

## “Advancing gender equality through climate action”

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The women’s labour participation rate has been increasing in the recent years from 77.5% in 2014 to 84.1% in 2019<sup>1</sup> in Cambodia. The number of women in decision making positions is also raising, and women represent 41 percent of the total civil servants, and 26 percent of them are serving in decision making roles, while in the public and private sector, about 36 percent of women belong to the management team<sup>2</sup>.

However, there is still a way to go and 1 in 10 commune chiefs elected are women in 2022 and some 173 women were elected as chiefs of 1,652 communes with an increase of 32 women, from the previous 2017 commune election<sup>3</sup>. The unequal distribution of household burden is still holding up women’s economic inclusion. It is predominantly women (86.0 per cent) who perform all the caring and household tasks compared with men. Women’s participation in tasks such as cooking, cleaning, shopping and direct care is consistently higher than men’s<sup>4</sup> and only cooking is taking approximately 1,5 hours a day of the time of women in the rural areas, for instance<sup>5</sup>.

1 National Institute of Statistics, 2020

2 National Assembly (NA) Women Parliamentarians Caucus Khuon Sudary, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022

3 VOD, article: 10% of New Commune Chiefs Are Women, 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2022

4 Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work / International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2018.

5 Scale pilots to accelerate the uptake of efficient electric cooking appliances to mitigate climate impacts through avoided deforestation and reduced emissions project, 2022

Even the country has made incredible progress in providing electricity (86% of rural areas in 2021<sup>6</sup>), what makes the situation more challenging is that 80% of the rural population does not have access to clean cooking, and 77% cook still with wood<sup>7</sup>. Cooking with traditional methods not only causes deforestation, GHG emissions and degradation of natural resources, it also produces smoke that kills nearly 4 million people worldwide each year from pneumonia, stroke, lung cancer, and more<sup>8</sup>.

6 Ministry of Mines and Energy, 2022

7 Accelerating the transition to ‘clean’ cooking in Cambodia, Nexus, 2021

8 WHO, Household air pollution and health, 2021



A woman Cooking with wood in Kampong Thom province

A Cambodia Climate Change Alliance supported project, “Scale pilots to accelerate the uptake of efficient electric cooking appliances to mitigate climate impacts through avoided deforestation and reduced emissions” provided modern cooking services to Cambodian households and tested ATEC’s electric cooking appliances through a sales and distribution chain of iDE’s MECS micro enterprise in 2021 and 2022. The project also studied the cooking experience of its customers to assess the benefits from the switch from biomass/LPG stoves to electric stoves. At the end of the pilot project, 268 out of 1,167 household representatives from 42 villages decided to purchase an electric cookstove and use the payment plan provided to cover the cost of a stove. The main reason to choose these appliances was the time saved as cooking with electric enables multitasking, stoves were

found being safer and they don't emit harmful toxic smoke. Out of the representatives who purchased the stoves, 195 were female (73%), and 2 were identified as ID-poor customers.



Mr. Moung Vandy, Project Lead-from iDE

Mr. Moung Vandy, Project Lead – from iDE told that iDE has planned to scale up the pilot project and the focus of the next phase will be on three components to 1) increase the demand side by using smart subsidy programs, to 2) strengthen the supply side by targeting new segments such as grandmothers and unlocking new financing markets, and to 3) create a strong and supportive enabling environment for the electric cookstoves market by disseminating knowledge and insights gained, conducting behavioral studies and energy meter data, and having a more diverse pool of funding and alternative business models in order to reduce operational costs.

The use of electric cookstoves can rapidly decrease the amount of wood used in the households and this can reduce emissions contributing to global climate change (the forestry and land use sector is the highest emitter of the GHG emissions in Cambodia<sup>9</sup>). A switch to an electric stove can also reduce women's domestic workload and shorten the time spent on household tasks that may not change the division of the tasks between women and men in Cambodian households but it enables women to spend the time saved from cooking and other household tasks to

9 Cambodia's First Biennial Update Report, 2020

participate in labor market, decision making and education activities. In addition, when electricity grids have reached the rural areas of Cambodia, providing sustainable appliances to the households, such as electric stoves can have other benefits such as improved safety and reduced air pollution.

The happy customers are saying that the use of electric cookstoves is easy, and it is safer and healthier than using the traditional stoves, cooking food is also faster.



*"I am busy with my work, and I need to come home to cook food at the lunchtime. After purchasing of an electric cookstove, I noticed that I have saved a lot of time" told Chheun Thet.*



*"This cookstove is safer and when I am using the timer function, I don't need to worry when I steam or boil food. I just press the button, and then I can do other work, when I come back, the food is ready," says Saray Mach.*