



Food and Agriculture  
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# GENDER NEWS Asia Pacific

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## FAO's role in supporting the implementation of SDG5 indicators

In September 2015, the United Nations' member states adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With a total of 169 targets and 232 unique indicators, reporting and monitoring on the SDGs represent a tremendous challenge for countries as well as the UN community.

### Data availability gap for the SDGs

Data play a key role in monitoring progress towards achieving the SDGs, informing policy and ensuring accountability of all stakeholders.

Despite the fact that the majority of countries in the region have formally established SDG coordination agencies and already incorporated actions to achieve the SDGs into their National Development Plans, gaps in data availability, in particular disaggregated data, remains a critical

challenge for the implementation of the Agenda.



FAO Regional Advocacy Event for Monitoring the SDGs related to Food and Agriculture.

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"On average, the countries in the Asia-Pacific region have only been able to account for 25 to 50 percent of the data required to meet the internationally agreed monitoring framework," said Mukesh Srivastava, FAO RAP Senior Statistician, during the FAO Regional Advocacy Event for Monitoring the SDGs related to Food and Agriculture held in Bangkok, 4-6 September 2017.

### FAO's role in supporting the implementation of SDG5 indicators

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## SDG5 and women's access to land

FAO is the custodian agency for two indicators (5.a.1 and 5.a.2) under SDG5 Target 5.a on women's equal rights to economic resources (see box). Both indicators focus on access to land as pathway towards women's economic empowerment. "Land is a key economic resource inextricably linked to access to, use of and control over economic and productive resources," said Pietro Gennari, FAO Chief Statistician, during the recent FAO Regional SDG Advocacy Event.



*Kundhavi Kadiresan, Assistant-Director General and Regional Representative at FAO RAP, and Pietro Gennari, FAO Chief Statistician, during the opening session of the regional SDG event..*

SDG indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2 were initially classified as Tier III indicators. Tier III indicators do not have established standards and/or an estimation methodology as compared to Tier I and II indicators (clear and established methodology). In March 2017, indicator 5.a.1 was upgraded to the Tier II group at the 5<sup>th</sup> Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) meeting.

As custodian agency for indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2, FAO is responsible for leading the development of the methodology for collecting data as well as preparing guidelines for reporting and providing technical assistance to countries to further develop their capacity.

In addition, FAO is in charge of computing results from countries and undertaking quality check before compiling the global data.

The first step in the development of the methodology involved the selection and development of specific proxies to measure both indicators. Respectively three and six proxy conditions have been developed to report and monitor on these indicators (see box for more information).

### Piloting of SDG indicators 5.a.1 and 5.a.2 methodology and guidelines

The methodology and guidelines for both indicators have been piloted in a number of countries in all regions to test the relevance and applicability of the overall methodology and proxies within various contexts. In the case of SDG indicator 5.a.2, the methodology and guidelines have been piloted in ten countries worldwide, including Nepal and Indonesia in the Asia.

The piloting of SDG indicator 5.a.2 was also meant to help refine the methodology and guidelines in view of the submission to the IAEG-SDGs in October 2017 for approval and upgrade to Tier II status.

For more information on FAO and the SDGs, a YouTube video is available [here](#).

Reference: FAO. 2017. FAO and the SDGs Indicators: Measuring up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available [here](#).

#### TARGET 5 AND INDICATORS 5.A.1 AND 5.A.2

**Target 5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws**

Indicator 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) Share of women among owners or rights bearers of agricultural land, type of tenure.

Indicator 5.a.1 is a statistical indicator divided in two sub-indicators (a and b). The monitoring and reporting of this indicator relies on three proxy conditions:

- 1) Presence of documented land tenure rights;
- 2) Rights to sell or permanently give away and;
- 3) Right to bequeath

Indicator 5.a.2: Percentage of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control.

Indicator 5.a.2 is a legal indicator. Six proxies have been developed for this indicator based on literature review, and review of policies and laws in more than 80 countries:

- 1) Joint registration of land;
- 2) Requirement of spousal consent for land transactions;
- 3) Equal inheritance rights;
- 4) Governmental commitment through allocation of financial resources;
- 5) Customary land tenure and women's land rights and;
- 6) Participation of women in land management or administration institutions

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## Supporting rural livelihood security among Thai women through the development of Geographical Indications (GI) in remote areas

"Geographical certification (GI) certification helps enhance livelihood security not only among mothers and aunts, but also younger generation like me to earn for a living, appreciate the local wisdom and preserving the traditional sericulture for generations to come," says Jira Rospoon, head of Ban Sa GI-certified silk-weaving group.

Ban Sa, from Surin's province in Northeastern Thailand, is the first village with its hand-extracted silk yarn to comply with the strict specifications of the "Isan Indigenous Thai Silk Yarn" GI thanks to the FAO Regional Project for the Promotion of Rural Development through the Development of Geographical Indications. "Isan Indigenous Thai Silk Yarn" is an authentic traditional Northeastern Thai silk product registered at the Queen Sirikit Department of Sericulture (QSDS), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Thailand.

The FAO project, funded by the French Development Agency, promotes the GI system which offers protection through the registration of national and trans-national Intellectual Property Rights to products that have specific qualities associated with their areas of origin. GI also promotes the special qualities of local products and the local wisdom required for their production. Smallholder farmers and local producers are protected from foreign copycats and can improve their livelihoods through their engagement. In addition, the GI system pays close attention to products that support biodiversity and the key role of rural women in production.

Ms. Jira used to work at a food-processing factory in Samutprakarn province for 13 years. In spite of working hard, she never earned enough to get by each month. Eventually, she decided to return to her home village in 2010. Having no savings nor job opportunities, she had no choice but started learning about the Isan Indigenous Thai Silk Yarn from her mother for her living and feed her family.



*GI-certified Isan Indigenous Thai Silk Yarn is of high quality and made by Ban Sa female group in Surin province.*

©Apiradee Treerutkuarkul

At the beginning, she could get around 2 000–3 000 baht per month simply by selling silk cocoons. Later she started to learn more about other complicated steps from her mother and other older female residents in the community, from boiling cocoons to reeling, and most importantly tie-dyeing, warping and weaving techniques.

Her patience and efforts paid off in 2012 when she won the first place of a silk-reeling competition and became a trainer on traditional Surin silk. By then Ms. Jira could earn

around 4 000–5 000 baht per month from training other female villagers in nearby Northeastern provinces on Surin silk techniques. Although the amount may not seem high, it constitutes a sufficient income for herself and her family.

Unlike when she was working away from her home, Ms. Jira can manage to have some saving for her children's education, religious donations and other charitable activities in her Khmer-Thai community.

Her experience working in a factory has been useful for helping older local women to earn from systematically producing GI-certified silk yarn products when the QSDS introduced the project in her community in 2016. Ms. Jira is responsible for taking care of the whole silk yarn production process from growing organic mulberry to hand-reeling, spinning, re-reeling and finishing fine yellow silk threads to ensure that they meet GI standard. A coding system has also been added for quality control and traceability, helping the group to trace back to individual silk yarn from each lot.

So far around 40 female villagers aged from 40 to 60 years old have joined in the Ban Sa silk weaving group. Each woman can produce about 3–4 kilograms of GI-certified silk yarn per month depending on their time availability. Buyers from nearby districts are in charge of taking all GI-certified silk yarn for producing the famous Surin Silk textile which price can range from thousands to over millions of bath depending on difficulties of tie-dyeing and weaving patterns and

techniques. All processes start with the high-quality fine silk threads.

By-products from silk yarn such as cocoons and silkworm pupa can also be changed into income. Silkworm pupa is edible and can be sold at 150 bath per kilogram. The female group also learns how to isolate sericin protein, known for its medical and anti-aging effects, from cocoon for use as a component of cosmetic products and daily essentials such as soap and lotion for sale as One Tambon One Product.



©Apiradee Treerutkuarkul

*Ban San female group in Surin is the first group that receives GI certification for Isan Indigenous Thai Silk Yarn from Department of Intellectual Property and supported by Queen Sirikit Department of Sericulture and FAO and French Development Agency.*

“We can still earn income these days without having to ask for money from our children because of silk-making knowledge passed on from my grandmother and mother to me,” said Tanyawan Ngerdkratoke.

Traditionally, sericulture has been a secondary occupation among rural households in Thailand, as their major focus is rice cultivation. Ban Sa village is no different. The average 10 000–15 000 baht monthly income from producing GI-certified silk yarn is not the main source of income of female villagers. Local residents can earn income from agricultural products particularly organic Hom Mali rice farming, vegetables and rubber. Nevertheless income from silk yarn is sufficient for Ms. Jira to live

happily in her hometown, and most importantly debt-free.

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#### FROM THE REGION

### Sub-Regional Gender Integrated Planning workshop in Samoa

A three-day workshop for the FAO sub-Regional Office for the Pacific (SAP) staff was held in Apia, 26-28 July 2017. The overall objective of this training was to provide participants with hands on experience and know-how on gender analysis methods, tools and steps in integrating gender issues into project design and planning.

A total of 31 participants from SAP, including Technical Officers, International Consultants, and Assistant FAO Representative from four Pacific Islands, attended the workshop. The training was facilitated by Clara Park, FAO Regional Gender Social and Rural Development Officer, and Barun Gurung, lead trainer and core

associate of the Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN).

Participants learned about gender analysis concepts, methods and tools, and ways to integrate them into the various stages of the project design.

Participants showed interest in the learning process and expressed relevance for their existing work. Challenges to integrating gender issues in projects were also outlined resulting from existing structural barriers including limited budget and projects' short life cycle.

A number of recommendations were formulated to further develop capacity and skills at the project level, including developing a comprehensive strategy for capacity building and a sector-specific training manual for the sub-region.

Participants and trainers expressed their appreciation for this first learning collaboration, and wished for continuing such strong engagement in the future.

An immediate follow up to the training was the commitment to conduct a multi-country gender assessment in the Pacific that will serve as a baseline for gender-responsive programming.



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## Women's action for inspiration in response to climate change disasters

For the last two years, Viet Nam has seriously been affected by El Nino phenomenon, a large-scale ocean atmosphere climate interaction significantly influencing weather patterns. As a consequence of El Nino, the regions of the Central Highlands, Central South and Mekong Delta of Viet Nam have experienced the most severe drought in the past 90 years, with 18 provinces declaring state of emergency.

In turn, one million people found themselves in need for food assistance and a further 1.75 million people lost their source of income and livelihood. The total economic loss resulting from this extreme weather is worth US\$674 million according to the Government of Viet Nam.



*Campaign villagers discussion during forum.*

With projections of disasters related to climate change such as extreme drought and flooding becoming the "new normal", FAO teamed up with Viet Nam Women's Union (WU) to share early warning action messages, with financial support from the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). The main goal of this joint effort is to build farmers' resilience in the face of drought and/or flooding through focusing on safeguarding agriculture. By putting women in the center of prevention and response

activities, FAO aims to enhance women's capacity to manage risks thereby reducing their greater vulnerability to disasters and climate change due to limited access to physical, financial, human, social and natural capital.

As part of the FAO-WU collaboration, two three-day training of trainers were rolled out in the Central Highlands and Mekong Region to strengthen the capacity of 61 WU staff members at the provincial and commune level on disaster preparedness, response and early warning. Trainings provided insights on how to develop communication messages, choose communication methods and develop communication plans. Trainings also provided specific knowledge on how to develop crop-protection messages in the face of drought, flooding or other natural disasters.

"With Viet Nam's long and unique geological shape, climates drastically vary among the northern, central and southern parts of Viet Nam, thus disasters affecting farmers are also very different. Therefore, by enabling participants to develop their own communication plan for their commune or district, we were able to localize the communication messages and plan according to the different climates and needs. Additionally, by giving participants more ownership to create the communication plan, we hope that the behavior change messages will be continuously shared with the community, even after the project." said Ki Jung Min, the Outreach Coordinator of FAO Viet Nam.



*Training of trainers.*

After the training of trainers, 18 awareness raising and sensitization sessions were organized in 18 communes in the Central Highlands and Mekong Region, reaching out 156 022 people in communities vulnerable from disasters. Trained WU staff members implemented different awareness raising sessions including theatrical plays, folklores and poems to effectively convey the messages.

"Building the capacity of WU for disaster risk reduction and the dissemination of behavioral change messages has had a compounding effect. Trained staff is now training other members of the Union in other provinces regularly affected by disasters to use the approach developed with FAO to share life-saving messages with vulnerable communities," said Roberta Tranquili, the Emergency Operations Coordinator of FAO Viet Nam.

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# Closing the gender gap in the agriculture sector in the Philippines

The Philippines has made significant progress in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment until becoming the most advanced country in Asia in bridging the gender gap, ranking 7<sup>th</sup> in the 2016 Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum. At the same time, there is still room for gender equality improvement in the Economic Participation and Opportunity, and Political Empowerment sub-indices of the Global Gender Gap Index.

Similarly, important improvements in the agriculture sector are also needed. According to the 2015 Gender-Based Indicators of Labor and Employment in Agriculture of the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA), less than a third of the 11.3 million Filipinos employed in agriculture are women. The same report reveals that the nominal wage rate of men in agriculture nationwide is about 10 percent higher at approximately US\$5.4 per day than that of women (US\$5).

Consequently, the creation of more and better opportunities for women to participate in the agricultural value chain is considered as an investment that ultimately leads to accelerated rural development, and enhanced food and nutrition security, among others.

## The FAO Philippines experience

Mainstreaming gender in its programmes and projects has always been a crucial aspect of FAO's work in the Philippines. From its support to women in agrarian reform

communities in the 1990s, to its more recent efforts to improve women's access to skills and resources, especially in post-disaster environments, FAO's focus on promoting gender equality continues to support the strong impacts and sustainability of its efforts and interventions.

"Working with women's cooperatives and producer groups has also proven to be effective in ensuring that the support delivered by FAO are based on a consultative and participatory process, thereby promoting greater ownership by communities," explained José Luis Fernández, FAO Representative in the Philippines.



*Neria Pical and her daughter Ana Mari Vhon Juan are both beneficiaries of FAO's fisheries post-harvest under the Typhoon Haiyan Emergency, Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme. Women play an important role in the agriculture and fisheries value chain in the Philippines as they engage in post-harvest processing, vending and marketing.*

For example, partnering with women's groups during the Typhoon Haiyan Emergency, Recovery and Rehabilitation programme from 2014 to 2015 resulted in longer-term economic empowerment.

Marife Jalbay, a coconut farmer from Eastern Samar and president of the Majority Women Farmers Association explained that the value-addition training conducted by FAO

encouraged the members of her association to expand their farm business by producing cassava chips. They are now earning at least 20 times more than when they used to sell raw cassava prior to FAO's interventions.

In Palawan, women have been instrumental in solidifying the commitment of 11 coastal communities to formulate and adopt more responsive coastal resource management strategies. With start-up assistance from FAO, six women's associations gathering a total of about 2 000 members decided to pursue alternative livelihoods that would allow them to contribute to their household income while performing their role as primary caregivers of their families. With this additional source of income, fisher families were able to abide by closed-fishing seasons and participate in the implementation of their Fisheries Improvement Plans.

FAO projects have also helped women who have been rendered vulnerable by humanitarian crises. For instance, the FAO response to the Zamboanga City siege in 2014 provided livelihood assistance to coastal women who were at risk of undertaking compromising forms of work because of limited job options. As a result of the project, members of at least 15 women's associations and seaweed farming groups gained skills to start small processed seafood businesses.

Rural women have also been instrumental to addressing impending food and nutrition security crises. In some villages in

Camarines Sur Province, where protein deficiency was detected through FAO's Early Warning system for Food and Nutrition Security, a backyard duck-raising project was implemented in 2014.

"Our family now has ready access to food and we are able to earn additional income through the ducks and eggs that we consume, sell and trade with other food items," said Rosita Nidea, a mother of 12 children.



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Corawon Desulat, a farmer from Eastern Samar Province, learns improved agricultural production and climate-smart techniques through an FAO-implemented training.

In Cotabato Province, FAO conducted a series of gender-sensitive disaster risk reduction, management and climate change adaptation workshops. Such workshops targeted farming and fishing family members affected by a succession of severe natural disasters and armed conflict in areas projected to be at a high risk of experiencing climate change impacts.

Between the implementation of the Typhoon Haiyan programme in 2014 and recent activities in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao in 2017, it is estimated that more than 27 000 women across the archipelago have received various forms of support from FAO.

## Way forward

With the issuance of the FAO corporate Policy on Gender Equality

in 2012 and the Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2017–2019 for Asia and the Pacific, the commitment of FAO Philippines to advance its work in gender mainstreaming has been even stronger.

Gender analysis is now part of the project formulation stage in order to identify the roles and responsibilities of men and women benefiting directly or indirectly from FAO activities. The gender marker, a tool used by several UN agencies, is also used by FAO to track each project's potential to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

FAO Philippines is also in the process of conducting a Country Gender Assessment during the last quarter of 2017. This effort will play a pivotal role in increasing contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 5 on Gender Equality, as well as FAO Philippines planning and programming.

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### FROM THE REGION

As part of the regional proposal for *Promoting gender equality through knowledge generation and awareness raising*, RAP will support the conduct of Country Gender Assessments (CGA) in agriculture and the rural sector in Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Lao PDR and Viet Nam.

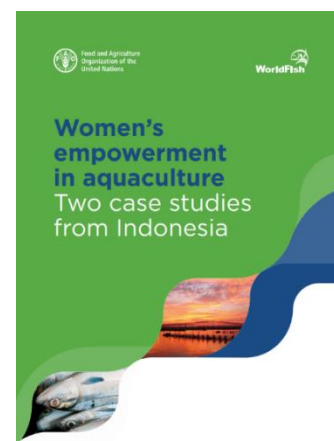
Such CGA will contribute to accelerating the effective implementation of the Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific 2017–2019 and inform FAO country level planning and programming. This proposal will also fill in existing countries' information gaps and generate knowledge to support the review or formulation of gender-responsive sectoral policies and strategies.



In a similar way, FAO sub-Regional Office for the Pacific is in the process of carrying out CGAs in five Pacific Island Countries (Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). At the sub-regional level, the CGAs will be conducted in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) with technical assistance and backstopping from FAO RAP and FAO SAP.

### NEW PUBLICATION

Release of online-version of two case study publications on women's empowerment in aquaculture



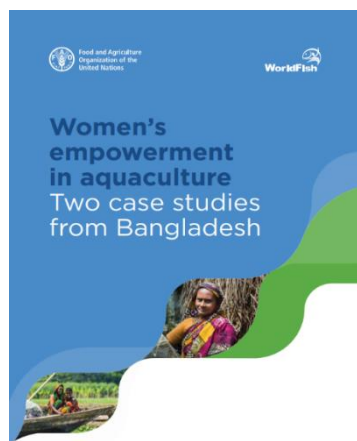
Two sister publications entitled *Women's empowerment in aquaculture: Two case studies from Bangladesh* (available [here](#)) and

*Women's empowerment in aquaculture: Two case studies from Indonesia* (available [here](#)) have recently been released online.

Both publications are the result of a joint collaborative effort between FAO and WorldFish in the region as part of the initiative on *Women's empowerment in aquaculture production systems in Asia: Comparative case studies and synthesis from Bangladesh and Indonesia*.

While women play a significant role in aquaculture production in Bangladesh and Indonesia, two of the global leader in aquaculture production, their contributions remain largely under-reported and undervalued, undermining women's contribution to and empowerment from aquaculture.

These two publications provide an attempt to address the fundamental information gap around women's empowerment in relation to aquaculture, enabling and constraining factors as well as positive outcomes and limitations from such engagement in both countries through a total of four case studies covering different aquaculture nodes.



## RECENT EVENT

### RAP GFP Webinar Series: Focus on gender in territorial/landscape approach: Why and how?

Paolo Groppo, Land Management Officer at FAO RAP, gave a presentation on the role and importance of gender in territorial/landscape approach on 12 September 2017.

He emphasized the importance to understand the diversity of concerned stakeholders, their power relations and specific interests, as well as promoting trust through dialogue and negotiation among concerned stakeholders for sustainable territorial development.

"Gender is fundamental for recognizing diversity, promoting inclusiveness and increase final outcomes of the dialogue and negotiation process for territorial development in economic, social and ecological terms," he said.

The Improving Gender Equality in Territorial Issues (IGETI) guide provides a tool to promote gender-inclusive approaches to territorial/landscape development through gender-responsive approach for participatory dialogue and negotiation processes.

Paolo also emphasized that "FAO has a central role to play in helping facilitating and activating processes of dialogue and trust building among concerned stakeholders by supporting their participation,".

The link to the webinar record is available [here](#).



## PHOTO FROM THE REGION



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*Phetsakone siblings in front of Mr. Phetsakone rice-fish field, Thongsmen Village, Khab District, Saiyabuly Province, Lao PDR.*

Phetsakone siblings are farmers from Lao PDR growing corn and rice as their main source of livelihood. Mr. Phetsakone participated in the Save and Grow Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in 2016 implemented by FAO and the Laotian government. After participating in the Save and Grow FFS, he was eager to share his knowledge on rice-fish farming with his siblings.

# GENDER NEWS

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