

6	Formulate self-help groups (or saving for change group) and train them on how to mobilize revolving funds and access credit with low interest rate (1%) as well as to train these groups on how to manage their finances with high transparency and accountability. These groups will be able to pay for the use of water from the reservoirs or canals.	CSOs MAFF
7	Study on irrigation systems and construct new irrigation systems that can store water for use in dry season; and rehabilitate main canals and mobilizing and promoting ownership of farmers build their own drainage at their individual farm.	MAFF MoWRAM MRD
8	Develop water canal systems to all remote farmers' fields and to manage, maintain and distribute water adequately, and establish farmer water user committees which will pay for use of water.	MAFF MoWRAM MRD, NGOs
9	Increase number of agricultural trainers in all communes and support agricultural technical and agricultural information extension activities to farmers especially women farmers in the communities.	MAFF
10	Provide proper information and proper methods on climate change adaptation to farmers and support them to develop strategic planning to ensure sufficient food production.	MOWRAM MAFF
11	Prepare crop calendar with communities to avoid duplicated crop production.	MAFF NGOs
12	Develop markets for agricultural products especially vegetables and fruit.	MAFF MOC
13	Develop local markets for organic agricultural products and widely promote those products through organizing special events for promoting and selling agricultural products and processed products in communities.	CSOs
14	Increase number of female training agents and extend wider scope of training on agricultural techniques, vegetable production, packaging, processing and developing small scale agricultural enterprise.	MAFF
15	Reduce burden of grandparent from taking care of their grandchildren and give them opportunities to touch agricultural work and advocating commune councils to establish childcare centers and kindergartens in all villages.	NCDD MoWA MoEYS
16	Develop literacy class and fundamental business planning including financial literacy for women farmers.	MOWA MoEYS
17	Educate village focal women on use of fertilizer and pesticide, reproductive health and hygiene to women so that they can echo disseminate to other women farmers in the villages.	MAFF MOWA

18	Develop policies to support domestic agricultural products and define clear rules on importing agricultural products from neighboring countries as well as providing seeds, capital and ensure stable price of domestic agricultural products.	MAFF
19	Promote agricultural research institutions on seeds purification or provide purification techniques to farmers especially women and to preserve and select quality seeds for planting.	CARDI MAFF
20	Coordinate agreements between farmers especially women and buyers to protect mutual benefits of all parties involved (products must be in good quality and the price based on market rate)	MAFF
21	Increase opportunities for women farmers in participating in events, training, and meetings in order to improve their knowledge, skills and participation in planning and implementation climate change resilient agriculture.	MAFF CSO
22	Provide opportunity for women farmers to participate in discussions and making decisions on agricultural, markets, capital and water issues.	MAFF CSO
23	Develop women empowerment programs and equitable measures to promote gender equality in agriculture.	CSO
24	Enforce gender mainstreaming policy in agriculture to be implemented at sub-national and local levels.	MAFF

**T**oday, we women hereby proclaim that we will no longer allow ourselves to bear with such inequality and suffering; we would like to see all women farmers to enjoy their privilege and to be proud of themselves as a women farmer. To all stakeholders who are here today, the Provincial Governor, MAFF, CSOs and Private Sectors, we would like to request your kindness to stand together with us and support us to address our challenges by ensuring the comprehensive policy that strongly support women farmers are in place and implemented to response to our needs and desire which presented during today forum.

**For more information:**  
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**កសិករស្ត្រីឆ្នើម**  
**WOMEN FARMER CHAMPIONS**

**JOIN STATEMENT  
OF WOMEN FARMERS  
FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE**

Dear all **“WOMEN”**, in the name of a **“WIFE”**, a **“MOTHER”** and a **“FARMER”** we are working so hard to produce food to feed our family and everyone in the country; those included many of you who are here today. We all should raise up our head and smile to enjoy our privilege as “Women Farmers”, In this moment, we proof to those who are here with us today to see that As “Women” and as “Farmers” we could do many more amazing works beyond farming. We will continue to demonstrate our capacity, our strength and our commitment to our country, region and Global.

**“LET THE TRUE STEPS TOWARDS OUR GOAL AND EXPECTATION TOGETHER TO BE VISIBLE SO THAT THE POVERTY OF THIS COUNTRY CAN BE ELIMINATED.”**

We insist, and will continue to insist, upon the solutions/interventions.

## BACKGROUND

While women make up 75% of the rural workforce reliant on farming for their livelihoods their representation in decision making around research and development agendas is slight. Representation in public service and research institutions and even national public forums is very low. The National Farmers Forum which attracts upwards of 500 delegates each year included less than 100 women in 2014. None as speakers.

While the National Farmers Forum has become a regular feature of the dialogue between farmers, government and agricultural interests, it has been limited in its achievements with participants being able to surface problems but rarely being able to engage in decision making or follow-on actions/solutions. Unfortunately a very small proportion of women farmers attend and those that do rarely have the opportunity to speak. In 2015, Gender and Children Project Support Unit of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Oxfam and partners decided to try a new approach to encourage women's participation. In each of the selected agricultural landscapes 200 women farmers assembled to discuss the challenges and opportunities that they saw as priorities. They then selected delegates from amongst themselves to take the discussion forward. In January 2016 these delegates will meet to refine their views and participate in a series of discussion sessions with donors, authorities and organizations interested in hearing what they have to say.

## THE VISION

While this is the inaugural attempt, it is envisaged that this could become a crucial vehicle for women farmers contending with problems of representation in the increasingly challenging environment of Labor shortages and migration; new markets and technology innovation, climate change adaptation and resource scarcity. The potential for e-voting amongst the women in the future means that their discussion and message can be relayed real-time.

## PROGRESS

The first forums have convened in Kratie on Oct. 29-30, the following with 2nd forum in Battambang on Nov. 10-11 and Nov. 11-12 in Siem Reap, Nov. 18-19 was in Kompot and the last forum was conducted in Prey Veng on Dec. 3-4, 2015. Five Women Farmer Forums have brought together around 551 women farmers the results have been outstanding, but more importantly participation has been astounding. Each of the forums has settled on their agendas and their delegates are looking forward to convening in Phnom Penh early in the New Year. The following communique summarizes some of what these women see as priority.



50 year-old Chet Chhay from Koh Kong province received an acknowledge letter from Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to acknowledge her and other 100 women as farmer champions at national level. Photo: Naratevy Kek/Oxfam



The meeting at national level following five sub-national farmer forums in Kratie, Battambang, Siem Reap and Kompot province providing insight to the priorities of women farmers across Cambodia. Photo by: Muyleang Kim

We, as women farmers, recognized that Agriculture is one of the most important sectors in Cambodia. It is playing a critical role in food security at the household level and is a major contributor to economic growth. Furthermore, through this forum we have heard several times from different stakeholders in Cambodia that 75% of women are employed in the agricultural sector. However, we as women have an important role toward the development of the sector; therefore, if the government puts more effort and investment then it will have the potential impact to the lives of women significantly.

In this regards, we would like to congratulate the Royal Government of Cambodia, which so far has recognized the role of women farmers as a dynamic primary change agent toward the agriculture sector growth and offer our gratitude to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery who has developed and adopted a Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture Policy and Action Plan 2016-2020. On behalf of women farmers from the five regions (Mekong Sub-Region, Northern and Southern Tunlesap Region, Lowland and Coastal Region), we will commit to continue supporting this initiative toward the benefit of the rest of women farmer in the whole country through collective networking. However, there are several issues and challenges that small holder farmers still facing as "WOMEN".

NO.	REQUEST	INSTITUTION
1	Develop policies that could minimize loan interest rate (between 1% to 1.2%) for women farmers to invest in agricultural production.	MEF
2	All loans should clearly identify the types of business and all loan processing should be widely publicized and in writing in order to reduce further costs.	CSOs MFIs
3	Formulate technical groups to help women farmers on business plans, agricultural plans, implementation and product processing. It is required technical experts to train women farmers on record keeping and on income-expense analysis.	CSOs MFIs
4	Build women farmers network to protect and promote mutual interests such as building supply chains or allocating production so as to avoid production duplications resulting in low price and to develop special program providing employments for poor women farmers.	CSOs
5	Develop policies to promote entrepreneur and provide financial support for them to purchase farmers' products in local communities for sales in the market.	MAFF