notable is that 63.5 per cent of women were unpaid family workers while there were only 27.3 per cent of men in this category. Sixty-eight per cent of women are unpaid family workers in the rural areas.

Nearly 83 per cent (82.8) of the employed population is either self-employed or unpaid family worker. Only 15.2 per cent are paid employees and very few are employers with paid employees[10]. Men in Phnom Penh are employed more as paid employees (65.1 per cent), while women are equally employed as own account workers (39.2 per cent) as well as paid employees (39.9 per cent). In other urban areas and rural areas, women are more engaged as unpaid family workers, and men as own account workers. This suggests the lack of skills and opportunities for rural women and women in other urban areas to make a living outside their family farm.

When changes since 1993 are examined, there is an increase in unpaid family workers and a decrease in the self-employed (Chart 2.7 and 2.8). This is all the more evident among women. However, in 1993/94 the interpretation of unpaid family workers was different and the change may only reflect the difficulty and/or the bias that the enumerators had in defining unpaid family and own account work. The enumerators might have automatically classified male heads of household as own account workers and their wives as unpaid family workers in a farming household.

However, if the trend of increased unpaid family work among women is valid, the reasons may be as follows. There may be a trend that women are retreating from self-employment and becoming unpaid family labour, owing to the harsher economic conditions since 1995, and because it is becoming increasingly difficult to have a viable business of one's own. Considering that some men are being successful in trade, and some men are starting their own business, women might be joining their husbands' business as unpaid family worker. Thus, women are defining themselves as helpers of men in farming and/or non-farm activities and as unpaid family workers, and not as own account workers. Even though women's unemployment rate is low, most are absorbed as unpaid family labour.

There was a drop in wage employment in the early 1990s, reflecting the closure of state-run enterprises. Later, as the market economy developed, factories were established and wage employment started to grow, especially for women. More women and men are moving out of agriculture and taking up wage employment, reflecting the move in the decrease in own account workers and the increase in wage employment.

[10] Especially, it is surprising that there is no employer with paid employees in Phnom Penh. However, as the CSES 1999 Report (Ministry of Planning, 2000a:30) explains, this might be because the survey covered only household economic activities or unincorporated enterprises and excluded establishment type units. Also, the laws require employers to pay minimum wages to their employees, and this might have affected the result.

If the informal economy is defined as 'working in any enterprise not registered or any enterprise which is not recognised or established by law'[11], many of the occupations of those who are in the informal economy would be included in the CSES as own account workers. As can be seen from Table 2.12, in Phnom Penh, there are more women working as own account workers compared to men. The income difference can be significant between those in registered establishments and the hawkers even though they are both own account workers. In Kusakabe's study (1999), the daily profit of some shop owner-sellers is around 8.7 times of that of the street vendors, and some market stall sellers earn at least 3.6 times more than street vendors[12].

2.2.6. Girl labour

The CSES 1999 estimated that 672,000 children comprising 334,000 boys and 338,000 girls in the age group 5-17 years had participated in economic activities as child workers. These are children who worked for pay, profit or family gain at any time during the reference year. More than half of the children (52 per cent) had helped in household chores. In the rural sector, more than 20 per cent of children aged 10-14 years and over 52 per cent of children aged 15-17 years responded that they did not attend school full time because of their responsibility to contribute to household income. In both rural and urban areas, fewer girls attended school full time, and they worked more for pay, and helped more in household chores compared to boys (Table 2.13).

Table 2.13
Distribution of children aged 5-17 years by school attendance, participation in household chores and economic activity, 1999

Item of information/ sex	Cambodia (%)	Phnom Penh (%)	Other Urban (%)	Rural (%)
Attended school/ training full time				
Both sexes	60.3	81.9	67.0	57.2
Boys	63.7	85.1	70.2	60.8
Girls	56.6	78.9	63.6	53.4
Helped in household chores				
Both sexes	52.2	44.2	46.8	53.7
Boys	52.0	40.5	44.4	54.1
Girls	52.3	47.8	49.3	53.2
Worked for pay, profit or family gain				
Both sexes	16.5	6.7	14.9	17.7
Boys	15.9	5.6	13.2	17.2
Girls	17.1	7.8	16.8	18.1

Source: MoP, 2000a:36

[11] Definition used by Rao (1996) in her study on women in the urban informal sector in Phnom Penh.

[12] The number of respondents who replied to this question is small.

2.3. Access to education and other resources

2.3.1. Formal and informal education

One of the bottlenecks for employment creation in Cambodia is the lack of skilled human resources and formal education creates a basis for human resource development. Cambodia, like other countries, still has gender disparity both in literacy rate as well as access to higher education. Forty-six per cent of women above the age of 25 never attended school while the corresponding figure for men is 20.7 per cent (MoP, 1996b).

The literacy rate of the population 15 years and over was 67.8 per cent in 1999. The female literacy rate was 57.7 while that of men was 80 per cent. In Phnom Penh, the literacy is much higher, although women's literacy rate is lower in all areas. However, the definition of literacy rates in the surveys, which asked the respondents to define by themselves whether they can read or write, can be misleading. Table 2.14 shows the result of a survey of a randomly-selected national sample of 6,548 respondents aged 15 years and above. Completely illiterate scored zero points in the test, the semi-literate could read and write only a few words and numbers, and the literate could use their skills in everyday life and income generation (Godfrey et al., 2001:6). This shows that only 37.1 per cent, and among women, less than 30 per cent can actually use their literacy skills for income generation. This poses a great constraint for skill and business development for both women and men.

The literacy rates are lower among the poorest, and the gender disparity in literacy is also wider among the poorest (Ministry of Planning, 1999a:24). In the poorest 20 per cent of villages, the male literacy rate is 51.4 per cent greater than the female literacy rate. However, in the richest 20 per cent of villages, the difference is only about 26 per cent.

Table 2.14
Three categories of literacy, by sex, Cambodia 1999

	Illiterate		Semi-literate		Literate	
	Number (millions)	Rate (%)	Number (millions)	Rate (%)	Number (millions)	Rate (%)
Male	0.7	24.7	0.8	27.7	1.3	47.6
Female	1.7	45.1	1.0	25.7	1.1	29.2
Both sexes	2.4	36.3	1.7	27.0	2.4	37.1

Source: RGC (1999) quoted in Godfrey et al. (2001:6)

Gorman (1999) argued that despite the estimated large number of illiterate Cambodian women, especially over the age of 30, adult women aged over 25 constitute a minority in many literacy programmes. Such programmes mainly reach young adults and school drop outs.

There is no significant gender disparity in school enrolment rate until the fourth grade. However, a larger percentage of girls drop out of school. Girls' enrolment rate becomes lower, the higher the education level is. At the lower secondary level, the enrolment rate of boys is 68 per cent greater than that of girls, and at the upper

secondary level, boys' enrolment rate is 88 per cent greater than that of girls (MoP, 1998a). At the tertiary level, 85 per cent of students are men. Privatization of education, the school being far from their village, less importance attached to girls' education, reluctance to send girls away from home, the expectation by parents and society that girls should help in the household and assist the family financially, all contribute to the low enrolment of girls in higher education. There is pronounced gender segregation in vocational training as well as in universities, where women are clustered in the traditional areas of humanities and teacher training. The faculties of law and medicine are 99 per cent male (GDN, 2000). The school curriculum has been criticized to be not gender-sensitive and enforce stereotyped thinking on roles and norms about women and men.

2.3.2. Access to credit

Many of the projects of Government and NGOs have credit components. As many as 80 NGOs are involved in the extension of micro-credit (ILO, 2000:22), and many of them target women. ACLEDA is the largest micro-credit provider and accounts for around 70 per cent of lending by micro-finance institutions. Most of the micro-credit is based on group liability, but ACLEDA also directs credit to independent small enterprises. Most of ACLEDA's clients tend to be involved in short term high return business such as retail business and less in seasonal investment such as agricultural work.

An ADB estimate suggested that the unsatisfied demand for credit among rural households amounts to US$37-40 million (ILO, 2000:22). NGOs are planning to inject more money into the credit market. An NGO, GRET (Group de Recherches et d'Echanges Technologiques) plans a five-fold increase in loan disbursements over the period 1998-2004, while Cambodia Community Building proposes a seven-fold increase over five years to 2004.

Most of the loan sizes are small. Twenty-three out of 25 leading credit NGOs had average loan sizes of below US$50 in December 1998, and 16 had average loan sizes below $30. ACLEDA offers credit to small and medium enterprises, with the mean sizes of loan being $1194 for small and $8118 for medium enterprises (ILO, 2000).

Most of the micro-credit schemes operate with a relatively high interest rate (around 3-5 per cent per month, although this is much lower than that of money lenders), a relatively short time span of loan, and a repayment schedule that requires monthly repayment of equal amounts. Although ACLEDA as well as other micro-credit institutions have modified their credit scheme to meet the needs of farmers, the interest rate is often still too high to use the loan for agriculture or other investments with low returns, especially considering the skill level of the majority of people that requires credit. There is a need for long term investment loans for farmers and small-scale producers.

2.3.3. Access to land

Among rural households, 14.4 per cent are landless. The average land holding is around 1 ha per household. A land study project has found that female-headed

households have smaller land holdings than average, and are twice as likely to become landless and become involved in land disputes. They are considered to be an easy prey for people who seek to obtain land (Williams, 2000; Biddulph et al., 2000; Mehta et al., 2000). The privatization of land has also limited women's access to common property assets, especially forest resources.

2.3.4. Access to decision making power in the household

It is important to have an overall picture of how much decision making power women have in the household together with their employment prospects outside the home. Women's status and responsibility in the household affect and are affected by women's access to paid employment, resources and information, as well as their access to opportunities for skills improvement.

Most of the data available until recently on this issue came from small sporadic case studies. However, the 2000 Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (CDHS) included this important indicator of women's empowerment. This survey is based on a nationally representative sample of 15,300 women between the ages of 15 and 49, and covered 12 provinces. The survey asked about single and joint decision making. As shown in Table 2.15, women are able to participate in decision making mostly with regard to their own health, and also for visiting family, friends, relatives and making purchases. They were able to make decisions least in whether to use contraception as well as whether to earn money. Only 40.7 per cent of women have sole or joint decision making power over all six decisions while almost one in every 10 women did not have any say in any of them.

Table 2.15
Percentage of women who say that they alone or jointly have the final say in specific decisions

	Visits to family, friends, relatives	Making daily purchases	Making large purchases	Whether to earn money	Own health care	Use contraception	all 6 decisions	none of the 6 decisions
Total	**80.0**	**75.2**	**72.1**	**65.7**	**80.9**	**61.5**	**40.7**	**9.5**
Residence								
Urban	79.9	67.6	63.7	60.1	82.1	53.2	33.1	10.2
Rural	80.0	76.8	73.8	66.8	80.6	63.3	42.3	9.3
Education								
No education	83.6	83.1	80.5	69.0	84.5	67.4	46.9	6.6
Primary	80.4	75.1	71.7	66.3	79.9	61.7	40.4	10.0
Secondary and higher	72.3	61.7	58.5	57.5	77.7	50.8	31.0	12.4
Current employment								
Employed for cash	84.0	81.0	78.1	80.5	86.7	62.5	47.5	5.9
Employed not for cash	79.8	74.1	69.7	63.3	78.3	62.8	38.9	11.0
Not employed	74.7	69.0	67.3	49.0	76.8	58.2	34.2	12.0

Source: Ministry of Planning, 2000c

Participation in decision making increased with age, and those who had ever been married had higher decision making power than those who had never married. Women in the rural areas displayed more decision making power than those in the urban areas. This might be because women's labour force participation is higher in the rural areas. Women who were employed as paid or unpaid workers had a higher participation in decision making. Surprisingly, participation in decision making dropped with rising education levels. This might be because better-educated middle-class women have a stronger sense of conforming to the socially-expected image of obedient women (Kusakabe, 1999). It might also be because better-educated women are married to even more educated men, and thus they can afford to be full-time housewives who are financially dependent on men.

The CDHS also compiled indicators on economic autonomy, consisting of asset ownership, exposure to modern financial institutions, and control over income. Asset ownership included ownership of land, home dwellings, and other dwellings, jewellery or gems, livestock, and cars or motorbikes. Financial institutions included banks, community-based or NGO-run credit programmes. Control over household items reflected women's control over purchase of perishable foods and staple foods, and personal items included clothes, any kind of medical care or toiletries such as lipstick or perfume.

Table 2.16
Percentage of women who either alone or jointly own assets, are exposed to modern financial institutions, and have control over income

	Asset ownership		**Exposure to modern financial institutions**		**Control over income**	
	owns at least one asset alone or jointly	owns at least one asset alone and can sell without permission	Knows about credit programmes	has ever applied for/ taken a loan	Controls money for at least one household item	Controls money for at least one personal item
Total	**78.3**	**27.6**	**37.4**	**10.4**	**68.9**	**80.2**
Residence						
Urban	74.0	29.0	45.3	10.0	63.0	78.9
Rural	79.1	27.3	35.7	10.5	70.1	80.4
Education						
No education	83.3	29.3	32.9	11.8	76.4	83.1
Primary	78.1	25.6	38.5	10.3	68.7	80.4
Secondary and higher	70.1	31.7	41.1	8.4	56.0	74.3
Current employment						
Employed for cash	81.6	32.5	38.3	11.3	74.1	85.6
Employed not for cash	78.1	26.2	38.2	11.2	68.2	78.6
Not employed	74.0	23.1	34.7	8.0	62.7	75.2

Source: CDHS, 2000

Table 2.16 shows that 78 per cent of women own assets either alone or jointly, and nearly 70 per cent or more controls money for household and personal items. Those who are employed control income more than those who are not. However, control

over these expenditures might suggest that they are responsible for the total household expenditure. That is, it might reflect their financial burden rather than their autonomy.

Even though they own assets, women who can dispose of such assets freely are much smaller in number. Only 27.6 per cent owns at least one asset alone and can sell it without permission (Ministry of Planning, 2000c:226). This explains why women face difficulty in mobilizing initial or expansion capital for their business. Less than one third of women have full control over an asset. This limitation to access to capital is further exacerbated by their lack of access to information on credit programmes. Only 37.4 per cent knows about credit programmes. It should be noted that those with a higher education know about credit programmes more than those without education, but those without education borrow money more. For example, 41.1 per cent of those with secondary or higher education know about credit programmes, while only 32.9 per cent of those without education do. On the other hand, 8.4 per cent of those with secondary or higher education level take loans, while 11.8 per cent of those without education do. This indicates that information on credit is not reaching the people who need credit.

2.3.5. Access to networks and social capital

According to some researchers, social cohesion and solidarity were never a distinct feature of Cambodian societies, in which households were like islands (Gorman, 1999). However, labour exchange during the transplanting and harvesting seasons is still practiced in many places. Although there are still not many associations, organizations and groups in Cambodia, they seem to be increasing at a fast rate[13]. Mutual help and advocacy groups are being formed, as well as market vendors' and business associations.

The Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey 2000 (p.228) showed that very few women (3.1 per cent) are a member of an organization, such as development committees, religious groups, and/or other social groups. Membership increases with age, is higher in rural areas, and falls with education. In the 40-49 age bracket, 4.9 per cent are members of an organization. In the rural areas, 3.4 per cent of women are members of an organization, while in the urban areas, only 1.8 per cent have joined an organization; 3.5 per cent of those without education are a member of an organization, which drops to 3 per cent for primary educated women, and to 2.5 per cent for those with secondary or higher education.

2.4. Women's vulnerability in the labour market

2.4.1. Vulnerable groups

Reerink (2001) in an ILO literature review of gender equality issues in the labour market and women's opportunities for decent work in Cambodia identified vulnerable and special interest groups as:

[13] JICA is planning to do a mapping of associations in Cambodia in early 2002.

- *Female-headed households.* Low social status, social exclusion or high risk of sudden crisis, as well as their heavier work burden have been pointed out. The support these women can obtain from others depends on the reason for being the single head of household. Some are widowed, divorced, deserted, or are second wives. These women, especially the divorced and second wives, suffer from stigma in society, and thus are less connected to information networks in the village (Kusakabe, 2001b).

- *Disabled women.* The CSES 1999 estimates that 1.5 per cent of the population is disabled – 1.8 per cent of men and 1.2 per cent of women. Urashima (2002) states that 9.8 per cent of the population have a significant physical or mental disability that impairs their ability to function independently on a daily basis. Women who are in the age bracket that experienced the sex ratio imbalance (above or around 40 years old) are the people who have undergone the most traumatic events in the last 30 years. With their responsibility to support the family economically, the recent shift to a market economy can be imagined to have further given stress to these women, and it can be assumed that there are more women than men who are suffering from situationally-induced mental illnesses.

- *Girls in child labour.* As seen in Section 2.2.1, girls' labour force participation rates are higher than for boys. In 1999, the labour force participation rate of girls between 10-14 years old was 11.7, while the corresponding rate was 10.6 for boys. For the 15-19 year age group more than two-thirds of the girls (68.1 per cent) and half of the boys (50.9 per cent) were in the labour force (MoP, 2000a:28). Difficulties for girls to continue education are not only distance and transportation to school, but also because girls are expected to assist in household tasks. With little education, girls are treated as cheap and docile labor, and are at risk of entering hazardous jobs such as sex work, begging and other forms of bonded labour.

- *Women and girls in sex work.* Urashima (2002) notes that 47 per cent of the commercial sex workers in Cambodia were sold against their will and an additional 34 per cent left home because of extreme poverty (see also Section 2.2.2.c).

- *Women from indigenous ethnic minority groups.* Language differences and differences in culture, social beliefs and customs make it difficult for women from indigenous ethnic minority groups to access existing services for education, information, health services and credit.

Urashima (2002), also includes:

- *Internally displaced women.* Between 1992/93, 180,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were returned to their place of origin. A large proportion of them were female headed households with children. They received hardly any material or moral support, and became highly vulnerable to destitution. There seem to be many who were chronically displaced. They were not able to go back to their place of origin, either because of lack of resources or because of land mine problems. Even after 1993, more people have been displaced because of continuing conflict and the majority of the IDPs continue to be women.

- *Young girls, particularly eldest daughters.* Eldest daughters are vulnerable because they are the first to be removed from school due to family obligations. Very poor families often sell older daughters into a form of debt bondage as domestic servants with richer families.

- *Victims of domestic violence.* The Cambodia Demographic and Health Survey (2000) found that 23 per cent of surveyed women had experienced violence since age 15, and 15 per cent had experienced it during the last 12 months. The perpetrators are mainly husbands. Only 25 per cent experienced physical violence by a person other than her husband.

- *Women living with HIV/AIDS.* The major mode of infection of HIV/AIDS in Cambodia is unprotected heterosexual intercourse. Increasingly, men are infecting their non-commercial sex partners, including their wives, with the virus. The infection rate among pregnant women tested in antenatal care clinics in 2000 was 2.3 per cent (Urashima, 2002:27). In addition to infection, women bear the burden of caring for infected family members.

- *Homeless women.* The number of women living on the streets has increased in recent years. Most are seasonal migrants to the cities. Up to 76 per cent of homeless women are accompanied by children. A growing number of homeless women are young mothers who have been abandoned by their husbands, and/or have been beaten, abused, or raped, and do not have other alternative.

2.4.2 Factors that make women vulnerable in the labour market

There are many gender specific factors that make women's status less than that of men's. Reerink (2001) identified factors influencing women's low status as:

- *Traditional attitudes and gender ideology.* Expectations of obedience and submission to parents and husband, as well as their low status prescribed by interpretations of Buddhist teaching, result in social norms that give less value to women. This leads to giving less priority to women in education, channelling them into a narrow range of low-status occupations, justifying women's lower wages, and over-burdening women with a heavy workload. Such values also expect eldest girls to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the family, which puts them in a vulnerable position. They also give stigma to divorced women, which again makes them vulnerable. It should also be noted that women's mobility is restricted because of the social norms that give negative value to mobile women.

- *Illiteracy.* Urashima (2002) stressed that illiteracy and low education is a main bottleneck for women's employment promotion. Illiteracy and low education severely affect women's opportunities to learn new skills and access market information.

- *Social cohesion and community solidarity.* It is well known that social cohesion provides a supporting environment for women, since they can access help from others easily. However, there is a debate whether community solidarity existed in

traditional structures of Cambodian communities, and as mentioned earlier, few women are members of organizations.

- *Lack of women in decision making.* UNDP (2000, quoted in Reerink, 2001) show that introduction and passage of gender-sensitive and women-friendly legislation and policy is more likely when women account for a substantial percentage of those in decision making positions.

- *HIV/AIDS.* As has been discussed in the previous section, HIV/AIDS make women vulnerable in the labour market not only because of the infection that she suffers herself, but also many women have to take care of the infected. MoP (2000c:187) reported that at the end of 2000, there were an estimated 169,000 Cambodians living with HIV/AIDS (more than one percent of the total population). The MoP (2000c) survey showed that 22.7 percent of their women respondents who have heard of AIDS thought that the HIV-positive status of a person should remain a secret. This shows that HIV/AIDS carriers still suffer stigma in social life. Fifty-four per cent of these respondents said that they are willing to care for a relative sick with AIDS.

- *High workloads of women.* Gorman et al. (1999) have pointed out that the heavy workload of women constrains them from seriously taking up opportunities for training and other development activities including literacy programmes.

- *Absence of safety nets.* The social structure that has provided women with social security is said to have weakened, if not totally disappeared. Family support mechanisms, such as labour exchange, informal loans provisions and emotional support are decreasing in both the rural and the urban areas. For rural migrants in urban areas, such lack of support is experienced severely[14]. The absence of safety nets makes women's life vulnerable and it prohibits women to improve their skills and earn income.

- *Domestic violence.* According to MoP (2000c:233), 75 per cent of women reported violence by a husband (alone or with others; both present and/or previous husband). The prevalence is higher among women age 20-39 compared to younger and older women. One out of every two women currently divorced or separated reported experiencing vilence since age 15 while the rate for currently married women is 22 per cent. The divorced/separated women are much more likely than others to report violence in the recent past. Twenty-eight per cent of them reported experiencing violence in the last 12 months, while it was 14.7 per cent for currently married women. Domestic violence seriously hampers women's well-being as a whole, and their ability to be engaged in any employment or skills development.

- *Violence against women.* Violence in society and the culture of impunity make women vulnerable. As stated earlier, a land rights study showed that female-headed households are more likely to get into land disputes compared to others

[14] This is one of the motivations behind setting up a micro-vendors' association in Phnom Penh markets. See Banwell (2001) and Kusakabe et al. (2001).

(see Section 2.3.3). When society does not provide a legal mechanism to assert one's right, women are more vulnerable to exploitation.

Women's labour force participation is high in Cambodia. However, because of the above-mentioned factors, women are more disadvantaged and vulnerable in the labour market. The next chapters will examine how vocational training is able to allow women to overcome such vulnerability based on the findings of the action research.

CHAPTER 3

VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN CAMBODIA

3.1. Existing vocational training in Cambodia

3.1.1 The formal education system

Skills training in Cambodia can be divided largely into two streams: training offered in the formal and in the non-formal education system. Urashima (2002) mapped existing formal and non-formal education systems of skills training. Higher levels of training are provided in government universities such as Phnom Penh University, the Institute of Technology Cambodia, the Faculty of Law and Science of Economics, the Combined Faculty of Medicine and the Royal University of Fine Arts. Several private universities have been established in recent years. Urashima (2002:34) quotes statistics of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) indicating that in the year 2000-2001, a total of 4,867 students enrolled in tertiary institutions, 30 per cent of which were female.

There are a number of technical and vocational secondary schools run by MoEYS. The technical secondary schools include schools of physical education and sports, business, finance, planning, public works and transport, and post and telecommunications. Vocational secondary schools include schools focused on a particular skill or sector. Vocational training programs graduated 9,211 students in 1998-2001 and 60 per cent of these graduates were women (Urashima, 2002:34). The MoEYS has been running Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) since 1980s, one in Battambang, and one in Phnom Penh (Preah Kosomak). Their focus has long been to train mechanics and electricians, and to provide longer term vocational training of 2-3 years.

The Royal Government of Cambodia established the National Training Board (NTB) on 28 November 1996 as a policy making, planning and coordination body for technical, vocational education and training (TVET). This Board has been established to stimulate a demand-driven approach to TVET where public training institutions, NGOs and private providers will be contracted to deliver provincial and district level programs for the urban and rural poor (Urashima, 2002:35). Currently, many ministries as well as NGOs are engaged in TVET. Under the NTB, there are 20 government institutions which provide short term provincial vocational training, 14 NGOs' which provide vocational training, and 54 private vocational training institutions. The government institutions employ 90 Cambodian teachers, the NGOs employ 119 Cambodian teachers and 14 foreign teachers, and private training institutions employ 464 Cambodian teachers and 39 foreign teachers (MoEYS, 2002). Urashima (2002) mentioned that there are 72 NGO training providers and 165 private schools.

3.1.2. Non-formal education systems

Non-formal education includes skills training provided by a number of government organizations, NGOs, and the private sector as well as apprenticeships.

The DTVET (Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training) of MoEYS is developing a labour market information system as well as national skill standards, testing and accreditation system to ensure competency standards. In order to strengthen the linkages between industries and vocational training centers, an Industrial Advisory Technical Committee was established under the National Training Board.

The MoEYS has established Provincial Training Centers (PTCs) in the 1990s. Currently there are 16 PTCs operational under the MoEYS in Cambodia. The PTCs focus less on mechanical and electrical trades training, and also provide short term sewing and agriculture-related training. Unlike the VTCs, which cater to youths who have finished their 9th grade education, the PTCs target female headed households and widows, disabled people, demobilized soldiers, internally displaced people, returnees, eldest daughters, orphans, school drop outs, families with more than four children, and other vulnerable groups. Because of this focus, the PTCs have more women trainees than VTCs. The PTCs received support from ILO from 1992 upto 1999, and ADB support from 1998 to 2001. Both VTCs and PTCs do not charge training fees, and give allowances to poor students.

The PTCs offer modular courses, which range from one to 24 weeks, and provide some assistance to cover food expenses. Also, in order to overcome the problem of access to vocational training, these centers were established in the provinces. In order to improve the access, especially for rural women who have heavy household responsibilities, the PTCs organized mobile training courses in villages. Although this is still organized for agricultural training, the total number has decreased since the mid 90s because of budget constraints (see Section 3.2.2.).

The MoEYS has a Gender and Equal Opportunity (GEO) Unit. It was established in 1993 as a Women in Development Team, and was later renamed as the GEO Unit. Its mandate is to enrol more women in the training courses. It has produced guidelines and training manuals, and conducted workshops on gender equality promotion in both Khmer and English.

The Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MoWVA) also provides vocational training through its seven Women in Development (WID) Centers and Provincial Women's Affairs Offices. ILO conducted a review of these WID Centers in early 2001 (ILO, 2001). This study highlighted the need to integrate skill training that meets market demand, with access to capital, entrepreneurship development training and other business services and identified the constraints women face in accessing the training at the centers. Based on this review, an Integrated Economic Empowerment, Entrepreneurship and Employment for Women in Cambodia (NEEEW) project was developed by MoWVA with technical assistance by ILO.

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSALVY) is reported to have its own vocational training centers and provide credit

support as well. They also promote the implementation of apprenticeship programs. Other ministries have their own training centers and programs. For example, the Ministry of Tourism trains tour guides; the Ministry of Transportation trains train mechanics; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (with administrative responsibility for Prek Leap Agriculture college and the Royal University of Agriculture) conducts agricultural training for farmers; the Ministry of Interior trains the police; the Ministry of Health has administrative responsibility for the medical colleges; and the Ministry of Defence trains demobilized soldiers.

NGOs such as Don Bosco, Mary Knoll, and Khemara have their own training programs. Most of the NGOs' training targets specific groups such as poor women, disabled persons, orphans, refugees or demobilized soldiers.

There are many other private institutions especially in Phnom Penh and other larger cities teaching foreign languages and computer skills at a charge. While the government vocational schools focus on training technicians, and have more male students, some private vocational schools have more female students. At the Regent College, which offers English, computing, management, secretarial and accounting courses, 60 per cent of students are women. At the Pacific Training School, 60 per cent of students are women, studying computing and English (Gorman, 1999:21).

The labour law requires that any enterprise with more than 60 employees takes a number of apprentices equivalent to 10 per cent of the number of employees (Urashima, 2002:37). However, not many people are accepted as apprentices in large companies, and international businesses oppose to make this a mandatory regulation. In many occupational groups, however, apprenticeship is widely practiced. Sometimes the apprentice pays the master to learn the craft. In other cases, apprentices receives free training, food, accommodation and some pocket money in exchange for labour.

3.1.3. Enrollment of trainees and job placement

The records of the Department of Vocational Training of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour, Vocational Training and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSALVY) indicate that during 1991 to 2000, 52,630 people were trained under short-term vocational training by government institutions and NGOs of which 58.5 per cent were in the industry sector and 34 per cent in the tourism sector. Urashima (2002:35) estimated that 50,555 people were trained in 1991-98 by government organizations and NGOs, excluding the private schools. In addition, MoSALVY further estimated that 200,000 persons were trained by factories/enterprises including the garment industry and rubber plantations, most probably through apprenticeships and on-the-job training.

According to MoEYS, a total of 11,706 trainees completed skills training courses during 1999 to 2001, which were conducted by 224 training institutions under the NTF in the 24 provinces and cities of Cambodia in 53 types of skills, including both long- and short-term training. Of these, 53 per cent (6,180) were women and 47 per cent (5,526) were men (MoEYS, 2001:17). Among these trainees, one-quarter was trained in short term sewing courses, the largest number of people trained in one skill. Other popular subjects were in order of priority: animal raising, computer, motorbike

repair, food processing, hairdressing, TV repair, radio and cassette repair, small engine repair, and construction (see Table 3.1).

According to the data by MoEYS (2001:18), the employment ratio of the graduates of these training courses is very high. Sixty-eight per cent of trainees have found employment (67 per cent for male trainees and 68 per cent for female trainees). Of the 505 trained demobilized soldiers, all of them were able to find employment after the training. Of the 919 widows trained, 98 per cent found employment. Among the other vulnerable groups, employment rates were as follows: orphans, 82 per cent; the handicapped, 77 per cent; school leavers: 71 per cent; and the rural poor: 47 per cent.

Among the 53 skills, those with the best employment rates were skills related to agriculture such as animal and fish raising, mushroom and onion growing, and silk worm raising. Almost all of the graduates of these courses found work. Other skills with high employment rates include automotive repair, blacksmith, bamboo basket making, hairdressing, and rattan processing. Skills with the least employment rates were accounting (35.6 per cent), computer repair (15.2 per cent), construction (19.0 per cent), electricity repair (29.0 per cent), hotel service (20 per cent), marketing (16.2 per cent), and masonry (22.6 per cent).[1]

However, these number should be interpreted with caution since the category 'found employment' included any employment, regardless of the skills used and regardless of whether it was a new job or the continuation of the old one. That is, these figures do not directly show that the skills training that people received contributed to their access to employment or created new employment. It should also be noted that most graduates cannot afford to be unemployed.

High employability does not necessarily mean decent work which provides a living wage. The wages or earnings that trainees can expect from training in some of the most employable skills may be much less than pay-levels in other jobs. According to MoEYS (2001:19), the average income from work in each of the 53 skills is US$53 per month. Most agriculture related jobs earn only around US$40, even though it is the most employable skill. Rattan processing earned $32, hairdressing earned $59. On the other hand, construction earns $64 and motorbike repair $66 (with an employment rate of 34.3 per cent). Welding can earn $73 per month. This again shows the wage disparities between male and female dominated occupations. Occupations which are paid less such as animal raising, handicraft and hairdressing are female-dominated, while construction, welding and motorbike repair are male-dominated.

Even though in general, women's employment rate was the same as that of men's after the training, inequalities in employment remained. First of all, as mentioned above, occupations that women go into after the training are generally less paid than those that men go into. High employment rates might just show the need for women to work and earn income rather than success in raising their living standard as such.

[1] Employment rates for some popular courses such as welding and radio and cassette player repair are not included if the survey covered less than half of the graduates, thus the calculated employment rates are not reliable (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1.
Employment rate per skill area of trainees of Phase: 1st – 7th (1999 to 2001)

No.	Course title		No. of Trainees Surveyed		
		No. of trainees	No. of trainees surveyed	No. of trainees who found employment	% trainees surveyed
1	Accounting	180	160	57	88.89
2	Air Conditioning	105	75	55	71.43
3	Alga/Seaweed Growing	92	92	92	100.00
4	Animal Raising	725	675	670	93.10
5	Automotive Repair	75	47	47	62.67
6	Bamboo Basket Making	20	20	20	100.00
7	Black Smith	15	15	15	100.00
8	Chicken Raising	75	75	75	100.00
9	Computer	715	448	250	62.66
10	Computer Repair	170	105	16	61.76
11	Construction	284	284	54	100.00
12	Cow Breeding/Raising	160	160	120	100.00
13	Dancing/Musician	30	30	30	100.00
14	Deeply Growing	60	60	60	100.00
15	Duck Raising	215	215	55	100.00
16	Electricity Repair	185	155	45	83.78
17	Embroidery	15	15	15	100.00
18	Fish Raising	185	185	105	100.00
19	Fishing Boat Driver	20	-	-	-
20	Food Processing	662	632	610	95.47
21	Fruit Processing	130	150	130	115.38
22	Furniture Making	50	20	10	40.00
23	Hair Cut	65	65	30	100.00
24	Hairdressing	485	427	427	88.04
25	Hol Phamong Weaving	145	71	53	48.97
26	Hotel Service	20	20	5	100.00
27	Install Wiring	80	80	32	100.00
28	Krama Weaving	120	15	15	12.50
29	Lathe	45	45	26	100.00
30	Lobster	60	60	60	100.00
31	Marketing	207	167	27	80.68
32	Masonry	237	177	40	74.68
33	Mat Weaving	255	191	165	74.90
34	Motorbike Repair	687	507	174	73.80
35	Mushroom Growing	180	175	175	97.22
36	Onion Growing	20	20	20	100.00
37	Outfitting	130	115	50	88.46
38	Pig Raising	116	116	106	100.00
39	Radio & Cassette Repair	420	180	163	42.86
40	Rattan Processing	62	58	58	93.55
41	Sewing	2,930	2,180	1,523	74.40
42	Shell Processing	35	35	27	100.00
43	Shoe Making	15	-	-	-
44	Silk Weaving	75	60	30	80.00
45	Silver Sculpture	45	45	25	100.00
46	Small Engine Repair	310	205	170	66.13
47	Stone Carving	60	30	24	50.00
48	TV Repair	424	389	162	91.75
49	Video Cameraman	15	-	-	-
50	Water Pump Repair	45	30	20	66.67
51	Welding	130	25	20	19.23

52	Wood Carving	90	75	54	83.33
53	Worm Raising	30	30	30	100.00
TOTAL		**11,706**	**9,211**	**6,262**	**78.69**

Source: MoEYS, 2001

Table 3.2.
Number of trainees of Phase 1st – 7th (1999 to 2001) who found employment
(By city/provinces and by sex)

No	Location	Number of trainees			No. of trainees who found employment			% of trainees who found employment		
		Total	M	F	Total	M	F	% Total	% M	% F
1	Sihanouk Ville	315	218	97	301	211	90	96	97	93
2	Keb Ville	122	24	98	114	24	90	93	100	92
3	Pursat	411	246	165	379	221	158	92	90	96
4	Koh-Kong	180	115	65	160	90	70	89	78	108
5	Kampot	920	445	475	753	303	450	82	68	95
6	Mondolkiri	160	72	88	128	57	71	80	79	81
7	Kampong Speu	254	70	184	196	50	146	77	71	79
8	Kp. Chnang	265	86	179	198	75	123	75	87	69
9	Rattanakiri	50	20	30	35	20	15	70	100	50
10	Kratie	235	100	135	163	68	95	69	68	70
11	Kampong Cham	695	249	446	479	124	355	69	50	80
12	Banteaymenchey	466	142	324	319	102	217	68	72	67
13	Battambang	516	196	320	352	112	240	68	57	75
14	Kandal	791	253	538	534	116	418	68	46	78
15	Preah Vihear	192	65	127	129	40	89	67	62	70
16	Stung Treng	145	48	97	94	20	74	65	42	76
17	Svay Reing	255	38	217	164	19	145	64	50	67
18	Siem Reap	245	168	77	157	86	71	64	51	92
19	Kampong Thom	284	70	214	180	61	119	63	87	56
20	Pailin	155	68	87	97	39	58	63	57	67
21	Takeo	745	413	332	463	167	296	62	40	89
22	Prey Veng	185	46	139	112	33	79	61	72	57
23	Odor Meanchey	65	-	65	36	-	36	55	-	55
24	Phnom Penh	1,560	490	1,070	699	395	304	45	81	28
Total		9,211	3,642	5,569	6,242	2,433	3,809	68	67	68

Source: MoEYS, 2001

Secondly, there were geographical differences in women and men's employment rates (Table 3.2). On average, women found employment to the same extent as men, but in provinces such as Rattanakiri, Kampong Thom and in the capital Phnom Penh, many more men were able to find jobs as compared to women. The gender disparity in finding employment in Phnom Penh is especially alarming. Considering the fact that wages in Phnom Penh are higher than in other places in Cambodia, this may indicate that women are having difficulty in getting employed in higher wage jobs. On the other hand, in provinces such as Siem Reap, Kampot, Koh Kong, Kampong Cham, Battambang, Kandal, and Takeo, more women found jobs as compared to men. This might be because women enrolled in agricultural training, continued with their farm work, and, thus, were counted as employed after the training.

3.1.4. Apprenticeships and informal on-the-job training

Over the period 1993-98, as many as half a million persons received training through apprenticeships and other on-the-job training (ILO, 2000:31). Statistics on these informal arrangements are difficult to find, and data is not disaggregated by sex. However, it is evident that many people are learning skills through apprenticeships and informal on-the-job training at present. This reflects a choice made by the students either because of costs (including opportunity costs), families' levels of income, the perceived appropriateness of courses and their linkage with subsequent job opportunities. Workers are willing to pay for courses that they think will promise useful returns. ILO's 1997 report on training in the Greater Mekong Subregion pointed out that workers in Cambodia were willing to pay $100 for a one-year training in tailoring, and up to $300 for training in TV/radio repair. Although sex-disaggregated data are not available, general observations show that apprenticeships and on-the-job training tend to preserve the existing gender disparities in better-paid occupations. MoEYS (1999)'s survey showed a very low demand for female employees among employers. A survey among 350 employers in 17 provincial towns and cities in Cambodia found that they planned to recruit 393 persons in the future of whom only 34 were women.

Although apprenticeships and on-the-job training are a common way to obtain skills, it does not necessarily create viable employment. MoEYS (1999) found that although on-the-job training is popular in workplaces, students were not accepted in 42 per cent of the companies surveyed. Others accepted students, but these were not given a salary.

3.2. Training in the surveyed institutions

3.2.1. Profile of the Training Institutions

All of the six training centers selected for the research are managed by the State. The training programs of the two vocational training centers are under the national government whereas the four PTCs are under provincial government. All the six training institutions selected for this study kept records of the training performance of men and women participants as well as the performance of the specific target groups. This information is stored in a hard copy in file cabinets and not computerized.

The number of total staff of the six training institutions surveyed was 176 in 1996. These consisted of 19 managers, 115 technical staff and 42 maintenance staff. In 1999, the number of staff increased to 190 comprising of 16 managers, 110 technical staffs and 64 maintenance staff. The number of staff in 2001 decreased to 151 persons: 19 managers, 80 technical staff and 52 maintenance staff. The number of staff decreased in 2001 because the training centers offered less courses than before because of financial constraints. Table 3.3 shows the sex-disaggregated number of staff in the training centers surveyed in 2002. Although four of the six training centers have female directors, the table clearly shows the very low number of women staff in the training centers, especially in VTCs.

Table 3.3
Number of staff in training centers by sex

	Number of government staff			Number of non-government staff		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
PTC Siem Reap	2	2	4	2	1	3
PTC Battambang	4	3	7	5	1	6
PTC Kampong Cham	13	3	16	3	2	5
PTC Kampot	4	4	8	5	2	7
VTC Preah Kosomak	59	6	65	0	0	0
VTC Battambang	37	4	41	9	0	9

3.2.2. Types of skills training courses

In 1996, the number of courses offered in the six training centers was 76 in 34 different skill areas. Among these 34 skills, pig raising/vaccination was the most popular training – 14 courses on this subject took place in 1996, followed by a course on mushroom growing, which was delivered 5 times.

The number of courses increased to 109 in 1999, but only in 25 skill areas. There was a considerable increase in the total number of courses offered because 32 food processing courses and 29 health nutrition courses were conducted in this year at the Kampong Cham Provincial Training Center.

Only 57 courses in 19 skills were offered in 2001. The number decreased because the majority of delivered courses were center-based. Pig raising/vaccination was still popular for villagers at PTCs.

According to the administrative data, during 1996, 1999, and 2001, 242 courses were offered in the six training centers; 97 (40.1 per cent) were in either male- or female-dominated skills, and 48 (19.8 per cent) were in skills that were not dominated by either sex (Table 3.4). A total of 5,119 people were trained during these three years, among them 2,896 were women. However, among the 97 female-dominated courses, 32 courses were on food processing and 29 were on health and nutrition. The number of courses on these two subjects was much larger than in other skills[2]. If these two courses are excluded, only 19.9 per cent are courses in skills that are female-dominated.

When compared by year, there were more courses offered during 1999 compared to 1996 and 2001 (Table 3.5), because technical and financial assistance was provided by the ILO and the UNDP. It is also noted that the ratio of female-dominated courses was the highest in the year 1999. This is partly because, in 1999, the courses on food processing and on health and nutrition were offered. However, even when these courses are excluded, in 1999, 27 per cent of the courses were female-dominated, which is higher than the three-years average of 19.9 per cent.

[2] The next largest following these two was a course on electricity that was offered 12 times.

Table 3.4
List of skills training in six training centers

No.	Skills Trained	PKSM	VTC BT	PTC BTB	PTC SRP	PTC KC	PTC KPT	Total
1	Civil construction	3	3					6
2	Brick mason/masonry	2		4		1	2	9
3	Carpentry	1	1					2
4	Electronic	2						2
5	Electricity	7	3	1			1	12
6	Fridge repair	5						5
7	Radio repair	2		1	2	1		6
8	TV repair				2	2		4
9	Recorder/TV repair	1	1	4				6
10	Motorbike repair	3			1	2	3	9
11	Auto repair	2					2	4
12	Auto mechanic		3					3
13	Machine of agriculture		3					3
14	Small engine repair	2		1	2	2		7
15	Welding	5		1	1		2	9
16	Leather	2						2
17	Silk Weaving						2	2
18	Embroidery						1	1
19	Sewing	1		3	2	4	5	15
20	Barber			1	1	1	1	4
21	Hair dressing				2	1		3
22	Graphic design		1					1
23	Computer					1	3	4
24	Outfitting				1			1
25	Wood carving				1		1	2
26	Marble/wood carving			1				1
27	Basket making				1		1	2
28	Bracelet making						1	1
29	Shell craft						1	1
30	Plough making						1	1
31	Food processing						32	32
32	Health & Nutrition						29	29
33	Rattan mat weaving			2				2
34	Mushroom growing			4	1			5
35	Reed color mat weaving			1				1
36	Rice growing							3
37	Pig raising/vaccination			4	4	3	22	30
38	Frog raising				2			2
39	Fish raising			2	1		1	4
40	Duck raising/vaccination			2	1			3
41	Vegetable growing				3			3
Total		**38**	**15**	**32**	**28**		**111**	**242 courses**

PKSM = Preah Kosomak VTC; VTC BT = VTC Battambang; PTC BTB = PTC Battambang;
PTC SRP = PTC Siem Reap; PTCKC = PTC Kampong Cham; PTC KPT = PTC Kampot
Source: Administrative data from the survey

Table 3.5
Number of courses offered by year in the six training centers

	1996		1999		2001	
	Number of courses	Number of skills	Number of courses	Number of skills	Number of courses	Number of skills
Female-dominated	12 (15.8%)	9 (26.5%)	71 (65.1%)	6 (24.0%)	10 (17.5%)	3 (15.8%)
Male-dominated	36 (47.4%)	20 (58.8%)	36 (33.0%	18 (72.0%)	29 (50.9%)	14 (73.7%)
Mixed sex	28 (36.8%)	5 (14.7%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (4.0%)	18 (31.6%)	2 (10.5%)
Total	**76 (100%)**	**34 (100%)**	**109 (100%)**	**25 (100%)**	**57 (100%)**	**19 (100%)**

Source: Administrative data from the survey

Most of the skills training courses offered in PTCs were mobile courses (119 courses out of 189 courses) in 1996. All the farm-based skill courses and some others such as food processing and health and nutrition, mat weaving, plough making, bracelet making and shell craft were done in villages. Some courses on sewing, wood carving, silk weaving were also offered as mobile courses. In 1996, there were 11 types of skills training that were offered as mobile courses. This decreased to 6 skills in 1999 and 2 in 2001. Until 1997, in PTC Battambang, mobile courses on motorbike repair, small engine repair and TV/radio/recorder repairs were offered. Similarly, in Kampot, masonry courses and in Siem Reap, small engine repair courses were offered. However, conducting these machine-related trainings in mobile courses is expensive because of the transportation cost to move the training equipment to the villages. Thus, after the cuts in the training budget, mobile courses have been limited mainly to agriculture-related courses.

Mobile courses consist mostly of training in small handicraft production which is female-dominated and agriculture-related courses which are attended by both. Thus, generally, in mobile courses, there are more women trainees than men. However, this does not mean that offering mobile courses increase women's participation in vocational training in general. It is the type of skills training which is the decisive factor in whether men or women will attend the course rather than whether the course is mobile or center-based. For example, all trainees in plough making mobile courses were men, while all trainees in center-based hairdressing courses were women. It seems that providing courses in the village does not change the sex segregation in participation in vocational skills training[3].

Each training center carries out the planning, implementation, coordination, supervision and monitoring of the training following the policies defined by the State. The identification of the types of training courses to be offered are done by PTCs while the central Government determines the types of training in Preah Kosomak Training Center and the Vocational Training Center in Battambang.

[3] The ratio of female trainees in male-dominated courses such as motorbike repair during the mobile courses is not available. Thus, it is difficult to compare between the participation of women in non-traditional skills training in center-based and in mobile courses. However, informal observation shows that there is no difference in the ratio of female trainees in male-dominated courses between mobile and center-based courses.

Annual training and employment needs assessment (TENA) surveys have been conducted by the four provincial training centers (Siem Reap, Battambang, Kampot and Kampong Cham). All of them also conducted a survey among NGOs to avoid duplications in skills training. Feasibility studies are carried out as well. The VTC Battambang has been doing a labour market study of jobs in NGOs in year 2000. In PTCs employment and training needs assessment surveys are conducted every year in order to identify training needs as well as job opportunities. A monthly meeting is held among staff of the training centers to review the skills training provided at each center. Decisions on new courses and revision of courses are made based on this information, although final decisions depend on the feasibility and costs of the courses. The study of the labour market in Preah Kosomak is conducted by industrial liaison officers, who visit business entities.

3.2.3. Access to the training centers

Generally, the average distance between the trainees' home and the training center is around 50 kilometer and the maximum is 70 kilometer. In PTCs, most trainees do not have an adequate means of transportation, because they do not have a motorbike or bicycle. They come on foot or ask for a ride from neighbours. It is difficult for women to ask for a ride because many are too shy to do so. As a result, most of the women trainees live nearby the PTCs. The VTC students are better-off, and they usually have motorbikes and bicycles.

3.2.4. Teaching curriculum and materials

In the PTCs, a review and subsequent revision of teaching materials is conducted after the completion of each course. In VTCs, such revisions are done at the end of each academic study year. The curriculum is revised frequently to keep up with the rapidly changing market demand. Efforts are made to update teaching materials as much as possible, but it is always not enough. Some centers reuse teaching materials that are still in an acceptable shape, because they do not have enough resources to buy new materials.

In the three PTCs in Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, and Battambang, the curriculum is revised according to the requirements of communities and the labour market after the completion of each course. Staff of the PTC in Kampot mentioned that improvements have been made to the silk weaving courses by changing the design and patterns and by using Khmer artificial dye powder. The VTC in Battambang allows the trainers to revise the curriculum during the course in order to meet community needs. Although budget constraints exist in renewing teaching materials, almost all the PTC directors mentioned that they made efforts to develop some teaching aids. For example, the VTC in Battambang has improved the transparency slides and learning materials for the courses in electricity and television/radio repair skills. The PTC in Battambang has produced visual aids and transparency slides to facilitate the learning of semi-literate women.

In addition to the regular review of training curricula, it is aimed to enhance the quality of training by upgrading the capability of the instructors. In the mid 90s,

instructors enrolled at the National Technical Training Institute for two-week refresher courses on a regular basis. This type of instructor training has rarely been provided in recent years due to budget constraints. When there is no budget to send the instructors for training, the PTCs provide them with documents and literature so that they can upgrade their knowledge by self-learning. Instructors are also asked to research market demand.

Nearly all the training institutions have constructed new buildings in recent years. The PTC Kampong Cham rehabilitated its storehouse and toilets. The VTC Battambang built a multi-functional workshop where training on, for example, automotive mechanics and civil construction can be given. The PTCs in Battambang and Siem Reap built special toilets for disabled people and established a new garden. In the PTC in Kampot, a silk worm breeding farm was established and toilets were built.

3.2.5. Recruitment of students

Each training centre disseminates information and promotes its courses through the mass media, by sending brochures, leaflets, booklets, posters and mail, through the organization of annual reunions of PTC graduates and meetings with NGOs, and through word of mouth by existing trainees, school children and women in the community. The Kompong Cham PTC arranged a special show during the International Women's Day in order to encourage women to learn new skills.

The VTCs in Preah Kosomak and Battambang offer counseling services on skills and occupations as well as employment prospects to potential students and their parents. The PTCs promote the understanding among villagers on the benefit of learning skills, and how these can generate income to alleviate poverty in the family. The Siem Reap PTC Director mentioned that vocational guidance is carried out to help explain the skills in jobs that are in demand in the market to prospective trainees. The Director of PTC Kampong Cham emphasized the usefulness of skills not only to prospective trainees but also to their families.

The PTCs have been carrying out promotional activities at the village level for several years, and nowadays, villagers know about training opportunities at PTCs. The Battambang PTC advertises through their students, which has been quite successful, for example by inviting alumni to course completion ceremonies. Battambang VTC advertises through NGOs, which has also proven to be effective. However, the duration between the advertisement and the application deadline can be only a few days, which makes it difficult for villagers in remote areas to put in their application on time. This problem has been recognized by the training centers and remedial measures are planned to be taken.

The selection criteria for trainees are: to be able to read, write and calculate; to be above 15 and below 50 years; and the passing of an oral test in the first interview. The final selection is based on this information and a home visit, carried out by a Selection Committee, consisting of the PTC Director, the instructor for the course, and selected members of the provincial Training Support unit, the Training and Employment Needs Assessment unit, and the Gender and Equal Opportunity (GEO) unit.

The training institutions carry out student registration and intakes, determine the course duration, and arrange the training site, the contract of instructors, and the stock management of training materials. In VTCs, assistance for a living allowance is provided to the top 35 per cent of the students. Four training institutions have made a proposal to seek support so that the trainees will receive a stipend of 5 US dollars or 15 kilogram of rice per month.

3.2.6. Job placement

The training centers support graduates to find employment. The Preah Kosomak training center has a liaison officer who visits enterprises, companies and factories to ask for available vacancies, and provides this information to the students. The PTCs have also established workshops so that recent graduates can gain actual work experience. Such support has been provided for graduates in welding (frame door/window welding), and car repair. Some students remain at the center after graduation and work for the center to generate income, of which the graduates receive a percentage. For example, the Kampot PTC selects the best students to stay at the center after graduation to help with pig raising and some work in the workshops.

The Kompong Cham PTC sends a list of new graduates to private sector establishments, governmental offices and NGOs in the province, so that prospective employers can contact their graduates directly. Additionally, some former-graduates voluntarily work as recruiters for new graduates and promoters for the center.

The four PTCs arrange internships for students with enterprises so that they can get on-the-job experience. If the employers are satisfied with the students' work, they employ them after graduation. Around 20 per cent of interns find a job in such a way. The Kampong Cham PTC contacted the garment industry to arrange for employment of their students. Not all the students find a job, but good students are being employed through this arrangement.

Graduates of agricultural training receive follow-up visits and training. The instructors visit them and provide on-site demonstrations. Both PTCs and VTCs have contacted NGOs to gain their support so that their graduates can access the NGO micro-credit programmes for their businesses.

Follow-up of graduates is done in three phases by each training center: three months, six months, and one year after the completion of the training. In Kampong Cham PTC, the graduates' performance is reviewed on a daily and weekly basis to be aware of the needs of the trainees and to assess how the trainers can be of help to them. In VTC Battambang, a tracer system is in place to identify whether graduates find a job. The PTCs and VTC Battambang consult with the graduates on technical skills that need to be upgraded periodically.

Staff of the PTC Siem Reap mentioned that 60 per cent of female trainees use the skills they have obtained to run a business or work for a wage. The VTC Battambang stated that in 1999, 60 per cent of graduates found employment; 19 per cent were under-employed, 2 per cent had yet to find a job and the other 19 per cent intended to continue their studies. In the PTC Kampot, around 10 per cent of the disabled found

employment. Ninety per cent of returnees and 75 per cent of demobilized soldiers found employment as well[4].

Since 2000, the PTCs provide micro-credit to new graduates to start a business or to scale up their existing enterprise. Table 3.6 shows the number of graduates who received a loan in 2001. Credit support is given to graduates who have just completed courses and have formed a group of at least three members. The size of the loan varies depending on the group, but the minimum is set at US$100 and the maximum is US$1,000 per group. This amount can be increased up to US$2,000 if it concerns the expansion of an existing business.

Table 3.6
Number of graduates receiving a loan from surveyed PTCs in year 2001

Name of PTC	Number of groups	Number of members		
		Men	Women	Total
Battambang	83	121	128	249
Siem Reap	34	45	57	102
Kampot	234	230	525	755
Kampong Cham	56	53	132	185

3.2.7. Women's participation in vocational and technical training

(a) Women's enrollment

In the 1980s, during the Socialist regime, there were more women enrolled in vocational training, especially in the male-dominated skills. At that time, any graduate, whether male of female, was automatically recruited as a government officer. There was a dearth of human resources, and anyone who had received some education was necessary for nation building. In these years, women trainees graduated in 'male' occupations such as mechanics and electricians and women did enter these occupations, because of the guarantee of employment. However, they tended to be assigned a job that was not directly related to what they had learned.

In recent years due to market liberalization, political instability and the general economic downturn related to the Asian economic crisis, guaranteed employment by the State has stopped. Labour market demand for women graduating in non-traditional skills has diminished and they become employed in traditionally 'female' occupations only. This has led to less women enrolling in courses on mechanics and electricity. Most women decide to enroll in sewing and food processing classes. If the students go for jobs in the private sector, women have less chance to get a job in 'male' occupations because of the stereotypes that prevail in the society. This has enhanced sex segregation in workplaces. Women are discouraged to take up male-dominated work. Thus, nowadays, there are much less women in the male-dominated skills training courses.

[4] Other PTCs and VTCs did not have this information.

Table 3.7
Ratio of women trainees enrolled in the six training centers
in the years 1996, 1999 and 2001

Training centers	Total number of women	Percentage of women	Total number of trainees
VTC Battambang	33	11.4	289
Preah Kosomak VTC	53	5.3	1003
PTC Battambang	195	34.2	570
PTC Kampong Cham	92	36.5	252
PTC Kampot	2309	86.2	2678
PTC Siem Reap	214	47.9	447

Source: Administrative data from the survey

There are very few female students in VTCs (Table 3.7), although VTC Battambang reported a ten-fold increase in the number of women trainees: in 1999/2000, there were only three women trainees, but since 2000, there have been around 30 women trainees every year[5]. According to the administrative data of the years, covered in this study – 1996, 1999, 2001 – the courses that had no women enrolled in these three years in all the six training centers are: masonry, carpentry, agriculture machinery, leather, welding, plough making and rice production (Table 3.8). It was reported by the DTVET team that there are many women working in masonry. So, there should be less social barriers for women to take up masonry. However, there was no women trainee in masonry. Masonry still seems to have the image of a male-dominated job. Since the workplace itself is not sex-segregated, there might be a possibility to increase the number of women masons by encouraging women to learn masonry.

When the training topic is on home gardening, around 50 per cent are women. However, when it is on rice production, there are hardly any women. Courses where less than 3 per cent of the trainees are women include: civil construction, electronics, TV repair, tape recorder repair, motorbike repair, automobile repair, auto mechanics, and small engine repair. Courses where women's enrolment rate is less than 5 per cent but more than 3 per cent are: electrical equipment repair, radio repair, and refrigerator repair. Courses where women's enrolment rate is around 10-15 per cent are: barber (7.5 per cent), and wood and marble carving (13.3 per cent).

Women who do enroll in male-dominated skills training are not aiming to use these skills directly. Those who are enrolled in auto-mechanic courses, for example, are planning to sell spare parts rather than to work as a technician and repair cars. They find that the knowledge in automobile and motorbike repair will enable them to better communicate with customers and manage the stock of spare parts. Employers do not want women workers with skills in male dominated fields, and it is difficult for women to become self-employed, since customers would not trust them and, thus, they would not have enough customers. For example, in radio repair courses, men are able to use the skills that they have learned in their work, while women are not able to do so. Women have difficulty in finding wage work in it, since employers do not

[5] This is because of the introduction of a graphic design course which is exclusively for female trainees.

think that women will be able to do radio repair. When women go for self-employment in radio repair, customers do not come because they do not have confidence in women radio repair technicians. It is difficult for women who acquire traditional male-dominated skills to apply them to the real workplace either because they are not accepted as employee or because customers do not approve**.**

Male trainees do not enroll in female-dominated courses such as hairdressing, embroidery, sewing, outfitting, basket making, bracelet making, food processing, and mat weaving. In 1996, 1999 and 2001, there has been only one man who enrolled in a female-dominated course (silk weaving).

The drop-out rates in VTCs are higher than in PTCs. There are hardly any drop-outs in PTCs while in VTCs some courses can have a drop-out rate of up to 32.4 per cent (Leather course in Preah Kosomak VTC). Even though women are very much a minority in VTCs, in most of the courses they do not drop out. The only course where a high drop-out rate of women trainees was evident, was in an electrical equipment repair course in VTC Battambang. Nine women enrolled but all dropped out, while the drop-out rate of men in such courses was only 11.4 per cent[6].

[6] These women trainees are said to have dropped out because of the requirement of physical strength. Domestic electric installations require climbing walls. Women are seen as unsuitable for the job, thus the learning environment might not be encouraging to women. However, the reason for the high drop- out rate for this particular class is not clear.

Table 3.8
Number of trainees enrolled by sex and by course in the six training centers

Course	Enrolled women	Enrolled men	Total enrolled	Drop out women	Drop out men	Total dropped out
Male-dominated						
Civil construction	3	134	137	1	42	43
Brick mason/masonry	0	164	164	0	16	16
Carpentry	0	33	33	0	18	18
Electronic	1	50	51	0	18	18
Electric equipment repair	13	176	289	9	33	42
Fridge repair	5	150	155	1	10	11
TV repair	1	59	60	0	0	0
Radio repair	4	102	106	0	5	5
Recorder/TV repair	1	92	93	0	12	12
Motorbike repair	4	191	195	0	0	0
Auto repair	1	64	65	1	6	7
Auto mechanic	2	70	72	0	19	19
Agricultural machinery	0	54	54	0	17	17
Leather	0	34	34	0	11	11
Small engine repair	3	129	132	0	4	4
Welding	0	171	171	0	27	27
Barber	4	49	53	0	0	0
Wood carving	3	27	30	0	0	0
Wood/marble carving	3	12	15	0	0	0
Plough making	0	14	14	0	0	0
Rice production	0	15	15	0	0	0
Sub-total	48	1,790	1,938	12	238	250
Female-dominated						
Silk weaving	31	1	32	0	0	0
Embroidery	15	0	15	1	0	1
Sewing	285	0	285	8	0	8
Graphic design	19	0	19	5	0	5
Hair dressing	40	0	40	0	0	0
Outfitting	15	0	15	0	0	0
Basket making	30	0	30	0	0	0
Bracelet making	15	0	15	0	0	0
Shell craft	12	3	15	0	0	0
Food processing	736	0	736	0	0	0
Health & nutrition	909	0	909	0	0	0
Rattan mat making	27	0	27	0	0	0
Reed color mat making	8	0	8	0	0	0
Sub-total	2,142	4	2,146	14	0	14
Mixed						
Computer	21	62	83	0	0	0
Mushroom growing	39	59	98	0	0	0
Pig raising/vaccination	547	177	724	1	0	1
Frog raising	21	23	44	0	0	0
Duck raising	29	41	70	0	0	0
Vegetable growing	26	28	54	0	0	0
Fish raising	23	59	82	0	0	0
Sub-total	706	449	1,155	1	0	1
GRAND TOTAL	2,896	2,243	5,239	27	238	265

Source: Administrative data from the survey

(b) Efforts of training centers to increase women's participation

Recognizing sex segregation in workplaces as a problem, each training institution has been making efforts to ensure the participation of women in vocational training. For example, the Battambang VTC, aware of the lack of women students in their training, accepted only women as trainees in a graphic design course, although graphic design is now considered more as a men's occupation. Since this is a relatively new profession, the gender stereotype in the market is not yet strong, and it is expected that the gender barrier for entry in this profession will be low. This is a recent initiative, and it was not yet known at the time of this study whether graduates would be able to find employment.

Other centers have lowered the entry requirements for women. Usually, trainees have to be able to read and write. However, for women candidates, this criterion is not always applied, so that illiterate women can join. Other entry requirements such as the age limitation (above 15 years of age) are also eased for women in PTCs. The training centers are aiming to have 30 per cent female students every year.

Instructors are given orientation in reviewing the curricula from a gender perspective – whether it is appropriate for women, and also how to improve women's participation in class. The importance of gender equality in accessing productive and remunerative work is also emphasized. In Battambang PTC, a gender awareness workshop was provided to trainers and staff members in 1995-96. When new courses are introduced, course materials are reviewed to ensure that there is no gender discrimination in examples, wording and illustrations.

The directors of training centers emphasized the importance of women taking up new skills for poverty alleviation and improvement of their status. They also stressed the importance of gender equality in access to jobs, resources and wages, and the need to reduce sex segregation in employment. They have encouraged women to enroll in male-dominated courses. They have utilized earlier successful women graduates of male-dominated courses as role models. The focus has also been on generating more self-employment for women in the community.

(c) Perceived performance of women trainees

The directors indicated that women perform very well in most courses whether in male- or female-dominated skills. They were reported to perform well especially in courses in sewing, vegetable growing, pig raising, duck raising, fish raising, cassette player and TV repair, electricity, mat weaving, computer and silk weaving.

In the PTC Siem Reap the largest difference between women and men in terms of participation and training performance is that women attend classes more regularly compared to men. The PTC Siem Reap Director mentioned that women are more industrious than men and they make efforts to overcome difficulties in completing the course. It is also easier for women to find jobs in this province than for men.

The staff of the PTC in Kampong Cham reported that when instructors ask the trainees to practice by working in groups, women and men trainees work in separate groups. Instructors note that women generally take a longer time than men to accomplish a task, but the result is better. The Director of the PTC Kampot noted that in courses such as computer and agricultural courses, women work together well with other women, but women do not talk to men much and they are shy to express their opinions in mixed groups. The VTC and PTC Battambang directors stated that women are more patient than men and they follow the rules and regulations of the center. Men are more mobile and can go for an internship far away but they lack patience, as compared to women.

It was also reported that the educational level of women trainees tends to be more diverse than that of men. Trainers have to take more care because of such diversity in levels, which is a additional burden for the trainers.

(d) Job placement of women

At PTC Kampot, around 95 per cent of women who obtained agricultural skills found a job successfully. Fifty to 60 per cent of those who took training in non-agricultural skills found jobs, and this increased to 60-65 per cent in 1999 and in 2001. According to the center directors, although the number of women graduating from male-dominated courses such as electricity, civil construction, auto machinery and radio/ TV repair, is still very small, 39 per cent of trainees in PTC Battambang were women, and 43 per cent of them found a job successfully.

The directors reported that generally, there is no significant difference between men and women in terms of finding employment after graduation, although staff in two centers indicated that women could find work slightly easier than men. According to the directors of the PTCs in Kampong Cham and Kampot, women are more likely to enter self-employment, because they can earn more money than in wage employment, and can look after the children and do housework. In some cases, women want to enter wage employment, because they do not have enough confidence in managing a business by themselves. Also, the lack of mobility of women, especially young women, affects women's employment opportunities.

In order to better prepare graduates for self-employment, Khmer silk weaving handicrafts are produced at the PTC Kampot Center. Graduates practice their skills here after graduation and earn a wage until they are confident enough to continue this activity in their communities.

Only the PTC Battambang Director explicitly mentioned that gender discrimination in wages exists. He reported that men can earn 7,000 riels per day in construction while women can earn only 5,000 riels; in sewing, men receive 10,000 riels, while women receive 7,000 riels. Men barbers receive 5,000 riels, while women barbers earn 3,000 riels.

3.2.8. Participation of other vulnerable groups

As mentioned in Section 3.1.2, the PTCs currently implement specific measures, guidelines or initiatives to increase or upgrade the participation of vulnerable social groups including female headed households, parents of more than four children, returnees from border camps, demobilized soldiers, the disabled and internally displaced persons and oldest daughters. Oldest daughters are a special target group of PTCs because they often miss the opportunity to education because of their responsibility of taking care of the younger siblings (see also Section 2.4.1.).

The Siem Reap PTC Director and the Battambang VTC Director indicated that their training centers give priority to these vulnerable groups in joining skills training courses and in supporting job placement. The Kampong Cham, Battambang and Kampot PTCs cooperate with local authorities at commune and district levels to reach out to these target groups and to encourage them to apply for vocational skills training. The training centers consider themselves not only as training providers but also as motivators and mental supporters for trainees from these priority groups who want to improve themselves.

There have been substantive increases in the participation of these target groups in agricultural courses like duck raising, vegetable growing, pig raising, fish raising, mushroom growing, and non-agricultural courses such as automotive mechanics, agricultural machinery, motorbike repair, sewing, basket making, outfitting, hair-dressing, TV repair, electrical technician, civil construction, wood furniture making, small engine repair, barbering, Khmer silk weaving, red mat weaving, silk T-shirt printing, accounting, welding and food processing. Participation is especially high in vegetable growing and animal raising. Among the non-agricultural skills, high enrollments of the priority target groups were seen in courses such as civil construction, hair-dressing, and electrical technician.

The training institutions make special efforts in job placement for trainees from these target groups by establishing close links with shop owners to raise their confidence in the skill ability of the graduates. The disadvantaged groups are also encouraged to obtain new skills from NGOs. PTCs also intend to encourage victims of human trafficking and orphan youths to attend courses by collaborating with other institutions. For example, Battambang PTC collaborated with Youth House Organization (Japan), Happy Girl Organization (France), and Family Health International), and received victims of human trafficking in their courses. These organizations also provided material and financial support to the training center.

3.2.9. Problems faced

One of the largest problems faced by the training centers is financial constraint. The centers are totally dependent on the budget provided by the Government. Most of the directors are experienced in pedagogy. However, with the current financial difficulties, they have to develop their skills in financial management. With financial difficulties, there is a danger that the teaching quality deteriorates or that the vulnerable groups will be left out. All Centre directors stressed that it is necessary for the central Government to guide and support the centers for long-term development.

Difficulties faced by the trainees include: no accommodation provided for trainees coming from remote villages; trainees' general basic education varies considerably; trainees are passive in learning; living conditions are very poor; tools and materials are very expensive; trainees find difficulties in finding some raw materials; trainees still have insufficient skills to work independently after graduation; there is often no training equipment that can be used by disabled trainees; lack of equipment to produce Khmer silk to match the market need; poor health of trainees; and limitations in the ability of instructors.

CHAPTER 4

FIELD ASSESSMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

4.1. Graduates of vocational training

4.1.1. Profile of respondents

Fifty-two men and 49 women ex-trainees were selected for interviews from five training centers: the VTC Battambang, and the PTCs in Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Cham and Kampot. Five of the respondents were disabled (3 men, 2 women); one had a sight impairment and 4 had other physical disabilities.

The average age of male and female graduate respondents was between 27 and 28 respectively. The youngest respondent was 17 and the oldest was 59 years old. The initial expectation was that VTCs would have younger students, because they only accept unmarried high school graduates. However, the average age of graduates at the PTC in Siem Reap, for example, was lower than at the VTC in Battambang. In the early 1990s, PTCs had students who were breadwinners, and the average age of students was higher. In recent years, youths who can not continue with higher education are increasingly joining courses offered at PTCs. This might also coincide with the decrease in the number of mobile courses offered by the PTCs (see Section 3.2.2). It is more difficult for breadwinners to be out of the house for a long period of time, while for youngsters, it is easier.

As shown in Table 4.1 below, 14 per cent of women graduates were divorced or widowed but none of the male graduates were. This might be the result of the targeting of special vulnerable groups by the PTCs.

Table 4.1
Marital status of graduates interviewed

Marital Status	Men		Women		Total	
Single	32	(61.5%)	28	(57.1%)	60	(59.4%)
Married	20	(38.5%)	14	(28.6%)	34	(33.7%)
Divorced		0	3	(6.1%)	3	(3.0%)
Widowed		0	4	(8.2%)	4	(4.0%)
Total	**52**	**(100%)**	**49**	**(100%)**	**101**	**(100%)**

The average number of years in school was 8.12 for men respondents while women had been to school for 7.12 years. There were three women respondents who could not read or write at all, while for men, there was none. The reason for the difference of only one year between educational levels of women and men is related to the age of respondents. Among the younger generations, the disparity in educational levels is smaller than among the older age-groups. Another reason might be that only women

with some education can afford and are willing to come for vocational training. Considering that a larger gender gap in school enrollment above grade 4 still persists among the general population, this result shows that the vocational training under the MoEYS is not able to reach less educated women.

As for ethnic groups, most of the people indicated that they were Khmer. Even though it was observed that some respondents were Vietnamese in origin, they replied that they were Khmer. Considering the discrimination against Vietnamese in Cambodia, this reaction is understandable. Therefore, no ethnic differences could be identified from the questionnaire results.

4.1.2. Basic employment outcomes

(a) Employment status

There were 14 respondents who had not worked during the past year. Six of them were men (11.5 per cent of male respondents), and 8 of them were women (16.3 per cent of female respondents). As seen in Table 4.2, among those who worked in the past year, around 35 per cent of the men graduates worked in street services, such as bicycle and motorbike repairs, followed by almost 20 per cent each in construction and metal machinery work finishing. For women 19.5 per cent was involved in farming, followed by work in personal services such as working in restaurants (12.5 per cent).

Among the 46 male respondents with work, 11 (23.9 per cent) had more than one income earning activity, while among the 41 women respondents, 16 (39.0 per cent) was engaged in more than one activity. This confirms earlier research findings that more women are having double or triple jobs. Reasons are:

- The demand for work that women are engaged in such as farming and hairdressing varies across seasons
- There are more work opportunities available to women which have ease of entry such as street vending. Thus, women can engage in multiple works if they wish to.
- The income from each job is relatively lower for women. Therefore, they need multiple jobs in order to obtain a minimum level of income.
- Many women work at home and combine several income earning activities. For example, a woman can raise pigs and at the same time run a small shop in front of her house.

Many men work outside the home, so it is more difficult to combine several activities together. However, men do combine several types of jobs in the same category. For example, those running a motorbike repair shop would also sell motorbike spare parts. However, since this is in the same job category, it did not come out as multiple occupations in the statistical analysis.

The hypothesis was that there would be more women in self-employment than men because of the difficulties faced by women in obtaining wage employment. However, the survey results did not confirm this. The number of respondents who were self-employed was almost the same for women and men: 57.7 per cent (30 respondents) of

men and 57.4 per cent (27 respondents) of women. Table 4.3 shows that there were slightly more married respondents who were self-employed compared to being a wage employee than single respondents – 70 per cent of married respondents were self-employed as compared to almost half of the single respondents; 21.2 per cent of married respondents and 34 per cent of single respondents were wage employees. Two of the three divorced women and three of the four widowed women were self-employed. It is noted that the ratio of women graduates who were in wage employment might actually be higher because the tracer study did not cover graduates who left the province and went to Phnom Penh for factory work.

Table 4.2
Major occupation of graduate respondents (Income generating activities that respondents spend most of the time)

Occupation	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	4	8.7	8	19.5	12	13.8
Fishery worker	2	4.3	0	0	2	2.3
Construction workers and building finishers	9	19.6	0	0	9	10.3
Metal and machinery workers	9	19.6	0	0	9	10.3
Handicraft workers	1	2.2	1	2.4	2	2.3
Street vendors	0	0	3	7.3	3	3.4
Street services	16	34.8	1	2.4	17	19.5
Salespersons in shops	0	0	3	7.3	3	3.4
Dressmakers and tailors	0	0	3	7.3	3	3.4
Motorcycle taxi, bus & taxi drivers	1	2.2	0	0	1	1.1
Domestic service and building maintenance	0	0	4	9.8	4	4.6
Messengers, doorkeepers & others	0	0	3	7.3	3	3.4
Personal service workers	1	2.2	5	12.2	6	6.9
Protective service workers	1	2.2	0	0	1	1.1
Hairdressers, barbers & beauticians	1	2.2	3	7.3	4	4.6
Other*	5	10.9	7	17.1	12	13.8
Total	**46**	**100.0**	**41**	**100.0**	**87**	**100.0**

* "Others" include teaching assistant at PTC, NGO staff, microphone service provider, etc.
Missing cases = 14

Table 4.3
Marital status of graduate respondents by their employment status

Marital status		Self-employed		Wage employment*		Not worked last year		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Single	Female	15	53.6	9	32.1	4	14.3	28	100.0
	Male	14	43.8	12	37.5	6	18.8	32	100.0
Married	Female	7	50.0	4	28.6	3	21.4	14	100.0
	Male	16	80.0	4	20.0	0	0.0	20	100.0
Divorced	Female	2	66.7	1	33.3	0	0.0	3	100.0
	Male	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	100.0
Widowed	Female	3	75.0	0	0.0	1	25.0	4	100.0
	Male	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	100.0
Total	Female	27	55.1	14	28.6	8	16.3	49	100.0
	Male	30	57.7	16	30.8	6	11.5	52	100.0
	Total	**57**	**56.4**	**30**	**29.7**	**14**	**13.9**	**101**	**100.0**

* One single woman and one married woman among the wage employment category worked as unpaid workers for others.

(b) Health and safety at work

Among the 87 respondents who worked in the past year, 58.7 per cent of men and 36.6 per cent of women stopped work for some time during the last three months because they were sick. These figures, of course, do not indicate that women face fewer illnesses than men. Rather, they confirm research findings from other countries, which show that women tend to continue work, even if they are ill. Many poor women and men cannot afford not to work. Some of the respondents indicated that they continued to work even when they were sick, while the better-off would take a rest when they were ill.

Among the 42 respondents who became sick during the last three months, 37 per cent of men and 40 per cent of women had frequent headaches, followed by feeling weak and exhausted (14.8 per cent of men and 20 per cent of women), and respiratory illness (11.1 per cent of men and 13.3 per cent of women)[1]. The reasons for the illnesses mentioned by men were: long working hours (33.3 per cent); carrying heavy materials (29.6 per cent), and working with hazardous chemicals (25.9 per cent). Those who became sick due to hazardous chemicals included farmers (2), a fishery worker, a construction worker, and a motorbike taxi driver. Women attributed their sickness to: long working hours (26.7 per cent); strenuous work posture (20 per cent); and carrying heavy materials (13.3 per cent). Both women and men indicated that they have to work long hours because of low earnings, or because these long working hours were obligatory at their workplace. The effect of long working hours was considered to be the major cause of their illness for both women and men.[2]

[1] Remaining illnesses were: eye problems (2 men), chest pain (2 men and 2 women) and others (9 men and 7 women).

[2] However, there was no statistically significant correlation between the number of hours worked and the incidence of sickness among the respondents.

There were 23 graduates who ever had an accident at work among the 87 respondents who worked in the last one year, 30.4 per cent of men and 22 per cent of women. The accidents involved cutting oneself in around three-quarters of the cases.

4.1.3. Self-employed graduates

There were 57 respondents who were self-employed (30 men, 27 women), and 51 of these were own account workers. Forty-nine respondents put in funds to start their business. As seen in Table 4.4, most respondents used funds from personal savings, or from parents or received a loan from an NGO. More women respondents received funds from their spouses than men respondents.

The respondent who invested the largest amount of money in her business was a woman, trained as a barber, who invested US$5,000 to start a hairdressing and ceremonial dress rental business. She also took a loan of US$10,000 from a micro-finance institution. The second was a woman who was trained on food processing. After graduation, she invested US$1,500 to start a grocery shop in front of her house. There were three respondents who invested US$1,000 each. Two were men, trained in radio and motorbike repair respectively, who started a business in these trades. The other was a woman trained on pig raising and home gardening, who started a pig raising and wheat milling business.

Table 4.4
Source of initial investment of self-employed graduate respondents (multiple choice)

Source of funds	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Personal savings	9	36.0	11	45.8	20	40.8
Spouse	2	8.0	4	16.7	6	12.2
Parents	8	32.0	9	37.5	17	34.7
Money lender	4	16.0	1	4.2	5	10.2
Government-based grant	0		1	4.2	1	2.0
Government-based loan	3	12.0	3	12.5	6	12.2
NGO-based loan	4	16.0	6	25.0	10	20.4
Relatives/friends	1	4.0	0		1	2.0
Total respondents	**25**	**100**	**24**	**100**	**49**	**100**

* These are number of responses among those who are self-employed and put in funds to start their business.

Among the 27 respondents who took a loan, 22 took a loan once, while 3 took a loan twice and 2 took a loan three times. Excluding the woman who borrowed US$ 10,000, the average loan amounted to US$324; the smallest loan was $25 and the largest was $800. No respondent expressed difficulty in repayment. Less than one quarter of the loans was used for family emergencies and for daily livelihood: 10 out of 57 took a loan for family emergencies and 3 out of 57 took a loan to cover the family's daily livelihood.

The number of graduates who received a loan from the government through the PTCs, is low. This is because the credit scheme just started in 2000, but also because of the

following reasons: (1) PTCs are far away from their houses, thus graduates have difficulty in borrowing and repaying, (2) PTCs require graduates to form a group of at least 3-5 members for joint liability. There is a fear that other members would not repay back, (3) Some graduates still remain indebted to other NGOs and local credit associations, (4) Lack of confidence in running a business.

The problems faced by respondents in their business are shown in Table 4.5. The largest problem was having inadequate skills and knowledge. Graduates from PTCs especially indicated that the duration of the training was too short. For example, in VTCs, students are trained on car repair for two years, while in PTCs, they spend only four months. This is not considered enough to start up their own car repair business. A similar situation was found with regard to other skills, although in different degrees.

Some students formed a group to receive additional teaching from the instructor after graduation. Responding to such students' initiatives, training centers nowadays form groups for graduates so that they can help each other in upgrading their skills after they are trained. For example, men students who learned radio repair formed a group after graduation and went to their instructor for further training. They invested in buying training materials and asked the instructor to teach. The teacher supported them voluntarily, and the PTC supported this teacher's generous contribution by letting the teacher enroll in the PTC computer courses at a discounted price. There has not been any women's group established after the training, most probably because it is more difficult for women to come out of their village after graduation.

Table 4.5
Problems faced by self-employed respondents (multiple choice)

Problem	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Inadequate skills and knowledge	18	62.1	14	63.6	32	62.7
Insufficient capital	14	48.3	13	59.1	27	52.9
Inadequate market information	1	3.4	5	22.7	6	11.8
Difficulty in accessing credit	1	3.4	1	4.5	2	3.9
Limited business experience	7	24.1	3	13.6	10	19.6
Weaker business networks	2	6.9	5	22.7	7	13.7
Others	0	0	2	9.7	2	3.9
Total respondents	**29**	**100**	**22**	**100**	**51**	**100**

* Missing cases: 6
* More than one answer was possible

Significantly more women respondents expressed that they had problems in obtaining market information[3]. Information on job vacancies or marketing opportunities is more difficult for women to access because of their limited mobility. Men go around and talk to others, and generally are better informed than women. Women graduates sometimes come to the PTCs, and this is one of the most important sources of labour market information for them, while men have other sources. Although the mobility of women is better than in the past, women still stay at home more often than men

[3] Chi square significance level 0.047.

because they are responsible for household work, and also because their parents do not want them to go far away from their village if they are not married.

4.1.4. Wage workers

Women respondents found jobs as hairdressers, domestic workers and personal service providers. Men respondents worked as construction workers and building finishers, and as street service providers including motorbike and auto repairs. Eighteen of the 30 respondents who were in wage employment worked in an establishment with 10 or fewer employees.

More than 80 per cent of the graduates in wage employment found their job after the training, although not all were working in the profession that they were trained for. For example, there were 5 respondents (3 men, 2 women) who worked for NGOs with more than 50 employees (with 63, and 156 employees respectively). Two men worked as a mechanic, one man as an electrician, and two women as cleaners. The three men were working in the profession that they were trained in. The two women cleaners, however, had been trained as electricians.

Table 4.6
Activities of wage worker graduate respondents

Activities	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Farmer	1	5.9	1	7.7	2	6.7
Construction workers & building finishers	5	29.4			5	16.7
Metal & machinery workers	1	5.9			1	3.3
Handicraft workers	1	5.9	1	7.7	2	6.7
Food processors			1	7.7	1	3.3
Street services	6	35.3			6	20.0
Dressmakers and tailors			1	7.7	1	3.3
Domestic services and building caretakers			2	15.4	2	6.7
Personal service workers	1	5.9	2	15.4	3	10.0
Protective service workers	1	5.9			1	3.3
Hairdressers, barbers and beauticians			3	23.1	3	10.0
Other	1	5.9	2	15.4	3	10.0
Total	**17**	**100**	**13**	**100**	**30**	**100**

Respondents in wage employment worked around 47 hours a week. There were 18 respondents who worked an average of 57.3 hours a week, and wished to work less. There were more men in this group. On the other hand, there were 7 respondents who worked only 26.9 hours a week, and wished to work more[4].

[4] There was one man respondent who already worked 66 hours a week and wanted to work more. He worked in a restaurant as a head cook, and he was paid overtime. His case is not included in the

Table 4.7
Preference on working hours of graduate respondents in wage employment

Preference for working hours	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Want to work less	12	70.6	6	46.2	18	60.0
Just right	1	5.9	4	30.8	5	16.7
Want to work more	4	23.5	3	23.1	7	23.3
Total	**17**	**100**	**13**	**100**	**30**	**100**

Ten respondents in wage employment were working on an irregular basis (seven men and three women)[5]. Seven out of 10 respondents said that their work was irregular because the amount of work depended on business conditions. For example, some car repair workers said that they faced a higher demand for their services during the rainy season because the road conditions were bad and cars broke down more often. Nine out of 10 respondents who had irregular work indicated that they preferred to work less than what they had worked last week[6]. The irregularity of work forced them to accept any length of working hours.

4.1.5. The unemployed graduates

Among the 14 respondents who replied that they did not work in the past year, 8 (4 men, 4 women) did not try to look for a job, while 6 (2 men, 4 women) did. Women respondents who did not find a job attributed this to lack of information (3), inadequate skills and knowledge (3), and because their parents or spouse discouraged outside work (2). The two men attributed this to inadequate skills and knowledge. None of the men mentioned difficulties in obtaining information or discouragement by parents or spouse to get a job. It was also reported that in some cases, women had learned skills with a hope to get employment. After graduation their family circumstances change and they have to change their plan. For example, some get married or their fathers become employed themselves. Then, they are asked by their families to stay at home and not seek outside employment.

Among the 14 respondents, 5 (1 man, 4 women) replied that they had tried to start a business, while 9 (5 men and 4 women) did not try to do so. Reasons among men for not trying to start a business were: lack of business knowledge (4 responses); lack of capital (4); lack of confidence and motivation to take independent action (3). For women, it was lack of capital (3); lack of access to micro credit (2); and dependents at home (2). When asked why, even when they had tried to start a business, they were not able to actually do so, reasons mentioned were: insufficient capital (1 man, 4 women); and inadequate skills and knowledge (1 man, 3 women).

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calculation of average working hours for those who wished to work more, because his case was too different from the rest of the respondents.

[5] There is no statistically significant differences between the sexes.

[6] It seems that the period of interview was in the busy season, and they had to work very hard. In slack seasons, they do not have much work.

Graduates from the VTC in Battambang mentioned lack of capital and access to credit as a constraint. VTCs do not provide credit to graduates to start a business because parents of students in VTCs are considered to be better off than those in PTCs. For PTC graduates, the credit scheme started only in year 2000. Not all graduates borrow money to start business because of reasons such as lack of confidence to start business or difficulty in forming groups to access loan (see Section 4.1.3).

4.1.6. Usefulness of the training

(a) Are the skills used?

Out of the 86 respondents who worked in the past year, 70 (81.4 per cent) replied that they used the skills learned during the training. Significantly more men respondents replied that they used the skills compared to women[7] - 42 men (93.3 per cent) and 28 women (68.3 per cent).

Table 4.8
Reasons for not using skills learned in training by graduates
(number of respondents)

Reason	Men	Women	Total
Skill not relevant	3	5	8
Did not know how to use skills learned	0	0	0
Not enough money to put the skills to work	3	5	8
Not profitable to use skills in business	2	2	4
Not enough information	0	2	2
Others	0	5	5
Total	**3**	**13**	**16**

There are several reasons for the gender differences in the use of skills learned:

- Firstly, the income from the occupation in which women use the skills learned might not be enough to support the family, or women might find a better income earning opportunity that does not involve the skills learned. At the same time, the income that women derive from each occupation is small, so they have to engage in multiple occupations. A woman trainee who learned hairdressing in Siem Reap is a case in point. After she finished her course in hairdressing from the Siem Reap PTC, she opened her own hairdressing business. However, there is a large seasonal fluctuation in the demand for hairdressing. So, she started to work at a hotel as a cleaner. During the festival season when the demand for hairdressing is high, she will take up this work alongside her job at the hotel.

- Secondly, some women are not able to use the skills learned in their job because their family situation has changed. For example, one woman respondent married after the training; her husband was able to support her financially, and he asked her to stay at home. Another woman respondent in Siem Reap learned to become

[7] Fisher's exact test significance 0.003 (one sided).

a barber. At that time, her father was unemployed and she wanted to learn a skill to help her family financially. She was encouraged by female promoters to take up a non-traditionally female occupation at the PTC, and decided to learn barber. After she graduated, her father got a job. So, her father told her that she need not start her business as a barber, since it is considered not appropriate for women. In Cambodia, some men still hesitate to let women touch their hair. So, it is difficult for women to become a barber. Although there are several successful women barbers, the social barrier still exists[8].

- Thirdly, for women who learn non-traditionally 'female' skills, the society or the working environment is not favorable. For example, some women trainees learned radio repair, and after graduation, one woman set up a radio repair shop. However, the social norm and gender stereotype is that radio repair is not a woman's job. Therefore, it was difficult to get customers, and in the end, she had to close her shop. Another woman trainee who learned electricity was hired as an electrician by an NGO. There were 5-6 electricians in the team, all of whom were men except her. The head of the team normally gave her administrative and supporting work, while the men electricians did the actual work of setting up and repairing electricity systems. She was increasingly given odd jobs, and once there was an opening in the same NGO for a cleaner, they transferred her to that position. Although she is not using her skill anymore, she is quite happy with the present job with a stable salary.

Another reason why trainees were not always using the skills learned at PTCs is because training at PTCs is free. Since it is a rare opportunity to receive training for free, trainees grasp the chance to enroll in a course before trying to get more information on what other courses would be available. For example, one man trainee enrolled in wood carving, because he happened to know about the existence of that course, and was selected to participate. While he was learning wood carving, he also looked into the neighboring classroom where masonry was being taught. After he graduated, he started to take up masonry, and now he leads a team of masons who construct houses.

(b) Occupational safety and health

Seventy-seven (88.5 per cent) of the 87 respondents who worked in the past one year said that they learned about occupational safety and health during their training. Eighty-eight per cent of them replied that the learning improved their safety and health on the job: all men respondents except one and three-quarters of the women. The other women were not using the skills that they had learned, thus they were not able to use the corresponding knowledge on work safety and health.

(c) Effects of training on the self-employed

[8] In the early 1990s, there have been several women who learned barber skills and established successful businesses. However, nowadays, not many women are trained as barbers. The reason for the decrease in barber courses in PTCs is because the demand to learn barbering is low. Cutting men's hair is considered to be easy, and people are not willing to invest time to learn barbering. They would prefer to learn hairdressing. So, nowadays, hairdressing courses are offered rather than barber courses.

Among the 57 respondents who were self-employed, 30 were men and 27 were women. Forty-three of them (23 men and 20 women) started the business after the training, while only 13 (6 men and 7 women) already had a business before the training. The training had an important effect on both men and women to start or improve their business.

Three quarters of those who already had a business replied that their business had improved after the training. Men respondents indicated that their business had improved through an increase in production volume (4 cases out of 6), higher profit (3 cases out of 6), better product quality and design (3 cases out of 6). Women respondents said that their business had improved in terms of higher profit (5 cases out of 7) and an increase in production volume (4 cases out of 7).

For example, one woman graduate could only repair clothes before she was trained. After the training, she was able to sew new clothes, and could increase her income substantially. One man who was repairing radios as an employee established his own radio repair shop after the training.

(d) Effects of training on wage workers

There were 30 respondents who were wage workers (17 men, 13 women). Seventy per cent of them said that the training course had helped them to find a job (13 men and 8 women). Four of them (2 men, 2 women) already found a job before or during the training. This again confirms the role of the training in finding employment for graduates.

It is interesting to note that women respondents found that the certificate was useful, while men more than women graduates found the network and support from the training center beneficial. The PTCs/VTCs generally have better networks and communications with male-dominated workplaces such as motorbike repair and masonry. Thus, they are better able to assist men in job placement than women. Men trainees are also better in collecting information and networking compared to women because of their mobility and because they are more confident in talking with others. Thus, they are able to make better use of the connections that they make during the training to seek employment.

Table 4.9
How the training helped respondents in getting a job (multiple answer)

	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Received a certificate to show employer	8	61.5	7	87.5	15	71.4
Received hope in finding the job during/after training	5	38.5	1	12.5	6	28.6
Gained a better knowledge/what job were available through training	5	38.5	3	37.5	8	38.1
Met people during training who helped me get the job	4	30.8	1	12.5	5	23.8
Total	**13**	**100**	**8**	**100**	**21**	**100**

* These are only for respondents who replied that training has helped in getting a job.

All the four respondents who already had a job before the training said that the way they performed their work was different from before the training. All four of them had received increases in their wages, and two of them got a promotion. Three said that they had improved occupational safety and health on the job. One construction worker used to earn only 5,000 riels a day. After he graduated and received the certificate, he became the chief of the construction team, and his income increased.

4.1.7. Control over income

The previous two sections showed that the majority of graduates started to earn income or improved their employability after the training. Thereby, they started to contribute considerably to their family's income. Among the 101 respondents, 20 men (38.5 per cent) and 12 women (24.5 per cent) were the main income earners of their households, followed by the father for men graduates (13 men or 25.0 per cent) and the spouse for women (12 women or 24.5 per cent). The overall majority of graduates (85 per cent of respondents) contributed financially to the household – 40 men (87.0 per cent) and 33 women (84.6 per cent). Twenty-four men respondents (61.5 per cent) and 20 women respondents (58.8 per cent) contributed more than half or all the family income. There is no significant gender difference in the contribution to the family income.

There is a statistically significant (at 0.01 level) relationship between the percentage of earnings that the respondents used for themselves, their age and their marital status. The older they are, the less they use the money for themselves. Single respondents used their earnings for themselves significantly more than married, divorced, and widowed respondents (single respondents use on average 42.5 per cent of their earnings for themselves, while for married, divorced and widowed respondents, the percentages are 7.2, 3.3 and 6.7 respectively). There is no statistically significant difference between women and men in the ratio of spending income for themselves. Both men and women respondents spent 27 per cent of their earnings for themselves. When comparing single female and male respondents, the differences are also not statistically significant (men spent 44.8 per cent while women spent 39.8 per cent of their earning for themselves).

Even though nearly 60 per cent of the graduates contributed more than half of the family income, only 26.3 per cent of them decided on how to spend it. Decision making power on daily household spending lies with women. Nearly 40 per cent (38.8 per cent) of the respondents replied that their mother was the one who decides on the spending. Earning income and contributing to the household economy does not affect the decision making pattern between younger and older generations in the family. Although children earn more than before, still the decision making lies with their mothers. This study did not differentiate the type of spending, that is, whether it was for daily expenditure or for large expenditures. Therefore, some caution is needed in interpreting the information on decision-making on income from this study. By contributing to the household economy, these young adults might be getting more say when the family discusses larger investments.

4.1.8. Forms of assistance needed

More than 80 per cent of both men and women graduates expressed the need for further assistance. The greatest need was further training on vocational skills expressed by graduates in all courses with the exception of barber and agricultural skills. Even trainees from VTCs expressed the need for more training. This shows the lack of confidence as well as lack of opportunity among graduates to upgrade their knowledge. There are at the moment no advanced courses or refresher/upgrading courses offered at the PTCs and VTCs.

The graduates from the PTCs in Kampong Cham and Siem Reap expressed the need for micro credit. The greatest need for micro-credit was identified among respondents who graduated before 1999, because micro-credit has been made available by PTCs only since 2000. Other than some luckier ones who gained access to NGO loans, these graduates did not have other credit sources except their relatives and money lenders. At the same time, it should be noted that the micro credit offered by PTCs is only provided once as start-up capital. Since businesses need constant upgrading and investment, further credit support for developing businesses is necessary.

Table 4.10
Need for further assistance of graduate respondents (multiple choice)*

Assistance	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Training in vocational skills	37	82.2	29	72.5	66	77.6
Guidance counseling	8	17.8	11	27.5	19	22.4
Accessible banking services	0	0	3	7.5	3	3.5
Access to literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0
More knowledge and information of market	6	13.3	5	12.5	11	12.9
Access to micro credit	16	35.6	16	40.0	32	37.6
Training for business and management practices	6	13.3	7	17.5	13	1.3
Others**	5	11.1	4	10.0	9	10.6
Total respondents	45	100	40	100	85	100

* "Others" include training on computer and English, need to form a group of graduates of masonry course, and further training on skills that they have learned.

** Missing cases: 16

4.2. Current trainees

4.2.1. Profile of current trainees

(a) Age

Among the 227 trainees, there were 162 men (71 per cent) and 65 women (29 per cent) respondents. The average age for women as well as for men respondents was 21.8 years. The age of current trainees of both VTCs and PTCs is young. The youngest average age was 19.5 years in PTC Battambang and the oldest was 25.6

years in PTC Kampong Cham. This PTC had the widest age differences with a standard deviation of 7.67. It was expected that students from VTCs would be younger, since they have a regulation that only unmarried students can enroll. However, the profile of respondent trainees shows that this expectation was not correct, as in the case of the interviewed graduates. It has been observed by training center managers and DTVET staff that the average age of students in PTCs was older in the early 1990s. At that time, the objective of the PTCs was to create employment for breadwinners. There were many refugees and internally displaced people, who were uprooted from their livelihood and in urgent need for skill development. Now that these men and women are making a living, the training demand has shifted to out-of-school youths.

Table 4.11
Number of current trainee respondents from training centers studied

Training center	Women	Men	Total
VTC Battambang	10	51	61
PTC Battambang	12	19	31
PTC Siem Reap	10	9	19
PTC Kampong Cham	20	30	50
PTC Kampot	10	22	32
VTC Preah Kosomak	3	31	34
Total	**65**	**162**	**227**

(b) Disability

Among the 227 respondents, there were 18 disabled trainees (8 per cent in total, 14 men, 4 women). Eight of them had a sight impairment (5 men, 3 women), two of them had a hearing impairment (both men), one had a mobility impairment (man), and seven had other physical disabilities (6 men, 1 woman). Table 4.12 shows the type of course that the disabled respondents were enrolled in.

Table 4.12
Courses disabled trainee respondents are enrolled in

Training Course	Disability				
	Sight	Hearing	Mobility	Other physical disabilities	Total
Electricity	2				2
Auto-mechanic	1				1
Sewing	2			1	3
Computer			1		1
Electronics	2	1		1	4
TV, radio, radio cassette repair		1		5	6
Silk weaving	1				1
Total	**8**	**2**	**1**	**7**	**18**

(c) Marital status

Eighty-eight per cent of the respondents were single (90.1 per cent of men and 83.1 per cent of women). The PTC Kampong Cham had the highest number of married respondents (14 men and 7 women). There was only one widow among the 227 respondents. All VTC respondents were single. Even among the PTCs, nearly 80 per cent of the respondents were single, reflecting the dominance of out-of-school youths in PTCs these days.

(d) Education level

There were nine respondent trainees (1 man, 8 women) who were illiterate[9] or semi-literate[10]. The average year of schooling was 9.22. There was a significant difference between the number of years of schooling between women and men. The average years of schooling for women was 7.66 while for men it was 9.85 – a difference of 2.19 years. The average years of schooling in PTCs were lower – 7.68, but the gender difference was slightly less. Women's average years of schooling were 6.63 while it was 8.36 for men – a difference of 1.73 years on average. Men had a higher educational level than women in general, but in VTCs, women's educational level is slightly higher (men 11.31 years, women 11.77 years). This might suggest that the current training is not able to reach the less educated women and confirms that the trainees who are able to access VTCs are a very selected few especially if they are women.

The number of years of schooling among respondents is higher than the national average. This is because the trainees are young, while the older generations have lower educational levels. It is also because those who can afford to invest time and transportation to come to study in PTCs are from families who are relatively better off. The more disadvantaged would have difficulty in spending time for training. PTCs do give rice to the trainees while they are studying, but this is just enough for them to eat during the training period. If they are the main income earners of the household, they cannot afford not to earn for months. Those who are illiterate will also not dare to apply for vocational training for fear of not being accepted.[11] It is also noted that the average education level of graduates is lower than the average educational level of current trainees. This coincides with the decreasing average age of trainees in training centers. This might indicate that the training centers, not only VTCs but also PTCs, are becoming a part of the formal education system, and form one of the options of education that students pursue after graduating high school rather than form a place for continuing education for working adults.

(e) Work experience and income

Significantly more women respondents were in the labour force before they joined the training (73 or 45.6 per cent of men respondents, and 43 or 66.2 per cent of women respondents[12]). This coincides with statistical findings at the national level, that

[9] Cannot read or write at all.
[10] Cannot read or write but can write one's name and address.
[11] PTCs do allow illiterate women in their courses.
[12] Fisher's exact test significance 0.004.

women participate in the labour force earlier than men, while men remain in education longer than women (see Chapter 2).

More women respondents worked at home compared to men (40.5 per cent of women and 24.7 per cent of men) among those who had been working before the training. There were significantly more men than women who had worked for others (31.5 per cent of men and 6.8 per cent of women)[13]. There were significantly more women who had worked for the family than men (33 women or 75.0 per cent of women, and 40 men or 54.8 per cent of men)[14]. Most of the respondents who had been working before the training were working on their farms (53.5 per cent of women and 52.1 per cent of men). The second most popular occupation was dressmaking among women (32.6 per cent) and construction among men (15.1 per cent).

There was no significant statistical difference between the income earned by women and men respondents before the training. Men earned a weekly income of 12,005 riels (US$3.08) on average, while women earned 10,489 riels (US$2.69)[15]. Their household income was 42,249 riels (US$10.8) per week on average. For men respondents it was 40,420 riels (US$10.4) and for women 45,585 riels (US$11.7).

Among the respondents, there were two persons who earned 80,000 riels per week. One was a self-employed woman dress maker in Kampong Cham, who attended a course on dress making. Another was a male wage worker in construction in Battambang PTC. He was learning masonry at the center at the time of the study.

(f) Parents' occupation

Most of the respondents had parents who were farmers. The mothers of two-thirds of respondents were farmers when the respondents were children, and 64.2 per cent of trainees' mothers were farmers at present. Fifty-three per cent of respondents had fathers who were farmers when they were children, as well as at present. There was no significant statistical difference between the parents' occupation of men and women respondents. There was also no significant relation between the parents' occupation, the occupation of respondents, or the skills that the respondents learned. The hypothesis was that trainees with parents in off-farm employment would go for training in off-farm skills more, but this was not the case.

4.2.2. Access to training

(a) Expenses

While both VTC and PTC training is for free, there are some costs that trainees have to bear, such as cost for transportation as well as for training material. Around sixty-two per cent of trainees indicated that there were expenses that were not covered by the institution. Almost 97 per cent (96.9 per cent) of trainees from PTC Kampot said that there were expenses that they had to bear and 94.1 per cent and 57.4 per cent of

[13] Chi square significance 0.002.
[14] Chi square significance 0.029.
[15] The average income shows that women earn less than men. However, women's income was more scattered. So, the t-test showed no statistically significant differences between the sexes.

women and men from VTC Preah Kosomak and VTC Battambang respectively mentioned this. Most of the respondent trainees (75.2 per cent) depended on their parents to pay for these expenses. Women respondents depended also on their spouses (10 per cent) and other family members (13.3 per cent) for support, while men supported themselves (11.7 per cent). Even though more women were working before joining the training, none of them paid for the training expenses themselves. They might not have been able to save money for themselves while they were working before and depended on others for their training expenses.

More than 71 per cent of respondents who paid for the training paid for transportation on their own. Significantly more men were paying for transportation than women (83 or 76.1 per cent of men respondents and 16 or 53.3 per cent of women respondents among those who said that they had expenses). As stated earlier most women trainees come from provincial towns and not from remote villages as they are too shy to ask others for a ride. This constraint does not exist for men, and they come from villages away from the training centers.

Forty-one per cent of respondents indicated that they had to pay for the training materials. There is no difference between women and men respondents in this respect. In PTCs, there is no need to pay for training materials. However, because of lack of materials at the center, some trainees buy their own so that they can practice better. For example, if they want to learn how to sew a certain cloth, they will buy it and bring it to the center to learn. The center is not able to provide such cloth, because it is too expensive. The same is valid for radio repair. The training material at the center is outdated and not enough so that several trainees have to share one radio. Some who can afford it will bring their own radio for practice.

(b) Encouragement and recommendations from others

Two hundred or 88.5 per cent of the respondents replied that someone encouraged them to attend the course (Table 4.13). Significantly more women said that there was someone who suggested them to attend the course[16]. Sixty-three women (96.9 per cent) said they were persuaded while 137 men (85.1 per cent), said so. Usually the trainees' parents were the ones who advised them to attend the training. Considering that they are also the ones who pay the related training costs, it is easy to understand that they have a large say in deciding on the skills training. For men, friends were also a strong source of information, while for women, their source of information is limited to family members.

Table 4.13
People who suggested/persuaded respondents to attend the course for trainee respondents (multiple answer)

Who suggested	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Parents	77	56.2	29	46.0	106	53.0
Spouse	1	0.7	3	4.8	4	2.0
Other family members	20	14.6	13	20.6	33	16.5

[16] Fisher's exact test significance 0.007 (one sided).

Friends	44	32.1	18	28.6	62	31.0
Employer	0	0	1	1.6	1	0.5
Others*	20	14.6	18	28.6	38	19.0
Total respondents	**137**	**100**	**63**	**100**	**200**	**100**

* "Others" include teachers in the training center, NGOs, head of village /commune, relatives.
* Missing cases: 27

4.2.3. Usefulness and relevance of skills

More than 70 per cent of respondents were planning to find a wage-earning job after the completion of the training. Many men and women trainees preferred wage employment because it provides a stable income. Especially when they are not very confident to start a business, wage employment is the preferred choice because less risk is involved. One-third of the women and one-fifth of the men planned to start a business (Table 4.14). The advantage of self-employment is that there is more freedom. It is also easier to combine work and family responsibilities if one is self-employed. An additional 15 per cent of women trainees indicated that they wanted to help in a family business, even if their parents were not self-employed. Thus, the wish to join a family business refers to the future.

Table 4.14
Plans after completion of training of current trainee respondents (multiple answer)

Plans	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Find job	116	71.6	44	67.7	152	67.0
Go back to previous job	10	6.2	4	6.2	14	6.2
Start business	33	20.4	22	33.8	55	24.2
Help in family farm	3	1.9	0	0	3	1.3
Help in family business	1	0.6	10	15.4	11	4.8
Others*	15	9.3	1	1.5	16	7.0
Total	**162**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**227**	**100**

* "Others" include study further, want to study other skills or the same skills further.

Nearly 65 per cent (64.8 per cent) of the respondents found the skills and knowledge learned in the training center to be useful for achieving their plans. There were significantly more women who replied positively than men (73.8 per cent of women and 61.1 per cent of the men)[17]. However, caution is needed in interpreting this result, because women generally hesitate to express a negative opinion to others, especially in front of a male-dominated audience. During the face-to-face interviews, it was observed that women trainees were more hesitant to share ideas and took longer time to answer. Especially in front of male trainees, it seems to be difficult for women trainees to speak out.

[17] Chi square significance level 0.025.

Although the respondents found the skills and knowledge useful, they foresaw problems that might hinder them in achieving their plan. More than 74 per cent of them thought they would face problems in either getting job or starting a business. Significantly more women expected to have problems compared to men[18]: 90.8 per cent of women and 67.9 per cent of men indicated possible difficulties. No woman replied that there would not be any problems as compared to 13.6 per cent of the men[19].

Table 4.15
Problems that the respondents foresee in achieving their plans
(multiple answers)[20]

Problems	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Financial problems	98	60.5	54	83.1	160	70.5
Inadequate information	28	17.3	8	12.3	36	15.9
Limited access to education	20	12.4	15	23.1	35	15.4
Balancing work and household tasks	8	4.944	7	10.8	15	6.6
Weak networks/association	30	18.5	13	20.0	43	18.9
Do not foresee any problem	22	13.6	0	0.0	22	9.7
I don't know	23	14.2	4	6.2	27	11.9
Others	3	1.9	11	16.9	14	6.2
Total	**162**	**100**	**65**	**100**	**227**	**100**

Financial problems scored the highest among all respondents (Table 4.15, see also Sections 4.1.3. and 4.1.6.), followed by weak networks and inadequate information for men and limited access to education for women. The majority of trainees, most of whom were young and single, did not consider the balancing of work and household tasks as a problem, although slightly more women were concerned in this respect (11 per cent of women and 7 per cent of men mentioned this as a possible future problem).

4.2.4. Assessment of the training center

In Battambang VTCs, there are dormitories for both women and men, but women trainees rarely use the dormitory. In PTCs, there is no accommodation facility. However, men trainees are allowed to stay overnight in the workshop room. For women, such arrangements are not made because of lack of space in PTCs. Women trainees have to commute every day or have to have a relative in the provincial town to be able to attend the training.

[18] Chi square significance level 0.001.

[19] The rest of the respondents said they did not know.

[20] Some respondents replied that they did not know whether they would have problems in achieving their plan, but at the same time replied positively when they were asked about specific problems. These people were excluded from the category 'I don't know'.

In the early 1990s, there used to be more mobile courses. However, after the support from ILO and UNDP ended, a more limited budget was made available for mobile training. Mobile courses are only organized in agriculture-related skills in three of the four PTCs. In some provinces such as Siem Reap, no mobile courses are provided anymore (see Section 3.2.2).

There were significantly more men, especially in the VTCs, who indicated that they were unsatisfied with the toilet facilities. There are many male trainees, but there is only one toilet for them. Also, the students are required to clean the toilet themselves. Women trainees keep their toilets clean, but men trainees do not, resulting in a dirty toilet for men and higher levels of dissatisfaction among them.

Table 4.16
Assessment of training center facility by trainee respondents
(number of respondents)

Issue	Men		Women		Total	
	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Satisfied
Place to stay	13	86	1	24	14	110
Training room	4	157	0	64	4	221
Toilet	45	111	2	61	47	172
Childcare	1	-	-	-	1	-
Training equipment	52	101	4	60	56	161
Training material	47	104	4	57	51	161
Attitude of trainer	25	132	3	62	28	194
Training methods	32	122	12	53	44	175
Attitude of male co-trainees	29	119	11	18	40	137
Attitude of female co-trainees	4	54	0	61	4	115
Total	**162**		**65**		**227**	

Significantly more men were unsatisfied with the training equipment (32.1 per cent of men and 6.2 per cent of women). These gender differences need to be interpreted with caution, however, as women generally feel shy to express their dissatisfaction. Especially in the VTCs, the level of dissatisfaction was high. Nearly half of the respondents in VTCs mentioned that the training equipment was unsatisfactory. This is because male-dominated courses use machineries which have become obsolete. For example, in Phreah Kosomak VTC, an old Russian engine is still used for training. Auto and motorbike repair courses need to have updated equipment to keep up with the knowledge on new engines[21]. A similar pattern of dissatisfaction existed with regard to the lack of training materials.

There are no childcare facilities in any of the training centers.

There was a higher dissatisfaction with the attitudes of trainers among the VTCs as compared to the PTCs. In the VTCs, the attitude of teachers is considered to be

[21] According to the training center directors, although both VTCs and PTCs have training equipment in appropriate conditions, the equipment in VTCs is older because they have been operating for a longer period than PTCs.

stricter and more autocratic. PTC trainers are more participatory and flexible in their training style and respond more to the needs of the students. The teacher-student relations were observed to be more friendly in PTCs compared to VTCs. Such relationships and a friendly atmosphere enable students to contact the PTCs and their instructors after graduation for further help in skills and information.

Significantly more women found the attitude of male co-trainees to be unsatisfactory. The trainers mentioned that in male-dominated courses, women become the target of jokes that can make women uncomfortable. For example, during the focus group discussion, men trainees made comments such as girls do not need to obtain skills because they will stay home after getting married. Such comments can be quite discouraging for their female classmates. Men trainers in these courses expressed that they need to pay extra attention to women trainees so that they are not intimidated and are able to complete the course. In the training centers where the female-male ratio is more unfavorable to women, trainees were more unsatisfied with the attitude of male co-trainees. In VTCs, where there were hardly any women trainees, more than 28 per cent of the women respondents said they were unsatisfied with the attitudes of male co-trainees. In contrast, in the Siem Reap PTC, where there were relatively more female trainees, no one expressed dissatisfaction with their male co-trainees. But even in this PTC, sexual jokes were whispered during focus group discussions.

4.3. Trainers of the training centers

4.3.1. Profile of trainers

A total of 39 trainers were interviewed, 30 men and 9 women. The average age of men trainers was 34.6 (the youngest was 23 years old, and the oldest was 65 years old), while for women trainers, it was 34.8 (the youngest was 19 years old, and the oldest was 48 years old). Women and men trainers were almost equal in terms of educational levels with men and women having an average number of schooling of 10 and 10.1 years respectively. However, women trainers had a significantly longer length of work experience as trainers compared to men. Men trainers had an average training experience of 5.49 years (minimum 0.66 years, maximum 18 years), while for women trainers, the average experience was 7.11 years (minimum 1 year, maximum 20 years). There are no regular trainers in PTCs and all have a short-term contract. All trainers in VTCs are government officials, and have a long term regular contract.

There are several reasons why there are more experienced women trainers than men trainers. More men trainers gain experience and then opt for jobs with NGOs. One of the reasons why more men trainers transfer to other jobs is because they generally have a higher English language ability. Thus, they have more opportunities to find better full-time employment. Secondly, more women trainers also have their own business. When they are not teaching, they work in their own business. It is not easy to make a living by being a trainer at the training center because the provision of courses and thereby the income is not regular. Thirdly, courses offered by women trainers such as sewing and hairdressing are held more often than courses in male-dominated skills. Thus, women trainers are more often called for work, while men trainers get jobs only occasionally. Therefore, there is more need for men trainers to look for other jobs. In addition, courses such as sewing and hairdressing are offered

only in PTCs and not in other places. Therefore, women trainers remain with PTCs since this is the only place where they can teach these courses.

4.3.2. Profile of classes

As indicated in chapter 3, the courses offered at training centers can be classified into male and female-dominated. Table 4.17 shows the list of male and female-dominated courses that the trainer respondents have conducted. Generally, there are three to four male-dominated courses for every female-dominated course taught in the training centers, especially in VTCs.

Male dominated courses are normally taught by men, and female-dominated by women. Among the trainer respondents, computer courses that are neither male- nor female-dominated were taught by men trainers. There was one man trainer who was teaching the female-dominated course of home gardening, and one woman was a trainer in the male-dominated course of masonry. This woman trainer studied in Germany in the early 1980s. After she came back from Germany, she started to teach in the Battambang VTC. At that time, the Government decided who should go where to study what. Human resources were limited, and there were not many high school graduates. So, regardless of the sex of students, the Government sent them to learn technical subjects. The students were willing to follow the government's decision, since employment after graduation was guaranteed.

There was no new young woman trainer who taught a male-dominated subject. After the market economy was introduced, and the state ceased to guarantee employment for graduates, women found it more difficult to find a job if they studied male-dominated subjects. So, most women opt for female-dominated subjects. VTCs hire teachers from their graduates, and since there were very few women who studied male-dominated courses, there are no newly recruited female teachers in these subjects.

There are several male-dominated courses in which there have been and were some women trainees at the time of the study. According to the perception and observations of trainers interviewed, these women enrolled in wood carving, barber, TV and radio repair, electricity, auto-mechanic, masonry, and air conditioning electricity.

Table 4.17
Courses taught by the interviewed trainers

Courses Taught	Type of Class			Sex of teachers		Total
	Male dominated	Female dominated	Mixed	M	F	
Wood carving	1			1		1
Barber	1			1		1
Hair dressing		1			1	1
Machine of agriculture	2			2		2
TV, radio, recorder, video repair	7			7		7
Motorbike repair	2			2		2
Electricity	2			2		2
Auto-mechanic	1			1		1
Masonry	4			3	1	4

Sewing		4			4	4
Welding	1			1		1
Computer			3	3		3
Auto-electricity system	1			1		1
Air conditioning electricity	1			1		1
Carpentry	2			2		2
Graphic design silk printing		1			1	1
Automotive repair	1			1		1
Silk weaving		1			1	1
Agriculture/home gardening		1		1		1
Pig/duck raising	1			1		1
Total	**28**	**8**	**3**	**31**	**8**	**39**

Table 4.18
Type of classes taught by interviewed trainers by training center

Training Center	Type of Class			Sex of trainers		Total
	Male dominated	Female dominated	Mixed	M	F	
VTC Battambang	12	1		11	2	13
PTC Battambang	3	1	1	4	1	5
PTC Siem Reap	5	3		6	2	8
PTC Kampong Cham	3	1	1	4	1	5
PTC Kampot	2	2	1	3	2	5
VTC Preah Kosomak	3			3		3
Total	**28**	**8**	**3**	**31**	**8**	**39**

The trainers confirmed that most of the students are in their 20s. The average age of trainees is higher only in agriculture and livestock raising training. Many of these agricultural courses are conducted in the villages, thus, older people can also attend. It is difficult for people in their 30s and 40s who are the main breadwinners of the household to take time for months to learn skills on a full-time basis.

More men in their 30s and above attend training than women in the same age bracket. There were more courses where the age of men was 30 years on average, while for women, the only courses with an average age composition of 30 years was in the agricultural courses. Women in their late 20s and 30s have heavier household responsibilities with small children, and are not able to attend training.

4.3.3. Trainers' perception on training performance of trainees

(a) Trainers' perception on training performance of women and men trainees

Many trainers indicated that they did not know whether there are differences in training performances between women and men, because they train either women or men. Less than half of the trainers commented on differences between women and men in training performance. Half of these trainers observed that women trainees perform better than men. No one mentioned that men perform better than women. The respondents said that women are more patient and do better work, even though they are slower. Men trainees look down on work that they think is easy, and do not work

with care. In classes where there are more men, they play and interact with each other, while women trainees especially if they are the only woman in the class, tend to concentrate on the work. Some trainers also observed that women trainees do not want to loose out to men, and do not want men to look down on them. So, they work harder.

Three trainers felt that women's drop out rate was lower than men's but the same number indicated that men's drop out rate was lower than women's. In male-dominated courses, 7 out of 10 trainers observed that women were better than men in terms of attendance. With regard to the performance in examinations, around one-third of them indicated that men did better than women. Administrative data show hardly any drop-outs in PTCs. In VTCs, where women are the minority, women do not drop out in most of the courses (see Section 3.2.7). Thus, the data does not suggest any tendency in women dropping out more than men. Some trainers have the perception of lower achievement of women trainees for several reasons. Firstly, the number of women in the class is so small that one drop-out attracts attention, while if one out of 15 male students drops out, it would not attract the same attention. Secondly, again because the number of women students is small, if they are not in the upper half of the class, trainers might consider that women do not perform as good as men, although women's performance may be better than some men. Thirdly, being the only woman in a class can create a hostile learning environment for women, and this can lead to lower performance[22].

(b) Trainers' perception on training performance of different groups

Four out of 12 trainers observed differences in performance among different groups of students. Four out of 13 said that returnees from border camps and internally displaced people perform better because they make more effort, and also they are more skilled. Nine out of 17 trainers said that trainees with physical and mental disabilities tend to be slower, but they make more effort. Parents with four or more children are slower in learning because they have many other things to attend to, thus they loose concentration. However, they understand some things faster because they are more experienced.

(c) Attempts to narrow the performance differences

Twenty-five out of 29 trainers replied they tried to narrow performance differences between women and men, and between different groups. Men trainers in male-dominated skills were aware of the harsh learning environment for women trainees so they try to pay more attention and give encouragement to women trainees so that they do not drop out. For example, some trainers will let women sit in the best seats where they can see well. When a group selects a class representative, the trainer will ask a woman trainee to be the representative. Another trainer mentioned that he would highlight the performance of a woman trainee whenever she does well, to show to others that women are as good performers as men, and also to give value to her efforts.

[22] Some trainers said that women in such minority cases excel in their performance.

Table 4.19
Attempts by trainers to narrow performance gaps (multiple answer)

	Men		Women		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Give more attention	16	80.0	4	80.0	20	80.0
Give more time	17	85.0	4	80.0	21	84.0
Special Training material	4	20.0	1	20.0	5	20.0
Offer tutoring	7	35.0	2	40.0	9	36.0
Seating arrangement	9	45.0	2	40.0	11	44.0
Encourage class participation	17	85.0	4	80.0	21	84.0
Total	**20**	**100.0**	**5**	**100.0**	**25**	**100.0**

4.3.4. Stereotypes and values about gender roles

More than three-quarters of the trainers in male-dominated courses think that women are more suited for certain jobs and half of the trainers in female-dominated courses had this view, as seen in Table 4.20. Jobs considered suitable for women are jobs such as weaving and silk worm raising. Although carving is considered as a 'male' skill, wood carving is also perceived to be suitable for women, because it is a light job, and can be done at home. Some men trainers replied that women's work is light work, needs less knowledge, experience and thinking. The stereotyping of women's work as unskilled work of secondary status proved to be strong even among the trainers.

Table 4.20
Trainers' perception on women's suitability for certain jobs by type of class

Type of class	Women are more suited for certain jobs				Total	
	No		Yes			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male-dominated	6	21.4	22	78.6	28	100
Female-dominated	4	50.0	4	50.0	8	100
Mixed	2	66.7	1	33.3	3	100
Total	**12**	**30.8**	**27**	**69.2**	**39**	**100**

Other jobs that are considered to be suitable for women are jobs which require contact with people such as selling and trading. Trainers in male-dominated skills said that it is not suitable for women to learn electricity and TV repair, because they cannot find employment. These trainers think women are not suitable for male-dominated skills not because women do not have the ability but because the labour market would not accept women in these occupations.

Table 4.21
Trainers' perception on women's suitability for certain jobs by sex of trainer[23]

Type of Class	Women are more suited for certain jobs				Total	
	No		Yes			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male trainer	9	29.0	22	71.0	31	100.0
Female trainer	3	37.5	5	62.5	8	100.0
Total	**12**	**30.8**	**27**	**69.2**	**39**	**100.0**

There was no significant difference in opinion on this issue between men and women trainers, although proportionally more men than women trainers held the view that women are more suited for certain jobs. (Table 4.21). This might indicate that it is not the sex of trainers but what they teach which influences the perception of trainers. Trainers in male-dominated course tend to perceive that women are not suited for male-dominated skills since they often see their female graduates having difficulty in finding a job. At the same time, the trainers think that women are slower but do better work. The perception of the trainers in male-dominated courses can be summarized as 'women are good students, but these skills are not really for them'.

On the other hand, trainers in male-dominated courses do encourage women to enroll in non-traditional skills for women. Eighty-two per cent of trainers in male-dominated courses said that they encouraged women to enroll in non-traditional courses. More women trainers in female-dominated skills said that they did not encourage women to enroll in non-traditional courses – half of the trainers in female-dominated courses replied that they did not encourage women to go for male-dominated work. It is natural for trainers to encourage any student to study what they teach, although at the same time, trainers may find the course not suited to women. Such ambivalence on the side of trainers will affect the perception of students. If women in non-traditional skills are to be promoted, there is a need to highlight achievements of women in these occupations in order to change perceptions in the labour market.

4.3.5. Efforts to encourage women's participation

More than 70 per cent of trainers encouraged women's participation in the training. In male-dominated classes, some trainers said that they encouraged women by giving examples from other countries, where women take up these male-dominated skills. Trainers also ask men trainees to help women trainees when they need physical strength. In some skills such as wood carving, trainers stress that there is a merit to being a woman because women can make curves more skillfully than men.

As seen in Tables 4.22 and 4.23, male trainees and trainers of male-dominated courses encourage women's participation less. This is partly because in many male-dominated courses, there are no woman trainees.

[23] Only one trainer of male-dominated course is a woman, and one trainer of female-dominated course is a man. In mixed courses, all the trainers are men.

Table 4.22
Encourage participation from women by type of class (trainer respondents)

Encourage participation from women	Type of Class							
	Male Dominated		Female dominated		Mixed		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No	10	37.0	1	12.5			11	28.9
Yes	17	63.0	7	87.5	3	100.0	27	71.1
Total	**27**	**100.0**	**8**	**100.0**	**3**	**100.0**	**38**	**100.0**

Missing: 1 case

Table 4.23
Encourage participation from women by sex of trainer (trainer respondents)

Encourage participation from women	Sex				Total	
	Male		Female			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No	10	33.3	1	12.5	11	28.9
Yes	20	66.7	7	87.5	27	71.1
Total	**30**	**100.0**	**8**	**100.0**	**38**	**100.0**

Thirty-one trainers (93.9 percent) know that there are specific guidelines to increase women's participation in training courses in their institution. They are aware of the MoEYS priority target groups that include eldest daughters and female-headed households. One trainer in VTC Battambang emphasized the importance of promoting women in non-traditional skills. He mentioned that it is important to utilize the accommodation for women to encourage more women to enroll at the training center. VTCs do have accommodation for women, but it is not used because all the women trainees are from the provincial towns. Thus, while there is the possibility to recruit more women from remote areas, this facility is not being used.

When the training courses of PTCs are promoted, trainers also go out to the villages to promote the courses. They talk to women villagers to convince them about the value of women learning new skills. The training centers also encourage women's participation by putting up women students as 'best student' and asking them to act as role models for other women.

As can be seen in Table 4.24, even though there are less women trainees in male-dominated courses, trainers counsel women more than men. This is because women face more problems, but also because it is easier to give advice to women trainees. They are considered to be more obedient and listen to the advice of trainers more, thus trainers prefer to counsel women trainees. Women trainers tend to counsel women more than men, but this is partly because there are almost no male trainees in their courses.

Table 4.24
Counseling trainees by type of class (number of trainer respondents)

Type of Class	Trainers counseling women or men trainees							
	Women more than men		Men more than women		No difference		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male dominated	9	36.0	3	12.0	13	52.0	25	100.0
Female dominated	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0	5	100.0
Mixed	1	33.3			2	66.7	3	100.0
Total	**13**	**39.4**	**4**	**12.1**	**16**	**48.5**	**33**	**100.0**

Missing: 6 cases

Table 4.25
Counseling trainees by sex of trainers (number of trainer respondents)

Counsel more women or men	Sex of trainers				Total	
	Male		Female			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Women more than men	11	37.9	2	50.0	13	39.4
Men more than women	3	10.3	1	25.0	4	12.1
No difference	15	51.7	1	25.0	16	48.5
Total	**29**	**100.0**	**4**	**100.0**	**33**	**100.0**

4.3.6. Sexual harassment

As can be seen in Table 4.26, nearly 40 per cent of trainers in male-dominated courses have heard of sexual harassment occurring in training courses, while none of the trainers in female-dominated and mixed courses had encountered this problem. The only woman trainer in a male-dominated course was not aware of any sexual harassment. However, other trainers in male-dominated courses are aware of this, so they give value and respect to women trainees, to reduce drop out. These findings indicate that there might be more incidence of sexual harassment in male-dominated courses. As seen in Section 4.2.4, women trainees in male-dominated courses were more dissatisfied with the attitude of male co-trainees. In these courses, women become the target of jokes and women feel uncomfortable. In addition, the sex of the trainer might have an influence on the occurrence of sexual harassment. That is, the presence of a woman trainer might discourage male trainees to sexually harass women trainees. However, the number of cases is too small to come to a definite conclusion.

Table 4.26
Awareness of the existence of sexual harassment by trainers respondents by type of class

Type of Class	Harassment				Total	
	No		Yes			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male dominated	17	60.7	11	39.3	28	100.0
Female dominated	8	100.0			8	100.0
Mixed	3	100.0			3	100.0
Total	**28**	**71.8**	**11**	**28.2**	**39**	**100.0**

Table 4.27 shows what types of sexual harassment exist according to the trainers: Sexual jokes, teasing including commenting on one's clothes and looks seem to be the most common forms.

Table 4.27
Type of sexual harassment that the trainers are aware of

	Never		Seldom		Sometimes		Often		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Telling sexual jokes	7	63.6	2	18.2	2	18.2	0	0	11	100
Sexual comments about body or clothes	6	60	1	10	2	20	1	10	10	100
Repeatedly asking someone out	4	36.4	2	18.2	5	45.5	0	0	11	100
Belittling remarks regarding one's gender	8	80	0	0	2	20	0	0	10	100
Paying unwanted attention	6	54.5	3	27.3	2	18.2	0	0	11	100
Unwanted touching of clothes	3	27.3	5	45.5	3	27.3	0	0	11	100
Requests and threats for sexual favors	10	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	100

- These are all for male-dominated courses, since no trainer in female-dominated courses replied that there are sexual harassment in the class.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

In Cambodia, two-thirds of women and men participate in the labour force and their unemployment rate is low. This is not a reflection of gender equality in the labour market but shows that both men and women are under extreme pressure to earn a living for their family. The unemployment rate for men is lower than for women, especially in the urban areas. It is notable that women's labour force participation rate is higher in the 14-19 age bracket compared to men, and the rate reverses among the older age-groups. Young women quit school and join the labour force earlier than young men, who continue with their education. Many Cambodian families do not prepare their daughters for joining the labour market as well as their sons.

In the late 1990s, there has been a slight relative increase in sectoral GDP growth and employment growth in the industrial sector, while the corresponding rates in agriculture were decreasing. While the overall share of agriculture in GDP is decreasing, the production of some agricultural goods, such as rice, soybeans, fish and fish products is increasing. Women are over-represented in the agricultural sector where the remuneration is the lowest. Industrial growth is spurred by the expanding garment industry that employs a large number of young women. Although wages in this sector are relatively low, this is an improvement for women who lack access to wage employment in general.

Women are generally disadvantaged in the labour market because of job segregation where 'women's' work is generally less remunerated than 'men's' work. Women also have a heavy unpaid workload at home, as they are usually in charge of managing the family economy. Thus, compared to men, women are generally more risk-averse, have less mobility and face more time constraints. While Cambodian women generally have a strong say in day-to-day household affairs, they have less decision making power over larger assets, and often are victims of domestic violence.

Women's lower status and power at home is also reflected in the workplace: women are concentrated in lower level occupations with low pay, and are found less in higher status jobs, such as in government service. Women generally earn 23 per cent less than men. Women have less education and their illiteracy rate is higher. Only 29.2 per cent of women are literate enough to use the literacy skills in their income generation activities. This poses great limitations to women to gain decent employment and improve their livelihood. More women work as unpaid family labour than men, and rural women are seen to have no other employment option or skill other than to work on their own farm, while men have other employment opportunities. Female-headed households in the urban areas, especially those with small children or those who are single and elderly, have been identified as one of the most vulnerable groups, because they are cut off from social support that they can rely on in the rural areas.

It is imperative that women's capability and status in the labour market be improved in order to eradicate poverty in Cambodia. The action research highlights how vocational training can be useful and effective to decrease gender differences in the labour market. The major points can be summarized as follows.

5.1.1. Access to training and training facilities

In the PTCs, 71 per cent of trainees during 1996, 1999 and 2001, the reference years for this study, were women: two PTCs had around one-third of women trainees; one PTC had 50 per cent of women and men respectively; and in one PTC the number of women amounted to 86 per cent. In the VTCs less than 7 per cent of trainees were women during these years. The low participation rates of women in VTCs is related to the fact that VTCs provide training in male-dominated occupations almost exclusively, while the PTCs provide training in both male and female skill areas. The overall majority of women trainees participates in courses on sewing and food processing and they form around half of the trainees in home gardening. Barber, wood and marble carving attract less than 15 per cent women. Courses in repair of household appliances, cars and motor cycles have participation rates of less than 5 per cent of women. No women were enrolled in carpentry, agricultural machinery, leather, welding, plough making, masonry and rice production even though, in practice, women are known to work as masons and rice farmers.

The largest access problem relates to the location of the training, which is concentrated in training centers in the provincial towns. It is not possible for trainees of PTCs to pay their transportation every day. Some can obtain transportation by asking for a free ride on an ox or horse cart or borrowing a bicycle. If others in the same village also attend training at the PTC, trainees can share transportation and most of them are able to arrange for transportation in such a way. However, the transportation problem is more serious for women than for men, because women are too shy to ask for a free ride. If another trainee who goes to the PTC from the same area is a man, it is difficult for the woman trainee to share a vehicle with him.

None of the PTCs have accommodation facilities, but men have the option of living and staying overnight in the PTC classrooms. This is not considered suitable accommodation for women. Therefore, almost all of the women trainees are from the provincial centers where the PTCs are located. This makes it difficult for women from remote areas to participate in vocational training at the centers.

The Battambang VTC has accommodation facilities for both men and women. The dormitories are used but not by women. The main reason cited for this is that parents do not want to send their daughters to dormitories in fear of lack of security. If that is the case, measures to guarantee security for women should be considered so that parents can entrust their daughters without worry. VTC Preah Kosomak does not have dormitories for women.

In the early 1990s, there were mobile vocational courses in remote villages, offering both agricultural as well as non-agricultural training with support from ILO and UNDP. All PTCs offered mobile training on agricultural skills, welding, machine and motorbike repair, TV and bicycle repair. With the end of this support in 1999, the

number of mobile courses has decreased, and the remaining mobile courses are mostly agriculture-related courses. The PTCs in Kampong Cham and Kampot still offer mobile courses in agriculture and weaving and the Battambang PTC provides mobile agricultural training. Providing mobile courses by itself does not seem to have changed the sex segregation of courses, or have increased women's participation in male-dominated courses to any significant degree.

Although mobile courses did not change sex segregation in skills training they have definitely helped in bringing in older working adults to participate in the training. Current trainees at the PTCs are younger than before. Because of the decrease in mobile training courses in villages, it is difficult for breadwinners and people with household responsibilities to spend time on training away from home. The educational level of trainees is also higher than the national average, and is on the increase. This might reflect that PTCs are not being able to reach out to the less advantaged in the society, but are becoming one of the options for continuation of formal education by youth.

Generally, both staff and trainees mentioned that the facilities, training equipment and materials of the centers are getting obsolete. This was the most common complaint especially from the VTCs.

5.1.2. Employment creation and improving income

The employment rate among interviewed graduates was high. Seventy-seven per cent of graduates who were self-employed have started their business after the training. Seventy per cent of the graduates who were in wage employment indicated that the training helped them in finding a job. Those who were already self-employed before the training said that they could improve their business and those who were in wage employment received a promotion or an increase in wages.

More than 80 per cent of the employed graduates are using the skills learned in the training. However, women use the skill less than men (93 per cent for men and 68 per cent for women), among others, because of the low income they receive from the skills that they learned, which are often in female-dominated jobs. Women trained in male-dominated skills, face sex-segregation in the labour market to such an extent that it is difficult for them to find a job where they can utilize these skills directly.

Although many graduates hoped to get wage employment, they end up in self-employment. More than 70 per cent of current trainees would like to go for wage employment, but only 30 per cent of graduates were able to find a job as an employee. The hypothesis was that more women would be self-employed and more men would have wage employment. However, this study found that almost the same ratio of women and men went into self-employment.

Considering the small labour market for wage employment in Cambodia, obtaining wage employment is not easy. Considering this limitation, the courses offered at PTCs also focus on creating self-employment. However, a dilemma exists. PTC courses are relatively short. Therefore, even after completing the course at PTCs, trainees especially if they are young are not yet confident to start up their business. Even if

they do, there is a high risk, since they are not yet well experienced. Skills such as sewing and radio repair can be mastered during the few months of skill training provided at the PTCs. However, trainees need constant upgrading of their skills in order to compete in the market.

There have been initiatives to correct this situation. Some male trainees have formed groups to receive further training from the instructors after graduation. Training centers proactively support the initiative of forming groups among graduates. So far, there have not been initiatives in forming similar women's groups. It is more difficult for women to come out of the villages to get together, considering their limitations in mobility.

There have not been any advanced, refresher or upgrading training courses offered to the graduates. In order to provide services to as many people as possible, PTCs have the policy that one person can enroll in only one course, and people who have been enrolled in one course cannot get a second chance to learn other skills. Many graduates (77.6 per cent of the women and 82.2 per cent of the men) wished to receive further vocational training.

Marketing is an age-old problem in self-employment and employment creation. Some PTCs used to provide training on food processing through mobile training. However, graduates encountered marketing problems, and thus stopped promoting it. In the Kampot PTC, they used to produce shell products, and a middle person from Siem Reap used to come and buy these. However, later, the market in Siem Reap became saturated, and the person stopped coming to Kampot. Thus, they lost the market and subsequently, stopped production. At the moment, since there is no comprehensive planning, training centers are not able to contribute to developing markets. The advantage of mobile training is that it is possible to promote production of certain goods in one area, which would be easier to market if they can produce in bulk. However, such initiatives need careful planning and networking connections, which at the moment do not exist.

One of the largest disadvantages that women have compared to men is the lack of access to information due to their limited mobility. Information on job vacancies or business opportunities is accessible only by asking around. Men have wider information networks through their friends. Women graduates come to visit PTCs, which is one of their most important information sources. However, it is not possible for those who are living in remote villages to come to a PTC just to obtain information. Thus, women in remote villages are left out of information networks and have fewer chances to obtain wage employment, even if they have been trained.

Women graduates found the certificate from the training centers most useful to find employment. Men graduates also appreciated the certificates, but they found the training center network more useful. In addition, training centers have better linkages with enterprises which employ men in male-dominated skills. Thus, the PTC network benefits men more than women. Among the self-employed, market information was expressed as a problem more by women than by men.

5.1.3. Capital and credit

Seventy per cent of the current trainees (83 percent of women and 60 per cent of men) mentioned that financial problems would be an obstacle to achieve their plan after completion of the course. Fifty-three per cent (59 per cent of women and 48 per cent of men) of self-employed graduates expressed the need for credit.

Since the end of 1999, the PTCs are providing credit as initial capital for new graduates. However, it was found that new graduates are not yet confident enough to borrow money to start a business immediately. Micro-finance institutions (MFIs) offer credit with lower interest rate than moneylenders, but the interest rate and repayment schedule is suitable for short term high return business. There are not many sources of credit for agricultural purposes. Further access to credit schemes that offer flexible repayment schedules depending on the type of investment is needed.

5.1.4. Women in non-traditional occupations

There has been little progress in terms of promoting women in non-traditionally female skills. Among the 101 female graduate interviewees, none had a job in a male-dominated trade, even though some had been trained in male-dominated skills. In the VTC in Battambang, there were a few women enrolled in male-dominated fields such as carpentry, car repair and auto-electricity repair courses. However, all these women enrolled in these courses not to become a carpenter or a mechanic but to gain knowledge with a view to sell spare parts or furniture. For example, carpentry is an extremely male-dominated job. But by knowing about woods, a woman trainee thinks that she will be able to use the knowledge in selling wooden furniture. Wood carving on the other hand is a skill considered suitable for women and there are relatively more women in wood carving courses.

The dim prospect of getting a job in a male-dominated occupation in a highly sex-segregated labour market discourages women to learn male-dominated skills. The social norms and trainers' attitudes reinforce this. Light, unskilled work that is not dirty is considered more suitable for women. Influenced by such stereotypes and lacking role models, it is difficult for women to imagine themselves in a male-dominated occupation.

Not only the subject, but also the male-dominated class environment can discourage women from taking up such courses. Incidences of jokes with sexual undertones, other forms of sexual harassment and a general women-unfriendly environment among graduates have been noted in male-dominated courses.

There has been some success in developing new professions for women. The VTC Battambang has offered a graphic design course exclusively for women. Graphic design, at the moment, is more of a man's occupation, but since it is still a new profession, it is possible to change this general perception. The first batch of these students is still studying, and it will be interesting to see how successful they will be in finding a job. There are also an increasing number of women and men who are enrolling in computer training. This is again a new profession and skill for Cambodia,

and encouraging women equally with men in this profession would prevent the profession to be segregated to one sex.

5.2. Recommendations

The importance of skill training for women cannot be over-emphasized. In order to improve the effectiveness of vocational skill training for women to gain access to decent work in Cambodia, recommendations are as follows.

5.2.1. Literacy training

A survey by the Cambodian Government has pointed out that the functional literacy level of Cambodians especially women might be lower than what is suggested in the national statistics – 63 per cent of the population and over 70 per cent of women are considered to be illiterate or semi-literate. This poses a great limitation for skills development of women. The PTCs have eased the recruitment criteria so that illiterate and semi-literate women can also access their training courses. This provides opportunities for skill enhancement for illiterate women. PTCs should add literacy training for these illiterate and semi-literate women in their training courses.

5.2.2. Review of the target groups for vocational training

The current trainees in PTCs have a higher education than before, which is much higher than the national average. All women trainees in the center-based courses come from the provincial centers. This suggests that the PTCs are not being able to reach out to the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups as they are expected to.

Currently, the PTCs' special target groups are: female headed households, disabled people, demobilized soldiers, internally displaced people, returnees, eldest daughters, orphans, school drop-outs and families with more than four children. The current trend is that among the special target groups, the proportion of school drop-outs are increasing while the enrolment rate of the other groups is decreasing. It is difficult for people such as female heads of households, eldest daughters, and breadwinners of families with more than four children to come to attend a training course for several months at a center away from home. These groups have heavier household and financial burdens to support their family economically, and it is not possible to be away from income earning activities even for one week. Therefore, the only type of training that these groups can attend is mobile training courses offered in the village for one or two days, or a training course offered at night time – and for women at a place close to their home.

The skills and teaching methodologies for school drop-outs and for older target groups with more life and occupational experiences might differ. School drop-outs might be more interested in non-farm skills and wish to go for wage employment and they will be able to afford a lump sum of time to attend training in a center-based training course. The interest of older target groups might be more on how to improve the skills that they are using now, especially on-farm skills, rather than learning new

skills. PTCs need to prioritize among the target groups, decide which group they would like to focus on, and review the course offerings and the location, duration and timing of the offering accordingly.

As discussed in Chapter 2, female-heads of households are not a uniform group. The most vulnerable group among the female-heads of households are those in the capital with small children or elderly female-heads of households who are living alone. It should be noted that in Phnom Penh, the female unemployment rate is much higher than the male unemployment rate, and wage disparities between the sexes are also higher than in other areas. In order to reach this vulnerable group of women, flexible training courses offered for few hours during non-working periods (eg. mid-day for micro-vendors and night time for manual workers) have to be provided in Phnom Penh. At the moment, MoEYS is not providing any non-formal vocational training in Phnom Penh. Considering the high in-migration to the capital and the higher incidence of female-headed households among the poor in Phnom Penh compared to the rural areas, specific targeting of these most vulnerable female-heads of households must be taken into consideration.

5.2.3. Improving access to training for vulnerable groups

In order to improve the access to training for those living in remote villages and those with heavy responsibilities in sustaining the family either by caring work or income generation, mobile training has to be offered in villages. Due to poverty and the resulting lack of time, most poor people can not spend more than a few days on training even when it is conducted in the village. Such training should be conducted in several sessions with a few days per session.

In order to improve the access to training for women school drop-outs in remote villages, it is important that either adequate accommodation or transportation arrangements are provided. Even when there is accommodation, if the parents are not confident of the security and safety of their daughters, it will not be used. Sufficient arrangements should be made to assure both the women trainees and their parents that the accommodation is adequate enough to ensure safety. If accommodation cannot be an option, transportation arrangements have to be made for women trainees from remote villages. It will make a difference if PTCs take the transportation issue seriously, and help women trainees to overcome mobility constraints.

One of the most vulnerable groups among the female-heads of households are those in the capital with small children, or elderly women who are living alone. In order to reach these vulnerable groups of women, flexible training courses offered for a few hours during non-working periods have to be offered in Phnom Penh. At the moment, MoEYS is not providing any non-formal vocational training in Phnom Penh. Considering the high in-migration to Phnom Penh and the higher incidence of female-headed households among the poor in the capital as compared to the rural areas, targeting of these most vulnerable female-heads of households must be taken into consideration.

5.2.4. Systematic approach to promote women in non-traditional occupations

'Male' occupations are generally better paid and have a higher status. Women are concentrated in lower paid work, and thus it is important that they are given more opportunity and space to improve their income and career. There is a common understanding among the centers' managers and trainers that it is important to promote women in non-traditional occupations. However, there are three problems: (1) promoting women in non-traditional occupation is not clearly stated in the policy and guidelines of the training centers especially in VTCs; (2) there is no clear strategy how to promote women in non-traditional occupations; and (3) there is still considerable ambivalence in the attitude of trainers. Seventy per cent of the trainers believe that women are suited for certain jobs only.

Therefore, PTC/VTC policies need to clearly state that women's training in non-traditional skills and occupations is a priority. Several strategies can be adopted to realize this goal.

(i) *Recruitment*

When the trainers visit villages to recruit trainees, more encouragement can be given to recruit women in non-traditional skills training. As seen in Chapter 2, girls join the labour force earlier than boys, while boys continue their education. Even though women's labour force participation rate is high and women contribute significantly to the household economy, families do not prepare women for employment as much as they invest in men. There is a need to change the perception of women as secondary earners and challenge the stereotyped images of occupations that are considered to be suitable for one sex only.

In the communities, parents are the major advisors and decision makers for girls to attend skills training. Campaigns should target parents to convince them of the economic return of education to girls and encourage them to send daughters to non-traditional skills training. The MOEYS vocational trianing system can contribute to such campaigns by reinforcing explicit gender equality messages through its existing outreach programme (brochures, meetings and personal communications with trainers and other staff from the training centers).

(ii) *Increase in women trainers in non-traditional skills*

Among the respondents, there was only one woman trainer who was teaching non-traditional skills for women. None of the new trainers teach non-traditional skills for women. It is important that there are more women trainers in non-traditional skills and the government-supported vocational training system can take the lead in employing qualified women trainers in new fields, who will be a role model not only for the women trainees but also in the society.

(iii) *Creating a women-friendly learning environment for non-traditional skills courses for women*

The study found that women trainees feel less comfortable in a male-dominated learning environment, and that incidences of sexual harassment

such as sexual jokes and teasing commonly occur in such an environment. Increasing the number of women trainees in non-traditional skills courses is important. Both male and female trainers would need further training on how to encourage women to pursue a career in non-traditional female occupations and how to provide a woman-friendly learning environment.

(iv) *Expand employment opportunities for women in non-traditional skills*

Because of gender stereotypes in the society, women in non-traditional skills have difficulties in securing both wage employment and self-employment in male-dominated occupations. In order to overcome this, it is important to challenge the stereotyped image of occupations. Three strategies can be suggested here.

(a) *Giving skills training opportunity to women in newly emerging occupations*

For example, in VTC Battambang, graphic design training was given only to women in an attempt to prevent the profession to be defined as a male profession, and keep space for women to enter a lucrative profession and viable employment.

(b) *Forming women-only technician groups*

Women graduates of non-traditional skills can form a group, and PTCs and VTCs can support them by giving work contracts. This will serve as a role model to demonstrate to the society that women are able to work effectively in male occupations. It also gives an on-the-job training opportunity to women graduates so that they can gain confidence in pursuing the occupation. At present, such arrangements exist for men technicians and women weavers, but not for women technicians.

(c) *Launching media campaigns*

The mass media can support attitudinal changes in society by highlighting women's performance in non-traditional occupations.

(d) *Identification of enterprises who hire women in non-traditional skills*

Efforts need to be made to identify socially responsible employers willing to employ women in new occupations. Public sector employers can be encouraged to set a good example in this respect.

5.2.5. Improvement of income, working conditions and status of female-dominated occupations

Compared to encouraging women in non-traditional work, improving female-dominated work has been given less attention and none of the directors or trainers mentioned this issue. Female-dominated work is seen as non-problematic, since women are already participating in large numbers. However, it should be noted that female-dominated occupations are normally less paid and have a lower status. Vocational skills training in these fields is usually short term. The following measures are suggested for improving the vocational training system to contribute to the status of female-dominated work.

(i) *Policy statement and expansion of curriculum.*

An explicit mandate of VTCs and PTCs should be to improve the image and status of female-dominated occupations. In addition, it is recommended to

expand the training curriculum. Besides literacy training, women trainees in female-dominated skills training need training in confidence building, negotiation and safe work practices to enable them to look after their basic workers' and health rights as women workers.

(ii) *Follow-up training.*

Follow-up training will ensure that trainees will constantly be able to upgrade the design and other skills related to the occupation. This not only raises the skill standard of women in the occupation, but also raises the self-esteem of the trainees and will enable them to maintain a network of women in female-dominated work.

(iii) *Forming professional associations.*

The PTCs and VTCs can assist women in forming professional associations or industry-specific groups. Group formation among women trainees can be encouraged during the initial skills training among those preparing for wage employment in the garment industry and those who will be engaged in self-employment, such as weaving, especially if they live in the same area. Professional associations and industry -specific groups can help in: maintaining and upgrading the skill standards of their members; nurturing mutual help among the members; creating more visibility and bargaining power; reducing production and marketing cost by working together, and raising self-esteem of the members.

5.2.6. Increasing wage employment opportunities

Seventy per cent of the trainees, especially the young single trainees prefer to go for wage employment. Formal wage employment is very limited in Cambodia at present, and concerted effort of various Ministries as well as the private sector is needed.

(i) *Networking.*

Even though the PTCs and VTCs have some connections with business establishments, the information flow is not as good as expected. Private enterprises do not want to share information with PTCs fearing that this will negatively affect their competitive advantage and other will occupy their market niche. So, they are not willing to take interns in their enterprise. It is important to establish better communication with businesses so that they will see PTCs as a place where they can access good skilled personnel. Ideas are: to have an exhibition of standards and organize an open center day to invite private enterprises to see the skill level of students. Training Centers have to constantly expand their business connections to enlarge information sources for vacancies.

(ii) *Access to vacancy information.*

Lack of market information is one of the largest problems for women. Especially information on wage employment opportunities is almost inaccessible to women in the villages. The PTCs are in touch with NGOs and private enterprises on a constant basis through their survey, once every two years. However, information especially from private enterprises can become outdated quickly. There should be a faster way of communicating vacancy announcements that would reach the graduates with the relevant skills. A

communication network of graduates, especially for women graduates in the villages, is needed to keep them in touch with market information.

(iii) *Career counseling.*

Career counseling for jobs is currently done at an informal level. Some trainers give advice to trainees, such as advice on attitudes at work or how to behave in a job interview. A more systematic approach to career counseling is important.

(iv) *Policy to support Small and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs).*

SMEs can create wage employment for the graduates. At present, inviting foreign investment is given top priority, and nurturing domestic SMEs is not given much attention. A national policy to support and promote SMEs has to be elaborated. Technology development support, tax and subsidies favourable to SMEs, credit support, provision of market information, and facilitating SMEs in obtaining permissions and registration should be provided.

5.2.7. Increasing self-employment opportunities

Even though many trainees wish to obtain wage employment, more graduates end up in self-employment. For married women graduates, self-employment is a preferred choice, since it gives flexibility in juggling their multiple responsibilities. In order to increase the graduates' chances of starting a business, the following measures are suggested:

(i) *Follow-up and refresher training*

Many graduates especially from PTCs feel that one short term training course is not enough, and they are not confident enough to start their own business. In some PTCs, follow up on-the-job training is continued on the premise, such as for weaving. Such follow-up training is necessary to make the graduates confident to start their own business. They also need refresher training so that they will be able to solve problems that they face in their daily business operations and be able to upgrade their current enterprise.

(ii) *Training/counseling on enterprise development*

In order to maintain a business with viable income, trainees need not only technical skills but also business management, communication and inter-personal skills. At present, in the training centers, trainers give sessions on basic business management to trainees before they graduate. Since trainees will face different management and marketing problems when they actually set up a business, training not only on basic book keeping and business monitoring but further management, marketing and communication training would benefit the graduates.

(iii) *Credit*

PTCs currently provide credit for new graduates since 2000. However, it is only for the new graduates, and it is only given once. For those in the remote villages, it is difficult to access the credit of PTCs, both for borrowing and for repaying. Businesses need constant replenishing of capital, and thus trainee graduates need to have access to credit. If the graduates cannot borrow from relatives and friends, the only option that they have is to borrow from micro-finance institutions (MFIs) or moneylenders. Even though MFIs have much lower interest rates than moneylenders, their interest rate and repayment

schedule is suitable mostly for short-term high return business. It is not suited for agricultural purposes. There is a need to create access to flexible credit sources that allow different types of investments. Access to credit is important for women. As seen in Chapter 2, women have less decision making on assets, and, thus, have less power to mobilize their own financial resources.

(iv) *Legal advice*

Micro-enterprises are vulnerable to harassment from the police and other influential figures, especially in urban areas. It would be useful if training centers can offer basic legal rights training and advice to their trainees to cope with such problems.

5.2.8. Coordination with other ministries

It is important that the training centers and MoEYS have good coordination with other ministries in developing policies and priorities together with ministries, such as Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF), Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, and Ministry of Industry. For example, skills training to use and process agricultural, fisheries and forestry products that are promoted by the MAFF would be effective. By being informed of Department of Fisheries (DOF)'s interest in developing aquaculture and the market information on the export demand on processed fish, training centers can train people in the area where DoF is promoting fisheries and aquaculture. By being informed of the Ministry of Industry's priority areas of industry development, skills training can be offered in order to develop necessary human resources. Such training, if targeted to women, will be able to prepare women better to participate in the labour market.

Currently, PTCs are conducting agricultural training that is also provided by MAFF. Coordination will minimize duplication of efforts in developing syllabus and course materials, as well as area coverage for training.

5.2.9. Collection of statistics on employment category

It has been pointed out in Chapter 2 that the definition of unpaid family labour is quite fluid, and, thus, large fluctuations between surveyed years exist. This stems from the fact that women's work is not well recognized. When husband and wife are farming or having a business together, the woman is easily classified as unpaid family worker while her husband will be registered as an own-account worker. Changing the perception in society to view women not as secondary earners but independent earners in their own right can start from improving data collection.

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