INTRODUCTION

In 2016, WaterSHED introduced the Water for the Women Collective, a multi-dimensional women’s economic empowerment program that provided technical support and mentorship to help women succeed in private water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) markets in rural Cambodia.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to help improve targeting and recruitment of better-fit profiles for rural women more likely to take up and succeed in WASH market IGAs for future programs. The main aims of the study were as follows:

1. Identify a set of characteristics of women to help predict current WASH job status, retention & satisfaction in WASH IGAs.
2. Understand the constructs (i.e. attributes of IGAs) by which women evaluate IGAs, form preferences, & decide which IGAs to engage in.

MODEL SELECTION

The study followed a mixed methods, cross-sectional research design.

Quantitative Phase

- Purpose of study: Identify key characteristics of WASH women who are most likely to continue participating in WASH IGAs.
- Data Collection: Questionnaire survey created by WaterSHED and NGO partners.
- Sample Selection: 152 WASH women from Targeted Provinces.
- Data Processing: Statistical analysis using SPSS.

Qualitative Phase

- Purpose of study: Understand women’s personal agency and participation in work-related decision making.
- Data Collection: Open-ended interviews.
- Sample Selection: 15 WASH women from Targeted Provinces.
- Data Processing: Thematic analysis.

CORRELATIONAL ANALYSES

- Correlation coefficients identified significant relationships between WASH women’s job retention and satisfaction with WASH IGAs.
- Factors such as household responsibilities and income generation contributed to WASH women’s satisfaction with their work.

Retention in WaterSHED IGAs

Women who felt they had sufficient latrine sales agent technical knowledge and perceived the majority of their time was spent on income-generating activities were more likely to stay in WASH IGAs.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Personal Attitudes of Women in WASH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latrine sales agent technical knowledge</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>2.175</td>
<td>1.262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with WASH IGAs</td>
<td>0.293</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>1.341</td>
<td>1.058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical Ability & Energy

Interviewees of all groups described a job that requires a lot of physical strength as ‘heavy’ and ‘exhausting.’ Some expressed that they need to consult their husbands before making work or business decisions.

Satisfaction in WASH IGAs

Women were unable to create a predictive model of satisfaction as all women involved in WASH IGAs reported being satisfied with their jobs.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

When asked what IGAs they would most prefer, none of the women in WASH IGAs preferred jobs in the WASH market. Below are constructs that emerged as most important to women in evaluating, forming preferences, and making decisions about which IGAs to engage in.

1. Family Support & Domestic Duties
2. Skills & Knowledge
3. Gender norms
4. Attitude toward IGAs

Involvement in WASH IGAs

Women who knew latrine sales agents they could ask for advice, felt they had latrine sales agent technical knowledge, could imagine being a latrine sales agent, made work-related decisions on their own, and did not feel vulnerable to create work were more likely to be involved in WASH IGAs.

CONCLUSION

The results around women’s personal agency and participation in work-related decision-making were mixed. Women in WASH IGAs were more likely to report making their own work-related decisions regardless of being held responsible for the wrong decision. However, the same group of women also felt that they needed to consult their husbands on work-related matters and provide adequate reasons for their families to be away from home.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study team would like to thank all the stakeholders engaged in this research and all women who gave their time to participate in our research activities and respond to our survey.

REFERENCES


FINDINGS

- Findings suggest that entrepreneurial support goes beyond mere job choice and extends, instead, to include assistance with household chores, jobs, financial, and market needs.
- Women in WASH IGAs had higher satisfaction rates in terms of work-related decisions and perceived that they needed to consult their husbands before making work or business decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The literature around women’s entrepreneurship in developing countries suggests that entrepreneurship is a pragmatic solution for women to provide financial support for their families and reduce household poverty.
- Program designers, particularly in Cambodia, should highlight these advantages of WASH IGAs to appeal to rural women’s priorities.

 tailored targeting strategies and program design to appeal not only to women, but also to their families.

- Longitudinal research is recommended to determine certain resources (e.g. time, technical knowledge, professional networks in WASH) found to be associated with involvement and retention in WASH IGAs as act as precursors for or outcomes of involvement and retention in WASH IGAs.

Frame WASH jobs as a solution for women who need to balance earning income and domestic duties.

- Women who worked in WASH tended, more so than women in non-WASH jobs, to work close to or within their homes, particularly latrine sales business owners/operators.
- In their interviews, women expressed a desire to work and work in order to complete housework, supervise children, and care for elderly family members.

Amount & Stability of Income

Women from all groups expressed the importance of earning income to support their families. Some women reported considering the amount of income they could earn in certain jobs compared to others.

- “They would do it for business or raising children” (1/2 gives more income than other jobs, so we would be better to do that” (WEwork woman, latrine technician)
- “I would do it for business or raising children” (1/2..."

OTHERS were more concerned with the stability of income or frequency of income.

- “I have nothing so working as a construction worker that could get income every 5 days...[...]
- “I have nothing so working as a construction worker that could get income every 5 days...[..."

CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

Women also frequently expressed a desire to reduce poverty or improve health in their community.

- "Working among villages has good health and important to help them to improve their health to reduce poverty or improve health in their community." (WEwork woman, latrine technician)
- "Working among villages has good health and important to help them to improve their health to reduce poverty or improve health in their community." (WEwork woman, latrine technician)