

**Entry No. IRRC-0362**

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
Select Theme	: Sustainable and equitable farming systems
Endorsement email	:
Keyword 1	: Livelihood and social equity
Keyword 2	: Water management
Keyword 3	: Sustainable management practices
Title of Entry	: Collective Action and Rice Farming: An Analysis of Irrigation Management in the Cambodian Floodplains
Presenting author	: Phoeurk Raksmeay
Presenting author email	: phoeurkraksmeay@gmail.com
Co author 1	: Jean-Philippe Venot
Co author 2	:
Affiliation presenting author	: Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Cambodia
Affiliation 1	: IRD and Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), Cambodia
Affiliation 2	:
Select only one type of presentation	: 15 minute oral presentation
Abstract	: The upper Mekong delta in Cambodia is an intensive rice farming region that has witnessed significant changes over the last 20 years with a shift from deep water and floating rice to short term hybrid varieties. This has been made possible thanks to (1) the progressive excavation of large earthen drainage canals that allow for flood management in the rainy season and improved water storage capacity in the dry season and (2) the multiplication of small size petrol pumps to secure water supplies. The sustainability of this system is under threat due to climate change, rapid mechanization and increasing labour costs, and the low prices for the

paddy production that is directly exported to Vietnam. This paper describes current farming structures and irrigation management practices. We notably investigate the collective institutional arrangements between smallholders, small private water sellers, and water user associations (FWUC, set up by the government of Cambodia) that underpin the long-term sustainability of rice farming in the area. Methods used include a review of the existing literature, analysis of quantitative agricultural statistics, and more than 50 semi-conducted interviews with farmers, private water sellers, FWUC and government officials. Our results show a long term trends towards land concentration, often to the benefits of private water sellers, and, at the same time and somehow surprisingly, the rather low profitability of the water selling business. We identify that improved water management –notably in the form of better maintenance of the canal network and the distributed pumping systems offers some opportunity to make irrigation in the area more sustainable, especially for the vast majority made of smaller farmers who are close to fall into a poverty trap.

[Read Less»](#)

## Uploaded Files »

---

**No files found.**