

Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership

Tracking Network Analysis in SWS: Cambodia

April 2021

Challenge

The Royal Government of Cambodia envisions that by 2025, rural communities will have access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. However, the government faces significant challenges to achieving this, including a crowded field of uncoordinated stakeholders who have not fully engaged with the public and private sectors to carry out this vision at the local or national levels.

Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership (SWS) partners LINC and WaterSHED, a Cambodian NGO, conducted an Organizational Network Analysis (ONA)¹ of the Rural Sanitation and Hygiene (RuSH) Network in 2017 to examine relationships and barriers among network members and inform an approach to coordinating these actors. The study was designed to help generate common understanding, discussion, and coordinated action among private and public sector actors to accelerate progress toward the sector vision. The ONA was meant to support a Collective Impact coordination effort that WaterSHED was leading under SWS.

Approach

WaterSHED and LINC designed the ONA to identify the most influential and most disconnected actors in the RuSH sector nationwide, and to understand the level of coordination among all stakeholders. This design sought to help inform and improve the activity goals of supporting collective action. A June 2017 workshop was held to introduce some RuSH network members to ONA mapping, who then produced a list of more than 100 other potential stakeholder organizations.

Between June and September 2017, representatives from 99 WASH-related entities were interviewed, including government, development partners, the private sector, academics, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Of those, 88 were identified as belonging to the RuSH sector, and had at least one relationship with other network members. They were interviewed using:

1. Close-ended questions about the respondent organization's attributes,

¹ ONA is a powerful tool to study complex networks and focuses on aspects of relationships among studied organizational actors. It has the capacity to highlight strengths and weaknesses in communication, resource flows, power structures, and overall network functionality.

2. Questions about the relationships that the respondent organization had with other actors on the pre-defined list during the previous six-month period, and
3. Open-ended questions about the key success factors and barriers to achieving the sector vision.

LINC analyzed the data to examine actor relationships and identify patterns of interaction in the network, well-connected and influential actors and groups, and network gaps and opportunities. The data and findings were presented back to RuSH members in an interactive, bilingual (English and Khmer) workshop in December 2017 where stakeholders had the opportunity to interpret the results, ask questions, and provide feedback that was later incorporated into the final report.

Results

The December 2017 workshop and [baseline report](#) were primarily designed to provide the Cambodia RuSH Network with insights from information gathered around the current state and structure of the WASH systems within which each organization operates. In particular, the report shed light on the need for network strengthening to drive structured collaboration in the sector.

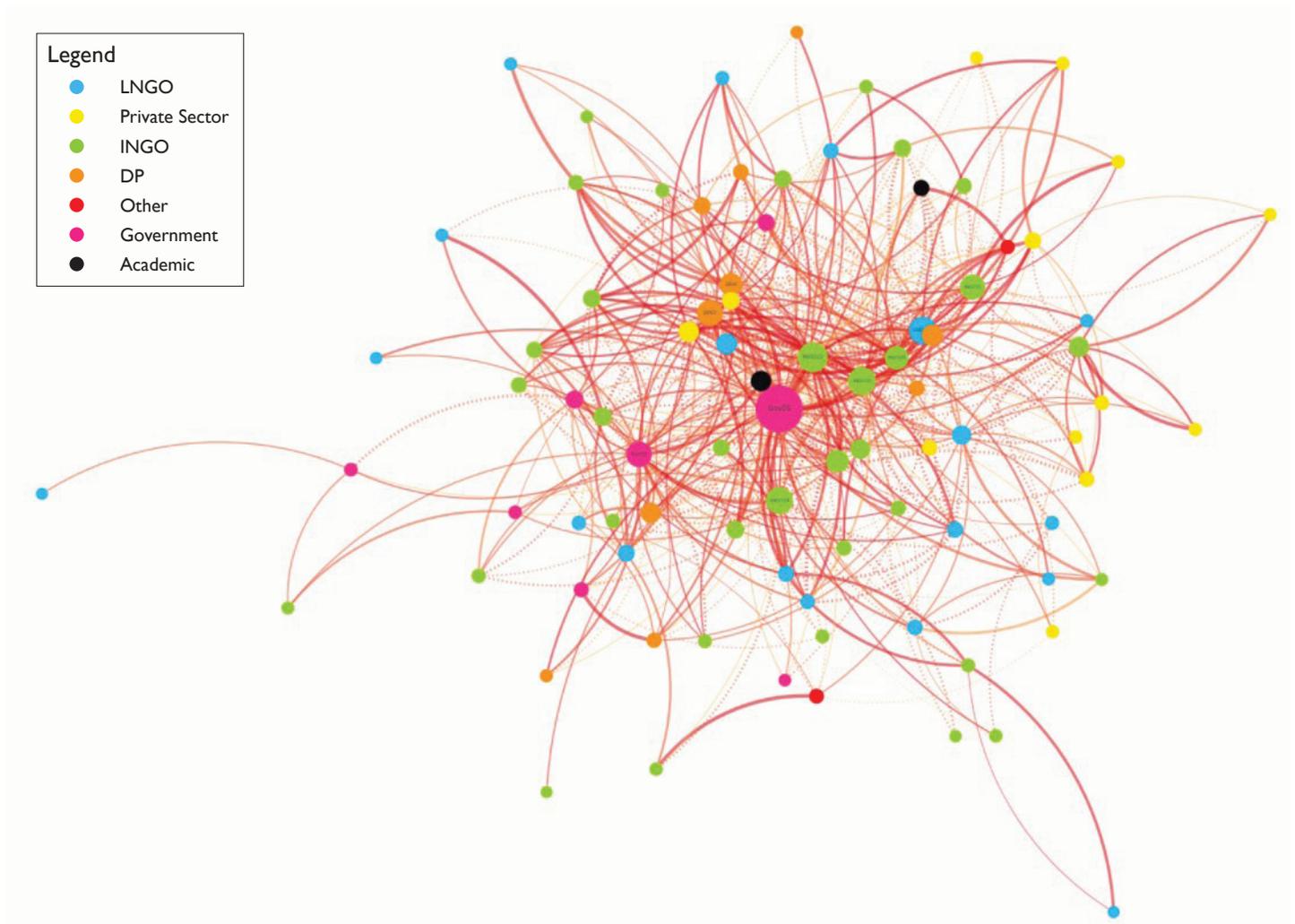


Figure 1. Overall Network Map

The overall network of 88 RuSH sector stakeholders is fairly large and diverse, with good average connectivity among members, but some actors are clearly better-connected than others (see Figure 1). Organizations were broken into seven different categories: international NGOs, local NGOs, private sector, development partners, government, academic institutions, and others. Social capital of these organizations was analyzed against a host of attributes, including organization type, sector of participation, language of interview, etc.

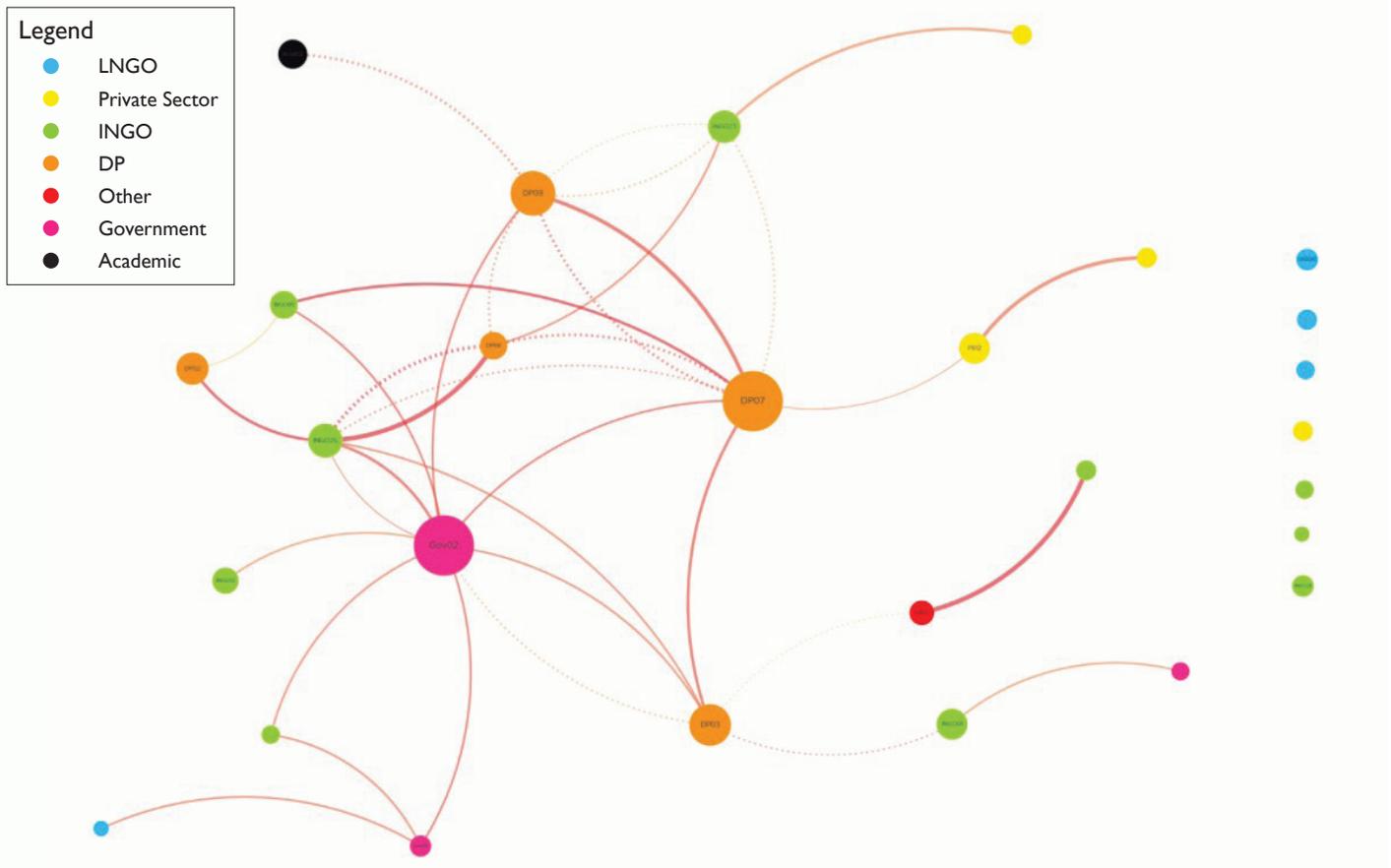


Figure 2. Sub-Network of Female-Run Organizations

Network interconnectivity disparities exist based on sex and language. The study found female-run organizations were significantly less connected and central to the network than organizations run by men (see Figure 2). On average, female-run organizations reported 60 percent fewer connections than male-led organizations. The study also found female-run organizations were much less likely to be an informational bridge between two or more actors within the RuSH Network. Additionally, organizations who interviewed in English represented a small fraction of the overall network but were four times as well-connected than those interviewed in Khmer.

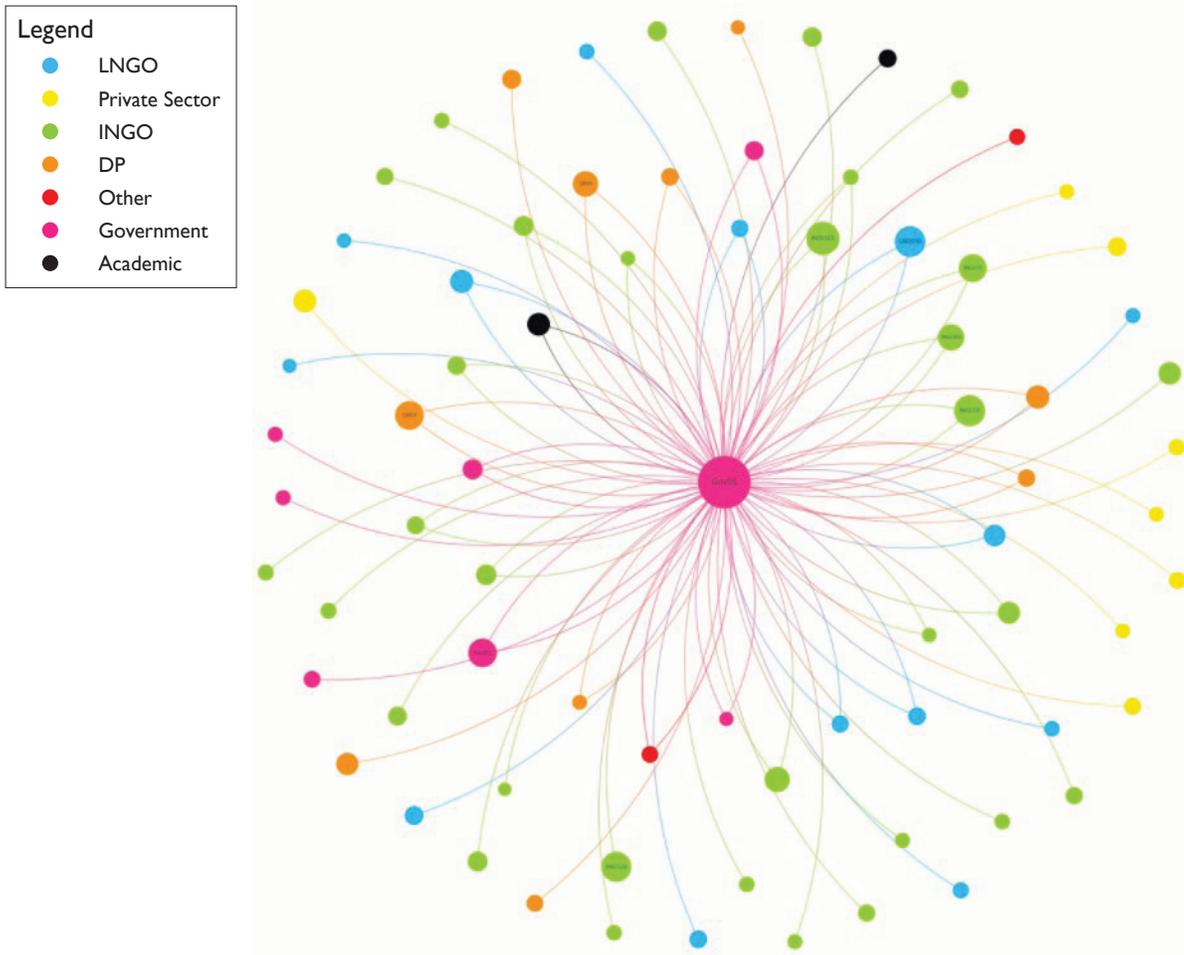


Figure 3. Ego Network Map of Ministry of Rural Development

The ONA revealed that the Ministry of Rural Development was the most centrally positioned actor in the network and the most frequent bridge between other actors (see Figure 3), and is therefore well-positioned to lead increased coordination and collaboration efforts. The Ministry of Rural Development had twice as many connections as the next-most-connected actor.

The study analyzed and compared several existing thematic subgroups within the RuSH Network and discovered that they represented strong models for coordination and created a potential mechanism to increase structured coordination and collaboration within the network writ large. The study also pointed to several gaps and opportunities for improving network cohesion and dynamics.

About the Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership: The Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership is a global United States Agency for International Development (USAID) cooperative agreement to identify locally-driven solutions to the challenge of developing robust local systems capable of sustaining water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) service delivery. This report is made possible by the generous support of the American people through USAID under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement AID-OAA-A-16-00075. The contents are the responsibility of the Sustainable WASH Systems Learning Partnership and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government. For more information, visit www.globalwaters.org/SWS, or contact Elizabeth Jordan (Ejordan@usaid.gov).