

SPEECH

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ភាពជាអ្នកដឹកនាំនៃស្ត្រី
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP
JOURNEY OF BECOMING

ADB

BE YOUR OWN HERO

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Hello, my name is Koung Sorita. I am the Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Women's Affairs. I am in charge of economic affairs as well as women entrepreneurship.

Our topic today is about women in leadership and whether women are leaders or simply housekeepers who belong in the kitchen. Is this a social norm that still exists today? In

the past, women did not have the opportunity to participate in society or receive the same education as men. But that was the past.

Now the country is developing, and society is prospering. Women are more involved in politics, the economy, and the private sector. Women play an important role in the family economy and the country as a whole as well. We see that 62 percent of those in the private sector are women. Women can partake in any sector they like. In the public sector, women account for 41 percent of participants and are present at both the national and sub-national level. In fact, 21 percent of women hold positions of Deputy Head of Office all the way up to Director-General.

Data from 2018 shows that women now have the opportunity to participate the same as men. Is it true that society does not encourage women's participation? I can say that the Ministry of Women's Affairs' Neary Rattanak Policy has played an important role in encouraging women and girls to have the opportunity to have the same educational opportunity as men. This is gender equality in action.

In today's digitalized world, we can see that women's participation at the national, sub-national and international level has increased considerably compared to the past. The question is what are you [women] waiting for? You have the power to grow into strong leaders. I am a daughter, a wife, and a mother, but I have sought to develop myself radically because I believe that I am the only one who can help myself. Be your own hero.

There are many things you can do to make yourselves proud. Sometimes, we can find role models to help push us to the next level. But we cannot forget who we are. We should not compare ourselves to others. Don't hinder yourself by thinking you can't do something. What I have achieved up until now is not a coincidence. I have had a lot of struggles, but I always had clear goals. I've asked myself, what is the purpose of life, what is my desired career?

It all starts with ourselves, so if you are not educated, how can you grab the opportunities? Do not forget that failure is a part of success. Yet, one's destiny is determined by oneself. No one can determine it for you. When you have your goals set, you need to use your wisdom to develop yourselves and also need to work hard and smart. From a college student to a businesswoman, and eventually to a government official, I have overcome many struggles. Being a woman is not a barrier.

I can prove myself to everyone around me, and I now also want to encourage you as well. You will have the opportunity to do many things, so you need to develop yourselves and improve your weaknesses. It is wrong to say that society does not give you the opportunities. It all starts with yourselves – Be Your Own Hero.