

Annex 15 – FAO's work in Region Asia and Pacific and gender issues

1 Introduction

1. The FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) is located in Bangkok, Thailand, and covers 44 countries in the region: 26 in Asia and 18 in the Pacific. One Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific (SAP) is located in Apia, Samoa.

2. The Evaluation team visited RAP and the FAO Representations in Bangladesh, the Philippines and Thailand. In total, the team reviewed 55 projects, 27 of which had been identified as GAD during the Evaluability Assessment and the others were selected among on-going projects for comparison purpose. Projects were reviewed through field visits, interviews with project staff and stakeholders, and relevant project and evaluation documents. In total site visits were made to 11 projects.

3. The team met with over 200 people in the three countries including the staff at the FAO Representations, project staff and consultants, stakeholders, government officials, civil society partners and beneficiaries. The team also reviewed 35 GPGs published by RAP. Other documents reviewed included the Regional Priority Framework, 2010-2019, the NMTPFs in Thailand (2007-2011) and the Philippines (2010-2011), the Bangladesh 2010 Country Investment Plan, and reports of FAO's Regional Conferences for Asia and the Pacific.

2 Resources

4. During the Evaluability Assessment, 145 projects in the Asia and Pacific region were identified as GAD. Budget-wise, these represented approximately 29% of FAO's total projects identified as GAD from 2002 to 2010, including Technical Cooperation (TC) and Emergency projects. Among these, 44% were emergency projects. 27% of all RAP-led projects were identified as GAD which was 6% of total GAD projects in the region.

5. In PWB 2010/11, 43 (or 23%) out of a total of 190 products and services in RAP, were considered gender sensitive. Out of these, the highest number of Gender Sensitive Products and Services (GSPS) was related to Strategic Objective B (11) and two to SO-K. This positioned RAP among the Decentralized Offices with the lower number of GSPS.¹ On the other hand, the Sub-regional Office for the Pacific (SAP) had 41% of its products and services tagged as Gender Sensitive.

6. One of the two SO-K related GSPS aimed at improving government capacity to mainstream a gender-sensitive approach in agriculture and to collect, analyze and use sex-disaggregated data. A project was initiated to collect and use sex-disaggregated data for agricultural censuses in four countries. As the project was currently on-going it was not possible to comment on the quality and effectiveness of the outputs. However it can be said that it was a good initiative.

7. The region is very varied in terms of assistance from FAO: in Bangladesh the organization has one of its largest Technical Cooperation programmes, with a staff of over 260 (28 female) working in two district offices in addition to the Representation in Dhaka. At the same time, FAO in Thailand has one of its smallest national programs. This level of variability suggests that different approaches would be required for different countries.

¹ A possible cause for this may have been inaccuracy in entering information in PIRES, but this was not verified.

3 Relevance of FAO's work in gender to national policies and to the regional mandate of the Organization

8. The Asia and Pacific region is widely diverse in terms of advancement in gender equality. Guided by the MDGs, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action, most countries in the region are making efforts to improve gender equality through specific gender related policies in political processes, and in economic and agricultural sectors. Particular attention is being paid to improving food security, nutrition and rural livelihoods for women. There are differences in how effectively these policies are being put into practice by member countries, but their stated policies favour rather than deter the advancement of gender equality.

9. In addition, the principles of the Paris Declaration of ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability encourage multi-stakeholder participation, achievement of development results, and transparent monitoring of performance results. These principles provide a framework for gender advocacy which is being used in several countries in the region such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and Viet Nam². The Declaration increases the responsibility of organizations such as FAO to support the implementation of national development strategies and can provide FAO with the mandate and opportunity to “*push the gender agenda*” in its work in the region.

10. FAO RAP's Regional Priority Framework, 2010-2019: Towards a food-secure Asia and the Pacific, mentioned gender as a cause of poverty that needed to be addressed along with other causes of social exclusion such as ethnicity, religion, social class or caste. There was a suggestion that reducing this type of poverty required “*more effective and innovative approaches, including rights-based solutions*” and a passing reference to the feminization of agriculture in the context of sustaining investments in agriculture and rural development.³

11. The report also identified five regional priority areas: strengthening food and nutritional security; fostering agricultural production and rural development; enhancing equitable, productive and sustainable natural resource management and utilization; improving capacity to respond to food and agricultural threats and emergencies; and coping with the impact of climate change. All of these would seem to lend themselves to a gender-sensitive approach. However, there were only passing references to gender concerns in the discussion of issues and challenges related to these priority areas, and two gendered results were mentioned under the first priority area of strengthening food and nutritional security. In addition, gender mainstreaming was mentioned as a tool for tackling water scarcity and promoting equitable access to land and water resources.

12. Overall, the report did not look at the regional context through a gender lens, and the attention paid to gender in the regional priority framework seemed inadequate. The activities being implemented towards the two unit results under SO-K also seemed inadequate in this context.

13. All the three countries visited as part of the evaluation provided an enabling environment for integrating gender issues into agriculture and rural development. Although the policies provided varying degrees of support, the governments in the three countries had stated priorities for integrating women's concerns in agriculture and rural development.

² Promoting Gender Equality in the Aid Effectiveness Agenda in Asia Pacific: Engaging the Principles of the Paris Declaration, UNIFEM Discussion Paper November 2007

³ See at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2012e/i2012e00.htm>, page 4

However, the NMTPFs in Thailand (2007-2011) and in the Philippines (2010-2011) completely failed to identify the link between the stated national priority outcomes and gender.

14. With regard to the Bangladesh NMTFP (2010 to 2015), gender was dealt with adequately only in one priority area, that of reducing poverty and enhancing food security. In Bangladesh, FAO also had inputs into the formulation of the 2010 Country Investment Plan produced by the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, in which the importance of women in the development process had been recognized.

15. Since 2002, FAO's Regional Conferences for Asia and the Pacific had discussed gender concerns in relation to the importance of integrating gender considerations into empowering the rural poor, creating safety nets and social programmes to reduce hunger, increase employment and enhance self-worth of vulnerable groups, especially women and children (2002); improving women's access to productive resources (2004) and improving gender-disaggregated data (2009). The Conference in 2002 had drawn attention to the FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action 2002-2007 and had recommended that countries pay special attention to the roles of women in agriculture and utilize the vast potential of community-government partnerships in combating hunger. The Regional Conferences in 2006 and 2010 did not discuss gender issues.

16. FAO's work in the region although broadly relevant to the recommendations of the Regional Conferences, did not show commitment to integrating gender issues. Various projects were implemented that aimed at improving livelihoods, combating hunger, and improving access to productive resources which had, in a limited way, increased the incomes of men and women in the project areas. Some of the projects had components that specifically provided inputs to targeted women beneficiaries, but they did not address gender relations or gender issues within the context of these projects.

4 Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability of Projects

17. The Evaluability Assessment revised 55 projects, 27 of which were tagged as GAD and 28 had not been identified as GAD/WID. Relevant documents and evaluation reports were analysed, interviews and discussions with project staff and stakeholders were carried out and 11 projects were visited on-site. The assessment concluded that gender qualifiers had not been assigned in an accurate manner and that gender mainstreaming had not been very effective. Within the 27 GAD projects, only 12 were actually GAD and 6 were WID, 7 were Missed Opportunities (MO) and 2 were in fact non-GAD. From among the non-GAD projects, the most populated group was the Missed Opportunity, although 4 were also considered GAD and 5 as WID. The real non-GAD projects were 13% of the total and the real GAD were 29%.

Box 1. *Gender - sensitive assessment of projects in Asia: revised gender qualifiers*

Evaluation qualifiers	GAD	WID	MO	Non GAD	Total
FAO qualifiers					
<i>Identified as GAD/WID</i>	12	6	7	2	27
<i>Not identified as GAD/WID</i>	4	5	14	5	28
Total	16	11	21	7	55
<i>Percentage within total</i>	29%	20%	38%	13%	

Source: Evaluation team

18. Examples of projects that were clearly non-GAD were: the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme-GCP/BGD/037/MUL, supported by the EC as part of a two-phases initiative in Bangladesh; and Developing a national shrimp seed certification system-TCP/BGD/3101, also in Bangladesh.

19. Missed opportunities were projects that provided opportunities for integrating gender concerns, but where this aspect had either not been recognized or was not followed up. The project 'The Future of Forests and Bio-diversity in the Greater Mekong Sub-region: the Outlook for 2020-GCP/RAS/225/ASB' focused on policy regarding food security, forests and livelihoods but overlooked the fact that the policy would have a direct impact on men and women whose livelihoods depended upon the forest resources. A study of the potential of forests to improve food security and identification of priority areas for action would need to assess directly the relative impact on the livelihoods of men and women. In the project document of 'Poverty reduction and bio-fuels in the Greater Mekong Sub-region-TCP/RAS/3202', the phrase "rural livelihoods" was mentioned a number of times but not elaborated upon. Any project or discussion about poverty reduction and bio-fuels would have to address gender concerns. There was no evidence that this had been done.

20. Another example of a Missed Opportunity is that of a project that was indeed WID but should have been GAD: the 2007 'Emergency Cyclone Recovery and Restoration (ECRRP) Project-UTF/BGD/040/BGD' in Bangladesh.

21. The inappropriate tagging of projects raised several important issues about the process of tagging; who was responsible for the tagging, what indicators were used for the tagging and at what stage of the process the tagging was done, and whether the tags were reviewed at any stage of the project period.

22. The team found that project documents could often be misleading: those reviewed by the team either did not discuss gender concerns or missed them completely. Very few project log frames had gender sensitive outputs, results and/or monitoring indicators. It was also found that in a significant number of cases, PPRC recommendations for integrating gender and social concerns had not been taken into account. Examples were 'Participation of tree plantation farmers for sustainable forest management- TCP/THA/3203'; and 'Regional Programme for participatory and integrated agriculture, forestry and fisheries development for long-term rehabilitation and development in Tsunami affected areas- GCP/RAS/218/JPN'.

23. Further it was found during field visits that in some cases, although the project documents did not address gender concerns, they were integrated during implementation, and follow-up reports did not mention that.

24. Using the revised qualifiers, the good examples of GAD projects included 'Regional Coordination of Avian Influenza control and prevention in Asia - OSRO/RAS/601/ASB', 'Philippines-Australia Technical Support for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, PATSARRD-GCP/PHI/047/AUL', 'Increasing rice yield and productivity through the promotion of small-scale irrigation and integrated crop management systems in rainfed areas-GCP/PHI/059/EC', the 'UN Joint Programme on Integrated highland development in Mae Hong Son-UNJP/THA/033/UNO', and 'Pilot project for poverty alleviation and the promotion of food security in Northeastern Thailand-TCP/THA/3102'.

25. Additional positive examples of mainstreaming a gender perspective, identified through past OED's evaluations, were the 'Regional Integrated Pest Management project-GCP/RAS/172/NOR', the 'Andhra Pradesh Farmer Managed Groundwater Systems Project APFAMGS-GCP/IND/175/NET' in India and the Special Programme for Food Security projects in Lao PDR and Sri Lanka.

26. WID projects in the team's assessment appeared to reinforce an existing traditional division of labour, with certain resources (e.g. goats, chickens) directed toward women and

others (e.g. fishing gear; agricultural equipment) directed towards men. An example is the European Union Food Facility project 'Support to assist landless, marginal and small farmers to overcome soaring input and food prices in impoverished areas of Bangladesh-GCP/BGD/043/EC'.

27. WID projects also reinforced stereotypes of gender roles. Examples are 'Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition for Children 0-2 Years Old in the Philippines (MDGF-2030)-UNJP/PHI/057/SPA' and 'Protecting and Promoting Food Security and Nutrition for Families and Children in Bangladesh (MDGF-1994)-UNJP/BGD/042/SPA'. Both projects focused entirely on women and children; however intra-household food and nutrition security cannot be improved without the support and active participation of the men within the households.

28. The approach adopted by WID projects of reinforcing traditional roles appeared to have been adopted because of the need to work with local cultural and social practices, with the understanding that a GAD approach could be seen by various interest groups as undermining or threatening local values. While this might be fine as an entry point, the ultimate goal of gender equity in access to resources could not be achieved without a GAD approach. At best interventions would result in improved incomes but not economic or decision-making empowerment.

29. In general, the emergency and rehabilitation projects in Bangladesh and the Philippines aimed to restore what had been destroyed, rather than to review or present different options for renewal of livelihoods. In replacing what had been destroyed, the old livelihoods that had existed along gender lines tended to be reinforced. With more emphasis being given on material inputs rather than outputs or impacts, there was no space for reviewing or working with the underlying factors that resulted in gender biased livelihoods. There was one exception, however, where a WID project (OSRO/PHI/901/BEL), aimed to give women chickens to raise, but the women wanted to grow chicha corn instead. The chicha corn was expected to bring in more income than the chicken. Due to the project coordinator's insightful intervention, the women did get their chicha corn instead of the chickens. It was too early to say whether this had any impact on gender relations, as the project was ongoing but at least the women were able to express their choice.

30. FAO's successful projects had shown that their effectiveness was greatly determined by the field staff and the knowledge they brought to the project from previous experiences gained while working with other organizations. Similarly, integration of gender concerns into project interventions depended upon the personal interest and commitment of project staff, since no orientation or training was provided to them when they began working for FAO.

31. Most regional project designs did not take into account the differences among countries in terms of gender. Similarly, national project documents did not take into account differences in the local context in terms of gender. FAO did not seem to have tailored its gender strategy or tools to these different contexts. For example, in Bangladesh the traditional division of labour for any given task in rural areas was almost always defined along gender lines, whereas in Thailand, both men and women participated in most activities in rural areas. Regional projects might have been more effective if they had taken into account such cultural differences.

32. Gender was largely understood as WID, rather than GAD. This was reflected in lists of men and women beneficiaries and participants, and setting of targets for women's participation in various project activities. There was hardly any discussion on gender relations or on how the project hoped to achieve gender equality in terms of increasing access to resources for both men and women. Even while discussing GAD projects, the focus was on the number of women beneficiaries, with women being considered as a homogenous group.

33. Projects were often based on assumptions of beneficiaries' needs in the given context and what was perceived to be beneficial to them in terms of improving livelihoods. There was no evidence that findings from consultations with end users or beneficiaries had been built into the project design, nor was there any evidence that the potential contributions of end users in terms of resources or indigenous knowledge had been taken into account. The team observed that beneficiaries did not normally participate in the planning and design of any of FAO's projects.

34. In some projects gender specialists had been involved, but in most there had been no specialized gender inputs. It appeared that where there had been specialized inputs, there had been a more gender aware approach and greater sensitivity towards understanding the dynamics of gender relations. A good example was the approach taken by the regional project 'Integrated Pest Management-GCP/RAS/172/NOR', which included an analysis of the different roles played by members of the family, according to age and sex in the given cultural context. Project interventions had been clearly more successful wherever such an analysis had been done. Another good example was the regional project on Avian Influenza OSRO/RAS/601/ASB. FAO had undertaken socio-economic studies that incorporated gender aspects into Avian Influenza control in Cambodia, India, Indonesia and Lao PDR, and those had led to some changes in approach in Cambodia and Indonesia (Evaluation of HPAI projects, 2010).

35. Sometimes imposing a WID or GAD approach without the required knowledge and expertise could have negative consequences on the sustainability and effectiveness of the project. In one of the projects visited by the team - TCP/PHI/3203 - the inadequate WID inputs by the gender consultant had alienated the project staff who had become wary of gender inputs and interventions and wanted to distance themselves from any type of gender related activities. In another project - GCP/PHI/059/EC - the Farmer Field School (FFS) participants were both men and women farmers who participated together in the project activities. The project was clearly GAD in implementation, although this was not discussed in the project document. A WID approach would have had a negative impact on the solidarity of the group. Project staff expressed an interest in addressing gender issues that might arise in the future, such as changing intra-household relations and power relations within the groups, but only if expert inputs were available.

36. In countries where the government's pro-women policy and the nature of the rural society provided an enabling environment for promoting equitable participation of men and women, a significant number of women participated in project activities as trainees and beneficiaries. In those countries, project staff also consisted of both men and women. It was found that in those situations, participation by men and women in project activities occurred more as a result of the prevailing enabling environment, rather than as a result of the project design or implementation policy. In the agrarian reform project GCP/PHI/047/AUL in the Philippines, FAO was responsible for capacity development including gender training, and a large number of staff in the Department of Agrarian Reform, both men and women, had been trained effectively. It was not difficult to get women trainees, as the government department itself had many women employees. It is worth noting that the Department of Agriculture in the Philippines suggested that FAO should "*ask for institutionalizing GAD in the work or projects they support*" and make it a criterion for selection of projects and consultants. They gave the example of IFAD, which always had a gender specialist contributing to its projects.

37. FAO activities often used groups of beneficiaries as units of interventions both in distributing inputs and in training, such as in the FFS or groups loosely formed along the lines of FFS. Some of these groups appeared to be temporary groups, created by the project only for the purpose of delivering various inputs. In those cases, there was no evidence that these

groups would have any long term existence. This seemed particularly to be the case among those interventions aimed at women, such as distribution of livestock. In cases where long term shared assets were involved (e.g. boats, pumps, power tillers), the groups consisted mainly of men and may have had a longer existence owing to the shared assets.

38. In general, it was not clear how beneficiaries were identified. Although part of the selection process was conducted at the community level, there were some doubts about whether the process was transparent enough, particularly since power relations within the community often influenced these decisions. FAO partnered with local NGOs who helped in the selection process and in the distribution of inputs. Instruments such as PRA, village mapping exercises, wealth ranking and transect walks were used, but the beneficiaries seemed to participate as informants rather than as collaborators. Also these instruments were used to identify potential beneficiaries for pre-determined inputs, and did not contribute to the understanding of social dynamics or gender relations within the community. This seemed to be particularly true in emergency projects.

39. A large number of men and women had received benefits from FAO's interventions, leading to some improvement in their incomes and livelihoods. The question however was how sustainable those benefits were. A large number of women, for example, had gained access to productive property including cows, chickens, horticultural and aquaculture inputs. While the project was being implemented, supporting services were being provided to them. The expectation appeared to be that government extension services would be accessible to these women once the project had ended. There was little evidence that linkages established during project implementation would continue. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the gains from these inputs would accrue to women rather than be appropriated by their husbands or other male relations. But as so little was known of the internal dynamics of households in project areas, it was not possible to know or predict what would happen.

40. Overall, FAO's interventions followed a safe path and did not challenge existing and "time-tested" methods of implementing projects in the countries in which they worked. Gender equality cannot be achieved unless the existing patterns of behaviour are challenged. Women's incomes might improve, but might not result in economic empowerment or improve access and control over productive assets unless existing gender roles and relations were altered in some way. That meant that the gender agenda would need to be pushed by addressing some challenges, however small, if gender equality were to be achieved.

5 Portfolio and assessment of GPGs

41. The Evaluability Assessment had identified 35 RAP GPGs, 12 of which were reviewed for the purpose of the evaluation. Average scoring on a six-point scale is illustrated in Box 2.

Box 2. *Assessment of FAO Global Public Goods for Asia and the Pacific: average scoring*

Criteria Type of products	Relevance of GAD to the topic (1-6)	Technical quality of GAD contents (1-6)	Innovativeness on GAD (1-6)	Potential impact as advocacy tool (1-6)	Potential impact as capacity development tool (1-6)	Links between GAD and social inclusion (1-6)	Number products
<i>Average scoring GAD GPG</i>	4.9	3.8	2.8	4.2	3.8	2.0	12

Source: Evaluation team

42. Six out of 12 publications scored 6 for relevance, 5 scored 4 and 1 scored 3. The average score on relevance was lowered because, although 8 titles had women or gender in them, 3 of those focused more on the technical subject matter than on the gender issues within that context. In fact two of those referred only superficially to the "people" aspect, hence were not considered relevant for GAD. All the publications had the potential for a GAD analysis.

43. Where technical quality of GAD contents was concerned, at best GAD was dealt with holistically in the publication, but with no reference to GAD theory. In most cases women or some differences between men and women were mentioned superficially. The low score on technical quality of GAD was further corroborated by an even lower score on innovativeness on GAD. The publications were more WID than GAD and either reiterated existing GAD thinking and approaches or adopted old positions in GAD/WID. One good example of an innovative approach was the re-tabulation of rural, agriculture and fishery censuses in order to produce a range of sex-disaggregated data to create a National Gender Profile of Agriculture Households.

44. A general trend in the publications was that women or sometimes even gender differences were mentioned in the introduction or background, but this was rarely followed up in the main text. By the end of the publication, the conclusions and recommendations became quite general.

45. The publications which were relevant also had the potential for being used in advocacy. Although the technical quality of GAD and innovativeness were low, material could be extracted from the publications and used for advocacy. Similarly some of the material could be used for capacity development. The lowest score came out on links between GAD and social inclusion. Such links were mentioned superficially in some of the publications.

46. In so far as capacity development on gender issues was concerned, during the period under evaluation ESW conducted 15 SEAGA training workshops in 10 countries in the region, namely, 2 in Afghanistan (2006), 4 in Cambodia (2002-2005), 1 in China (2009), 1 in East Timor (2010), 1 in Indonesia (2006), 1 in Japan (2004), 1 in Pakistan (2011), 1 in Tajikistan (2008), 3 in Thailand (2008 and 2011) and 1 in Viet Nam (2009). ESW also conducted 7 training workshops in 4 countries in gender and agricultural statistics. 91 female and 75 male participants from Cambodia, China, India, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Peninsular Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam attended these workshops.

47. However as no reports were available, it was not possible to assess the impact and effectiveness of these workshops. There was also no information on how these workshops were planned and executed, whether they were conducted in collaboration with RAP, FAORs or member countries.

6 GAD awareness and competence among staff

48. There was an open-mindedness and interest in addressing gender among officers interviewed at the regional RAP level. While many FAO RAP staff members indicated that they were aware that they had to address gender, the understanding of WID, GAD and gender mainstreaming varied among the different staff. Knowledge about FAO's gender tools and guidelines was limited, and there was not much evidence that anyone used them in their work.

49. RAP Project staff and national project staff generally interpreted gender mainstreaming or GAD as increasing the participation of women and maintaining a sex-disaggregated database of participants and beneficiaries where possible. Project staff did not

take into account the dynamics of social change while identifying appropriate project interventions. No orientation was given to project staff on FAO policies including gender; many staff members used knowledge from previous jobs in implementing gender aspects of FAO projects.

50. The RAP office had an ESW regional gender officer until August 2007. Many publications had been issued and workshops held on gender-related matters from 1999 to 2006. However, it had been reported that much of this work had been done without the broad support or participation of the staff of RAP; workshops had been held with partners outside of FAO, and had had little connection with the RAP programme. After the ESW regional officer retired, the decision was made at the most senior level in the Organization to freeze the post and divert the resources to fund one FAO Representative in the region who was expected to devote one-third of her time to fulfilling the functions of a regional gender specialist. However, this arrangement had proved to be ineffective.

51. By the time of the Evaluation (early 2011), the Regional Office did have an active Gender Focal Point, a senior male officer who had good working relations in the office and, due to his seniority, was able to discuss gender issues with colleagues. RAP also tried to address the gap by recruiting a Gender Volunteer to assist the GFP. However, this was obviously not enough to provide the assistance needed by RAP and project staff to adopt a gender-sensitive approach in their work, which could only be provided by a senior gender specialist.

52. Many staff members indicated that they needed practical assistance on how to incorporate gender and social concerns into their projects and programmes. They also expressed a need for an accountability framework within which to build in the gender components. It was obvious that the gender specialist's post needed to be restored.

53. Last, within PWB 2010-11, one of the GSPS related to SO-K aimed to sensitize RAP officers to gender mainstreaming and to include gender components in RAP's work. Two types of training were offered in recent years, one for the FAO Representatives in the region (February 2009) and the other (gender sensitization workshop) for the professional staff at FAO's RAP Office in Bangkok in February 2011.

7 Relation with ESW and GFP's work

54. In general, it was found that collaboration between ESW and RAP, as also with FAORs in the region depended to a large extent on inter-personal relationships, rather than on inter-departmental collaborations. Most of the RAP and project staff interviewed had very little contact with ESW.

55. Among the few examples of good relations was the planning and implementation of a gender sensitization workshop for the professional staff at RAP in Bangkok for which the RAP GFP worked closely with ESW to discuss what would be appropriate in the local context – how to orient the material and what would be acceptable to the staff. The feedback on the training was largely positive, especially on the first day.

8 Overall visibility and knowledge about FAO working in GAD among partners, including governments

56. FAO was seen as having a strong brand identity in certain areas, notably food policy, food security, and nutrition, but had little presence in terms of gender. UN agency partners interviewed by the team were generally not aware that FAO had a gender strategy or that

FAO considered gender a priority. The government and non-government partners interviewed by the team had not been made aware of FAO gender policies, strategies or tools.

57. The Evaluation team saw very little evidence of awareness of gender training materials, SEAGA, gender analysis or GPGs relating to gender among government officials or interagency partners. One government department was aware of SEAGA and the Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook. Two project staff had found FAO's gender material while doing a Google search on the Internet. Still, during the period under evaluation, ESW staff and the ESW officer in RAP organized training events in some countries for national government staff using SEAGA: this appeared to have happened in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Thailand and Viet Nam.

9 Conclusions

58. There was an apparent disconnect between national gender policies and FAO's products and services in the region.

59. FAO's interventions had provided men and women, and in many cases particularly women, with sources of income such as poultry and home gardens. Some incomes had increased as a result of agriculture and aquaculture related interventions. However there was little evidence that these interventions were sustainable and that the gains accrued would benefit the women for whom they were meant. The reason for this was that very little was known about the gender relations in the context of project interventions, both intra-household and within the community. Social and gender analysis was rarely done before the project was implemented.

60. When dealing with gender issues, FAO tended to take the "safe road" and was unwilling to push the gender agenda. Women were treated as a homogenous group and were targeted as recipients of inputs, and not as collaborators or contributors. As a result, FAO's interventions had a WID approach rather than a GAD approach and, while this might be fine as an entry point, the ultimate goal of gender equity in access to resources could not be achieved without a GAD approach. At best interventions would result in improved incomes but not economic or decision-making empowerment.

61. FAO RAP's project documents had a rigid design, and the log frames were largely gender insensitive, without gender-related monitoring results or indicators. PPRC recommendations for addressing gender and social issues were not taken into account. This could be attributed to a lack of commitment on the part of the organization to put in place a monitoring framework for ensuring that gender and social concerns were incorporated into the project cycle. Since no orientation regarding FAO policies was given to project staff, integration of gender concerns and project effectiveness depended upon the personal interest and commitment of project staff.

62. An analysis of GPGs indicated a low level of relevance, technical quality of GAD contents and innovativeness with regard to GAD. They did not appear to be synchronized with FAO's work in the region.

63. While there was openness on the part of RAP and project staff to integrate gender in their work, they needed much more than just training and sensitization in order to be able to put gender into practice. The need for a gender specialist or gender expertise in the Regional Office was strongly expressed by RAP, FAO Representatives and project staff.

10 Suggestions

64. All recommendations stemming from the discussion above formed the basis for the Evaluation's recommendations. Here one suggestion is formulated, of specific relevance to RAP.

Suggestion 1. To RAP on normative products

<i>Global Public Goods must be relevant to the work being done by FAO RAP in the region, and an effort must be made to incorporate a high level of technical content related to GAD.</i>
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